

Chapter 4: Policies and methods

This chapter presents the policies and methods that, when implemented, will achieve the objectives of this Regional Policy Statement and address the regionally significant resource management issues (including the issues of significance to iwi authorities). The resource management issues and objectives are presented in the previous chapter under topic headings. Within this chapter, the policies and then the methods are listed in numeric order.

Chapter 4 is divided into five sections. The first four sections set out the policies, organised according to their type:

- Section 4.1 contains policies that direct district or regional plans, or the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy
- Section 4.2 contains policies that are to be considered when processing and deciding upon a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or replacement to a plan
- Section 4.3 contains policies that allocate responsibilities for indigenous biodiversity, natural hazards and hazardous substances
- Section 4.4 contains policies that outline non-regulatory actions.

The fifth section sets out the methods for implementing the policies. There are two main groups of methods:

- Regulatory methods, implementing policies in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3
- Non-regulatory methods, that implement the policies in section 4.4 or that support the delivery of the other policies.

Each of the five sections includes a summary table in which the policy or method titles are provided. This serves only as a guide, as the policy and associated methods are not reproduced in full within these summary tables.

Alongside each of the policies, in the margin, is a cross reference to the most relevant objectives, methods and related policies. This is not a complete and exhaustive list, and these provisions must be read in association with each policy, to appreciate the relationships between these policies and methods.

Within chapter 4, words and terms for which definitions are provided are presented in italics in the explanation, when the definition is directly relevant to interpretation of the policy in which the word or term is used. All definitions are provided in Appendix 3, although some do also appear in the explanations. Where additional definitions are given in Appendix 3, for words and terms that are not used within a policy, these are not presented in italics within the document.

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Chapter 4.1: Regulatory policies – direction to district and regional plans and the Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy

This section contains:

- Policies that must be given effect to by regional, city or district plans (in accordance with sections 67(3)(c) and 75(3)(c) of the Resource Management Act, 1991)
- Policies that the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan ~~Strategy~~ must be consistent with (in accordance with section 75(a)(iii)(B) of the Land Transport Management Act 2008).

The policies are to be implemented in accordance with methods 1, 2 or 3. The methods require that the process to amend district or regional plans to implement the policies shall ‘commence’ on or before the date in which a relevant council commences the review of a provision in a district or regional plan in accordance with section 79 of the Resource Management Act 1991. This recognises substantial work may be required for councils to give effect to these policies.

Within this section the policies are presented in numeric order. The summary table below, however, lists the policy titles alongside topic headings.

| Topic | Policy title |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Air quality | Policy 1: Odour, smoke and dust – district plans |
| | Policy 2: Reducing adverse effects of the discharge of odour, smoke, dust and fine particulate matter – regional plans |
| Coastal environment | Policy 3: Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 4: Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment – district plans |
| | Policy 5: Maintaining and enhancing coastal water quality for aquatic ecosystem health – regional plans |
| | Policy 6: Recognising the regional significance of Porirua Harbour (including Pauatahanui Inlet and Onepoto Arm) – district and regional plans |
| Energy, infrastructure and waste | Policy 7: Recognising the benefits from renewable energy and regionally significant infrastructure – regional and district plans |
| | Policy 8: Protecting regionally significant infrastructure – regional and district plans |
| | Policy 9: Reducing the use and consumption of non-renewable transport fuels and carbon dioxide emissions from transportation – Regional Land Transport Strategy |
| | Policy 10: Promoting travel demand management – district plans and Regional Land Transport Strategy |

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| | Policy 11: Promoting energy efficient design and small scale renewable energy generation – district plans |
| Fresh water | Policy 12: Management purposes for surface water bodies – regional plans |
| | Policy 13: Allocating water – regional plans |
| | Policy 14: Minimising contamination in stormwater from new development – regional plans |
| | Policy 15: Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 16: Promoting discharges to land – regional plans |
| | Policy 17: Water allocation and use for the health needs of people – regional plans |
| | Policy 18: Protecting aquatic ecological function of water bodies – regional plans |
| | Policy 19: Managing amenity, recreational and indigenous biodiversity values of rivers and lakes – regional plans |
| | Policy 20: Using water efficiently – regional plans |
| Historic heritage | Policy 21: Identifying places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 22: Protecting historic heritage values – district and regional plans |
| Indigenous ecosystems | Policy 23: Identifying indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 24: Protecting indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values – district and regional plans |
| Landscape | Policy 25: Identifying outstanding natural features and landscapes – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 26: Protecting outstanding natural features and landscapes values – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 27: Identifying special amenity landscapes – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 28: Managing special amenity landscape values – district and regional plans |
| Natural hazards | Policy 29: Avoiding inappropriate subdivision and development in areas at high risk from natural hazards – district and regional plans |
| Regional form, design and function | Policy 30: Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of regionally significant centres – district plans |
| | Policy 31: Identifying and promoting higher density and mixed use development – district plans |
| | Policy 32: Identifying and protecting key industrial-based employment locations – district |

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| | plans |
| | Policy 33: Supporting a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form – Regional Land Transport Strategy |
| Soils and minerals | Policy 15: Minimising the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance – district and regional plans |
| | Policy 34: Controlling activities on contaminated land – district plans |

Policy 1: Odour, smoke and dust – district plans

District plans shall include policies and/or rules that discourage:

- a) new sensitive activities locating near land uses or activities that emit odour, smoke or dust, which can affect the health of people and lower the amenity values of the surrounding area; and
- b) new land uses or activities that emit odour, smoke or dust and which can affect the health of people and lower the amenity value of the surrounding areas, locating near sensitive activities.

Explanation

New *sensitive activities* should not establish near land uses or activities that generate odour, smoke or dust. The reverse is also true; new land uses and activities should be distanced from sensitive activities having regard to the particular location or operational requirements of those land uses and activities.

Land uses or activities that affect sensitive activities include:

- Activities which emit or cause odour – such as rendering, spray painting and solvent use, landfills, sewage treatment plants, silage feeding, effluent spreading and agrichemical use
- Activities which emit or cause smoke – such as backyard burning
- Activities which emit or cause dust – such as earthworks, quarries, and vegetation disturbance.

Reverse sensitivity effects can also arise at the interface between areas of differing land uses – such as between residential areas and industrial or rural areas. In particular, urban growth through either rural residential subdivision or the expansion of urban areas can constrain existing industrial and rural production activities. The management of these interfaces is required to reduce the risk of reverse sensitivity arising and allow for the continued operation of industrial and rural production activities without unreasonable restriction.

Policy 2: Reducing adverse effects of the discharge of odour, smoke, dust and fine particulate matter – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, ~~and/or~~ rules and/or methods that:

- a) protect or enhance the *amenity values* of neighbouring areas from discharges of odour, smoke and dust; and
- b) protect people's health from discharges of dust, smoke, and fine particulate matter.

Explanation

Policy 2 seeks to protect neighbouring areas and people's health from discharges of contaminants into the air.

~~The *amenity value* of air reflects how clean and fresh it is. High amenity is associated with good visibility, low levels of deposited dust and with people's ability to enjoy their outdoor environment. Amenity is reduced by *contaminants* in the air affecting people's wellbeing – such as when dust or smoke reduces visibility or soils surfaces, or when odour is objectionable.~~

~~Amenity values need to be considered in the context of different environments and they may change temporarily or seasonally. In effect, what constitutes an objectionable odour, or level of smoke or dust is, in part, dependant on the normal conditions experienced in a locality or at a time of year.~~

~~Protecting people's health from discharges to air includes considering the effects of *fine particulate matter* discharged from human activities. The Wairarapa (specifically Masterton), Wainuiomata and Upper Hutt are the airsheds known to be at risk of exceeding the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality, in relation to fine particulate matter (PM10), during cold calm winter nights. Domestic fires are the main source of fine particulate emissions in these airsheds during winter.~~

Policy CC.1: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport demand and infrastructure – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or methods that require that all new and altered *land transport infrastructure* to be designed, constructed, and operated in a way that contributes to an efficient transport network, maximises mode shift from private vehicles to public transport and active modes and reduces *greenhouse gas emissions* by:

- a) enabling multi-modal transport networks and *infrastructure* to serve and support development in locations which *minimise* travel distances between residential, employment and other essential services, and within *walkable catchments* of public transport routes where practicable; and
- b) utilising existing space to remove barriers for access to walking, cycling and

public transport; and

- c) where providing new *infrastructure* or capacity upgrades on the transport network, prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, such as improved or new bus and cycle lanes and measures, to prioritise the need of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport above the car.

Explanation

This policy requires transport infrastructure planning (including design, construction and operation) to consider and choose solutions that will contribute to reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* by requiring all new or altered transport *infrastructure* to support an efficient transport network and public transport and other low and zero- carbon transport modes to support development. This will support behaviour change through mode shift from private vehicles to public transport or active modes, which also improves health outcomes as a co-benefit. This policy does not apply to aircraft or activities undertaken at Wellington Airport which are necessary for the operation of the aircraft.

Policy CC.2: Travel choice assessment– district plans

By 30 June 2025, *district plans* shall include objectives, policies and rules that require subdivision, use and development to contribute to the reduction of *greenhouse gas emissions* by requiring consent applicants to provide *travel choice assessment* that:

- a) demonstrates how the use of public transport and active modes will be
b) *maximised*; and
c) demonstrates how the use of private vehicles will be *minimised*; and
d) includes measures within the design of subdivision, use and development which addresses parts (a) and (b) above.

The requirement for a *travel choice assessment* must apply to all new subdivision, use and development over a specified travel choice threshold as required by Policy CC.2A.

The results of *travel choice assessments* may form the basis for conditions of consent.

Policy CC.2A: Travel choice assessment local thresholds – district plans

By 30 June 2025, *district plans* shall include local thresholds for *travel choice assessments* as required by Policy CC.2. As a minimum, city and district councils must use the regional thresholds set out in Table 1 as the basis for developing their own local thresholds. The regional thresholds in Table 1 will cease to apply when Policy CC.2A is given effect through a *district plan*. To contribute to reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* city and district councils must develop their own travel choice thresholds that are locally specific.

Table 1: Regional Thresholds

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Activity and Threshold per application</u></p> <p><u>100 residential units located within a <i>walkable catchment</i>.</u></p> <p><u>Commercial development of 2,500m² gross floor area</u></p> <p><u>Greenfield subdivision over 100 residential units</u></p> | |
| <p><u>Explanation</u></p> <p><u>The regional travel choice thresholds have been developed as a minimum and as guidance to assist city and district councils in developing their local travel choice thresholds. Local travel choice thresholds are important to reflect the differences in connectivity and accessibility between rural and <i>urban areas</i>. In addition, local travel choice thresholds should reflect local issues, challenges and opportunities. Local travel choice thresholds should apply to residential, education, office, industrial, community, entertainment and other land use activities that could generate private vehicle trips and freight travel. Development thresholds should specify the trigger level (for example, number of dwellings, number of people accommodated or gross floor area) where the requirement for a <i>travel choice assessment</i> applies.</u></p> <p><u>The results of <i>travel choice assessments</i> may form the basis for conditions of consent.</u></p> | |
| <p><u>Policy CC.3: Enabling a shift to low and zero-carbon emission transport – district plans</u></p> | |
| <p><u>By 30 June 2025, district plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and methods for enabling <i>infrastructure</i> that supports the uptake of zero and low-carbon multi- modal transport that contribute to reducing <i>greenhouse gas emissions</i>.</u></p> <p><u>Explanation</u></p> <p><u><i>District plans</i> must provide a supportive planning framework (for example, permitted activity status) for zero and low-carbon multi-modal transport <i>infrastructure</i>, such as public transport <i>infrastructure</i>, cycleways, footpaths, walkways and public EV charging network for EV modes of transport.</u></p> | |
| <p><u>Policy CC.4: Climate responsive development– district plans</u></p> | |
| <p><u>District plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or non-regulatory methods to require development and <i>infrastructure</i> to be located, designed, and constructed in ways that provide for <i>climate change mitigation</i>, <i>climate change adaptation</i> and <i>climate-resilience</i>, prioritising the use of <i>nature-based solutions</i> and informed by <i>mātauranga Māori</i>.</u></p> <p><u>This includes, as appropriate to the scale and context of the activity:</u></p> <p>a) <u>requiring provision of urban green space, particularly canopy trees, to reduce urban heat and reduce <i>stormwater</i> flowrates:</u></p> | |

- (i) prioritising the use of appropriate *indigenous* species, and
- (ii) contributing to achieving a wider target of 10 percent *tree canopy cover* at a suburb-scale by 2030, and 30 percent cover by 2050; and
- b) requiring methods to increase water resilience, including harvesting of water at a domestic and/or community-scale for non-potable uses (for example by requiring rain tanks, rainwater reuse tanks, and setting targets for urban roof area rainwater collection); and
- c) requiring that significant adverse effects on the *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience* functions and values of an *ecosystem* shall be avoided, and other adverse effects on these functions and values shall be avoided, *minimised*, or remedied; and
- d) promoting efficient use of water and energy in buildings and *infrastructure*; and
- e) promoting appropriate design of buildings and *infrastructure* so they are able to withstand the predicted future higher temperatures, intensity and duration of rainfall and wind over their anticipated life span.

Explanation

Policy CC.4 directs *district plans* to include provisions to provide for development and *infrastructure* to respond to the predicted effects of climate change. The policy seeks that priority be given to the use of *nature-based solutions*, recognising the multiple-benefits they can provide for people and nature. It also seeks to manage any adverse effects of activities on the climate change functions and values of *ecosystems*.

It is noted that other policies of this Regional Policy Statement also provide for actions and initiatives to deliver *climate-resilient infrastructure* and development. This includes requirements to apply *water sensitive urban design principles* and *hydrological control in urban development* in Policy 14, Policy FW.3, and Policy FW.X (Hydrological control in urban development).

Policy CC.4A: Climate-responsive development – regional plans

Regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and non-regulatory methods to require development and *infrastructure* to be located, designed, and constructed in ways that provide for *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience*, prioritising the use of *nature-based solutions* and informed by mātauranga Māori. This includes, as appropriate to the scale and context of the activity:

- a) requiring significant adverse effects on the *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience* functions and values of an *ecosystem* be avoided, and other adverse effects on these functions and values be avoided, *minimised*, or remedied.

Explanation

Policy CC.4A directs *regional plans* to include provisions to provide for *climate- resilient development and infrastructure*. The policy seeks that priority be given to the use of *nature-based solutions*, recognising the multiple benefits they can provide for people and nature. It also seeks to manage any adverse effects of activities on the climate change functions and values of ecosystems.

It is noted that other policies of this Regional Policy Statement also provide for actions and initiatives to deliver *climate-resilient infrastructure* and development, including requirements to apply *water sensitive urban design principles* and *hydrological control* in Policy 14, Policy FW.3 and Policy FW.X (*Hydrological control in urban development*).

Policy CC.5: Reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions – regional plan

Regional plans shall include objectives, policies, and methods to support reductions in agricultural greenhouse gas emissions from 2019 levels to contribute to the Objective CC.3 2050 net-zero emissions target.

Explanation:

As agriculture is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the Wellington Region, contributing 34 percent of the region's greenhouse gas emissions, reducing emissions from the agricultural sector is critical to contribute to achieving Objective CC.3. While central government is taking the lead on the policy approach to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. Policy CC.5 seeks to complement this by directing regional plans to include provisions to support reductions in agricultural emissions. This will be supported by non-regulatory Policy CC.15 and Method CC.8 that seek to support change and improved management practices at a farm level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As of 30 November 2022, regional councils are able to control the discharge of greenhouse gases having regard to the effects on climate change. This policy is intended to provide flexibility as to how agricultural greenhouse gas emissions are reduced through a future regional plan change process which will need to consider issues such as equity and the relationship with the national approach for agricultural greenhouse gas emissions to ensure that these are complementary.

Policy CC.6: Increasing regional forest cover and avoiding plantation forestry on highly erodible land – regional plans

Regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or non-regulatory methods that support an increase in the area and health of *permanent forest* in the Wellington Region, maximising the benefits for carbon sequestration, *indigenous biodiversity*, land stability, water quality, and social, cultural and economic well-being, while:

- a) promoting and incentivising the planting or regeneration of permanent *indigenous* forest representative of the natural type expected in the area over exotic species, particularly on *highly erodible land* and in catchments where water quality targets for sediment are not reached; and
- b) avoiding *plantation forestry* on *highly erodible land*, particularly in catchments where water quality targets for sediment are not reached; and
- c) promoting and supporting the control of browsing pest animals in priority areas.

Explanation

This policy recognises that, while there is a need for increased forest extent across the Wellington Region to help achieve net zero emissions by 2050, offsetting through carbon sequestration is only a short-term solution and that there are significant risks associated with unfettered afforestation across the Wellington Region. The policy directs *regional plans* to develop provisions that will support “right tree-right place”, seeking to ensure that an increase in forest extent for its sequestration benefits will be implemented in a way that maximises the co-benefits for *indigenous biodiversity* and aquatic ecosystem health, and provide for social and economic wellbeing as directed by Objective CC.5.

Clause (a) recognises the significant values of *indigenous* forest, along with the need for incentives to support their planting and natural regeneration.

Clause (b) responds to the high risk of harvesting forest in areas that are *highly erodible* and in catchments where waterways already have high sediment loads. The National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry enables *regional plans* to regulate *plantation forestry* for the purpose of protecting *freshwater* quality. Clause (c) recognises the importance of controlling browsing pest animals to ensure that forests are healthy and can therefore provide maximum benefits.

Policy CC.8: Prioritising the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions – district and regional plans

When giving effect to the climate change objectives and policies in the Regional Policy Statement, *district and regional plans* shall, where relevant, prioritise reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* by applying the following hierarchy in order:

- a) in the first instance, *gross greenhouse gas emissions* are avoided or reduced

where practicable; and

- b) where gross greenhouse gas emissions cannot be avoided or reduced, a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is achieved where practicable, with any offsetting undertaken as close to the source of the greenhouse gas emissions as possible; and
- c) increases in net greenhouse gas emissions are avoided to the extent practicable.

Explanation

This policy recognises the importance of reducing gross greenhouse gas emissions as the first priority, then reducing net greenhouse gas emissions, then avoiding increases in net greenhouse gas emissions to the extent practicable. Relying heavily on net- emissions through offsetting will delay people taking actions that reduce gross emissions, lead to higher cumulative emissions and push the burden of addressing gross emissions onto future generations.

The intent is that Wellington Regional Council will work with city and district councils to provide co-ordination and guidance as to how to implement this policy direction. The intent is to ensure regional and district plan provisions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from key emitting sectors in the Wellington Region support this hierarchy approach to reducing emissions where relevant and appropriate, are co-ordinated, and help deliver national policy and strategies. This work will recognise the respective RMA functions of the Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils in relation to controlling greenhouse gas emissions from air discharges and land-use activities and the limited role of district plans in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from existing activities, except at the time of redevelopment. This work will consider issues such as scale, equity, and the type of activities to which offsetting should apply.

Policy 3: Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect high natural character in the *coastal environment* from inappropriate subdivision, development and/or use. In partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua, natural character should be assessed considering the following matters, with a site determined as having high natural character when the *landscape* is slightly modified or unmodified, the land-cover is dominated by *indigenous* vegetation and/or the vegetation cover is natural and there are no apparent buildings, structures or *infrastructure*:

- a) the extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur, including:
 - (i) natural elements: the products of natural processes – such as landforms, water forms, vegetation and land cover;
 - (ii) natural processes: the ecological, climatic and geophysical processes

that underlie the expression and character of the place, site or area;

(iii) natural patterns: the visual expression or spatial distribution of natural elements which are, or which appear to be, a product of natural processes; and~~/or~~

(iv) surroundings: the setting or context, such that the place, site or area contributes to an understanding of the natural history of the wider area; and

b) the nature and extent of modifications to the place, site or area, including, but not limited to:

(i) physical alterations by people to the *landscape*, its landforms, ~~waterforms~~ water forms, vegetation, land cover and to the natural patterns associated with these elements;

(ii) the presence, location, scale and *density* of buildings and structures, including *infrastructure*, whether appearing to be interconnected or isolated, and the degree of intrusiveness of these structures on the natural character of the place;

(iii) the temporal character of the modification – such as, whether it is fleeting or temporary, transitory, transitional or a permanent alteration to the character of the place, site or area; and~~/or~~

(iv) any existing influences or pressures on the dynamic ecological and geophysical processes contributing to the presence and patterns of natural elements, such that these may change and the natural elements and/or patterns may become threatened over time.

c) ~~Social values: the place, site or area has meaning for a particular community or communities, including:~~

(i) ~~sentimental: the natural character of a place, site or area has a strong or special association with a particular community; and/or~~

(ii) ~~recognition: the place, site or area is held in high public esteem for its natural character value, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a particular community.~~

Explanation

Section 6(a) of the Resource Management Act 1991 requires that the preservation of the natural character of the *coastal environment* and the protection of it from inappropriate use and development is recognised and provided for.

~~Although it is a matter of national importance to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment, However, the Resource Management Act~~ it does not preclude appropriate

use and development in the *coastal environment*.

~~The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement further establishes a requirement to define what form of subdivision, use, development or occupation would be appropriate in the coastal environment and where it would be appropriate. Policy 3 supports these requirements, along with policies 55 and 56, which promote a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form.~~

Policy 3 implements in part Policy 13 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement by requiring ~~requires~~ district and regional plans to protect areas considered to have ‘high’ natural character from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Councils must assess *land* in the *coastal environment* to ascertain which areas have high natural character, in order to protect these areas, and to determine what would be inappropriate activities on this *land*, depending on the attributes associated with an area’s high natural character.

The policy lists the matters to be considered when assessing natural character. Policy 3 (a) contains factors which contribute ‘natural’ attributes to an area, while the factors within clause (b) are about people’s influence in or upon the area, which can compromise, modify, or otherwise diminish the natural character of the area.

~~Case law⁷ has established that ‘natural character’ does not necessarily mean pristine or completely unmodified character. Natural character occurs on a continuum, from pristine to totally modified. Most of the coastal environment has some element of natural character and, conversely, some degree or element of modification. Natural character does not necessarily mean pristine or completely unmodified character. Natural character occurs on a continuum, from pristine to totally modified. Most of the *coastal environment* has some element of natural character and, conversely, some degree or element of modification.~~

The Department of Conservation guidance note to Policy 13 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement describes coastal natural character as including patterns and processes that are the products of nature, both living and non-living, but not those that are human-made. Natural character also includes the perception of these elements but does not specifically consider social and cultural values. Social and cultural values are considered within Policy 25 - identifying outstanding *natural features* and *landscapes*, of which natural character values are a component.

~~When making a determination as to whether the degree of natural character is high in a particular location, an area of high natural character is likely to be dominated by natural elements rather than by the influence of human activities, and/or the natural elements will be out of the ordinary or otherwise regarded as important in terms of one or more of the factors outlined within policy 36(a) and (c). Alternatively, an area of high natural character may be regarded as having qualities which are relatively uncompromised by human activities and influence, as specified within 36(b).~~

~~Policy 36 will need to be considered alongside policy 3 when changing, varying or reviewing a district or regional plan.~~

~~Related policies within this Regional Policy Statement direct regional and district plans to identify and protect historic heritage places, sites and areas (policies 21 and 22),~~

~~ecosystems with significant biodiversity value (policies 23 and 24), outstanding natural features and landscapes (policies 25 and 26), and special amenity landscape values (policies 27 and 28) – using the criteria outlined in each policy, and guidance that will be developed to assist with implementation of the Regional Policy Statement (method 7).~~

In situations where coastal natural character is considered less than high, has not been assessed, mapped, identified or otherwise included in regional or district plans, Policy 36 is used to assess and manage the effects of activities for resources consents, notices of requirement or regional or district plan changes, variations or reviews to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of activities on natural character in the *coastal environment*.

Policies 3 and 36 address management of activities that may have effects on coastal natural character. Related to these two provisions is Policy 35 that gives effect to the preservation of natural character elements of Policy 13 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement. Policy 35 is used when considering resources consents, notices of requirement or regional or district plan changes, variations or reviews.

Policy 4: Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment – district plans

District plans shall include policies and/or rules to identify the landward extent of the coastal environment using the following criteria:

- a) any area or landform dominated by coastal vegetation or habitat;
- b) any landform affected by active coastal processes, excluding tsunamis;
- c) any landscapes or features, including coastal escarpments, that contribute to the natural character, visual quality or amenity value of the coast; and
- d) any site, structure, place or area of historic heritage value adjacent to, or connected with, the coastal marine area, which derives its heritage value from a coastal location.

Explanation

Policy 4 identifies those natural and physical resources that, because of their form, function, or value, give particular parts of the region a coastal character.

Tsunamis are excluded from the criteria because they are not ‘an active coastal process’, but are generated by submarine fault rupture, landslide or volcanic eruption. Active *coastal processes* include: storm surge, inundation, liquefaction, *aeolian* (the action of wind on coastal landforms and features, such as dunes), and the effects of sea level rise.

The criteria used in policy 4 reflect the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement’s intended field of influence, in terms of the landward extent of the *coastal environment*.

This policy does not direct how the use, development and protection of the identified natural and physical resources of the coastal environment should be managed. Other policies provide guidance on these matters. Neither does the policy direct the timescale of

coastal processes to be used in the determination. This will be specific to the processes involved and the location or geomorphology of the area.

Councils shall identify in consultation with landholders, the community, tangata whenua and other key stakeholders, the landward extent of the coastal environment.

Policy 5: Maintaining and enhancing coastal water quality for aquatic ecosystem health – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies and rules to:

- a) require, as a minimum, water quality in the coastal marine area to be managed for the purpose of maintaining or enhancing aquatic ecosystem health; and
- b) manage coastal water quality for other purposes identified in regional plans

Explanation

A high standard of water quality is an essential requirement for maintaining healthy aquatic *ecosystems* in the *coastal marine area*.

This policy means that discharges, after reasonable mixing, cannot cause water quality to be unsuitable for sustaining healthy, functioning aquatic ecosystems. Regional plans will identify limits for coastal water quality for the maintenance and enhancement of aquatic *ecosystem* health.

Most contaminants and sediments that arrive in the coastal marine area are carried by *rivers*, streams and *stormwater* drains. Fresh water quality in rivers and streams is addressed in policies 12 and 14. Policy 16 promotes the discharge of contaminants to land and policy 15 seeks to minimise erosion and sediment runoff, prior to plan controls being established.

Other purposes include, and are not limited to, contact recreation and food gathering.

Policy 6: Recognising the regional significance of Porirua Harbour (including Pauatahanui Inlet and Onepoto Arm) – district and regional plans

District and regional plans with jurisdiction over all or part of the Porirua Harbour catchment area shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:

- a) recognise and acknowledge the regional significance of Porirua Harbour (including Pauatahanui Inlet and Onepoto Arm); and
- b) recognise and provide for the maintenance, protection and enhancement of the significant amenity, recreational, ecological and cultural values associated with the Porirua Harbour.

Explanation

Porirua Harbour includes the Pauatahanui inlet and the Onepoto arm. Porirua Harbour contains a nationally significant ecosystem and has high cultural significance to Ngāti Toa.

While the Harbour is a recognised aesthetic, natural and community asset, parts of it have been significantly impacted by historic and current land and coastal management practices. The regulatory approach of the Regional Policy Statement seeks to address the discharge of sediment, nutrients and other contaminants into the Harbour and its ecological health through regional and district plans. However, general regulatory policies cannot address the cross-boundary issues associated with the management of the Harbour, and the need to address existing land management practices that are increasingly impacting on the Harbour.

A non-regulatory method is also necessary to address the issues that cannot be resolved through a regulatory approach, but are vital in restoring the mauri and ecological health of the Harbour. Further, the integrated and coordinated management of Porirua Harbour between Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council and Wellington Regional Council is vital to protecting and restoring the Harbour.

Policy 7: Recognising the benefits from renewable energy and regionally significant infrastructure – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or other methods that recognise:

- a) recognise the social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of
 - (i) *regionally significant infrastructure*, including:
 - (ii) people and goods can travel to, from and around the Wellington Region efficiently and safely and in ways that support the transition to low or zero-carbon multi-modal transport modes;
 - (iii) public health and safety is maintained through the provision of essential services: - supply of potable water, the collection and transfer of *sewage and stormwater*, and the provision of emergency services;
 - (iv) people have access to energy, and preferably renewable energy, so as to meet their needs; and
 - (v) people have access to telecommunication services; and
- b) recognise and provide for the social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits of energy generated from renewable energy resources and its transmission through an efficient, effective and resilient electricity transmission network, including:
 - (i) avoiding, reducing and displacing *greenhouse gas emissions*;
 - (ii) contributing to the security of supply, *resilience, independence* and diversification of ~~our~~ energy sources and the transmission of this

energy to communities, homes and businesses;

(iii) reducing dependency on imported energy resources;~~and~~

(iv) using renewable resources rather than finite resources ~~reducing greenhouse gas emissions;~~

(v) the reversibility of the adverse effects on the environment of some renewable electricity generation technologies;

(vi) the provision of an efficient, effective and resilient *electricity transmission network*; and

(vii) providing for the economic, social and cultural well-being of people and communities; and

c) recognise the benefits of *regionally significant infrastructure* that contribute to reductions in *greenhouse gas emissions*, give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai*, mitigate *natural hazards*, or enable people and communities to be resilient to climate change.

Explanation

Policy 7 recognises that renewable energy generation and *regionally significant infrastructure* can provide a range of local, regional and national benefits, including helping to reduce *greenhouse gas emissions*, and provide essential services for the well-being of people and communities. The Policy also recognises the benefits of *regionally significant infrastructure* that supports lower *greenhouse gas emissions*, the health and wellbeing of freshwater and receiving environments, *climate change resilience* and *natural hazard* mitigation, and must be read with other policies that restrict the location of *infrastructure* in certain places, such as Policy 52.

~~Energy generated from renewable energy resources and regionally significant infrastructure can provide benefits both within and outside the region. Renewable energy benefits are not only generated by large scale renewable energy projects but also smaller scale projects.~~

~~Renewable energy means energy produced from solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, biomass, tidal wave and ocean current sources.~~

~~Renewable energy generation and regionally significant infrastructure can also have adverse effects on the surrounding environment and community. These competing considerations need to be weighed on a case by case basis to determine what is appropriate in the circumstances.~~

~~Imported and non-renewable energy sources include oil, gas, natural gas and coal.~~

~~When considering the benefits from renewable energy generation the contribution towards national goals in the New Zealand Energy Strategy (2007) and the National Energy Efficiency.~~

~~and Conservation Strategy (2007) will also need to be given regard.~~

~~Regionally significant infrastructure is defined in Appendix 3.~~

Policy 8: Protecting regionally significant infrastructure – regional and district plans

District and regional plans shall include policies and rules that protect regionally significant infrastructure from incompatible new subdivision, use and development occurring under, over, or adjacent to the infrastructure.

Explanation

Regionally significant infrastructure is an important physical resource that enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing, and their health and safety.

Regionally significant infrastructure is defined in Chapter 2A Definitions.

Incompatible subdivisions, land uses or activities are those which adversely affect the efficient operation of infrastructure, its ability to give full effect to any consent or other authorisation, restrict its ability to be maintained, or restrict the ability to upgrade where the effects of the upgrade are the same or similar in character, intensity, and scale. It may also include new land uses that are sensitive to activities associated with infrastructure.

Protecting regionally significant infrastructure does not mean that all land uses or activities under, over, or adjacent are prevented. The Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils will need to ensure that activities provided for in a district or regional plan are compatible with the efficient operation, maintenance, and upgrading (where effects are the same or similar in character, intensity, and scale) of the infrastructure and any effects that may be associated with that infrastructure. Competing considerations need to be weighed on a case by case basis to determine what is appropriate in the circumstances.

Policy 11 of the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission requires that, in achieving protection for the transmission network, consultation occurs with the operator of the national grid to identify appropriate buffer corridors.

Policy 9: Promoting greenhouse gas emission reduction and uptake of low emission fuels ~~Reducing the use and consumption of non-renewable transport fuels, and carbon dioxide emissions from transportation~~ – Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy shall include objectives and policies that promote ~~a reduction in:~~

- a) a reduction of the consumption of non-renewable transport fuels; and
- b) ~~the emission of carbon dioxide from transportation~~
- b) a reduction of the emission of *greenhouse gases*, and other transport-generated harmful emissions such as nitrogen dioxide; and

- c) an increase in the uptake of low emission or zero-carbon fuels, biofuels and new technologies; and
- d) the decarbonisation of the public transport vehicle fleet.

Explanation

This policy provides direction to the Regional Land Transport Plan, acknowledging the role of the objectives and policies in that plan, in promoting a reduction in *greenhouse gas emissions* to decarbonise the transport system, promotes the uptake of low emission or zero-carbon fuels and new technologies. Regionally, in 2019, transport was the biggest source of *greenhouse gas emissions*. Transport emissions accounted for 39 percent of total gross emissions. This policy does not apply to aircraft or activities undertaken at Wellington Airport which are necessary for the operation of the aircraft.

~~Transportation is a significant and growing contributor to the consumption of non-renewable fuels and the emission of carbon dioxide. In 2004, 86 per cent of the oil consumed in New Zealand was used by the transport sector. The transport sector also accounts for around 45 per cent of the country's carbon dioxide emissions.~~

~~Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.~~

~~The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy is a statutory document, prepared under the Land Transport Act 2003, which Wellington Regional Council must produce. It is a strategy for the development of the region's land transport system over the next 30 years and provides policies to guide regional transport decisions and action programmes. The operative Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy 2007-2016 was prepared under the Land Transport Act 1998 for the required timeframe of 10 years.~~

~~The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy will play an important role in ensuring that the demand for non-renewable energy and the emissions of carbon dioxide are reduced through improving the passenger transport network, promoting an increased uptake in walking and cycling, managing the demand for travel and increasing travel efficiency. It is, however, only one of the mechanisms to achieve national targets for reducing carbon-dioxide equivalent emissions from transportation and complements other central government and industry mechanisms.~~

Policy 10: Promoting travel demand management – district plans and the Regional Land Transport Strategy

~~District plans and the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy shall include policies to promote travel demand management mechanisms that reduce:~~

- ~~a) the use and consumption of non-renewable transport fuels; and~~
- ~~b) carbon dioxide emissions from transportation.~~

Explanation

~~Travel demand management includes a range of mechanisms — such as travel behavioural change programmes, road pricing tools and improvements to the efficiency of the existing network.~~

~~Land use planning is important in managing demand for travel. Land use patterns — such as higher density or mixed use development in areas close to good public transport links and community facilities, or community facilities and employment close to where people live — can reduce dependence on the private car, the need to travel and journey lengths. It is also important to ensure good connectivity within and between settlements to optimise walking, cycling and public transport.~~

Policy 11: Promoting and enabling energy efficient design and small scale and community scale renewable energy generation – district plans

District plans shall include policies and/or rules and other methods that:

- a) promote energy efficient design and the energy efficient alterations to existing buildings; and
- b) enable the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of use of domestic scale (up to 20 kW) and small scale and community scale distributed renewable energy generation (up to 100 kW); and provide for energy efficient alterations to existing buildings.

Explanation

Policy 11 promotes energy efficient design, energy efficient alterations to existing buildings, and enables the development of *small scale and community scale renewable energy generation*.

Energy efficient design and alteration to existing buildings can reduce total energy costs (i.e., heating) and reliance on non-renewable energy supply.

Small scale and community scale renewable energy generation provides a range of benefits, including increasing local security of supply, energy and community resilience, and providing for the well-being of people and communities. *Small scale and community scale renewable energy generation* also plays an important role in reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* and meeting national and regional emission reduction targets.

~~Orientation, layout and design can have a significant influence on the energy efficiency of developments.~~

~~Improved energy efficiency can be achieved by:~~

- ~~Enabling everyday services — such as shops, schools, businesses and community facilities to be accessed by walking and cycling~~
- ~~Enabling easy access to public transport services~~

- ~~Locating and designing infrastructure and services to support walking, cycling or the use public transport~~
- ~~Enabling the efficient use of the sun as a source of power and heating~~
- ~~Incorporating renewable energy generation facilities – such as solar panels and domestic scale wind turbines.~~

~~Small scale distributed renewable energy generation facilities (up to 20 kW for domestic use and up to 100 kW for small community use) include solar generation particularly for water heating and wind turbines used for on-site or domestic purposes.~~

~~Energy efficient alteration may include alterations of buildings for the installation of solar water heating systems or domestic scale wind turbines.~~

Policy EIW.1: Promoting affordable high quality active mode and public transport services – Regional Land Transport Plan

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan shall include objectives, policies and methods that promote equitable and accessible high quality active mode infrastructure, and affordable public transport services with sufficient frequency and connectedness, including between modes, to encourage a reduction in the dependency and use of private vehicles for everyday living. for people to live in urban areas without the need to have access to a private vehicle, by contributing to reducing greenhouse emissions.

Explanation

This policy provides direction to the Regional Land Transport Plan, acknowledging the role of the objectives and policies in that plan, to promote mode shift from private vehicles to public transport and active modes by providing connected, accessible, affordable and extensive multi-modal infrastructure and services.

Policy 12: Management of water bodies – regional plans

Regional plans shall give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai* and include objectives, policies, rules and/or methods that:

- a) are prepared in partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, and through engagement with communities, stakeholders and territorial authorities, and enable the application of mātauranga Māori; and
- b) adopt an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*; and
- c) contribute to achieving any relevant long-term vision for *freshwater*; and
- d) manage *freshwater* through the following *whaitua* which are shown in Appendix 6:
 - (i) Kāpiti

- (ii) Ruamāhanga
- (iii) Te Awarua-o-Porirua
- (iv) Te Whanganui-a-Tara
- (v) Wairarapa Coast; and

- e) identify Freshwater Management Units that require specific management within the whaitua identified in clause (d), in partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, and through engagement with communities; and
- f) for each Freshwater Management Unit, in accordance with the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020:
 - (i) identify values and environmental outcomes for each value as objectives
 - (ii) identify attributes for each value and the baseline states for those attributes as objectives
 - (iii) identify target attribute states for each attribute that achieve the environmental outcomes
 - (iv) set environmental flows and levels that will achieve environmental outcomes and long-term visions for *freshwater*, and
 - (v) identify limits on resource use, including take limits that will achieve the target attribute states, flows and levels; and
- g) identify non-regulatory actions that will be included in Action Plans that will assist in achieving target attribute states (in addition to limits); and
- h) identify non-regulatory and regulatory actions in Actions Plans required by the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020.

Explanation

Policy 12 sets out the key elements of giving effect to the national direction set by the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, including sections 2.2, 3.2, and 3.8-3.17.

Policy 13: Allocating water – regional plans

~~Regional plans shall include policies and/or rules that:~~

- ~~a) establish allocation limits for the total amount of water that can be taken from rivers and lakes, taking into account aquatic ecosystem health; and~~
- ~~b) establish allocation limits for the total amount of water that can be taken~~

~~from groundwater, taking into account the aquatic ecosystem health of rivers, lakes and wetlands, and preventing saltwater intrusion.~~

Explanation

~~Policy 13 directs the establishment of allocation limits for rivers and groundwater in a regional plan. Allocation limits for rivers are the total amount of water that is available to be taken from a river, including water behind any dam, while taking into account policy 12.~~

~~Groundwater allocation limits must safeguard the needs of dependent ecosystems in groundwater fed streams and wetlands, and prevent saltwater intrusion.~~

Policy 14: Urban development effects on freshwater and receiving environments— regional plans

Regional plans shall give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai* and include objectives, policies, rules and methods *for urban development*:

- a) enable the active involvement of mana whenua / *tangata whenua* in *freshwater* management (including decision-making processes); and
- b) identify and provide for Māori *freshwater* values; and
- c) adopt an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*, that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment to determine the location and form of *urban development*; and
- d) control both land use and discharge effects from *urban development* on *freshwater* and receiving environments; and
- e) identify how to achieve the target attribute states and environmental flows and levels set for the catchment; and
- f) require *urban development*, including *stormwater* discharges, to meet any limits set in a *regional plan*; and
- g) require *urban development* to incorporate *water sensitive urban design* techniques to *minimise* the generation of *contaminants* from *stormwater* runoff, and maximise, to the extent practicable the removal of contaminants from *stormwater*; and
- h) require that *urban development* is appropriately located and designed to protect and *enhance* the health and wellbeing of gully heads, rivers, lakes, wetlands, springs, riparian margins and estuaries and other receiving environments including the natural form and flow of the waterbody; and
- i) require *urban development* adjacent to natural waterbodies to protect and
- j) *enhance* riparian margins; and) promoting and enabling the daylighting of

rivers.

Explanation

Policy 14 manages the effects of *urban development*, including the effects of *contamination* in *stormwater*, *earthworks* and vegetation clearance from new and existing subdivision and development to halt and reverse the degradation of *freshwater* and in receiving environments.

Policy 15: Managing the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance – district and regional plans

Regional and *district plans* manage the effects of *earthworks* and *vegetation clearance* as follows:

- a) *regional plans* shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:
 - (i) control the effects of *earthworks* and *vegetation clearance* including through setbacks from *wetlands* and *riparian margins*, to achieve the target attribute states for water bodies and *freshwater ecosystems*, including receiving environments; and
 - (ii) in the absence of target attribute states, *minimise* silt and sediment runoff into *freshwater* and receiving environments, or onto land that may enter water; and
 - (iii) *minimise* erosion; and
 - (iv) manage sediment associated with *earthworks* except as specified in clause (b)(iv).
- b) *district plans* shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:
 - (i) require *urban development* to follow existing land contours, to the extent practicable; and
 - (ii) *minimise* the extent and volume of *earthworks* required for *urban development*; and
 - (iii) require setbacks from waterbodies and other receiving environments for *vegetation clearance* and *earthworks* activities; and
 - (iv) manage sediment associated with *earthworks* less than 3000m²; and
 - (v) manage subdivision layout and design.

Explanation

An area of overlapping jurisdiction between Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils is the ability to control *earthworks* and *vegetation clearance*. Large scale

earthworks and *vegetation clearance* on erosion prone land in rural areas and many small scale *earthworks* in urban areas – such as driveways and retaining walls – can cumulatively contribute large amounts of silt and sediment to stormwater and water bodies. This policy is intended to minimise erosion and silt and sedimentation effects associated with these activities.

Policy 16: Promoting discharges to land – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that promote:

- a) discharges of human and/or animal waste to land rather than water, particularly discharges of sewage, while maintaining groundwater quality and soil health; and
- b) the use of collective sewage treatment systems that discharge to land where it is likely that individual treatment systems will not maintain groundwater quality and soil health.

Explanation

Well managed land-based discharges can avoid adverse effects on *water bodies*, including degradation of the *mauri* of *water bodies*, that results from waste, particularly human waste (however well treated), being put into surface water instead of being returned to the land. Collective and individual land based treatment systems need to be appropriately designed and managed so that the quantity and quality of discharges maintain ground water quality and soil health.

Collective or individual *sewage* treatment systems can both be viable options in many places for the treatment of *sewage* before it is disposed of to *land*. Collective treatment systems are promoted in circumstances where it is unlikely that individual treatment and disposal systems will maintain *groundwater* quality and soil health.

The quality at which *groundwater* is maintained will be determined by water quality standards in *regional plans*, as directed by policy 12. Soil health in the context of this policy refers to the ability of soil to function so that plant and animal productivity is sustained, *groundwater* flows and quality are maintained and human health and habitation is supported. Public health risk will need to be considered when rules are developed in *regional plans*.

Policy 17: Take and use of water for the health needs of people – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that prioritises the health and wellbeing of the waterbody and *freshwater ecosystems* first, and then prioritises any take and use of water for the *health needs of people*, including:

- a) the taking of water by any statutory authority that has a duty for public water supply under any Act of Parliament; and

- b) the taking of water for reticulation into a public water supply network; and
- c) the taking of water for community supplies; and
- d) the taking of water for marae and papakāinga.

Explanation

Policy 17 gives effect to the objective of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 by prioritising the health and wellbeing of waterbodies first, and then providing for the take and use of water for the health needs of people, before other uses of water.

Policy 18: Maintaining and improving the health and wellbeing of water bodies and freshwater ecosystem health— regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai*, and in doing so maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of water bodies and *freshwater ecosystem health*, including by:

- a) actively involve mana whenua / *tangata whenua* in freshwater management (including decision-making processes); and
- b) identifying and providing for Māori freshwater values; and
- c) adopting an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*, that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment to ensure that *ecological health of freshwater* is managed using an integrated, *ecosystem wide* approach; and
- d) incorporating the use of mātauranga Māori to protect and *restore ecosystem health*; and
- e) protecting the significant values of outstanding water bodies; and
- f) protecting the *habitats of indigenous freshwater species*; and
- g) protecting the *habitat* of trout and salmon, insofar as this is consistent with clause (f); and
- h) natural features – such as pools, runs, *riffles*, and the *river's* natural form to *maintain in- stream habitat* diversity; and
- i) retaining natural flow regimes – such as *flushing flows*; and
- j) protecting and reinstating *riparian habitat*; and
- k) promoting the installation of off-line water storage; and

- l) measuring and evaluating water takes; and
- m) restricting stock access to estuaries, *rivers*, *lakes* and *wetland*; and
- n) restricting the diversion of water into or from *wetlands* – unless the diversion is necessary to restore the hydrological variation to the *wetland*; and
- o) restricting the removal or destruction of *indigenous* plants in *wetlands* and *lakes*; and
- p) restoring and maintaining fish passage except where it is desirable to prevent the passage of some fish species in order to protect *indigenous* species, their life stages, or their *habitats*.

Explanation

Policy 18 lists a range of actions that will protect and *restore* the health and wellbeing of water bodies and *freshwater ecosystem* health. The *ecosystem health* of water bodies is dependent on water quality, water quantity, *habitat*, aquatic life, and ecological processes. To be a healthy *freshwater ecosystem*, all five components support and sustain *indigenous* aquatic life. *Habitat* diversity is essential for *freshwater ecosystems* to survive and be self-sustaining. When areas of *habitat* in one part of the river, lake or *wetland* are degraded or destroyed by activities critical parts of the *ecosystem* may be permanently affected with consequent effects elsewhere in the *ecosystem*.

Policy 18A: Protection and restoration of natural inland wetlands – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect the values of natural inland wetlands, promote their *restoration*, and avoid the loss of extent of natural inland wetlands, unless:

- a) the loss of extent or values arises from any of the following:
 - (i) the customary harvest of food or resources undertaken in accordance with *tikanga* Māori
 - (ii) *wetland* maintenance, *restoration*, or biosecurity (as defined in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020)
 - (iii) scientific research
 - (iv) the sustainable harvest of sphagnum moss
 - (v) the construction or maintenance of *wetland* utility structures (as defined in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020)
 - (vi) the maintenance or operation of *specified infrastructure*, or other *infrastructure* (as defined in the Resource Management (National

Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020

(vii) natural hazard works (as defined in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020);
or

b) the loss of extent or values is a result of use and development within natural inland wetlands that:

(i) is necessary for the purpose of the construction or upgrade of *specified infrastructure* that will provide significant national or regional benefits;
or

(ii) is necessary for the purpose of *urban development* that contributes to a well-functioning urban environment (as defined in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020), and:

- a. the *urban development* will provide significant national, regional or district benefits; and
- b. the activity occurs on land that is identified for *urban development*
- c. in operative provisions of a regional or district plan; and
- d. there is no practicable alternative location for the activity within the area of the development, or every other practicable location in the area of the development would have equal or greater adverse effects on a natural inland wetland; or

(iii) is necessary for the purpose of quarrying activities and the extraction of the *aggregate* will provide significant national or regional benefits;
or

(iv) the activity is for the purpose of the extraction of *minerals* (other than coal) and ancillary activities and the extraction of the *mineral* will provide significant national or regional benefits; or

(v) the activity is necessary for the purpose of constructing or operating a new or existing landfill or cleanfill area and:

- a. The landfill or cleanfill area:
- b. will provide significant national or regional benefits; or
- c. is required to support *urban development* as referred to in Policy 18A(b)(ii); or
- d. is required to support the extraction of *aggregates* as

referred to in clause (b)(iii),

- e. is required to support the extraction of *minerals* as referred to in clause (b)(iv); and
- f. there is either no practicable alternative location in the Wellington Region, or every other practicable alternative location in the Wellington Region would have equal or greater adverse effects on a natural inland wetland; and

(vi) in relation to clauses (b)(i), (b)(iii), and (b)(iv) there is a *functional need* for the activity to be done in that location; and

(vii) in all cases, the effects of the activity will be managed through applying the *effects management hierarchy*; and

(viii) where the activity will result (directly or indirectly) in the loss of extent or values of a natural inland wetland:

- a. require an assessment of the loss of extent or values of the *wetland* in relation to the values of: *ecosystem health*, *indigenous biodiversity*, hydrological functioning, Māori *freshwater* values, and *amenity values*; and
- b. if *aquatic offsetting* or *aquatic compensation* is applied, require compliance with principles 1 to 6 in Appendix 6 and 7 of the National Policy Statement of Freshwater Management 2020, and have regard to the remaining principles in Appendix 6 and 7, as appropriate; and
- c. ensure that the offsetting or compensation will be maintained and managed over time to achieve the conservation outcomes; and
- d. ensure that any conditions of consent apply the *effects management hierarchy* including conditions that specify how the requirements in clause (b)(viii)c. will be achieved.

Explanation

Policy 18A gives effect to clause 3.22 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 by setting out the circumstances under which the loss of extent and values of natural inland wetlands may be appropriate.

Policy 18B: Protection of river extent and values – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to avoid the loss of *river* extent and values, unless:

- a) there is a *functional need* for the activity in that location; and
- b) the effects of the activity are managed by applying the *effects management hierarchy*; and
- c) where clauses (a) and (b) apply, and the activity will result (directly or indirectly) in the loss of extent or values of a *river*:
 - (i) require an assessment of the loss of extent or values in relation to the values of: *ecosystem health*, *indigenous biodiversity*, hydrological functioning, Māori *freshwater* values, and amenity; and
 - (ii) if *aquatic offsetting* or *aquatic compensation* is applied, require compliance with principles 1 to 6 in Appendix 6 and 7 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, and have regard to the remaining principles in Appendix 6 and 7, as appropriate; and
 - (iii) ensure that the offsetting or compensation will be *maintained* and managed over time to achieve the conservation outcomes; and
 - (iv) ensure that any conditions of consent apply the *effects management hierarchy* including conditions that specify how the requirements in (c)(iii) will be applied.

Explanation

Policy 18B gives effect to clause 3.24 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 and provides direction for the content of *regional plans* in managing the loss of *river* extent and values. The policy requires the avoidance of the loss of *river* extent and values, unless there is a *functional need* and the *effects management hierarchy* has been applied.

Policy FW.1: Reducing water demand – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to reduce demand for water from *community drinking water supplies* and *group drinking water supplies*, including:

- a) water losses and leaks from *community drinking water supplies* and *group drinking water supplies*; and
- b) requiring efficient end use of water for new developments; and
- c) promoting alternate water supplies for non-potable uses, particularly in the summer months; and

- d) requiring water conservation measures, particularly in the summer months.

Explanation

Policy FW.1 requires regional plans to address the reduction of demand in *community drinking water supplies* or *group drinking water supplies*.

Policy FW.2: Reducing water demand – district plans

District plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to reduce demand for water from *community drinking water supplies* and *group drinking water supplies*, including where practicable:

- a) promoting alternate water supplies for non-potable use in new developments, such as the requirement to install rainwater tanks.

Explanation

Policy FW.2 requires district plans to address the reduction of demand in *community drinking water supplies* or *group drinking water supplies* water supplies.

Policy FW.3: Urban development effects on freshwater and receiving environments – district plans

District plans shall include objectives, policies, and methods including rules for *urban development*, that give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai* and section 3.5(4) of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, and in doing so must:

- a) partner with mana whenua / *tangata whenua* and recognise and provide for their relationship with their culture, *land*, water, wāhi tapu and other *taonga*; and
- b) incorporate the use of mātauranga Māori to ensure the effects of *urban development* are considered appropriately; and
- c) adopt an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*, that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment to determine the location and form of *urban development*; and
- d) integrate planning and design of *stormwater* management to achieve multiple improved outcomes – *amenity values*, recreational, cultural, ecological, climate, vegetation retention; and
- e) consider the effects of the location, layout and design of *urban development* on *freshwater*; and
- f) require that *water sensitive urban design* principles and methods are applied during consideration of subdivision, including the extent of impervious surfaces and *stormwater infrastructure*; and

- g) require *urban development* to be designed, constructed and maintained to achieve *hydraulic neutrality*; and
- h) require that *urban development* is located and designed to protect and *enhance* the health and wellbeing of gully heads, *rivers, lakes, wetlands, springs, riparian* margins and estuaries and other receiving environments; and
- i) identify aquifers and drinking water source areas in the district and include information about how *urban development* in these areas is managed in the Wellington Region; and
- j) require that *urban development* is located and designed to protect natural flows and enable the daylighting of *rivers* as far as practicable; and
- k) manage land use and development in a way that will minimise the generation of contaminants, including in relation to the choice of building materials.

Explanation

Policy FW.3 requires district plans to manage the effects of *urban development* on freshwater.

Policy FWXXA: Mana whenua / tangata whenua and Te Mana o te Wai – regional and district plans

District and regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and, where appropriate, other methods to give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai*, and in doing so:

- a) recognise and provide for the mana whenua / *tangata whenua* Statements of *Te Mana o te Wai* in Appendix 5, as applicable to the territorial authority area shown in Table X. Regional plans shall apply the mana whenua / *tangata whenua* statements as relevant to the scope and content of the plan change or review process; and
- b) partner with mana whenua / *tangata whenua* in the development of the required district and regional plan objectives, policies, rules or other methods that give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai*.

Table X: Mana whenua / tangata whenua statements and applicable territorial authority areas

| Mana whenua / tangata whenua statement | Territorial authority area(s) | Whaitua |
|--|--|------------|
| Rangitāne o Wairarapa | Masterton District Carterton District South Wairarapa District | Ruamāhanga |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Kahungunu ki Wairarapa | Masterton District Carterton District South Wairarapa District | Ruamāhanga |
| Taranaki Whānui | Wellington City Hutt City Upper Hutt City | Te Whanganui-a-Tara |

Explanation

Policy FW.XXA sets out the requirements of local authorities in developing regional and district plans in relation to the mana whenua / *tangata whenua* Statements of *Te Mana o te Wai* in Appendix 5. These statements provide important guidance and information about what *Te Mana o te Wai* means to mana whenua / *tangata whenua* across the Wellington Region. Local authorities must apply Policy FW.XXA to give effect to *Te Mana o te Wai* insofar as it relates to their respective functions under sections 30 and 31 of the RMA.

Policy FW.X: Hydrological Control for urban development – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods for *urban development* that require *hydrological control* to avoid adverse effects of runoff quality and quantity (flows and volumes) and maintain, to the extent practicable, natural stream flows. *Hydrological control* standards must be set for greenfield, brownfield, and infill development.

Explanation

Policy FW.X requires *regional plans* to provide for *hydrological control* of *urban development* in order to manage water quantity and water quality as a result of *stormwater* runoff from impervious surfaces resulting from urban development. *Hydrological control* provides multiple benefits in terms of managing the frequency of small frequent runoff events that impact on stream *resilience* and *freshwater ecosystem health*, maintaining and improving water quality through bank management and / or diverting *stormwater* from streams. Different requirements will apply to greenfield and brownfield developments.

Policy 19: Managing amenity, recreational and indigenous biodiversity values of rivers and lakes – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:

- a) maintain or enhance the amenity and recreational values of rivers and lakes, including those with significant values listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1; and
- b) protect the significant indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values of rivers and lakes, including those listed in

Table 16 of Appendix 1.

Explanation

The *rivers* and *lakes* with significant *amenity* and recreational values listed in Appendix 1 were identified by the community as places that are regularly used for fishing, swimming, picnicking and other recreational activities. These rivers and lakes are listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1.

The rivers and lakes with significant *indigenous ecosystems* and *habitats* with significant *indigenous* biodiversity values were selected using indicators of aquatic invertebrate community health, the diversity of *indigenous* migratory fish species, the presence of nationally threatened fish species and the location of inanga spawning habitat. The criteria used to assess rivers and lakes with significant *indigenous ecosystems* are explained underneath Table 16 in Appendix 1.

Policy 20: Using water efficiently – regional plans

Regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that:

- a) promote the efficient allocation and use of water; and
- b) promote water harvesting.

Explanation

Using water efficiently and *water harvesting* when it is in abundant supply will make more water available when there is a shortage. *Efficient allocation* and use includes minimising water wastage during the abstraction, distribution and final use of the water. This includes all allocations and uses of water.

Water harvesting means taking and storing water from water bodies when the availability is high and using it when there is a water shortage.

Policy 21: Identifying places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall identify places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of history and culture under one or more of the following criteria:

- a) historic values: these relate to the history of a place and how it demonstrates important historical themes, events, people or experiences
 - (i) themes: the place is associated with important themes in history or patterns of development.
 - (ii) events: the place has an association with an important event or events in local, regional or national history.

- (iii) people: the place is associated with the life or works of an individual, group or organisation that has made a significant contribution to the district, region or nation.
 - (iv) social: the place is associated with everyday experiences from the past and contributes to our understanding of the culture and life of the district, region or nation.
- b) physical values: these values relate to the physical evidence present.
 - (i) archaeological: there is potential for archaeological investigation to contribute new or important information about the human history of the district, region or nation.
 - (ii) architectural: the place is notable for its style, design, form, scale, materials, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural values.
 - (iii) technological: the place provides evidence of the history of technological development or demonstrates innovation or important methods of construction or design.
 - (iv) integrity: the significant physical values of the place have been largely unmodified.
 - (v) group or townscape values: the place is strongly associated with other natural or cultural features in the landscape or townscape, and/or contributes to the heritage values of a wider townscape or landscape setting, and/or it is a landmark.
- c) social values: these values relate to the meanings that a place has for a particular community or communities.
 - (i) sentiment: the place has strong or special associations with a particular cultural group or community for spiritual, political, social, religious, ethnic, national, symbolic or commemorative reasons.
 - (ii) recognition: the place is held in high public esteem for its historic heritage values, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a community, to the extent that if it was damaged or destroyed it would cause a sense of loss.
- d) tangata whenua values: the place is sacred or important to Māori for spiritual, cultural or historical reasons.
- e) surroundings: the setting or context of the place contributes to an appreciation and understanding of its character, history and/or development.

- f) rarity: the place is unique or rare within the district or region.
- g) representativeness: the place is a good example of its type or era.

Explanation

Policy 21 provides criteria to ensure significant historic heritage resources are identified in district and regional plans in a consistent way. The criteria are based on the Resource Management Act definition of historic heritage and commonly used assessment methodologies. They provide the basis for describing and evaluating historic heritage, including the physical, historic, social and other values that people attach to historic heritage. Wellington Regional Council, district and city councils are required to assess a place, site or area against all the criteria, but may use additional criteria. A place, site or area identified must, however, fit one or more of the listed criteria in terms of contributing to an understanding and appreciation of history and culture in a district in order to have significant historic heritage values.

Regional plans will identify significant historic heritage in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers; district plans will identify significant historic heritage for all other land.

Method 20 is to provide guidance with using the criteria in policy 21 to identify places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values.

Policy 22: Protecting historic heritage values – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or other methods that:

- a) protect the significant historic heritage values associated with places, sites and areas identified in accordance with policy 21, from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development; and
- b) avoid the destruction of unidentified archaeological sites and wāhi tapu with significant historic heritage values.

Explanation

Appropriate subdivision, use and development respects *historic heritage* values. Planning for, developing and using a historic place, site or area must be done with full understanding of its value. In addition, destruction of, or damage to, places, sites and areas of historic heritage needs to be avoided when unidentified sites are discovered.

Policy 22(a) is not intended to prevent change to historic heritage, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered. The places, sites or areas with significant historic heritage values identified in policy 21, and the degree of significance of those values, will influence what activities would be deemed to be appropriate or inappropriate.

Policy 22(b) requires district and regional plans assess which activities could destroy unidentified archaeological sites or *wāhi tapu* with significant historic heritage values and

ensure such activities avoid adverse effects.

Policy 46 will need to be considered alongside policy 22 when changing, varying or reviewing a district or regional plan.

Policy 23: Identifying indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna – district and regional plans

~~As soon as reasonably practicable and by no later than 4 August 2028 District and regional plans shall identify and evaluate indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values; these ecosystems and habitats will be considered significant if:~~

- ~~1. District plans shall identify and map indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna in the terrestrial environment that qualify as significant natural areas in accordance with Appendix 1B; and~~
- ~~2. Regional plans shall identify and map indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna in the coastal marine area, the beds of lakes and rivers, and natural wetlands, they that meet one or more of the following criteria:~~
 - ~~a) representativeness: the *ecosystems* or *habitats* that are typical and characteristic examples of the full range of the original or current natural diversity of *ecosystem* and *habitat* types in a district or in the Wellington Region, and:
 - ~~(i) are no longer commonplace (less than about 30% remaining); or~~
 - ~~(ii) are poorly represented in existing protected areas (less than about 20% legally protected).~~~~
 - ~~b) rarity: the *ecosystem* or *habitat* has biological or physical features that are scarce or threatened in a local, regional or national context. This can include individual species, rare and distinctive biological communities and physical features that are unusual or rare.~~
 - ~~c) diversity: the *ecosystem* or *habitat* has a natural diversity of ecological units, ecosystems, species and physical features within an area.~~
 - ~~d) ecological context of an area: the *ecosystem* or *habitat*:
 - ~~(i) enhances *connectivity* or otherwise *buffers* representative, rare or diverse indigenous ecosystems and habitats; or~~
 - ~~(ii) provides seasonal or core habitat for protected or threatened~~~~

indigenous species.

- e) mana whenua / tangata whenua values: the ecosystem or *habitat* contains characteristics of special spiritual, historical or cultural significance to mana whenua / tangata whenua, identified in accordance with *tikanga* Māori.

Explanation

Policy 23 sets out ~~the criteria as guidance that must be met for an~~ considered in identifying indigenous ecosystems and/or habitats to be considered to have ~~with~~ significant *indigenous biodiversity* values. This evaluation is to be completed and the *ecosystems and habitats* identified as having significant *indigenous biodiversity* values included in a *district or regional plan* as soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028.

Wellington Regional Council, and district and city councils are required to assess *indigenous ecosystems and habitats* against all the criteria but the relevance of each will depend on the individual cases. To be classed as having significant biodiversity values, an *indigenous ecosystem or habitat* must meet ~~fit~~ one or more of the listed criteria in Policy 23(1) or (2). Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils will need to engage directly with landowners and work collaboratively with them to identify areas, undertake field evaluation, and assess significance. ~~Policy 23 will ensure that significant biodiversity values are identified in district and regional plans in a consistent way.~~

Indigenous ecosystems and habitats can have additional values of significance to mana whenua / tangata whenua. There are a number of *indigenous ecosystems and habitats* across the Wellington Region that are significant to tangata whenua for their ecological characteristics. These *ecosystems* will be considered for significance under this policy if they still exhibit the *ecosystem functions* which are considered significant by mana whenua / tangata whenua. Access and use of any identified areas would be subject to landowner agreement. Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils will need to partner ~~engage directly with~~ mana whenua / tangata whenua and work collaboratively with ~~them~~ ~~and other~~ stakeholders, including landowners, to identify areas under this criterion.

~~Regional plans will identify indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant biodiversity values in the coastal marine area, wetlands and the beds of lakes and rivers. District plans will identify indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant biodiversity values for all land, except for the coastal marine area, and the beds of lakes and rivers.~~

Policy 24: Protecting indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna – district and regional plans

As soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028, ~~D~~district and regional plans shall include policies, rules and methods to protect *indigenous ecosystems and habitats* with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values, other significant habitats of indigenous fauna, and the *ecosystem processes* that support these *ecosystems and habitats*, from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, including by applying:

- a) Policy 24B to manage adverse effects on significant *indigenous biodiversity* values in the terrestrial environment; and
- b) Policy 24C and Policy 24CC to manage adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity* values in the coastal environment; and
- c) Policy 24D to manage the adverse effects of *REG activities* and *ET activities* on significant *indigenous biodiversity* values (these activities are not subject to Policy 24A and Policy 24B).

Explanation

Policy 24 applies to provisions in *regional* and *district plans*. This requires the protection of significant *indigenous biodiversity* values in terrestrial, *freshwater* and *coastal environments* consistent with section 6(c) of the RMA. It also clarifies the effects management provisions for significant *indigenous biodiversity* values that need to be applied when giving effect to this policy in *regional* and *district plans*. Policies 18A and 18B in this Regional Policy Statement include effects management provisions to manage adverse effects on the values and extent of natural inland *wetlands* and *rivers*.

Table 16 in Appendix 1 identifies *rivers* and *lakes* with significant *indigenous* ecosystems and *habitats* with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values by applying criteria taken from Policy 23 of rarity (*habitat* for threatened *indigenous* fish species) and diversity (high *macroinvertebrate* community health, *habitat* for six or more migratory *indigenous* fish species).

Policy 47 will need to be considered alongside Policy 24 when changing, varying or reviewing a *regional* or *district plan*.

Policy 24 is not intended to prevent change, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered and is appropriate in relation to the biodiversity values identified in Policy 23.

Policy 24A: Principles for biodiversity offsetting and biodiversity compensation – (except for REG and ET activities) - regional and district plans

Where *district* and *regional plans* provide for *biodiversity offsetting* or *aquatic offsetting* or *biodiversity compensation* or *aquatic compensation* as part of an *effects management hierarchy* for *indigenous biodiversity* and/or for aquatic values and extent, they shall include policies and methods to:

- a) ensure this meets the requirements of the full suite of principles for *biodiversity offsetting* and/or *aquatic offsetting* set out in Appendix 1C or for *biodiversity compensation* and/or *aquatic compensation* set out in Appendix 1D;
 - (i) provide further direction on where *biodiversity offsetting*, *aquatic offsetting*, *biodiversity compensation*, and *aquatic compensation* are inappropriate, in accordance with clauses (b) to (d) below;

- (ii) provide further direction on required outcomes from *biodiversity offsetting, aquatic offsetting, biodiversity compensation, and aquatic compensation*, in accordance with clauses (e) and (f) below; and
- (iii) In evaluating whether *biodiversity offsetting or aquatic offsetting* is inappropriate because of irreplaceability or vulnerability of the *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values affected, the feasibility to offset residual adverse effects on any *threatened or naturally uncommon ecosystem* or *threatened species* must be considered, including those listed in Appendix 1A as a minimum; and
- b) In evaluating whether *biodiversity compensation or aquatic compensation* is inappropriate because of the irreplaceability or vulnerability of the *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values affected, recognise that it is inappropriate to use *biodiversity compensation or aquatic compensation* where residual adverse effects affect a *threatened or naturally uncommon ecosystem* or *threatened species*, including those listed in Appendix 1A as a minimum; and
- c) In evaluating whether *biodiversity offsetting or aquatic offsetting* is inappropriate because there are no technically feasible methods to secure gains in acceptable timeframes, recognise that this is likely to be inappropriate for
- d) those species and *ecosystems* listed in column Policy 24A(d) in Appendix 1A but that may change over time due to changes in knowledge, methods or expertise, or mechanisms; and
- e) *District and regional plans* shall include policies and methods that require *biodiversity offsetting or aquatic offsetting* to achieve at least a net gain, and preferably a 10% net gain or greater, in *indigenous biodiversity* outcomes to address residual adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values. This requires demonstrating, and then achieving, net gains in the type, amount, and condition of the *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values impacted. Calculating net gain requires a like-for-like quantitative loss/ gain calculation of the *indigenous biodiversity* values (type, amount, and condition) affected by the proposed activity; and
- f) *District and regional plans* shall include policies and methods to require *biodiversity compensation or aquatic compensation* to achieve positive effects in *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values that outweigh residual adverse effects on affected *indigenous biodiversity*, extent, or values.

Explanation

Policy 24A recognises that the outcomes achievable through the use of biodiversity or aquatic offsetting and compensation are different. A 'net gain' outcome from offsetting is expected to achieve an objectively verifiable increase in the target values, while a compensation outcome is more subjective and less preferable. This policy applies to the use

of biodiversity offsetting and biodiversity compensation to address the residual adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity in the terrestrial and coastal environments and aquatic offsetting and aquatic compensation to address the loss of extent or values of natural inland wetlands and rivers.

Policy 24A is to be read with Policy 24C(1) which sets out adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity in the coastal environment that need to be avoided, meaning that applications for biodiversity offsetting or biodiversity compensation cannot be considered. These ecosystems and species are also listed in Table 17 and Appendix 1A. Policy 24A does not apply to REG activities and ET activities which are subject to 24D. Instead, Policy 24D(3) requires REG activities and ET activities to have regard to the principles for biodiversity offsetting and biodiversity compensation.

Policy 24B: Managing adverse effects on significant indigenous biodiversity values in the terrestrial environment (except for REG and ET activities) – district plans

As soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028, district plans shall include policies, rules and methods to protect indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna in the terrestrial environment by:

1. Except as provided for by clause (2) and (3), avoiding the following adverse effects:
 - a) loss of ecosystem representation and extent; and
 - b) disruption to sequences, mosaics, or ecosystem function; and
 - c) fragmentation of indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values or the loss of buffers or connections within these ecosystems and habitats; and
 - d) a reduction in the function of indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values as a buffer or connection to other important habitats or ecosystems; and
 - e) a reduction in the population size or occupancy of Threatened or At Risk species that use a habitat with significant indigenous biodiversity values for any part of their life cycle.
2. Applying the effects management hierarchy to adverse effects not referred to in clause (1) and to the following new subdivision, use and development, which are exempt from clause (1):
 - a) construction or upgrade of specified infrastructure (other than REG activities and ET activities) if;
 - (i) it provides significant national or regional public benefit; and

- (ii) there is a *functional need* or operational need to be in that particular location; and
 - (iii) there are no practicable alternative locations for the activity.
- b) mineral extraction if:
 - (i) it provides a significant national public benefit that could not otherwise be achieved using resources within New Zealand; and
 - (ii) there is *functional need* or operational need to be in that particular location; and
 - (iii) there are no practicable alternative locations for the activity.
- c) aggregate extraction activities if:
 - (i) it provides a significant national or regional public benefit that could not otherwise be achieved using resources within New Zealand; and
 - (ii) there is *functional need* or operational need to be in that particular location; and
 - (iii) there are no practicable alternative locations for the activity.
- d) the operation or expansion of any coal mine that was lawfully established before August 2023 (except that, after 31 December 2030, this exception applies only to such coal mines that extract coking coal) if:
 - (i) there is *functional need* or operational need to be in that particular location; and
 - (ii) there are no practicable alternative locations for the activity.
- e) new use and development associated with a single residential dwelling on an allotment that was created before 4 August 2023 and where there is no practicable location within the allotment where a single residential dwelling and essential associated on-site *infrastructure* can be constructed without avoiding the adverse effects referred to in clause (1).
- f) use or development for the purpose of maintaining or *restoring* ecosystems and *habitats* provided it does not involve the permanent destruction of significant *habitat* of *indigenous biodiversity* (or an alternative management approach established to *restore indigenous biodiversity*).
- g) use or development in an area of *indigenous* vegetation or *habitat* of

indigenous fauna (other than an area managed under the Forests Act 1949) that was established and is managed primarily for a purpose other than the maintenance or restoration of that indigenous biodiversity and the loss of indigenous biodiversity values is necessary to meet that purpose.

- h) use and development associated with the harvest of indigenous tree species, such as track clearance or timber storage (but not the harvest itself managed under clause (3)(d)), from within an ecosystem or habitat with significant indigenous biodiversity values that is carried out in accordance with a forest management plan or permit under Part 3A of the Forests Act 1949.

3. Allowing the following use, development, work and activities without being subject to clause (1) and (2):

- a) use and development required to address a high risk to public health or safety;
- b) the sustainable customary use of indigenous biodiversity conducted in accordance with tikanga;
- c) work or activity of the Crown within the boundaries of any area of land held or managed under the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act specified in Schedule 1 of that Act (other than land held for administrative purposes), provided that the work or activity:
 - (i) is undertaken in a way that is consistent with any applicable conservation management strategy, conservation management plan, or management plan established under the Conservation Act 1987, or any other Act specified in Schedule 1 of that Act; and
 - (ii) does not have a significant adverse effect beyond the boundary of the land.
- d) the harvest of indigenous tree species that is carried out in accordance with a forest management plan or permit under Part 3A of the Forests Act 1949.
- e) the maintenance, operation and minor upgrade of existing infrastructure (other than that covered in Policy 24CC), which is within or affects indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna, where the effects (including cumulative effects) on the ecosystem or habitat are no greater in intensity, scale or character than they were at 4 August 2023, and which do not result in the loss of extent or degradation of the ecological integrity of the ecosystem or habitat.

Explanation

Policy 24B applies to *indigenous* ecosystems and *habitats* with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values and other significant habitats of *indigenous* fauna in the terrestrial environment. Clause (1) sets out a list of adverse effects that need to be avoided to ensure the protection of these ecosystems and *habitats*, their *ecosystem function* and values. Clause (2) sets out a list of activities that are exempt from clause (1) and instead adverse effects are to be managed in accordance with the *effects management hierarchy* and other relevant requirements are met (e.g. there is an operational need or *functional need* for the activity to be in that particular location). Clause (3) sets out a list of essential activities, customary activities, or activities undertaken in accordance with conservation management plan or forest management plan that are exempt from clause (1) and (2).

Policy 24B does not apply to *REG activities* and *ET activities*.

Policy 24C: Managing adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity values in the coastal environment – district and regional plans

As soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028, *district and regional plans* shall include policies, rules and methods to manage adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity* values in the *coastal environment* to:

1. Avoid adverse effects of activities on the following ecosystems, *habitats* and species with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values:
 - a) *indigenous* taxa that are listed as *Threatened* or *At-Risk* species in the New Zealand Threat Classification System lists; and
 - b) taxa that are listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources as threatened; and
 - c) *threatened indigenous ecosystems* and vegetation types that are threatened in the *coastal environment*, or are *naturally rare*; and
 - d) *habitats* of *indigenous* species where the species are at the limit of their natural range, or are *naturally rare*; and
 - e) areas containing nationally significant examples of *indigenous* community types; and
 - f) areas set aside for full or partial protection of *indigenous* biological diversity under other legislation; and
2. Avoid significant adverse effects on the following *indigenous* ecosystems and *habitats*:
 - a) areas of predominantly *indigenous* vegetation in the *coastal environment*; and

- b) habitats in the coastal environment that are important during the vulnerable life stages of indigenous species; and
 - c) indigenous ecosystems and habitats that are only found in the coastal environment and are particularly vulnerable to modification, including estuaries, lagoons, coastal wetlands, dunelands, intertidal zones, rocky reef systems, eelgrass and saltmarsh; and
 - d) habitats of indigenous species in the coastal environment that are important for recreational, commercial, traditional or cultural purposes; and
 - e) habitats, including areas and routes, important to migratory species; and
 - f) ecological corridors, and areas important for linking or maintaining biological values; and
3. Manage non-significant adverse effects on the indigenous ecosystems and habitats referred to in clause (2) by:
- a) avoiding adverse effects where practicable; then
 - b) where adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimising them where practicable; then
 - c) where adverse effects cannot be minimised they are remedied where practicable; then
 - d) where residual adverse effects cannot be avoided, minimised, or remedied, biodiversity offsetting is provided where possible; then
 - e) if biodiversity offsetting of residual adverse effects is not possible, the activity itself is avoided unless the activity is regionally significant infrastructure then biodiversity compensation is provided; and
 - f) the activity itself is avoided if biodiversity compensation cannot be undertaken in a way that is appropriate as set out in Appendix 1D; and
4. For all other ecosystems and habitats not listed in clause (1) and (2), manage significant adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity values using the effects management hierarchy.

Explanation

This policy applies to provisions in district and regional plans. This requires district and regional plans to manage adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity in the coastal environment by applying a hierarchy approach based on the values of the indigenous species, ecosystem or habitat. Policy 24C is to be read together with:

- Policy 24A which sets out principles for biodiversity offsetting and biodiversity

compensation which apply in the coastal environment.

- Policy 24B in relation to the coastal environment above mean high water springs, with Policy 24C to prevail where there is conflict that cannot be resolved.
- Policy 24CC which relates to existing regionally significant infrastructure and existing REG activities in the coastal environment.
- Policy 24D which applies to REG activities in terrestrial, freshwater and coastal environments.

Policy 24CC: Existing regionally significant infrastructure and existing REG activities in the coastal environment - regional and district plans

As soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028, district and regional plans shall include policies, rules and methods to consider providing for the operation, maintenance, upgrade and extension of existing regionally significant infrastructure and existing REG activities in the coastal environment that may have any of the adverse effects referred to in clause (1) and (2) of Policy 24C where:

1. There is a functional need or operational need for the regionally significant infrastructure or REG activities to be in the area; and
2. There is no practicable alternative on land or elsewhere in the coastal environment for the activity to be located; and
3. The activity provides for the maintenance and, where practicable, the enhancement or restoration of the affected significant indigenous biodiversity values and attributes at, and in proximity to, the affected area, taking into account any consultation with the Wellington Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and mana whenua.

Explanation:

Policy 24CC is to be read with Policy 24C and is intended to enable the consideration of the operation, maintenance, upgrade and extension of existing regionally significant infrastructure and existing REG activities with adverse effects that would otherwise need to be avoided under clause (1) and (2) of Policy 24. It only allows for consideration of these adverse effects when certain requirements are met, including demonstrating that there are no practicable alternative locations for the activity and the activity provides for maintenance, enhancement or restoration of significant indigenous biodiversity values at the area affected.

Policy 24D: Managing the effects of REG activities and ET activities on indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna – district and regional plans

As soon as reasonably practicable, and by no later than 4 August 2028, *district and regional plans* shall include policies, rules and methods to manage the effects of *REG activities* and *ET activities* on *indigenous ecosystems and habitats* with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values and other significant *habitats of indigenous fauna* to:

1. Allow *REG activities* or *ET activities* to locate in areas with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values and other significant *habitats of indigenous fauna* if:
 - a) there is an operational need or *functional need* for the *REG activities* or *ET activities* to be located in that area; and
 - b) the *REG activities* or *ET activities* are nationally or regionally significant; and
 - c) clause (2) is applied to manage adverse effects.
2. Manage adverse effects by applying the following hierarchy:
 - a) adverse effects are avoided where practicable; then
 - b) where adverse effects cannot be avoided, they are *minimised* where practicable; then
 - c) where adverse effects cannot be *minimised*, they are remedied where practicable; then
 - d) where more than minor residual adverse effects cannot be avoided, *minimised*, or remedied, *biodiversity offsetting* is provided where practicable; then
 - e) if *biodiversity offsetting* of more than minor adverse effects is not practicable, *biodiversity compensation* is provided; then
 - f) for *REG activities* and *ET activities*, if *biodiversity compensation* is not appropriate to address any residual adverse effects:
 - (i) the *REG activities* or *ET activities* must be avoided if the residual adverse effects are significant; but
 - (ii) if the residual adverse effects are not significant, the *REG activities* or *ET activities* must be enabled if the national significance and benefits of the activities outweigh the residual adverse effects.
3. When considering *biodiversity offsetting* and *biodiversity compensation*, have

regard to the principles set out in Appendix 1C and Appendix 1D.

Explanation

Policy 24D applies to REG activities and ET activities and applies a specific pathway and effects management framework for these activities to ensure adverse effects of these activities on indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna values are appropriately managed.

Policy IE.1: Giving effect to mana whenua / tangata whenua roles and values when managing indigenous biodiversity – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include objectives, policies, methods and/or rules to partner with mana whenua / tangata whenua when managing indigenous biodiversity, including to:

- a) apply mātauranga Māori frameworks, and support mana whenua / tangata whenua to exercise their kaitiakitanga, in managing and monitoring indigenous biodiversity; and
- b) identify and protect acknowledged and identified taonga species, populations, and ecosystems; and
- c) support mana whenua / tangata whenua to access and exercise sustainable customary use of indigenous biodiversity, including for mahinga kai and taonga, in accordance with tikanga; and
- d) maintain and restore indigenous biodiversity on Māori land to the extent practicable, while enabling new occupation, use and development of that land to support the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of mana whenua / tangata whenua.

Explanation

Policy IE.1 directs regional and district plans to include provisions to partner with mana whenua / tangata whenua to recognise and provide for Māori values for indigenous biodiversity, and for the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki in the Wellington Region.

Policy 25: Identifying outstanding natural features and landscapes – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall identify outstanding natural features and landscapes having determined that the natural feature or landscape is:

- a) exceptional or out of the ordinary; and
- b) that its natural components dominate over the influence of human activity, after undertaking a landscape evaluation process, taking into account the factors listed below.

Natural science factors

- a) Natural science values: these values relate to the geological, ecological, topographical and natural process components of the natural feature or landscape:
 - (i) Representativeness: the combination of natural components that form the feature or landscape strongly typifies the character of an area.
 - (ii) Research and education: all or parts of the feature or landscape are important for natural science research and education.
 - (iii) Rarity: the feature or landscape is unique or rare within the district or region, and few comparable examples exist.
 - (iv) Ecosystem functioning: the presence of healthy ecosystems is clearly evident in the feature or landscape.

Sensory factors

- b) Aesthetic values: these values relate to scenic perceptions of the feature or landscape:
 - (i) Coherence: the patterns of land cover and land use are in harmony with the underlying natural pattern of landform and there are no significant discordant elements of land cover or land use.
 - (ii) Vividness: the feature or landscape is visually striking and is widely recognised within the local and wider community for its memorable and sometimes iconic qualities.
 - (iii) Naturalness: the feature or landscape appears largely unmodified by human activity and the patterns of landform and land cover appear to be largely the result of intact and healthy natural systems.
- c) Expressiveness (legibility): the feature or landscape clearly shows the formative processes that led to its existing character.
- d) Transient values: the consistent and noticeable occurrence of transient natural events, such as seasonal change in vegetation or in wildlife movement, contributes to the character of the feature or landscape.

Shared or recognised factors

- e) Shared and recognised values: the feature or landscape is widely known and is highly valued for its contribution to local identity within the immediate and wider community.
- f) Tangata whenua values: Māori values inherent in the feature or landscape

add to the feature or landscape being recognised as a special place.

- g) Historical associations: knowledge of historic events that occurred in and around the feature or landscape is widely held and substantially influences and adds to the value the community attaches to the natural feature or landscape.

Explanation

Policy 25 provides a list of factors to help describe and evaluate 'candidate' areas or sites to determine if they reach the threshold of outstanding *natural features* and *landscapes* consistently in district and regional plans. The factors align with significant case law⁵ and commonly used landscape assessment methodologies. It should be noted that this list of factors is not exhaustive; nor do all factors necessarily apply to all landscapes.

The Wellington Regional Council, district and city councils are required to assess natural features and landscapes against all the factors, but may use additional factors. An outstanding natural feature or landscape will be exceptional and out of the ordinary, and importantly the natural components must dominate over the influence of human activity. This does not mean that evidence of human activity cannot be present, but that it should be subordinate to the natural components.

Regional plans will identify outstanding natural features and landscapes in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers; district plans will identify outstanding natural features and landscapes for all other land.

Method 32 indicates that tangata whenua, stakeholders, landowners and the community will be involved in the identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes. Method 50 outlines the development of a regional landscape character description which will describe and categorise the region's landscapes to assist with implementing policy 25.

Policy 26: Protecting outstanding natural features and landscape values – district and regional plans

Where outstanding natural features and landscapes have been identified in accordance with policy 25, district and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that protect outstanding natural features and landscape values from inappropriate subdivision, use or development.

Explanation

Appropriate subdivision, use and development respects those values identified within the *landscape* or *natural feature*. Planning for, developing and undertaking activities within an identified outstanding landscape or natural feature must be done with a full understanding of its value.

Policy 26 is not intended to prevent change, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered and is appropriate in relation to the landscape values identified in policy 25.

Method 32 indicates that tangata whenua, stakeholders, landowners and the community will be involved in the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes

Policy 27: Identifying special amenity landscapes – district and regional plans

District and regional plans may identify special amenity landscapes which are distinctive, widely recognised and highly valued by the community for their contribution to the amenity and quality of the environment of the district, city or region. Any special amenity landscape evaluation process carried out to inform the identification of any such special amenity landscapes shall take into account the factors listed in policy 25.

Explanation

Policy 25 provides a list of factors to help describe and evaluate the attributes of landscapes. Where a district or regional plan identifies *special amenity landscapes* or similar, these factors will be used to help identify those landscapes in a consistent way. The factors align with commonly used landscape assessment methodologies and case law. The list of factors is not exhaustive; nor do all factors necessarily apply to all landscapes.

If undertaking a landscape identification and evaluation under this policy, Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils are required to assess landscapes against all the factors, but may use other additional factors. Once the information on the landscapes has been compiled, an evaluation is required to assess the significance of the landscapes for the area.

Community values and relationships to the landscape are important components of a special amenity landscape. A special amenity landscape will be distinctive and widely recognised by the community for the contribution its landscape amenity values make to the pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, cultural and recreational attributes of the district, city or region.

For the purposes of clarification, special amenity landscapes when compared to outstanding natural landscapes will have, when assessed under the factors listed in Policy 25:

- a) highly valued, but not clearly exceptional landscape values, in an area where the **natural components** of landscape character dominate; or
- b) highly valued, including exceptional landscape values, in an area where the modification of landscape by **human activity** is a dominant influence on landscape character.

In contrast the natural components **must** dominate and the landscape must be exceptional to be an outstanding natural landscape under policy 25.

Regional plans may identify special amenity landscapes in the *coastal marine area* and the beds of *lakes* and *rivers*; district plans may identify special amenity landscapes for all other land.

Method 32 indicates that tangata whenua, stakeholders, landowners and the community

will be involved in the identification and evaluation of special amenity landscapes. Method 50 outlines the development of a regional landscape character description which will describe and categorise the region's landscapes to assist with implementing policy 27.

Policy 28: Managing special amenity landscape values – district and regional plans

Where special amenity landscapes have been identified in accordance with policy 27, district and regional plans shall include policies and/or methods (which may include rules) for managing these landscapes in order to maintain or enhance their landscape values in the context of the continuation of:

- a) existing land uses that contribute to these landscape values,
- b) predominant existing land uses that are provided for within the underlying zoning, and
- c) other lawfully established activities.

Explanation

Appropriate subdivision, use and development will generally be compatible with the values identified within the *landscape*. Therefore, activities within an identified *special amenity landscape* must be planned and undertaken with respect for the identified values.

When local authorities consider relevant provisions within their respective plans they will need to state what the special amenity landscape values are and how they are to be managed. Implementing this policy shall involve an assessment of the extent to which the existing plan provisions are adequate to manage these landscape values. It is anticipated that non-regulatory methods, such as education and advice, could also be components of provisions to manage these landscapes.

Policy 28 is not intended to prevent land use change, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered and is appropriate in relation to the landscapes that may be identified in policy 27.

Existing land uses are part of the landscape values of an area. Primary production activities such as farming, horticulture, vineyards and forestry are the predominant land uses within the rural zone. Equally, urban development, including housing, is the predominant land use within the urban zone. These predominant land uses have significantly contributed to the evolution of many of our current rural and urban landscapes and these landscapes tend to change over time.

It is important that change within these landscapes is managed to ensure that the special amenity landscape values identified using the factors in policy 25 are maintained or enhanced whilst still acknowledging the continuation of productive activities within these rural environments and redevelopment in urban environments.

Policy 29: ~~Avoiding inappropriate~~ Managing subdivision, use, and development in areas at risk from natural hazards – district and regional plans

Regional and district plans shall manage subdivision, use and development in areas at risk from natural hazards as follows:

- a) identify areas potentially affected by natural hazards; and
- b) use a risk-based approach to assess the consequences to new or existing subdivision, use and development from natural hazard and climate change impacts over at least a 100 year planning horizon which identifies the hazards or risks as being low, medium or high; and
- c) include hazard overlays, objectives, policies and rules to manage new and existing ~~avoid inappropriate~~ subdivision, use, and development in those areas where the hazards or risks are assessed as low to medium in order to minimise or not increase the risks from natural hazards; and
- d) include hazard overlays, objectives, policies and rules to avoid new and minimise or not increase the risks to existing subdivision, use and development and hazard sensitive activities in areas where the hazards or risks are assessed as high, unless there is a functional or operational need to be located in these areas.

Explanation

Policy 29 establishes a framework to:

1. identify and assess the likelihood of natural hazards that may affect the Wellington Region or district over at least a 100 year period; and then
2. apply a risk-based approach for assessing the potential consequences to new or existing subdivision, use and development in those areas; and then
3. develop provisions to manage new and existing subdivision, use and development in those areas in order to avoid, minimise or not increase the risks from natural hazards.

The factors listed in Policies 51 and 52 should be considered when implementing Policy 29 and when writing policies and rules to manage subdivision, use and development in areas identified as being affected by natural hazards.

Other than in relation to relevant regional rules, the Policy does not apply to regulated activities under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) Regulations 2016.

Guidance documents that can be used to assist in incorporating a risk-based approach to hazard risk management and planning include:

- Risk Tolerance Methodology: A risk tolerance methodology for central, regional, and local government agencies who manage natural hazard risks. Toka Tū Ake | EQC (2023); and
- Planning for natural hazards in the Wellington Region under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020, GNS Science Misc. Series 140 (2020); and
- NZCPS guidance note: Coastal Hazards, Department of Conservation (2017); and
- Coastal Hazards and Climate Change: Guidance for Local Government, Ministry for the Environment (2017); and
- Risk Based Approach to Natural Hazards under the RMA, Prepared for MfE by Tonkin & Taylor (2016); and
- Planning for Risk: Incorporating risk-based land use planning into a district plan, GNS Science (2013); and
- Preparing for future flooding: a guide for local government in New Zealand, MfE (2010); and
- Landslide Planning Guidance: Reducing Landslide Risk through Land-Use Planning, GNS Science, (2024); and
- Planning for development of land on or close to active faults, Ministry for the Environment (2003); and
- Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities) Regulations 2016, User's Guide, Ministry for the Environment, 2018; and
- Other regional documents and strategies relating to the management of natural hazards.

~~The process of identifying 'areas at high risk' from natural hazards must consider the potential natural hazard events that may affect an area and the vulnerability of existing and/or foreseeable subdivision or development. An area should be considered high risk if there is the potential for moderate to high levels of damage to the subdivision or development, including the buildings, infrastructure, or land on which it is situated. The assessment of areas at high risk should factor in the potential for climate change and sea-level rise and any consequential effect that this may have on the frequency or magnitude of related hazard events.~~

~~Examples of the types of natural hazards or hazard events that may cause an area or subdivision or development to be considered high risk include—but are not limited to—fault-rupture zones, beaches that experience cyclical or long-term erosion, failure prone hill.~~

~~slopes, or areas that are subject to serious flooding.~~

~~The factors listed in policies 51 and 52 should be considered when implementing policy 29 and writing policies and rules to avoid inappropriate subdivision and development in areas at high risk.~~

~~Most forms of residential, industrial or commercial development would not be considered appropriate and should be avoided in areas at high risk from natural hazards, unless it is shown that the effects, including residual risk, will be managed appropriately.~~

~~Hazard mitigation works can reduce the risk from natural hazards in high hazard areas.~~

~~To give effect to this policy, district and regional plans should require assessments of the risks and consequential effects associated with any extensive structural or hard engineering mitigation works that are proposed. For a subdivision or development to be considered appropriate in areas at high risk of natural hazards, any hazard mitigation works should not:~~

- ~~• Adversely modify natural processes to a more than minor extent,~~
- ~~• Cause or exacerbate hazards in adjacent areas to a more than minor extent,~~
- ~~• Generally result in significant alteration of the natural character of the landscape,~~
- ~~• Have unaffordable establishment and maintenance costs to the community,~~
- ~~• Leave a more than minor residual risk, and/or~~
- ~~• Result in more than minor permanent or irreversible adverse effects.~~

~~Examples of how this may be applied to identified high hazard areas include: fault rupture avoidance zones 20 metres either side of a fault trace; setback distances from an eroding coastline; design standards for floodplains; or, requirements for a geotechnical investigation before development proceeds on a hill slope identified as prone to failure.~~

~~This policy promotes a precautionary, risk-based approach, taking into consideration the characteristics of the natural hazard, its magnitude and frequency, potential impacts and the vulnerability of development.~~

~~Guidance documents that could be used to assist in the process include:~~

- ~~• Risk Management Standard AS/NZS 4360:2004~~
- ~~• Guidelines for assessing planning policy and consent requirements for landslide prone land, GNS Science (2008)~~
- ~~• Planning for development of land on or close to active faults, Ministry for the Environment (2003)~~
- ~~• Coastal Hazards and Climate Change: A Guidance Manual for Local~~

~~Government in New Zealand, Ministry for the Environment (2008)~~

- ~~• Other regional documents relating to the management of natural hazards.~~

~~This policy also recognises and supports the Civil Defence Emergency Management principles—risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery—in order to encourage more resilient communities that are better prepared for natural hazards, including climate change impacts.~~

~~Policy 29 will act to reduce risk associated with natural hazards. The risks are to people and communities, including businesses, utilities and civic infrastructure.~~

~~This policy and the Civil Defence Emergency Management framework recognise the need to involve communities in preparing for natural hazards. If people are prepared and able to cope, the impacts from a natural hazard event are effectively reduced.~~

Policy 30: Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of regionally and locally significant centres – district plans

District plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or methods that enable and manage appropriate subdivision, use, and development ~~a range of land use activities that maintains and enhances the viability and vibrancy of the regional central business district in the Wellington city and the:~~

- a) central Wellington as the main centre of the Wellington Region; and
- b) other regionally significant centres ~~(a) Sub-regional centres of:~~

- (i) ~~Upper Hutt city centre;~~
- (ii) ~~Lower Hutt city centre;~~
- (iii) ~~Porirua city centre;~~
- (iv) ~~Paraparaumu town centre;~~
- (v) ~~Masterton town centre; and the~~
- (vi) ~~Johnsonville;~~
- (vii) ~~Kilbirnie;~~
- (viii) ~~Petone; and~~

- c) the locally significant centres of ~~(b) Suburban centres in:~~

- (i) ~~Petone;~~
- (ii) ~~Kilbirnie; and~~

- (iii) Johnsonville;
- (i) Ōtaki Main Road;
- (ii) Ōtaki Township;
- (iii) Raumati Town;
- (iv) Waikanae;
- (v) Featherston;
- (vi) Greytown;
- (vii) Carterton;
- (viii) Martinborough; and

- d) other local and neighbourhood centres that provide for the daily and weekly needs of their residential catchments.

Explanation

Policy 30 identifies the hierarchy of regionally and locally significant centres within the Wellington Region. The centres identified are of significance to the region's form for economic development, transport movement, civic or community investment.

By identifying these centres and in enabling their planned purpose and role in the *urban environment* and wider region, Policy 30 is intended to help achieve a *regional form* that delivers other outcomes identified in the Regional Policy Statement. This includes, reducing *greenhouse gas emissions*, ensuring an equitable access to commercial and community services, economic development, and land use-transport integration.

District plans are required to identify these centres and include provisions that enable them to achieve their planned purpose and role. Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of these centres is important in order to encourage investment and development that supports an increased range and diversity of activities. It is also important for their prosperity and resilience in the face of social and economic change. The regional central business district is the major centre in the Wellington Region; the other key centres also provide significant business, retailing and community services. This policy does not limit territorial authorities from identifying additional centres of local significance within the district plan.

~~The centres listed in policy 30 were identified during the development of the Wellington Regional Strategy as centres of significance to the region's form for economic development, transport movement, civic or community investment. The Wellington central business district is the regional central business district, with 73,000 people working there each day. The subregional centres of regional significance are the civic centres of Upper Hutt city centre, Lower Hutt city centre, Porirua city centre, Paraparaumu town centre, and Masterton town centre. The suburban centres of regional significance are in Petone,~~

~~Kilbirnie and Johnsonville. Maintaining and enhancing the viability and vibrancy of these centres is important in order to encourage investment and development that supports an increased range and diversity of activities. It is also important for their prosperity and resilience in the face of social and economic change. The regional central business district is the major centre in the Wellington region; the sub-regional centres also provide significant business, retailing and community services.~~

~~The range of appropriate land uses to be encouraged through this policy will vary depending on the character and context of each centre. For this reason, policy 30 requires the region's district and city councils to determine the range and location of land uses, supported by appropriate social infrastructure to be encouraged and/or controlled in order to maintain and enhance the viability and vibrancy of the relevant centre managed through its district plan. However, when maintaining and enhancing regionally significant centres within a district, councils also need to consider the viability and vibrancy of the regionally significant centres outside their district, including the regional central business district as the major centre in the Wellington region.~~

Policy 31: Enabling intensification to contribute to well- functioning urban areas ~~identifying and promoting higher density and mixed-use development~~ district plans

District plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that enable intensification within existing *urban zones* where it contributes to a compact, well-designed, *climate-resilient*, accessible and *environmentally responsive regional form* with well- functioning *urban areas* by:

- a) for any tier 1 territorial authority, identifying a range of building heights and urban form *densities* (while recognising identified qualifying matters in that area) to:
 - (i) realise as much development capacity as possible in *city centre zones*, and
 - (ii) enable *high density development* within *metropolitan centre zones*; and any other locations, within at least a *walkable catchment* of:
 - a. existing and planned rapid transit stops, along networks identified as existing and planned transit in the current Regional Land Transport Plan, or
 - b. edge of *city centre zones* and *metropolitan centre zones*, or
 - c. areas with a range of commercial activities and community services, and
 - (iii) enable *medium density development*, and
 - (iv) otherwise reflect the purpose of, and level of commercial activity and community services, within and adjacent to town, local and

neighbourhood centres; and

- b) for any other territorial authority not identified as a *tier 1 territorial authority*, identifying areas for greater building height and urban form densities within, and adjacent to *town centre zones* where appropriate and either:
 - (i) where there is good access to existing or planned active and public transport to a range of commercial activities and community services,
or
 - (ii) to meet relative demand for housing and business use in that location.

~~District plans shall:~~

- a) ~~identify key centres suitable for higher density and/or mixed use development;~~
- b) ~~identify locations, with good access to the strategic public transport network, suitable for higher density and/or mixed use development; and~~
- c) ~~include policies, rules and/or methods that encourage higher density and/or mixed use development in and around these centres and locations, so as to maintain and enhance a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form.~~

Explanation

Policy 31 requires identification of locations suitable for intensification, and enables intensification in these locations, giving effect to Policy 3 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. Sufficient development capacity to meet expected housing demand in the short, medium, and long term must be achieved in any *tier 1 urban environment*, as required by Objective 22A.

Policy 31 also enables greater building height and densities to be provided for in non-tier 1 territorial authorities. Providing for this development is consistent with Policy 5 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020.

~~Policy 31 directs district and city councils to determine key centres and other locations with good access to the strategic public transport network, suitable for higher density or mixed use development, where they will reinforce the region's compact form. District plans will then need to include policies, rules and/or other methods to encourage higher density and mixed use activities in these locations to support this form.~~

~~Objective 22 outlines the range of elements to be achieved by a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form. This includes a viable and vibrant regional central business district in Wellington city and an increased range and diversity of activities in and around other centres listed in policy 30.~~

Key centres include the regionally significant centres identified in policy 30, as well as other

~~significant local centres that a city or district council considers are integral to the functioning of the region's or a district's form. This includes centres identified for higher density and/or mixed use development in any Council growth and/or development framework or strategy.~~

~~Examples of growth and/or development framework or strategies in the region are:~~

- ~~• The Upper Hutt Urban Growth Strategy~~
- ~~• Wellington City Northern Growth Management Framework~~
- ~~• Porirua Development Framework~~
- ~~• Kapiti Coast: Choosing Futures Development Management Strategy and local outcomes statements contained in the Kapiti Coast Long term Council Community Plan.~~

~~Higher density and mixed use development can be achieved in a number of ways – such as infill development, comprehensive re-development and/or multi-storey developments that support complementary living and other uses.~~

~~Mixed use development means a variety of compatible and complementary uses within an area. This can include any combination of residential, commercial, industrial, business, retail, institutional or recreational uses.~~

~~Density is a measure of how compact development is in a given area. For example, the number of people per square kilometre, the variety of land uses or activities (mixed use development) per square kilometre, or square meters of retail space per square kilometre of land area.~~

~~The strategic public transport network is those parts of the region's passenger transport network that provide a high level of service along corridors with high demand for public transport. It connects the region's centres with the central~~

~~business district in Wellington city. It includes the rail network and key bus corridors within Wellington region.~~

~~Locations with good access to the strategic public transport network include those:~~

- ~~• Within reasonable walk times to stops or stations on the strategic public transport network (research indicates a walk time of up to 10 minutes is 'reasonable')~~
- ~~• With frequent and reliable public transport services~~
- ~~• With accessibility, by public transport, to key destinations in the region, and~~
- ~~• Without physical barriers to public transport (for example, busy roads, lack of footpaths or crossing facilities, steep hills).~~

Policy 32: Identifying and protecting key industrial-based employment locations – district plans

District plans ~~should~~ shall include policies, rules and/or methods that identify and protect key industrial-based employment locations where they contribute to maintain and enhance a compact, well-designed, *climate-resilient*, accessible and *environmentally responsive* and sustainable regional form with well-functioning urban areas and rural areas by:

- a) recognising the importance of industrial based activities and the employment opportunities they provide; and
- b) identifying specific locations and applying zoning suitable for accommodating industrial activities and their reasonable needs and effects including supporting or ancillary activities; and
- c) identifying a range of land sizes and locations suitable for different industrial activities, and their operational needs including land-extensive activities; and
- d) managing the establishment of non-industrial activities, in industrial zones, by avoiding activities likely to result in reverse sensitivity effects on industrial activities, or likely to result in an inefficient use of industrial zoned land or infrastructure.

Explanation

Policy 32 directs that district plans must protect key industrial based employment opportunities where they contribute to Objective 22. Further direction is provided on how this is achieved through clauses (a) – (d). Key industrial employment locations are important as they provide for economic growth, employment opportunities and development. Management of other land use activities where significant historical investment or existing infrastructure may be adversely affected by competing or conflicting activities.

~~This policy uses “should” to recognise that in some locations there is limited information about the supply of and demand for industrial employment activities, and that this makes it difficult for city and district councils to identify key industrial based employment locations.~~

~~Objective 22 outlines the range of elements to be achieved by a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form.~~

~~The introduction of non-industrial uses such as large scale retail, wholesaling activities, showrooms, offices and residential activities into industrial-based employment locations can displace industrial employment activities from established industrial areas. Key industrial-based employment locations that maintain and enhance the region’s compact form need to be protected in order to, amongst other matters, reduce the demand for new infrastructure, and promote the efficient use of existing infrastructure.~~

Policy 33: Supporting a reduction in transport related greenhouse gas emissions a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form— Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy shall contain objectives and policies that ~~support~~ contribute to a reduction in transport related *greenhouse gas emissions* and ~~vehicle kilometres travelled of the light vehicle fleet, to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of~~ a compact, well-designed, *climate-resilient, accessible and environmentally responsive* and ~~sustainable regional form~~.

Explanation

Policy 33 provides direction to the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan, acknowledging the role of the objectives and policies in that plan in achieving a reduction in transport related *greenhouse gas emissions* and Objective 22.

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy provides a policy framework for regional transport decisions that play an important role in the maintenance and enhancement of a compact, and well designed and sustainable regional form.

Objective 22 outlines the elements that are to be achieved by a compact, well designed and sustainable regional form. Elements of particular relevance will include efficient use of existing infrastructure and improved east west transport linkages.

Policy UD.1: Providing for the occupation, use, development and ongoing relationship of mana whenua / tangata whenua with their ancestral land – district plans

District plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or methods that provide for the occupation, use, development and ongoing relationship of mana whenua / *tangata whenua* with their ancestral land, by:

- a) enabling mana whenua / tangata whenua to exercise their Tino Rangatiratanga; and
- b) recognising that marae and papakāinga are a taonga and making appropriate provision for them; and
- c) recognising the historical, contemporary, cultural, and social importance of papakāinga; and
- d) if appropriate, identifying a Māori Purpose Zone; and
- e) recognising Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori, and enabling mana whenua / tangata whenua to exercise Kaitiakitanga; and
- f) providing for the development of land owned by mana whenua / tangata whenua.

Explanation

Policy UD.1 directs that district plans must provide for the occupation, use, development, and ongoing relationship of mana whenua / *tanqata whenua* with their ancestral land, including freehold land owned by mana whenua / *tanqata whenua* but excluding general land owned by Māori, and provides the minimum requirements in doing so. Enabling mana whenua / *tanqata whenua* to exercise Tino Rangatiratanga may be achieved through District Councils working in partnership with mana whenua / *tanqata whenua* during the plan review, change or variation process. Papakāinga is specifically referenced in the policy and are required to be provided for, which is consistent with Policy 1(a)(ii) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. Clause (d) provides the ability for identifying a Māori Purpose Zone, having the same meaning as the National Planning Standards (November 2019).

Policy UD.4: Achieving a compact regional form – district and regional plans

District and regional plans shall include objectives, policies, rules and/or other methods requiring that subdivision, use and development occurs in a way that supports compact growth by prioritising:

- a) first, urban development (including unanticipated or out-of-sequence brownfield development) within existing urban zones, with a preference for higher densities in and adjacent to centres with a range of commercial activities and along existing or planned public transport corridors; then
- b) second, sequenced and planned greenfield urban development beyond existing urban zones, consistent with Policies 55 and 56; then
- c) third, unanticipated or out-of-sequence greenfield urban development that is well-connected along transport corridors, consistent with Policies 55 and 56, and adds significantly to development capacity consistent with Policy UD.3; then
- d) fourth, residential or mixed use development in rural areas, consistent with Policy 56; and

District and regional plans shall apply this hierarchy to enable development capacity while:

- (i) enabling Māori to express their culture and traditions, and
- (ii) requiring all infrastructure necessary to support development to be provided in an integrated and efficient way which prioritises the use or upgrading of existing infrastructure over the creation of new infrastructure; and
- (iii) providing for a range of housing typologies and land uses, including mixed use development; and
- (iv) for clauses (b) and (c), demonstrating that additional urban-zoned land is necessary and the most appropriate option to enable sufficient development capacity.

Explanation

Policy UD.4 provides strategic direction to district plans on how housing and business demand is to be met. Clause (d) relates to residential rural lifestyle development as well as development in settlement zones.

Policy 34: Controlling activities on contaminated land – district plans

District plans shall include policies and rules that control activities on contaminated land so that those activities are not adversely affected by the contamination.

Explanation

Policy 34 directs city and district councils to include policies and rules in their district plans to control land uses on *contaminated land*.

The Ministry for the Environment has compiled a list of 53 hazardous activities and industries capable of contaminating soil and causing adverse effects on the environment, including people. This alerts district and city councils to the likelihood of soil contamination, and therefore the need for further investigation. If land has been used for a hazardous activity or industry – such as a landfill or timber treatment plant – the actual level of any contamination needs to be determined. New land uses should be avoided unless the adverse effects associated with the contamination can be appropriately managed, remedied or mitigated to a level which is safe for the intended use.

Chapter 4.2: Regulatory policies – matters to be considered

This section contains the policies that need to be given effect to, where relevant, when reviewing, changing, or varying district or regional plans, and that particular regard must be had to, where relevant, when assessing and deciding on resource consents, and particular regard must be had to when making recommendations on notices of requirement, or when changing, or varying district or regional plans.

Policy IM.1: Integrated management - ki uta ki tai – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a regional or district plan, local authorities shall adopt an integrated approach to the management of the region's natural and physical resources, including by:

- a) partnering with mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to provide for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* involvement in resource management and decision making; and
- b) recognising the interconnectedness between air, freshwater, land, *coastal marine areas, ecosystems* and all living things – ki uta ki tai; and
- c) recognising that the effects of activities may extend beyond immediate and directly adjacent area, and beyond organisational or administrative boundaries; and
- d) recognising the interrelationship between natural and physical resources; and
- e) making decisions based on the best available information, improvements in
- f) technology, science, and mātauranga Māori; and
- g) requiring Māori data and mātauranga Māori to be interpreted within Te Ao Māori while upholding Māori data sovereignty.

Explanation

This policy requires that a holistic, integrated view is taken when making resource management decisions. It also requires both regional and district councils to provide for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to be actively involved in resource management and decision making, including the protection of mātauranga Māori and Māori data.

Policy CC.9: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with subdivision, use or development – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a regional or district plan, particular regard shall be given to whether the subdivision, use or development has been planned in a way that contributes to reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* by optimising overall transport demand, by maximising mode shift from private vehicles to public transport or active modes, and supporting low and zero-carbon modes.

Explanation

This policy requires regional and district councils to consider whether subdivision, use and development proposals have fully considered all options to reduce *greenhouse gas emissions* as far as practicable. For example, EV charging infrastructure, car share infrastructure, provision for bus stops and a transport network designed to support public transport or active modes which has co-benefits including improved health outcomes. This policy does not apply to aircraft or activities undertaken at Wellington Airport which are necessary for the operation of the aircraft.

Policy CC.10: Freight movement efficiency and minimising greenhouse gas emissions – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a regional or *district plan* for freight distribution centres and new industrial areas or similar activities with significant freight servicing requirements, particular regard shall be given to the proximity of efficient transport networks and locations that will contribute to efficient freight movements and minimising associated *greenhouse gas emissions*.

Explanation

This policy requires decisions for freight land use or servicing to consider transport efficiency to contribute to minimising *greenhouse gas emissions*. This policy does not apply to aircraft or activities undertaken at Wellington Airport which are necessary for the operation of the aircraft.

Policy CC.11: Encouraging whole of life greenhouse gas emissions assessment for transport infrastructure – consideration

Encourage *whole of life greenhouse gas emissions assessments* to be provided with resource consent applications to Wellington Regional Council and resource consent applications and notices of requirement to city and district councils for all new or upgraded land transport infrastructure. This information will assist with evaluating the potential *greenhouse gas emissions*, options for reducing direct and indirect *greenhouse gas emissions* and whether the infrastructure has been designed and will operate in a manner that contributes to reducing transport-related *greenhouse gas emissions* in the Wellington Region.

Explanation

This policy encourages a whole of life greenhouse gas emissions assessment for new or upgraded land transport infrastructure. This assessment will provide information and evidence on predicted emissions to enable assessment of impacts and options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Waka Kotahi has a tool providing accepted assessment methodology. This policy does not apply to aircraft or activities undertaken at Wellington Airport which are necessary for the operation of the aircraft.

Policy CC.14: Climate-responsive development – district and city council consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a *district plan*, require that development and *infrastructure* is located, designed and constructed in ways that provide for *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience* prioritising the use of *nature-based solutions* and informed by mātauranga Māori. This includes as appropriate to the scale and context of the activity:

- a) providing urban green space, particularly canopy trees, to reduce urban heat and reduce *stormwater* flowrates:
 - (i) prioritising the use of appropriate *indigenous* species, and
 - (ii) contributing to achieving a wider target of 10 percent *tree canopy cover* at a suburb-scale by 2030, and 30 percent cover by 2050; and
- b) methods to increase water resilience, including by requiring harvesting of water at a domestic and/or community-scale for non-potable uses (for example by requiring rain tanks, rainwater re-use tanks, and setting targets for urban roof area rainwater collection); and
- c) avoiding significant adverse effects on the *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience* functions and values of an *ecosystem*, and avoiding, minimising, or remedying other adverse effects on these functions and values; and
- d) promoting efficient use of water and energy in buildings and *infrastructure*; and
- e) promoting appropriate design of buildings and *infrastructure* so they are able to withstand the predicted future higher temperatures, intensity and duration of rainfall and wind over their anticipated life span.

Explanation

Climate change, combined with population growth and housing intensification, is increasingly challenging the *resilience* and well-being of communities and natural ecosystems, with increasing exposure to *natural hazards*, and increasing pressure on water supply, wastewater and *stormwater* infrastructure, and the health of natural

ecosystems.

This policy identifies the key attributes required to ensure that development and infrastructure provide for *climate-resilience* and requires district councils to take all opportunities to provide for actions and initiatives, particularly *nature-based solutions*, that will prepare our communities for the changes to come. Managing *stormwater* runoff following intense rainfall events and contaminants from *urban development* also contributes to the achievement of Policy CC.14 and these matters are addressed through the requirements of Policies 40 and 42.

Policy CC.14A: Climate-responsive development – regional council consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, or a change, variation, or review of a *regional plan*, require that development and *infrastructure* is located, designed, and constructed in ways that provide for *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience*, prioritising the use of *nature-based solutions* and informed by mātauranga Māori. This includes, as appropriate to the scale and context of the activity:

- a) avoiding significant adverse effects on the *climate change mitigation*, *climate change adaptation* and *climate-resilience* functions and values of an *ecosystem* and avoiding, minimising, or remedying other adverse effects on these functions and values.

Explanation

Climate change, combined with population growth and housing intensification, is increasingly challenging the resilience and well-being of communities and natural ecosystems, with increasing exposure to *natural hazards*, and increasing pressure on water supply, wastewater and *stormwater infrastructure*, and the health of natural ecosystems.

This policy identifies the key attributes required to ensure that development and *infrastructure* provides for *climate-resilience* and requires the regional council to take all opportunities to provide for actions and initiatives, particularly *nature-based solutions*, that will prepare our communities for the changes to come.

It is noted that other policies of this Regional Policy Statement also provide regulatory requirements to apply *water sensitive urban design principles* and *hydrological control* including Policy 14, Policy FW.3, Policy FW.X (*Hydrological control in urban development*) and Policy 42.

Policy 35: Preserving the natural character of the coastal environment – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to preserving the natural character of the coastal environment by:

- a) minimising any adverse effects from point source and non-point source discharges, so that aquatic ecosystem health is safeguarded;
- b) protecting the values associated with estuaries and bays, beaches and dune systems, including the unique physical processes that occur within and between them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, so that healthy ecosystems are maintained;
- c) maintaining or enhancing amenity – such as, open space and scenic values – and opportunities for recreation and the enjoyment of the coast by the public;
- d) minimising any significant adverse effects from use and enjoyment of the coast by the public;
- e) safeguarding the life supporting capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems;
- f) maintaining or enhancing biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystems; and
- g) protecting scientific and geological features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Explanation

Preserving the natural character of the *coastal environment* is a matter of regional and national importance. Natural character does not necessarily mean pristine or completely unmodified character. Natural character occurs on a continuum from pristine to totally modified. Most of the coastal environment has some element of natural character and conversely, some degree of modification, including existing land uses.

Not all values that contribute to the natural character of the coastal environment are included within the sub-clauses of this policy, as these values are addressed in other policies. For example, policies 21, 23 and 25 direct plans to identify significant historic heritage, indigenous ecosystems, and outstanding natural features and landscapes using specified criteria. Policies 22, 24 and 26 then require the protection of these identified values from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. These policies apply to the whole region, including the coastal environment, and so each of these policies will identify values for protection within the coastal environment. Hence, this policy provides guidance for determining the appropriate subdivision, use and development of the coastal environment, in a manner which would retain natural character. Policy 36 then provides a list of considerations to give particular regard to when determining if an activity is inappropriate, including the acknowledgement of existing land uses in the

coastal environment. Policies 35 and 36 should be read together.

Policy 35 applies to subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment, the landward extent of which is required to be defined or given particular regard by policies 5 and 38.

Policy 35(b) refers to the special values of estuaries and bays, beaches and dune systems. These values include the unique physical processes that occur within and between these features and include those resulting from the interaction between coastal and river dynamics. Such areas are important in providing spawning areas and nursery areas for juveniles of aquatic species. Similarly, the interaction and thus the interface between land and sea creates important recreation opportunities and *amenity values*, as well as being a natural defence against *coastal hazards*.

Preserving those special qualities and dynamic processes can be achieved in a number of ways, including the use of setbacks from the *coastal marine area* and other *water bodies*, and/or the use of buffer zones.

Policy 36: Managing effects on natural character in the coastal environment – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, a determination shall be made as to whether an activity may affect natural character in the coastal environment, and in determining whether an activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- a) the nature and intensity of the proposed activity including:
 - (i) the functional need or operational requirement to locate within the coastal environment
 - (ii) the opportunity to mitigate anticipated adverse effects of the activity
- b) the degree to which the natural character will be modified, damaged or destroyed including:
 - (i) the duration and frequency of any effect, and/or
 - (ii) the magnitude or scale of any effect;
 - (iii) the irreversibility of adverse effects on natural character values;
 - (iv) whether the activity will lead to cumulative adverse effects on the natural character of the site/area.
- c) the resilience of the site or area to change;
- d) the opportunities to remedy or mitigate previous damage to the natural character;

e) the existing land uses on the site.

Explanation

Policy 36 gives effect to a requirement, under the Resource Management Act and the *New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement*, to preserve the natural character of the *coastal environment*, which is a matter of national importance.

This policy will ensure that subdivision, use and development is appropriate for the characteristics of the area or site and will not adversely affect the natural character of the *coastal environment* which is also a matter of regional importance.

Case law has established that natural character does not necessarily mean pristine or completely unmodified character. Natural character occurs on a continuum, from pristine to being highly modified. Most of the *coastal environment* has some element of unmodified natural character and, conversely, some degree or element of modification.

The appropriateness or otherwise of any subdivision, use or development will depend both on the character of the particular coastal environment and on the nature of the activity proposed. In order to manage effects on natural character, an assessment is required as to where the particular site/area lies on that continuum from pristine to highly modified. The factors in policy 3 can be used for that assessment. Integral to this assessment is an appreciation of the robustness of the environment to retain the integrity of the natural processes and forms.

The determination as to whether a proposed activity is appropriate, given that context, is then assessed using the factors in this policy. These address the nature and characteristics of the proposal and the potential effects which could arise from the proposal.

Policy 36 applies to subdivision, use and development in the *coastal environment*, the landward extent of which is required to be defined or given particular regard by policies 5 and 38.

Policy 36 is not intended to prevent change, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered and is appropriate in relation to the natural character values in the coastal environment, as assessed using the matters in policy 3.

Policies 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56 and 58 will need to be considered alongside policy 36, when managing effects on natural character, changing, varying or reviewing a district or regional plan, as these also assist with assessments of what might be considered 'appropriate' use and development or conversely, 'inappropriate' use and development.

Policy 37: Safeguarding life-supporting capacity of coastal ecosystems – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems by maintaining or enhancing:

- a) any area within the intertidal or subtidal zone that contains unique, rare, distinctive or representative marine life or habitats;
- b) areas used by marine mammals as breeding, feeding or haul out sites;
- c) habitats in the coastal environment that are important during the vulnerable life stages of indigenous species;
- d) habitats, corridors and routes important for preserving the range, abundance, and diversity of indigenous and migratory species;
- e) any area that contain indigenous coastal ecosystems and habitats that are particularly vulnerable to modification – such as, estuaries, lagoons, coastal wetlands, dunelands, rocky reef systems and salt marshes; and
- f) the integrity, functioning and resilience of physical and ecological processes.

Explanation

This policy describes *habitats* and types of areas that are typically sensitive and vulnerable to development pressures. Because some of these areas and habitats straddle the land and water interface, they will need to be controlled through both regional and district plans. Plans will need to control activities that affect these habitats, species and areas.

The integrity, functioning and resilience of habitats and processes in the *coastal environment* includes having particular regard to activities that affect the dynamic processes and features arising from the natural movement of sediment, water and air, the natural movement of biota, the composition of the natural substrate, and the natural biodiversity, productivity and biotic patterns.

Policy 38: Identifying the landward extent of the coastal environment – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district plan, particular regard shall be given to whether the proposal is within the coastal environment using the following criteria:

- a) any area or landform dominated by coastal vegetation or habitat;
- b) any landform affected by active coastal processes, excluding tsunamis;
- c) any landscapes or features, including coastal escarpments, that contribute to the natural character, visual quality or amenity value of the coast; and

- d) any site, structure, place or area of historic heritage value adjacent to, or connected with, the coastal marine area, which derives its heritage value from a coastal location.

Explanation

Policies 3, 4, 35, 36 and 37 contain reference to land in the *coastal environment*. Policy 5 and 38 provide direction about how to identify the spatial extent of the coastal environment, for application of these policies.

Policy 38 identifies those natural and physical resources which, because of their form, function or value, give particular parts of the Wellington region a coastal character.

Policy 38 shall cease to have effect when policy 5 is given effect through a district plan.

Policy 39: Recognising the benefits from renewable energy and regionally significant infrastructure – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement or a change, variation or review of a *district or regional plan*, ~~particular regard shall be given to:~~

- a) recognise and provide for the social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits of energy generated from renewable energy resources and its transmission through the *electricity transmission network*; and
- b) recognise the social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits of other ~~and/or~~ regionally significant infrastructure, including where it contributes to reducing *greenhouse gas emissions* and provides for *climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and climate-resilience*; and
- c) have particular regard to protecting *regionally significant infrastructure* from incompatible subdivision, use and development occurring under, over, or adjacent to the *infrastructure*; and
- d) recognise and provide for the operational need and functional ~~the~~ need for renewable electricity generation activities to be in particular locations, including the need ~~facilities~~ to locate where the renewable energy resources exist; and
- e) recognise the benefits of utilising the significant wind, solar, and marine renewable energy resources within the Wellington Region and the development of the *electricity transmission network* to connect the renewable energy resource to distribution networks and end-users.

Explanation

Policy 39 recognises that renewable energy generation and *regionally significant infrastructure* can provide a range of environmental, economic, social and cultural

benefits locally, regionally and nationally, including where it contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions as sought by Objective CC.3. These benefits are outlined in Policy 7.

~~The benefits of energy generated from renewable energy resources include:~~

- ~~• Security of and the diversification of our energy sources~~
- ~~• Reducing our dependency on imported energy resources — such as oil, natural gas and coal~~
- ~~• Reducing greenhouse gas emissions~~
- ~~• Contribution to the national renewable energy target.~~

~~The benefits are not only generated by large scale renewable energy projects but also smaller scale, distributed generation projects. The benefits of regionally significant infrastructure include:~~

- ~~• People and goods can efficiently and safely move around the region, and to and from~~
- ~~• Public health and safety is maintained through the provision of essential services such as potable water and the collection and transfer of sewage or stormwater~~
- ~~• People have access to energy to meet their needs~~
- ~~• People have access to telecommunication services.~~

~~Energy generation from renewable energy and regionally significant infrastructure (as defined in Appendix 3) can provide benefits both within and outside the region.~~

~~Renewable energy generation and regionally significant infrastructure can also have adverse effects on the surrounding environment and community. These competing considerations need to be weighed on a case by case basis to determine what is appropriate in the circumstances.~~

~~When considering the benefits from renewable energy generation, the contribution towards national goals in the New Zealand Energy Strategy (2007) and the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (2007) will also need to be given regard.~~

~~Potential significant sites for development of Wellington region's marine and wind resources have been identified in reports 'Marine Energy — Development of Marine Energy in New Zealand with particular reference to the Greater Wellington Region Case Study by Power Projects Ltd, June 2008' and 'Wind Energy — Estimation of Wind Speed in the Greater Wellington Region, NIWA, January 2008'.~~

Policy 39(a) shall cease to have effect once policy 9 is given effect in a relevant district or

~~regional plan.~~

~~Policy 39(b) shall cease to have effect once policy 8 is given effect in a relevant district or regional plan.~~

Policy 40: Maintaining and improving the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems – consideration

When considering an application for a regional resource consent, the regional council must have regard to:

- a) managing water quality, flows and water levels and aquatic habitats of water bodies in a way that improves the health and well-being of degraded waterbodies and *freshwater ecosystems*, and at least maintains the health and wellbeing of all other water bodies and *freshwater ecosystems*; and
- b) managing water quality in the *coastal marine area* in a way that maintains and, where degraded, protects and enhances the health and well-being of coastal waterbodies and the health and wellbeing of marine; and
- c) providing for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* values, including *mahinga kai*; and
- d) partnering with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*; and
- e) maintaining or enhancing the ecological functions of *riparian* margins; and
- f) minimising the effect of proposals such as gravel extraction, exploratory drillings, flood protection and works in the *beds of lakes and rivers* on *groundwater* recharge areas that are connected to surface water bodies; and
- g) maintaining or enhancing the amenity and recreational values of *rivers* and *lakes*, including those with significant values listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1; and
- h) protecting the values of *rivers* and *lakes* that have significant indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values as identified in Table 16 of Appendix 1; and
- i) maintaining natural flow regimes required to support aquatic *ecosystem health*; and
- j) maintaining or enhancing space for *rivers* to undertake their natural processes; and
- k) maintaining fish passage except when this conflicts with clause (o); and
- l) protecting and reinstating *riparian habitat*, in *particular riparian* habitat that

is important for fish spawning; and

- m) restricting stock access to estuaries rivers, lakes and wetlands; and
- n) avoiding the removal or destruction of indigenous wetland plants in wetlands; and
- o) protecting the *habitat of indigenous freshwater species*; and
- p) protecting the *habitat* of trout and salmon, insofar as this is consistent with clause (o).

Explanation

Policy 40 provides criteria for considering regional consents to protect the health and wellbeing of waterbodies, particularly during the transition period before regional plans are changed to give effect to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020.

Policy 40A: Loss of extent and values of natural inland wetlands – consideration

When considering an application for a regional resource consent for use and development within natural inland wetlands the regional council must not grant consent unless:

- a) there will be no loss of extent of natural inland wetlands and their values will be protected; or
- b) any loss of extent or values, arises from any of the following:
 - (i) the customary harvest of food or resources undertaken in accordance with *tikanga* Māori
 - (ii) *wetland* maintenance, *restoration*, or *biosecurity* (as defined in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020)
 - (iii) scientific research
 - (iv) the sustainable harvest of sphagnum moss
 - (v) the construction or maintenance of *wetland* utility structures (as defined in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020)
 - (vi) the maintenance or operation of *specified infrastructure*, or other *infrastructure* (as defined in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020)
 - (vii) natural hazard works (as defined in the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020); or

- c) any loss of extent or values is a result of use and development within natural inland wetlands that:
- (i) is necessary for the purpose of the construction or upgrade of *specified infrastructure* that will provide significant national or regional benefits; or
 - (ii) is necessary for the purpose of *urban development* that contributes to a *well-functioning urban environment* (as defined in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020), and:
 - a. the *urban development* will provide significant national, regional or district benefits; and
 - b. the activity occurs on *land* that is identified for *urban development* in operative provisions of a regional or *district plan*; and
 - c. the activity does not occur on land that is zoned in a *district plan* as general rural, rural production, or rural lifestyle; and
 - d. there is no practicable alternative location for the activity within the area of the development, or every other practicable location in the area of the development would have equal or greater adverse effects on a natural inland wetland; or
 - (iii) is necessary for the purpose of quarrying activities and the extraction of the *aggregate* will provide significant national or regional benefits; or
 - (iv) is for the purpose of the extraction of *minerals* (other than coal) and ancillary activities and the extraction of the *mineral* will provide significant national or regional benefits; or
 - (v) is necessary for the purpose of constructing or operating a new or existing landfill or cleanfill area and the landfill or cleanfill area:
 - a. will provide significant national or regional benefits; or
 - b. is required to support *urban development*; or
 - c. is required to support the extraction of *aggregates* as referred to in clause, (c)(iii); or
 - d. is required to support the extraction of *minerals* as referred to in clause (c)(iv); and
 - e. there is either no practicable alternative location in the Wellington Region, or every other practicable alternative

location in the Wellington Region would have equal or greater adverse effects on a natural inland wetland; and

(vi) in relation to clauses (c)(i), (c)(iii), and (c)(iv) there is a *functional need* for the activity to be done in that location; and

(vii) in all cases, the effects of the activity will be managed through applying the *effects management hierarchy*; and

d) for any activity listed in clauses (b)-(c), other than sub-clause (b)(i), the council is satisfied that:

(i) the applicant has demonstrated how each step of the *effects management hierarchy* will be applied to any loss of extent or values of the *wetland* (including cumulative effects and loss of potential value), particularly (without limitation) in relation to the values of *ecosystem health, indigenous biodiversity, hydrological functioning, Māori freshwater values, and amenity values*; and

(ii) where *aquatic offsetting* or *aquatic compensation* is applied, the applicant has complied with principles 1 to 6 in Appendix 6 and 7 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, and has had regard to the remaining principles in Appendix 6 and 7, as appropriate; and

(iii) there are methods or measures that will ensure that the offsetting or compensation will be maintained and managed over time to achieve the conservation outcomes; and

(iv) suitable conditions will be applied to the consent (if granted) that apply the *effects management hierarchy*, require the monitoring of the wetland at a scale commensurate with the risk of the loss of extent or values of the *wetland*, and specify how the requirements in clause (d)(iii) will be achieved.

Explanation

Policy 40A sets out the matters that must be considered and applied when assessing a resource consent for activities within natural inland wetlands and when loss of extent and values of natural inland wetlands will be considered. In all other cases the loss of extent and values must be avoided. The policy gives effect to Clause 3.22 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 but will cease to have effect when Policy 18A has been given effect in the regional plan.

Policy 40B: Loss of river extent and values

When considering an application for a regional resource consent for use and development within *rivers* the regional council must not grant consent unless:

- a) there will be no loss of *river* extent and values; or
- b) there is a *functional need* for the activity in that location; and
- c) the activity will be managed by applying the *effects management hierarchy*; and
- d) the applicant has demonstrated how each step in the *effects management hierarchy* will be applied to any loss of extent or values of the *river* (including cumulative effects and loss of potential value), particularly (without limitation) in relation to the values of: *ecosystem health*, *indigenous biodiversity*, hydrological functioning, Māori *freshwater* values, and amenity; and
- e) if *aquatic offsetting* or *aquatic compensation* is applied, the applicant has complied with principles 1 to 6 in Appendix 6 and 7 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, and has had regard to the remaining principles in Appendix 6 and 7, as appropriate; and
- f) there are methods or measures that will ensure that the offsetting or compensation will be maintained and managed over time to achieve conservation outcomes; and
- g) suitable will be applied to the consent (if granted) that:
 - (i) apply the *effects management hierarchy*
 - (ii) specify how the requirements in clause (f) will be achieved.

Explanation

Policy 40B applies to resource consents for activities in *rivers* and aims to ensure these activities result in no loss of extent of rivers unless there is a *functional need* for the activity in that location and the *effects management hierarchy* has been applied. Policy 40B gives effect to clause 3.24 of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 but will cease to have effect when Policy 18B has been given effect in the *regional plan*.

Policy 41: Managing the effects of earthworks and vegetation clearance– consideration

When considering an application for a regional resource consent for *earthworks* or *vegetation clearance*, have regard to:

- a) the extent to which the activity *minimises* erosion; and
- b) in the absence of environmental outcomes, target attribute states, or limits for suspended sediment for the relevant Freshwater Management Unit or part-Freshwater Management Unit, the extent to which silt and sediment runoff into water, or onto or into land that may enter water, will be *minimised*; and
- c) the extent to which the activity results in adverse effects on *aquatic ecosystem health, indigenous biodiversity* in water bodies and receiving environments.

Explanation

Policy 41 applies to regional resource consents that involve *earthworks* and *vegetation clearance*. The policy intent is to manage both rates of erosion and sediment runoff into waterbodies. The policy recognises that it may not be possible in all cases to avoid the effects of these activities, but nevertheless requires that the effects be *minimised*. The policy also recognises that there may be a period of time where environmental outcomes and target attribute states for a Freshwater Management Unit have not yet been set in the regional plan, and in these cases, there remains a requirement to minimise silt and sediment runoff into water. Policy 41 shall cease to have effect once Policy 15(a) has been given effect in the Regional Plan for all Freshwater Management Units in the Wellington Region.

Policy 42: Effects on freshwater and receiving environments from urban development– consideration

When considering an application for a regional resource consent that relates to *urban development* the regional council must have regard to:

- a) adopting an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*, that recognises the interconnectedness of the whole environment to determine the location and form of *urban development*; and
- b) protecting and enhancing Māori *freshwater* values, including *mahinga kai*, in partnership with *mana whenua / tangata whenua*; and
- c) providing for *mana whenua / tangata whenua* and their relationship with their culture, land, water, *wāhi tapu* and other *taonga*; and
- d) incorporating the use of *mātauranga Māori* to ensure the effects of *urban development* are considered appropriately; and

- e) the effects of use and development of *land* on water, including the effects on receiving environments (both *freshwater* and the *coastal marine area*); and
- f) the target attribute states set for the catchment; and
- g) the extent to which the *urban development*, including *stormwater* discharges, meets any limits set in a *regional plan* and the effect of any exceedances; and
- h) the extent to which *urban development* incorporates *water sensitive urban design* techniques and *hydrological control* to *minimise* the generation of *contaminants* from *stormwater* runoff, and *maximise*, to the extent practicable, the removal of *contaminants* from *stormwater*; and
- i) the extent to which *urban development* is located and designed to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of adjacent *rivers, lakes, wetlands, springs, riparian margins*, and receiving environments, including the natural form and flow of the waterbody; and
- j) the extent to which *hydrological control* *minimises* adverse effects of runoff quantity (flows and volumes) and other potential adverse effects on natural stream values; and
- k) the provision of *riparian buffers* for *urban development* adjacent to natural waterbodies; and
- l) the extent to which the development avoids piping of *rivers* and whether there is a *functional need* for the activity in that location; and
- m) the practicability of daylighting *rivers* within the area proposed for *urban development* area; and
- n) efficient end use of water and alternate water supplies for non- potable use; and
- o) protecting drinking water sources from inappropriate use and development; and
- p) applying a catchment approach to wastewater networks including partnering with mana whenua as kaitiaki and allowance for appropriately designed overflow points where necessary to support growth and consideration of different approaches to wastewater management to resolve overflow.

Explanation

Policy 42 applies to regional resource consents which relate to *urban development*, where the *regional plan* requirements or standards are not met. The range and nature of

considerations reflects the regional council's overall responsibilities relating to the management of water in relation to *urban development* and its effects on water.

Policy 43: Protecting aquatic ecological function of water bodies – consideration

~~When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to:~~

- ~~a) maintaining or enhancing the functioning of ecosystems in the water body;~~
- ~~b) maintaining or enhancing the ecological functions of riparian margins;~~
- ~~c) minimising the effect of the proposal on groundwater recharge areas that are connected to surface water bodies;~~
- ~~d) maintaining or enhancing the amenity and recreational values of rivers and lakes, including those with significant values listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1;~~
- ~~e) protecting the significant indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values of rivers and lakes, including those listed in Table 16 of Appendix 1;~~
- ~~f) maintaining natural flow regimes required to support aquatic ecosystem health;~~
- ~~g) maintaining fish passage;~~
- ~~h) protecting and reinstating riparian habitat, in particular riparian habitat that is important for fish spawning;~~
- ~~i) discouraging stock access to rivers, lakes and wetlands; and~~
- ~~j) discouraging the removal or destruction of indigenous wetland plants in wetlands.~~

Explanation

~~This policy identifies key elements of habitat diversity that are essential for healthy aquatic ecosystems to survive and be self-sustaining.~~

~~When areas of habitat in one part of a river or lake are degraded or destroyed by people's activities, critical parts of the ecosystem may be permanently affected, with consequential effects elsewhere in the ecosystem. Specific policies and regional rules can set out where it is important to retain habitat for ecological function. Remedying and mitigating of effects can include offsetting, where appropriate.~~

~~Application for a resource consent refers to all types of resource consent. Policy 43 shall cease to be considered for resource consents processed by the Wellington Regional~~

~~Council once policies 18 and 19 are given effect to in a regional plan. Policy 43 shall continue to be considered by city and district councils when processing resource consents, notices of requirement and making changes, variations or reviewing district plans.~~

~~The rivers and lakes with significant amenity and recreational values listed in Table 15 of Appendix 1 were identified by the community as places that are regularly used for recreational activities.~~

~~The rivers and lakes with significant indigenous ecosystems were selected using indicators of aquatic invertebrate community health, the diversity of indigenous migratory fish species, the presence of nationally threatened fish species and the location of inanga spawning habitat. The criteria used to assess rivers and lakes with significant indigenous ecosystems are given in Appendix 1.~~

Policy 44: Managing water takes and use to give effect to Te Mana o te Wai – consideration

When considering an application for a regional resource consent to take or use water, or a change, variation or review of a *regional plan* that relates to the ~~to~~ take and use of water, have regard to:

- a) the extent to which Māori freshwater values, including *mahinga kai* are provided for; and
- b) the extent to which early engagement has occurred with mana whenua /
- c) *tangata whenua*; and
- d) whether sites of significance, *wāhi tapu* and *wāhi tupuna* will be protected; and
- e) the extent to which integrated management, *ki uta ki tai* has been considered; and
- f) whether *habitats of indigenous freshwater species* are protected; and
- g) whether habitat of trout and salmon is protected, insofar as this is consistent with clause (e); and
- h) whether the volume of water sought is reasonable and justifiable for the intended use, including consideration of soil and crop type when water is taken for irrigation purposes; and
- i) whether the consent holder will measure and report the actual amount of water taken; and
- j) whether the consent holder will adopt water conservation and demand management measures and will demonstrate how water will be used

efficiently; and

- k) whether alternate water supplies for non-potable water use such as storage or capture of rainwater for use during the drier summer months has been considered.

Explanation

Efficient water use relies on people taking only the amount of water that is needed and having systems in place to avoid waste. The amount of water taken should be measured and reported on to allow assessment as to whether allocation limits and permissible low flows have been set at appropriate levels. Appropriate consideration of mana whenua values has been added. Consideration of alternative water supplies is also required.

Policy FW.5: Water supply planning for climate change and urban development – consideration

When considering a change, variation or review of a regional plan that relates to *urban development*, the regional council shall have regard to:

- a) climate change impacts on *community drinking water supplies* and *group water supplies*, including water availability and demand and the potential for saline intrusion into aquifers; and
- b) demand from future population projections; and
- c) development of future water sources, storage, treatment and reticulation; and
- d) an integrated approach, *ki uta ki tai*, in the protection of existing and future water sources.

Explanation

Policy FW.5 requires water supply planning to adequately considered including the impacts of climate change and new *urban development*.

Policy FWXXB: Mana whenua / tangata whenua and Te Mana o te Wai – consideration

When considering an application that relates to freshwater for:

- a) resource consent, have regard to; or
- b) a notice of requirement, have particular regard to
- c) the mana whenua / *tangata whenua Te Mana o te Wai* Statements contained in Appendix 5, as applicable to the territorial authority area shown in Table X.

Table X: Mana whenua / *tangata whenua* statements and applicable territorial authority

areas

| Mana whenua / <i>tangata whenua</i> statement | Territorial authority area(s) | Whaitua |
|---|--|---------------------|
| Rangitāne o Wairarapa | Masterton District Carterton District South Wairarapa District | Ruamāhanga |
| Kahungunu ki Wairarapa | Masterton District Carterton District South Wairarapa District | Ruamāhanga |
| Taranaki Whānui | Wellington City Hutt City Upper Hutt City | Te Whanganui-a-Tara |

Explanation

Policy FW.XXB sets out the requirements of local authorities when assessing an application for resource consent in relation to *freshwater* and how they must consider the mana whenua / *tangata whenua* Statements of *Te Mana o te Wai* in Appendix 5. These statements provide important guidance and information about what *Te Mana o te Wai* means to mana whenua / *tangata whenua* across the Wellington Region. Local authorities must apply Policy FW.XXB insofar as it relates to their respective functions under sections 30 and 31 of the RMA.

Policy 45: Using water efficiently – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, or a change, variation or review of a district plan, particular regard shall be given to requiring water collection, water demand management options, and water reuse and/or water recycling measures, so that water is used efficiently.

Explanation

Objective 12 intends to safeguard the values of water, while Objective 14 seeks that water is used efficiently and is not wasted. These objectives are promoted via policies 20 and 44, about efficient use and water harvesting, and managing the adverse effects of subdivision and land use on stormwater. Policy 45 is another part of this inter-related suite of policies to promote the efficient use of water.

Supplying water to new subdivisions and developments increases the amount of water taken from water bodies. Rainwater collection from roofs, water recycling and greywater

reuse can reduce this demand, especially in water short areas or in times of water shortage.

Roof water and recycled water can be a threat to public health but is appropriate for garden irrigation, and can be used for toilet flushing in some circumstances.

Policy 46: Managing effects on historic heritage values – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, a determination shall be made as to whether an activity may affect a place, site or area with historic heritage value, and in determining whether an activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- a) the degree to which historic heritage values will be lost, damaged or destroyed;
- b) the irreversibility of adverse effects on heritage values;
- c) the opportunities to remedy or mitigate any previous damage to heritage values;
- d) the degree to which previous changes that have heritage value in their own right are respected and retained;
- e) the probability of damage to immediate or adjacent heritage values;
- f) the magnitude or scale of any effect on heritage values;
- g) the degree to which unique or special materials and/or craftsmanship are retained;
- h) whether the activity will lead to cumulative adverse effects on historic heritage; and
- i) whether the relationships between distinct elements of an historic place, site or area will be maintained.

Explanation

Policy 46 provides an interim assessment framework prior to the identification of places, areas and sites with significant *historic heritage* value in accordance with policy 21, and the adoption of plan provisions for protection of these sites and management of effects on unidentified sites in accordance with policy 22.

In determining whether an activity may affect places, sites and areas with historic heritage

value the criteria in policy 21 should be used.

This policy shall cease to have effect once policies 21 and 22 are in place in the relevant district or regional plans.

Policy 47: Managing effects on indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant habitats of indigenous fauna – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a *district or regional plan*, a determination shall be made as to whether an activity may affect *indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values, other significant habitats of indigenous fauna, and the ecosystem processes that support these ecosystems and habitats*, and in determining whether the proposed activity is inappropriate particular regard shall be given to:

- a) *maintaining* connections within, or corridors between, *habitats* of indigenous flora and fauna and/or enhancing the connectivity between fragmented indigenous habitats; and
- b) providing adequate *buffering* around areas of significant indigenous ecosystems and habitats from other land uses; and
- c) managing natural wetlands for the purpose of aquatic *ecosystem* health, recognising the wider benefits, such as for indigenous biodiversity, water quality and holding water in the landscape; and
- d) avoiding the cumulative adverse effects of the incremental loss of *indigenous ecosystems and habitats*; and
- e) providing seasonal or core habitat for *indigenous* species; and
- f) *protecting* the life supporting capacity of *indigenous ecosystems and habitats*; and
- g) ~~remedying or mitigating~~ minimising or remedying adverse effects on the *indigenous biodiversity* values where avoiding adverse effects is not practicably achievable except where Clause (i) and (j) apply; and
- h) the need for a precautionary approach to be adopted when assessing and managing the potential for adverse effects on *indigenous ecosystems and habitats*, where;
 - (i) the effects on indigenous biodiversity are uncertain, unknown, or little understood; and
 - (ii) those effects could cause significant or irreversible damage to indigenous biodiversity; and

- i) the provisions to protect significant biodiversity values in Policy 24B, and Policy 24C and the principles for *biodiversity offsetting* and *biodiversity compensation* in Policy 24A, except that Policy 24A and Policy 24B do not apply to *REG activities* and *ET activities*; and
- j) the provisions to manage the adverse effects of *REG activities* and *ET activities* on significant biodiversity values in Policy 24D; and
- k) protecting *indigenous biodiversity* values of significance to mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, including those associated with a significant site for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* identified in a *regional or district plan*; and
- l) enabling *established activities* affecting significant biodiversity values in the terrestrial environment to continue, where the effects of the activities:
 - (i) are no greater in intensity, scale and character; and
 - (ii) do not result in loss of extent, or degradation of *ecological integrity*, of any significant biodiversity values; and
- m) ensuring that the adverse effects of *plantation forestry* activities on significant *indigenous biodiversity* values in the terrestrial environment are managed in a way that:
 - (i) maintains significant *indigenous biodiversity* values as far as practicable, while enabling *plantation forestry* activities to continue; and
 - (ii) where significant biodiversity values are within an existing *plantation forest*, maintains the long-term populations of any *Threatened or At Risk (declining) species* present in the area over the course of consecutive rotations of production.

Explanation

~~Policy 47 provides an interim assessment framework for councils, resource consent applicants and other interested parties, prior to the identification of ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values in accordance with policy 23, and the adoption of plan provisions for protection in accordance with policy 24.~~

~~Remedying and mitigating effects can include offsetting, where appropriate.~~

Policy 47 makes it clear that the provisions in Policy 24 and Policy 24A to protect significant *indigenous biodiversity* values must be considered until those policies are given effect to in regional and *district plans*. Policy 47 also provides for *established activities* and *plantation forestry* activities affecting significant *indigenous biodiversity* values to continue, provided certain tests are met, consistent with the requirements in the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023. The clauses above that relate to Policy 24A, Policy 24B and *established activities* do not apply to *REG activities* or *ET activities*.

In determining whether an activity may affect significant *indigenous biodiversity* values, the criteria in ~~Policy 23~~ should be used.

~~This policy shall cease to have effect once policies 23 and 24 are in place in an operative district or regional plan.~~

Policy IE.2: Giving effect to mana whenua / tangata whenua roles and values when managing indigenous biodiversity – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a plan change, variation or review of a *district plan* for subdivision, use or development that may impact on *indigenous biodiversity*, recognise and provide for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* values and relationships associated with *indigenous biodiversity*, including by, but not restricted to:

- a) giving effect to the *decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity* and, once they are established, the local expressions of the *decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity* developed through Method IE.1; and
- b) enabling mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to exercise their roles as kaitiaki; and
- c) incorporating the use of mātauranga Māori in the management and
- d) monitoring of *indigenous biodiversity*; and
- e) supporting mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to access and exercise sustainable customary use of *indigenous biodiversity*, including for *mahinga kai* and *taonga*, in accordance with *tikanga*.

Explanation

Policy IE.2 requires recognition and provision for mana whenua / *tangata whenua* values and relationships when managing activities that may impact on *indigenous biodiversity*.

Policy IE.2A: Maintaining indigenous biodiversity in the terrestrial environment – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a plan change, variation or review of a *district plan* or *regional plan*, *indigenous biodiversity* in the terrestrial environment that does not have significant *indigenous biodiversity* values as identified under Policy 23 and is not on Māori land, shall be *maintained* by:

- a) avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of *REG activities* and *ET activities* to the extent practicable; and
- b) managing any significant adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity* from any other proposed activity by applying the *effects management hierarchy*; and
- c) managing all other adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity* to achieve at

least no overall loss in *indigenous biodiversity* within the Wellington Region or district as applicable.

Explanation

Policy IE.2A recognises that it is important to *maintain indigenous biodiversity* that does not have significant *indigenous biodiversity* values to meet the requirements in section 30(1)(ga) and section 31(b)(iii) of the RMA. This policy applies to *indigenous biodiversity* that does not have significant values in the terrestrial environment as identified under Policy 23 and requires a more robust approach to managing any significant adverse effects on *indigenous biodiversity* and to *maintain indigenous biodiversity* more generally.

Policy 48: Principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to:

- a) the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi; and
- b) Waitangi Tribunal reports and settlement decisions relating to the Wellington region.

Explanation

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty) is a founding document of New Zealand. It encompasses guiding principles for the engagement of *iwi* with *local authorities* in relation to resource management. *Tangata whenua* of the region maintain the primacy of the Māori version of Te Tiriti, in accordance with the international rule of *contra preferendum*.

Te Tiriti principles are derived from Te Tiriti as a whole, its underlying meaning, intention and spirit. There is no definitive list of Te Tiriti principles. Accordingly, the principles have evolved through statements of the Court of Appeal, Waitangi Tribunal and Government. Many of the principles are directly relevant to resource management matters, as they have arisen out of claims before the Waitangi Tribunal concerning land, water and other natural resources.

A systematic approach to taking the principles of Te Tiriti into account involves applying agreed meaning. Greater Wellington and the region's *iwi authorities* have jointly signed a charter of understanding which contains principles to assist in promoting dialogue and engagement between *iwi* and local authorities. The principles are:

- *“The Crown’s right to govern and make laws (kāwanatanga). In signing Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is recognised that iwi ceded their right to govern to the Crown, in exchange for the Crown recognising and guaranteeing the exercise of rangatiratanga (self-determination) by iwi and hapū over their resources. In exchange for ceding sovereignty, Māori are accorded the protection of the Crown. The powers and functions of local authorities are expressions of kāwanatanga. This principle requires local authorities and iwi to recognise*

respective rights.

- *Māori to retain rangatiratanga, which refers to the chieftainship and authority over lands, taonga and other valued resources. This includes the ability to manage resources according to Māori cultural preferences (kaitiakitanga). Taonga includes such intangible assets as the Māori language and the mauri of natural resources.⁹ Government has recognised the right for iwi to organise and to control resources they own. Application of this principle requires those exercising kāwanatanga (governance) to recognise the exercise of rangatiratanga (self-determination) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) by iwi.*
- *Partnership, including a duty for partners to act reasonably and in good faith. This principle may be expressed through shared decision-making.*
- *Active protection of Māori in the use of their lands, waters and other resources. This principle requires that the duty of protection of Māori interests in resource management is not simply a passive one, but active to the fullest extent practicable.*
- *A duty to consult with Māori, including early consultation. While not all matters may in practice require consultation, environmental matters and control of resources as they affect Māori access to mahinga kai require consultation with the iwi or hapū concerned. Local authorities should have regard to the different levels of iwi, hapū, whānau and marae decisionmaking structures when undertaking consultation. For example, site specific issues may require consultation with hapū, whānau or marae.*
- *Mutual benefit, that is, iwi and local authorities are able to gain from the relationship and enjoy benefits. Sometimes this is expressed as the need for compromise by parties, and the balancing of competing interests.*
- *The right of development. Iwi are not just bound by the methods and technologies available at the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, but have the right to use new methods and technologies.”*

Waitangi Tribunal reports relating to the region and settlement decisions should be referred to for guidance on resource management issues of significance to iwi. These reports often describe the value and history of a site or place which can further inform assessments of effects and resource management decision making.

Policy 49: Recognising and providing for matters of significance to tangata whenua – consideration

When preparing a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, the following matters shall be recognised and provided for:

- a) the exercise of kaitiakitanga;
- b) mauri, particularly in relation to fresh and coastal waters;
- c) mahinga kai and areas of natural resources used for customary purposes;
and
- d) places, sites and areas with significant spiritual or cultural historic heritage value to tangata whenua.

Explanation

This policy recognises the importance of the listed matters of significance to tangata whenua. Accordingly, the policy requires that as part of a plan change, variation or review, local authorities must recognise and provide for these matters. In practice, this means that local authorities' first priority should be on avoiding adverse effects on the listed matter, while recognising that this does not necessarily preclude regional and district plans from allowing these effects to occur in appropriate cases.

There are several ways of gathering information on matters of significance to the region's *tangata whenua*, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Referring to the relevant iwi authorities and/or iwi management plan(s)
- Requesting a cultural assessment
- Seeking technical assistance
- Working with iwi authorities, hapū, whānau or tangata whenua associated with specific marae to identify potential effects on cultural values and *kaitiakitanga*.

Kaitiakitanga refers to the expression of Māori authority, mana ethics and guardianship and may be exercised in respect of a particular locality, place or resource. Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) involves the protection of mauri and a duty to care for the environment so that it remains in as good as, or better, state for future generations.

Kaitiakitanga is linked inextricably to rangatiratanga (self-determination) as it may only be practised by those iwi, hapū or whānau that possess customary authority in their area. Kaitiaki (those who exercise kaitiakitanga) are knowledgeable about the local environment and resources. The ways in which iwi, hapū, or whānau define kaitiakitanga relating to ancestral land, water and other taonga, and how they wish to have their kaitiaki role recognised, is a matter for them to decide and communicate to local

authorities. There are various methods of kaitiakitanga natural resources customary regulations, including rāhui, or placing a temporary restriction or ban.

Mauri is the life force that exists in all things in the natural world, including people. Mauri comprises both physical and spiritual qualities. Mauri can be harmed by insensitive resource use. For example, the health and vitality of the sea, streams and rivers and the plants and animals they support can be threatened by activities such as discharges of pollutants, stormwater, sewage and runoff of contaminants from land; excessive water use; changing the course of water bodies or diverting water between catchments or rivers. Māori consider that rivers are the life blood of the land and that the wellbeing of a river is reflected in the wellbeing of people. Similarly, the mauri of the land and air and the plants and animals they support can be harmed by practices such as clearance of vegetation, soil disturbance and disposal of wastes. The mauri of coastal waters is harmed by pollutants and sewage, and by insensitive use and development which diminishes the natural character, life-supporting capacity and ecosystem health of the coastal environment.

Mauri can be restored, maintained or enhanced through sensitive management which supports the restoration of the natural character of the place, and the health and vitality of the ecosystem it supports.

Mahinga kai is the customary gathering of food and natural materials and the places where those resources are gathered. Resources used for cultural purposes include, but are not limited to, flora and fauna for rongoa Māori (medicine); flora and fauna for weaving (for example, pingao, kiekie, bird feathers); and wood, such as tōtara, for carving purposes. Access to these resources is important for continuing cultural traditions.

Threats to mahinga kai and natural resources include degradation of water quality in fresh water and marine environments through poor stormwater, sewage and run-off management; loss of water resources and associated ecosystems through water abstraction, drainage and flood management works; exclusion from access to mahinga kai through the construction of physical barriers such as roads or through changes in ownership, management and control. Major threats to natural resources used for customary purposes are similar to the threats to mahinga kai, including development, changing land use, loss of ecosystems, poor management and disposal of wastes, unsustainable resource use, and exclusion from access to sites where valued cultural resources are found.

Many places, sites and areas in the region that are associated with Māori histories, traditions and tikanga are sites of heritage value. Such sites are valued because of the historical and traditional practices and events associated with them. Places, sites and areas with Māori historic heritage value are important because of their social, cultural and spiritual significance not only to Māori, but to all people of the Wellington region. They are an integral part of the region's heritage and provide links between the past, present and future generations.

Some heritage sites are wāhi tapu, sacred places of immense importance. Places can be considered sacred because of past events or activities (such as a battle or ceremony), or

where the whenua (placenta) is returned to the earth, or where a valued resource is found.

Places, sites and areas with significant spiritual or cultural historic values to tangata whenua include wāhi tapu and other sites, features of historical, spiritual or cultural significance to tangata whenua, and the cultural and spiritual values associated with them. These include, but are not limited to:

- Tauranga waka (canoe landing places)
- Mahinga mātaītai (places for gathering seafood, fishing grounds and reefs)
- Taonga raranga (plants used for weaving, such as kiekie and pingao)
- Wāhi tīpuna (ancestral sites)
- Landscape features referred to in whakataukī (proverbs and stories)
- Landscape features that define iwi boundaries, e.g. mountains, streams, rivers, estuaries
- Coastal access points
- Residential sites such as pa, marae, papākainga
- Urupā (burial sites)
- Historic battlegrounds.

The identification of these heritage values rests with iwi, hapū, whānau and marae in accordance with their kaitiaki responsibilities.

Policy 50: Managing effects on outstanding natural features and landscapes – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, a determination shall be made as to first, whether an activity may affect an outstanding natural feature and/or landscape, and second, whether or not an activity is inappropriate, having particular regard to the following:

- a) the degree to which the natural feature or landscape values will be modified, damaged or destroyed including:
 - (i) the duration and frequency of any effect, and/or
 - (ii) the magnitude or scale of any effect;
- b) the irreversibility of adverse effects on landscape values;

- c) the resilience of the natural feature, place or area to change;
- d) the opportunities to remedy or mitigate previous damage to natural feature or landscape values; and
- e) whether the activity will lead to cumulative adverse effects on the natural feature or landscape values.

Explanation

Policy 50 provides an interim assessment framework for councils and resource consent applicants prior to the identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes, in accordance with policy 25, and the adoption of plan provisions for protection in accordance with policy 26. This policy is to be used where an outstanding natural feature or landscape has already been identified in a district or regional plan prior to policy 25 being given effect to, or where an assessment has not yet been undertaken, but such a landscape or natural feature is present. Policy 50 shall cease to have effect once policies 25 and 26 are in place in the relevant district or regional plans.

In determining whether an activity may affect an outstanding natural feature or landscape, the factors in policy 25 should be used.

Policy 50 is not intended to prevent change, but rather to ensure that change is carefully considered and is appropriate in relation to the landscape values.

When assessing the degree to which natural feature or landscape value will be modified, damaged or destroyed and its duration and frequency this may include short-term, long-term or recurring effects. The magnitude or scale of effects may include the number of sites affected, the spatial distribution, the context and the potential of a proposed activity to change its character.

The irreversibility of adverse effects on landscape values may include loss of unique or rare features, or limited or impractical opportunity for avoidance or remediation.

The resilience of the natural feature or landscape to change may relate to the ability of the natural feature or landscape to assimilate change or its vulnerability to the effects of the proposed activity.

Cumulative adverse effects on natural feature or landscape values include the loss of multiple sites of identified landscape value, or the potential for a proposed activity to contribute to incremental change in landscape character.

Policy 51: Avoiding or Minimising the risks and consequences of natural hazards - consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review to a district or regional plan, the *risk and consequences of natural hazards* on people, communities, their property and *infrastructure* shall be avoided or minimised, and/or in determining whether an activity is inappropriate_

particular regard shall be given to:

- a) ~~the frequency and magnitude~~ likelihood and consequences of the range of *natural hazards* that may adversely affect the ~~proposal or development~~ subdivision, use, or development, including residual risk ~~those that may be exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise~~; and
- b) ~~the potential for climate change and sea level rise to increase in the frequency or magnitude of a hazard event~~;
- b) whether the location of the subdivision, use, or development will foreseeably require hazard mitigation works in the future; and
- c) the potential for injury or loss of life, social and economic disruption and civil defence emergency management ~~and civil defence~~ implications – such as access routes to and from the site; and
- d) whether the subdivision, use or development causes any change in the risks and consequences from natural hazards in areas beyond the application development site; and
- e) minimising effects ~~the impact~~ of the ~~proposed~~ subdivision, use, or development on any natural features that may act as a buffer to reduce the impacts from natural hazards; and ~~and where development should not interfere with their ability to reduce the risks of natural hazards~~;
- f) ~~avoiding inappropriate subdivision, use, or development and hazard sensitive activities~~ where the hazards and risks are assessed as high in areas at high risk from natural hazards, unless there is a functional or operational need to be located in these areas; and
- g) appropriate ~~the potential need for~~ hazard risk management and/or adaptation ~~and mitigation~~ measures for subdivision, use, or development in moderate-risk areas where the hazards and risks are assessed as low to moderate, including an assessment of residual risk; and
- h) the allowance for floodwater conveyancing in identified overland flow paths and stream corridors; and
- i) the need to locate ~~habitable floor areas and access routes~~ levels of habitable buildings and buildings used as places of employment above the 1% annual exceedance probability (1:100 year) flood level, in identified flood hazard areas; and
- j) whether Te Ao Māori or mātauranga Māori provides a broader understanding of the hazards and risk management options.

Explanation

Policy 51 aims to *minimise* the risk and *consequences of natural hazard* events through sound preparation, investigation and planning prior to development. This policy reflects a need to employ a precautionary, *risk-based* approach, taking into consideration the likelihood of the hazards and the vulnerability of the development and in partnership with mana whenua / *tanqata whenua*, Te Ao Māori and mātauranga Māori perspectives.

~~Typical *natural hazards* in the region include, but are not limited to:~~

- ~~• Flooding and inundation (river, stormwater, coastal)~~
- ~~• Earthquake (groundshaking, amplification, liquefaction, ground displacement)~~
- ~~• Coastal hazards (erosion, storm surge, tsunami)~~
- ~~• Mass movement (landslip, rockfall).~~

~~Other site specific hazards may become apparent during the course of an assessment for a proposal or development; however, those above are the most serious hazards to consider.~~

~~Policy 51 refers to *residual risk*, which is the risk that remains after protection works are put in place. Stopbanks, seawalls and revetments and other engineered protection works can create a sense of security and encourage further development. In turn, this increases the extent and value of assets that could be damaged if the protection works fail or an extreme event exceeds the structural design parameters.~~

~~Policy 51(g) will cease to have effect once policy 29 has been given effect to in the relevant district plan.~~

~~The term areas at high risk refers to those areas potentially affected by natural hazard events that are likely to cause moderate to high levels of damage to the subdivision or development, including the land on which it is situated. It applies to areas that face a credible probability of experiencing significant adverse impacts in a hazard event – such as such as fault rupture zones, beaches that experience cyclical or long term erosion, failure prone hill slopes, or areas that are subject to repeated flooding.~~

~~Policy 51(i) requires that particular regard to be given, in identified flood hazard areas, to the need to locate floor levels above the expected level of a 1 in 100-year flood or 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP), to minimise damages. It also recognises that access routes should be located above this level, to allow evacuation or emergency services access to and from a site. The clause uses the 1% annual exceedance probability as a minimum standard, allowing for the possibility that it may need to be higher in certain areas, depending on the level of risk.~~

~~To promote more resilient communities that are better prepared for natural hazards, including climate change impacts, there is a need to support the Civil Defence Emergency Management principles of hazards and/or risk reduction, readiness, response.~~

~~and recovery.~~

~~Reduction is concerned with minimising the adverse impacts from natural hazards through sound planning and management. Readiness is about preparing for hazard events before they occur and involves local authorities, civil defence emergency management and the community. An important way to achieve this is through public education and by providing information and advice in order to raise awareness of natural hazard issues. Response and recovery are the important functions carried out by local authorities and civil defence emergency management during and after a civil defence emergency.~~

~~The policy recognises the need to involve the community in preparing for natural hazards. If people are prepared and able to cope, the impacts from a natural hazard event are effectively reduced.~~

Policy 52: Avoiding or Minimising adverse effects of hazard mitigation measures – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, for hazard mitigation measures, particular regard shall be given to:

- ~~a) the need for structural protection works or hard engineering methods;~~
- a) whether ~~non-structural~~ nature-based solutions, Mātauranga Māori, ~~or soft engineering methods~~ options provide are a more appropriate ~~option~~ solution; and
- b) avoiding ~~structural protection works or hard engineering~~ methods unless it is necessary to protect existing development, regionally significant infrastructure or property from unacceptable *risk* and the works form part of a ~~long-term~~ *hazard risk management strategy* that represents the best practicable option for the future; and
- c) the long-term viability of maintaining a hard engineering approach with particular regard to changing risks from natural hazards over time due to climate change; and
- d) adverse effects on Te Mana o te Wai, mahinga kai, taonga species, natural processes, and the indigenous ecosystems and biodiversity; and
- e) sites of significance to mana whenua / tangata whenua, including those identified in a planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with a local authority or scheduled in a district or regional plan; and
- f) any change in natural hazard risk to nearby areas as a result of changes to natural processes from the hazard mitigation works; and
- g) the cumulative effects of isolated hard engineering ~~structural protection~~

works; and

- h) any residual risk remaining after mitigation works are in place, so that they minimise reduce and or do not increase the risks from of natural hazards.

Explanation

Policy 52 recognises that *hard engineering* protection structures can have adverse effects on the environment, increase the *risks from natural hazards* over time and transfer the *risks* to nearby areas. It provides direction to consider lower impact methods of hazard mitigation such as, *soft engineering*, *nature-based solutions* or Mātauranga Māori options, that may be more appropriate, providing they can suitably mitigate the hazard.

~~Objective 19 seeks to reduce the risks and consequences from natural hazards, while Objective 20 aims to ensure activities, including hazard mitigation measures, do not increase the risk and consequences from natural hazards. Policy 52 promotes these objectives.~~

~~Having established there is a need for protection works, non-structural and soft engineering methods should be the first option for hazard mitigation. Soft engineering methods may include, for example; hazard avoidance or controlled activity zones; setback or buffer distances; managed retreat or land retirement; a 'do nothing' policy; restoration projects for wetlands, dunes or hillslopes prone to flooding, slipping or erosion.~~

~~Activities such as river bed gravel extraction which may assist in the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards are also a consideration under this policy.~~

~~Structural measures or hard engineering methods can have significant environmental effects and should be considered as the least desirable option for natural hazard control. Where there is an unacceptable risk to development or property, there may be a place for structural measures or hard engineering methods, if they are part of a long term hazard management strategy that includes other measures. Policy 51 will need to be considered alongside policy 52(c) when deciding whether a development faces an unacceptable risk or not.~~

~~The risk that remains after protection works are put in place is known as the residual risk. Stopbanks, seawalls, and revetments and other engineered protection works can create a sense of security and encourage further development. In turn, this increases the extent and value of assets that could be damaged if the protection works fail or an extreme event exceeds the structural design parameters.~~

Policy 53: Managing effects on outstanding natural features and landscapes – consideration

When considering an application for a subdivision consent, or a coastal or land use consent on public land, or a change, variation or review of a district plan to address subdivision or rezoning, particular regard shall be given to enhancing public access to, and along:

- a) areas of the coastal marine area, and lakes and rivers with:
 - (i) places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values identified in accordance with policy 21;
 - (ii) areas of indigenous ecosystems and habitats, and areas with significant indigenous biodiversity values identified in accordance with policy 23;
 - (iii) outstanding natural features and landscapes identified in accordance with policy 25;
 - (iv) special amenity landscapes identified in accordance with policy 27;
 - (v) places, sites and areas with high natural character identified in accordance with policy 36; and
 - (vi) the rivers and lakes identified in Table 15 of Appendix 1;
- b) Wellington Harbour and Porirua (Onepoto Arm and Pauatahanui Inlet) Harbour;

Except where there is a need to protect:

- c) sensitive indigenous habitats of species;
- d) the health or safety of people;
- e) sensitive cultural and historic heritage values; and/or
- f) the integrity and security of regionally significant infrastructure.

Explanation

Providing public access to and along *rivers, lakes* and the *coastal marine area* is most desirable where that access can contribute to people's enjoyment of these resources and the values associated with them. The values listed in policy 53 contribute to people's recreational enjoyment and appreciation of the coastal marine area, rivers and lakes.

Policy 53 recognises that district and city councils have a key role to play as they are responsible for requiring the creation of *esplanade reserves* and strips in any proposed coastal development or development, alongside lakes and rivers, when considering resource consents for the purposes set out in section 229 of the Resource Management Act.

Enhancing public access may include taking esplanade reserves or strips.

Policy 53 does not limit other efforts to enhance access, or the range of values to which access could be enhanced. Policy 52 outlines the need to consider access to areas of significance required to be identified in accordance with this Regional Policy Statement.

Policy 53 outlines that when implementing the policy, there may be circumstances where public access to the *coastal marine area*, lakes and rivers is not desirable – such as to provide security for *regionally significant infrastructure* or to prevent harm to the public. It is recognised that public access to private land that does not contain an *esplanade strip* or *reserve* is at the discretion and with the permission of the landowner.

Policy 54: Achieving the region's urban design principles – consideration

When considering an application for a notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, for development, particular regard shall be given to achieving the region's urban design principles in Appendix 2.

Explanation

The region's urban design principles are based on the seven design qualities described in the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol. The region's urban design principles seek to ensure developments, including infrastructure, consider the following design elements:

- Context
- Character
- Choice
- Connections
- Creativity
- Custodianship
- Collaboration.

Policy 55: Managing greenfield development to contribute to well-functioning urban areas and rural areas ~~Maintaining a compact, well-designed and sustainable regional form~~ – consideration

~~When considering an~~ An application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district plan for *urban development* beyond the region's existing *urban zones* ~~urban areas (as at March 2009)~~, will contribute to achieving a compact, well-designed, climate-resilient, accessible and environmentally responsive regional form if: ~~particular regard shall be given to whether:~~

- a) the location, design and layout of the urban ~~proposed development is the most appropriate option to achieve Objective 22:~~
 1. contributes to well-functioning urban areas, as articulated in Policy UD.5; and
 2. is well-connected to the existing urban area, which means it:

- (i) is adjacent to existing *urban zones* with access to employment and amenities, and either,
- (ii) is along existing or planned transport corridors that provide for multi-modal transport options, including public transport, or
- (iii) supports the efficient and effective delivery of planned new or upgraded transport *infrastructure* including for public transport; and

3. concentrates building heights and densities to:

- (i) maximise access to, and efficient use of, existing infrastructure,
- (ii) use land to be zoned urban efficiently,
- (iii) support viable and vibrant neighbourhood, local, town, metropolitan and city centres, and
- (iv) support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by use of low and zero-carbon emission transport modes, including efficient provision of public transport services; and

4. applies specific management or protection for values or resources required by this Regional Policy Statement, including:

- (i) managing subdivision, use and development in accordance with the risk from *natural hazards* as required by Policy 29,
- (ii) *protecting* indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values as identified by Policy 23,
- (iii) *protecting* outstanding natural features and landscape values as identified by Policy 25,
- (iv) *protecting* historic heritage values as identified by Policy 22,
- (v) giving effect to *Te Mana o te Wai* consistent with Policy 42,
- (vi) providing for climate resilience and supporting a low and zero-carbon multi-modal transport network consistent with
- (vii) Policies CC.1, CC.4, CC.4A, CC.9, CC.14 and CC.14A,
- (viii) providing for mana whenua / tangata whenua values, including their relationship with their culture, ancestral lands, water, sites, *wāhi tapu* and other *taonga*,
- (ix) protecting *Regionally Significant Infrastructure* from incompatible or inappropriate adjacent land uses, consistent

with Policy 8,

(x) protecting significant mineral resources from incompatible or inappropriate adjacent land uses, consistent with Policy 60, and

(xi) managing effects on natural character in the coastal environment, consistent with Policy 36; and

b) ~~it the proposed development has regard to is consistent with the Future Development Strategy the Council's growth and/or development framework or strategy~~ that describes where and how future urban development should will occur in that district; and/or

c) a structure plan has been prepared to a level of detail commensurate to the scale of the urban development, in partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua where undertaken by a local authority.; and

d) for a plan change, it would add significantly to development capacity in accordance with Policy UD.3.

Explanation

Policy 55 gives direction to the matters that must be considered in any proposal that will result in urban development occurring beyond the region's existing urban areas, which is any greenfield development. This involves ensuring that Objective 22 is achieved. Clause (a) includes managing values or resources as required elsewhere in the Regional Policy Statement.

Policy 55 seeks that greenfield developments demonstrate appropriate development densities to use the new urban-zoned land efficiently. They should also be located, zoned, laid out, and designed to best support existing urban development or existing or new centres (for example through mixed use zoning) and provide for low and zero-carbon travel, to support compact, connected, climate- resilient, diverse and low-emission neighbourhoods.

Clause (b) requires consideration to be given to the consistency of the development with the Future Development Strategy which will look to deliver well-functioning urban environments through a regional spatial plan.

Clause (c) requires consideration to be given to whether a structure plan has been provided. A structure plan is a framework to guide the development or redevelopment of an area by defining the future development and land use patterns, areas of open space, the layout and nature of infrastructure (including transportation links), and other key features and constraints that influence how the effects of development are to be managed.

Clause (d) requires consideration of a plan change that would add significantly to development capacity, which gives effect to Policy 8 of the National Policy Statement on

Urban Development 2020.

~~Urban development beyond the region's urban areas has the potential to reinforce or undermine a compact and well designed regional form.~~

~~The region's urban areas (as at March 2009) include urban, residential, suburban, town-centre, commercial, community, business and industrial zones identified in the Wellington city, Porirua city, Lower Hutt city, Upper Hutt city, Kāpiti coast and Wairarapa combined district plans.~~

~~Urban development is subdivision, use and development that is characterised by its planned reliance on reticulated services (such as water supply and drainage) by its generation of traffic, and would include activities (such as manufacturing), which are usually provided for in urban areas. It also typically has lot sizes of less than 3000 square metres.~~

~~Examples of growth and/or development frameworks or strategies in the region are:~~

- ~~• The Upper Hutt City Council Urban Growth Strategy~~
- ~~• Wellington City Northern Growth Management Framework~~
- ~~• Porirua City Development Framework~~
- ~~• Kapiti Coast: Choosing Futures Development Management Strategy and local outcome statements contained in the Kapiti Coast Long Term Council Community Plan~~

~~Policies 54 and 56 also need to be considered in conjunction with policy 55. In addition, there are also a range of 'related policies' in the Regional Policy Statement that set out matters to be considered in order to manage effects on natural and physical resources.~~

~~Structure planning integrates land use with infrastructure – such as transport networks, community services and the physical resources. Structure planning should also deliver high quality urban design.~~

~~The content and detail of structure plans will vary depending on the scale of development.~~

~~Notwithstanding this, structure plans, as a minimum, should address:~~

- ~~• Provision of an appropriate mix of land uses and land use densities~~
- ~~• How environmental constraints (for example, areas at high risk from natural hazards) and areas of value (for example, indigenous ecosystems, rivers, streams and ephemeral streams, wetlands, areas or places with historic heritage, outstanding landscapes, or special amenity landscapes) are to be managed Integration with existing and proposed infrastructure services, such as, connections to existing and proposed transportation systems and~~

~~provision of public and active transport linkages by undertaking an integrated transport assessment~~

- ~~• The integration of the development with adjoining land use activities including measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate reverse sensitivity effects~~
- ~~• Integration of social infrastructure and essential social services as necessary~~
- ~~• Development staging or sequencing~~
- ~~• How the region's urban design principles will be implemented~~

Policy 56: Managing development in rural areas – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent or a change, variation or review of a district plan for subdivision, use, and development, in rural areas ~~(as at March 2009)~~, seek to manage adverse effects on rural areas by considering whether the proposal: ~~particular regard shall be given to whether:~~

- ~~a) the proposal will result in a loss of~~ retains the productive capability capacity of the rural area, including cumulative impacts that would reduce the potential for food and other *primary production* ~~and reverse sensitivity issues for existing production activities, including extraction and distribution of aggregate minerals~~; and
- ~~b) minimises the potential for reverse sensitivity issues, including on existing production activities, and extraction and distribution of aggregate minerals operations; and~~
- ~~c) (b) the proposal will reduce~~ retains or enhances the amenity aesthetic, cultural and open space values in rural areas between and around settlements; and
- ~~d) provides for mana whenua / tangata whenua values, including the relationship with their traditions, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga; and~~
- ~~e) (c) the proposals location, design or density will~~ supports reductions in greenhouse gas emissions ~~minimise demand for non-renewable energy resources~~ through appropriate location, design and density of development; and
- ~~f) is climate-resilient; and~~
- ~~g) gives effect to Te Mana o Te Wai; and~~
- ~~h) for urban development, is consistent with Policy 55; and~~

i) ~~(d) for other development the proposal~~

(i) ~~has regard to is consistent with the Future Development Strategy the relevant city or district council growth and/or development framework or strategy that addresses future rural development, or~~

(ii) ~~where inconsistent with the Future Development Strategy (j) in the absence of a framework or strategy, the proposal would~~ will increase pressure for public services and *infrastructure* beyond existing *infrastructure* capacity.

Explanation

Policy 56 considers *urban development* and rural residential development within the region's rural areas, including potential *mixed use development* within a settlement zone. The policy seeks to ensure rural development occurs in a manner that maintains the rural environment's character and values, and recognises that development in the rural area can lead to the cumulative erosion of the productive capability of the rural area if not appropriately managed.

The policy also seeks to ensure that reverse sensitivity issues are appropriately considered, and that the amenity, open space, and mana whenua values of the rural area are maintained. Where development in the rural area occurs, it should be consistent with the relevant growth strategy or framework to ensure that rural residential development achieves well-functioning *rural areas* and aligns with the desired *regional form*. Development should also be *climate-resilient* to ensure that rural communities and future urban communities are able to respond to the effects of climate change.

~~Policy 56 addresses development in the region's rural areas. This policy relates to urban development and rural residential development.~~

~~Rural areas (as at March 2009) include all areas not defined as the region's urban areas (as at March 2009).~~

~~The region's urban areas (as at March 2009) include urban, residential, suburban, town-centre, commercial, community, business and industrial zones identified in the Wellington city, Porirua city, Lower Hutt city, Upper Hutt city, Kāpiti coast and Wairarapa combined district plans.~~

~~Settlements are clusters of residential lots.~~

~~Demand for non-renewable energy resources can be minimised by locating residential developments close to public transport services, through energy efficient design and on-site use of renewable energy resources.~~

Policy 57: Integrating land use and transportation – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district plan, seek to achieve integrated land use and transport within the Wellington Region by: for subdivision, use or development, particular regard shall be given to the following matters, in making progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy:

- a) locating development in areas near centres and well-served by existing or planned public transport, to minimise private vehicle travel and trip length and maximise mode shift to public transport or active modes; and
 - b) supporting connectivity with, and accessibility to public services or amenities, key centres of employment activity or retail activity via public and active transport networks; and
 - c) supporting a safe, reliable, equitable, inclusive and efficient transport network including through connections with the wider transport network; and
 - d) providing safe and accessible multi-modal transport networks along connected routes that are designed for public and active transport, while recognising that the delivery of public transport services may not always be efficient or practical; and
 - e) supporting and enabling the rapid transport network and the growth corridors in the Wellington Region, including:
 - (i) Western Growth Corridor – Tawa to Levin;
 - (ii) Eastern Growth Corridor – Hutt to Masterton;
 - (iii) Let's Get Wellington Moving Growth Corridor; and
 - f) minimising the potential for *reverse sensitivity* effects on the safe and efficient operation of transport corridors.
-
- a) ~~whether traffic generated by the proposed development can be accommodated within the existing transport network and the impacts on the efficiency, reliability or safety of the network;~~
 - b) ~~connectivity with, or provision of access to, public services or activities, key centres of employment activity or retail activity, open spaces or recreational areas;~~
 - c) ~~whether there is good access to the strategic public transport network;~~
 - d) ~~provision of safe and attractive environments for walking and cycling; and~~
 - e) ~~whether new, or upgrades to existing, transport network infrastructure have~~

~~been appropriately recognised and provided for.~~

Explanation

Progress towards the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan key outcomes cannot be achieved by that Strategy alone. Subdivision, use and development decisions also need to consider impacts on the Strategy's outcomes. Policy 57 lists matters that need to be considered for all proposals that affect land transport outcomes. It seeks to align with the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan and support decarbonising the transport system in the Wellington Region.

~~Progress towards the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy key outcomes cannot be achieved by that Strategy alone. Subdivision, use and development decisions also need to consider impacts on the Strategy's outcomes.~~

~~Policy 57 lists matters that need to be given particular regard when considering all proposals in terms of their effect on land transport outcomes.~~

~~The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy key outcomes are:~~

- ~~• Increased peak period passenger transport mode share~~
- ~~• Increased mode share for pedestrians and cyclists~~
- ~~• Reduced greenhouse gas emissions~~
- ~~• Reduced severe road congestion~~
- ~~• Improved regional road safety~~
- ~~• Improved land use and transport integration~~
- ~~• Improved regional freight efficiency.~~

~~The strategic public transport network is those parts of the region's passenger transport network that provide a high level of service along corridors with high demand for public transport.~~

~~Locations with good access to the strategic public transport network include those:~~

- ~~• Within reasonable walk times to stops or stations on the strategic public transport~~
- ~~• network (research indicates a walk time of up to 10 minutes is 'reasonable')~~
- ~~• With frequent and reliable public transport services~~
- ~~• With accessibility, by public transport, to key destinations in the region~~
- ~~• Without physical barriers to public transport (for example, busy roads,~~

~~lack of footpaths or crossing facilities, steep hills).~~

Policy 58: Co-ordinating land use with development and operation of infrastructure – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a plan change, variation or review of a district plan, ~~for subdivision, use or development, seek to achieve development that is integrated with infrastructure, in a way that: particular regard shall be given to whether the proposed subdivision, use or development is located and sequenced to:~~

- a) makes effective, efficient and safe use of existing infrastructure capacity; and
 - b) makes provision for the development, funding, implementation and operation of infrastructure serving the area in question; and
 - c) all infrastructure required to serve new development is available or is able to be delivered in a timeframe appropriate to service the development, and this may require timing or staging development accordingly.
- ~~a) make efficient and safe use of existing infrastructure capacity; and/or~~
- ~~b) coordinate with the development and operation of new infrastructure.~~

Explanation

Policy 58 seeks to ensure urban development is appropriately serviced by infrastructure necessary for that development. The policy seeks that urban development is sequenced to ensure existing infrastructure capacity is efficiently and effectively used and that infrastructure that is necessary to service the development will be provided. This includes all infrastructure, such as three waters infrastructure and transport infrastructure, including low or zero-carbon, multi-modal and public transport infrastructure, that would be necessary to support the development.

The delivery of publicly funded infrastructure should be planned for through a long-term plan, transport plan, or Infrastructure Strategy, whilst privately funded infrastructure can be delivered through other mechanisms, such as developer agreements and financial contributions. To avoid significant delays between development occurring and infrastructure being provided, the delivery of infrastructure should be appropriately timed to service development.

~~Subdivision, use and development, (including infrastructure) decisions have a direct bearing upon or relationship to the sequencing and development of new infrastructure, including new infrastructure for the electricity transmission network and the region's strategic transport network. The region's strategic transport network is described in the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy 2007-2016.~~

Policy UD.2: Enable Māori to express their culture and traditions – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change of a *district plan* for subdivision, use or development, enable Māori to express their culture and traditions in land use and development by, as a minimum:

- a) providing for mana whenua / tangata whenua to express their relationship with their culture, ancestral lands, water, sites, *wāhi tapu* and other *taonga*; and
- b) recognising *taonga* and sites and areas of significance, awa and moana and important places where mana whenua / tangata whenua practice Mātauranga Māori, including marae and urupā.

Explanation

Policy UD.2 supports Māori to express their culture and traditions in land use and development.

Policy UD.3: Plan changes that provide for significant development capacity – consideration

For local authorities with jurisdiction over part, or all, of an *urban environment*, when determining whether a plan change for *urban development* will be treated as adding significantly to development capacity that is not otherwise enabled in a plan or is not in sequence with planned land release, the following criteria must be met:

- a) the plan change makes a significant contribution to meeting a need identified in the latest Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment, or a
 - (i) shortage identified through monitoring or otherwise for
 - (ii) a variety of housing that meets the regional, district, or local shortage of housing in relation to the particular type, size, or format, or
 - (iii) business space or land of a particular size or locational type, or
 - (iv) community, cultural, health, or educational facilities; and
- b) a plan change will make a significant contribution to a matter in (a) if it:
 - (i) is of high yield relative to either the forecast demand or the identified shortfall,
 - (ii) will be realised in a timely manner, and
 - (iii) responds to demonstrated demand for the land use types proposed, for the short-medium term in that location; and

- c) where it provides for housing, the plan change will:
 - (i) as part of a mix of housing typologies, provide for *high density development* or *medium density development*, and
 - (ii) contribute to increasing housing affordability through a general increase in supply or through providing non-market housing; and
- d) the required *infrastructure* can be provided effectively and efficiently for the proposal, and without material impact on the capacity provided by existing or committed *infrastructure* for other feasible, reasonably expected to be realised developments, in the short-medium term; and
- e) the plan change justifies the need for additional *urban-zoned* land in that particular location to meet housing and business demand, demonstrating consideration of existing feasible, reasonably expected to be realised development capacity within existing *urban zones*; and
- f) the plan change can demonstrate it will mitigate any potential adverse effects on the ability of existing *urban areas* and *rural areas* to be well-functioning, including by minimising potential *reverse sensitivity* effects and impacts on the feasibility, affordability, or deliverability of *urban development* anticipated by the *district plan*.

Explanation

Policy UD.3 outlines the criteria that need to be met for a development to be considered to provide 'significant development capacity' as required by clause 3.8(3) of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. Responsive planning applies to both greenfield and brownfield (infill/intensification) developments. All of Policy 55 will also need to be considered for any out-of-sequence or unanticipated plan change for greenfield development.

For proposals that are providing for housing, they can provide for *high density development* or *medium density development* through a relevant residential zone, a centre zone or a mixed use zone, and by clustering housing to suit the site characteristics if necessary.

Policy UD.5: Contributing to well-functioning urban areas – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, a notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a *district plan* for *urban development*, including housing and supporting *infrastructure*, seek to achieve well-functioning *urban areas* by:

- a) providing for the characteristics of *well-functioning urban environments*, in a way that uses *land* efficiently; and
- b) where providing housing, seeks to improve housing affordability, quality

and choice and provide a diversity of typologies; and

- c) providing for safe multi-modal access between housing, employment, services, amenities, green space, and local centres, preferably within walkable catchments and using low and zero-carbon emission transport modes; and
- d) providing for and protecting mana whenua / tangata whenua values, sites of significance to mana whenua / tangata whenua, and their relationship to their culture, ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga; and
- e) avoiding or mitigating potential adverse effects, including cumulative effects, of urban development on the natural environment, including on freshwater consistent with Policy 42; and
- f) coordinating development with infrastructure while prioritising, where possible, the effective and efficient use of existing infrastructure; and
- g) protecting the operation and safety of regionally significant infrastructure from potential reverse sensitivity effects.

Explanation

Policy UD.5 articulates what contributing to well-functioning urban areas, as sought in Objective 22, means in the Wellington Region. This policy applies to all areas zoned residential, commercial or industrial and all local authorities in the Wellington Region, and seeks to support the efficient use of urban-zoned land and infrastructure.

Clause (a) references the characteristics of well-functioning urban environments as defined in Policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. Meeting clause (a) involves providing for a range of housing typologies, particularly including modest (i.e. small footprint) and multi-unit housing, to contribute to housing affordability and choice. This also includes non-market or partially subsidised affordable housing. Using land efficiently means that both brownfield and greenfield development demonstrate compact development patterns.

Clause (e) provides for environmentally responsive and integrated urban development, which manages impacts on freshwater in accordance with Policy 42. Clause (f) requires existing infrastructure to be used efficiently, while also ensuring that the impacts of urban development on existing infrastructure are anticipated, coordinated and appropriately managed. It requires consideration of how the pattern and location of development might affect the natural environment and provide population densities necessary to the ability to continue to maintain infrastructure.

Policy 59: Retaining highly productive agricultural land (Class I and II land) – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district plan, particular regard shall be given to safeguarding productive capability on Class I and II land.

Explanation

This policy recognises the social, economic and environmental benefits from making use of highly productive agricultural land for its productive capabilities.

Class I land is the most versatile multiple-use land with virtually no limitations to arable use; it is deep, well drained, fine textured, naturally fertile and flood free.

Class II land is very good land with slight limitations to arable use. Slight limitations include texture, structure, potential erosion and potential flooding.

The New Zealand Land Resource Inventory (NZLRI), (Landcare Research New Zealand Ltd, 1975, electronic database), is the reference used to identify the locations of Class I and II land around New Zealand, including within the Wellington region.

According to that classification, Class I and II land is located in Kāpiti Coast, Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa districts, within the Wellington region.

Resource management decision-making needs to consider the irreversible effects of losing Class I and II land, which is *highly productive* agricultural land, suitable for multiple uses such as for growing a wide range of crops, pasture and forest, and for supporting grazing animals. It is important to retain the productive capability of this land for future generations. The use of high quality soils for some activities – such as residential development and roading projects – will result in what is effectively permanent loss of these soils from productive use.

Policy 60: Utilising the region's mineral resources – consideration

When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to:

- a) the social, economic, and environmental benefits from utilising mineral resources within the region; and
- b) protecting significant mineral resources from incompatible or inappropriate land uses alongside.

Explanation

Policy 60 directs that particular regard be given to the social, economic, and environmental benefits of utilising *mineral resources* within the region. It also requires that particular regard be given to protecting *significant mineral resources* from incompatible and inappropriate land use alongside. This protection extends to both the land required for the working site and associated access routes. Examples of methods to protect *significant mineral resources* include the use of buffer areas in which sensitive activities may be restricted, and the use of noise reduction measures and visual screening.

Method 52, when implemented, will identify the locations of *significant mineral resources* within the region.

Chapter 4.3: Allocation of responsibilities

This section contains the policies that allocate the responsibilities for indigenous biodiversity, *natural hazards* and hazardous substances between Wellington Regional Council and the region’s district and city councils.

| Policy 61: Allocation of responsibilities for land use controls for indigenous biodiversity | | |
|---|--|--|
| Regional and district plans shall recognise and provide for the responsibilities below, when developing objectives, policies and methods, including rules, to <i>maintain indigenous biodiversity</i> : | | |
| a) Wellington Regional Council shall be responsible for developing objectives, policies, and methods in the regional policy statement for the control of the use of land to <i>maintain indigenous biological biodiversity</i> ; <u>and</u> | | Appendix 7.6b: Indigenous ecosystems |
| b) Wellington Regional Council shall be responsible for developing objectives, policies, rules and/or methods in regional plans for the control of the use of land to <i>maintain</i> and enhance ecosystems in <u><i>freshwater bodies</i></u> and <i>coastal water</i> . This includes land within the <i>coastal marine area</i> , <i>wetlands</i> and the <i>beds</i> of lakes and rivers; <u>and</u> | | Method 5 See policies 5, 12, 18, 19, 23, 24, 47 & |
| c) city and district councils shall be responsible for developing objectives, policies, rules and/or methods in <i>district plans</i> for the control of the use of <i>land</i> for the <i>maintenance of indigenous biological biodiversity</i> , <u>including to manage associated adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity in freshwater and coastal water</u> in liaison with the Wellington Regional Council. This excludes <u>controlling the use of</u> land within the <i>coastal marine area</i> , and the <i>beds</i> of lakes and rivers, <u>and wetlands</u> . | | |
| Explanation | | |
| In accordance with section 62 of the Resource Management Act 1991, p Policy 61 sets out the local authorities in the Wellington Region responsible for specifying the objectives, policies and methods for the control of the use of land to <i>maintain indigenous biological diversity</i> . | | |
| District and city councils in the Wellington Region have primary responsibility for controlling the use of land to maintain indigenous biological diversity (other than <u>within the coastal marine area, and the beds of lakes and rivers, and wetlands</u>) <u>to maintain indigenous biodiversity, including to manage associated adverse effects on indigenous biodiversity in freshwater and coastal water</u> in liaison with the Wellington Regional Council, through the creation of objectives, policies and rules in their <i>district plans</i> . | | |
| Wellington Regional Council has the primary responsibility for the control of the use of land to maintain and enhance <i>indigenous ecosystems</i> in <u><i>freshwater</i></u> bodies (including <i>wetlands</i>) and <i>coastal water</i> . | | |
| <u>Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils shall work together to develop plan</u> | | |

provisions and operational arrangements to provide for the coordinated management and control of subdivision, use and development to *maintain indigenous biodiversity in freshwater and coastal water*. This includes working collaboratively, such as during structure planning, rezoning, subdivision, and site development, so that the location, layout and design of development is *environmentally-responsive*.

Policy FW.6: Allocation of responsibilities for land use and development controls for freshwater

Regional and *district plans* shall recognise and provide for the responsibilities below, when developing objectives, policies and methods, including rules, to protect and enhance the health and well-being of water bodies and freshwater ecosystems:

- a) Wellington Regional Council has primary responsibility for freshwater. Wellington Regional Council shall be responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of water quality and ecosystems in water bodies, and the maintenance of water quantity, including through:
 - (i) managing the direct effects of the use and development of *land* on waterbodies and receiving environments including discharges of *contaminants*,
 - (ii) implementing the National Objectives Framework of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020, managing the effects of *stormwater* runoff volumes on *freshwater ecosystem health*; and
 - (iii) protecting and enhancing *riparian* margins; and
- b) in relation to wetlands, Wellington Regional Council is responsible for managing land use within, and within a 100m of natural inland wetlands as directed by the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Regulations 2020), as well as areas adjoining and/or upstream of a *wetland* for the purpose of protecting *wetlands*; and
- c) city and district councils are responsible for managing the effects of *urban development* on the health and wellbeing of waterbodies, *freshwater ecosystems* and receiving environments including through *stormwater* management and managing the elements of *urban development* (including layout, design and materials) of development (such as roof materials and impervious surfaces) that may affect the health and wellbeing of waterbodies; and
- d) Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils have joint responsibility for the location and design of *urban development* in relation to waterbodies and receiving environments, and the protection and enhancement of waterbodies and receiving environments from the effects of *urban development* insofar as this relates to their respective functions under section 30 and section 31 of the RMA.

Explanation

Policy FW.6 outlines the allocation of responsibilities for land use and development controls for freshwater between Wellington Regional Council and territorial authorities. There are some areas of responsibility that overlap and in these cases the Wellington Regional Council and territorial authorities shall work together to develop plan provisions and operational arrangements to provide for the coordinated management and control of subdivision, use and development to maintain, and where required improve, the health and wellbeing of waterbodies and *freshwater ecosystem health*. This includes working collaboratively at different scales, such as during structure planning, rezoning, subdivision, and site-development, so that the location, layout and design of development is managed in an integrated manner.

Policy 62: Allocation of responsibilities for land use controls for natural hazards

Regional and district plans shall recognise and provide for the responsibilities listed in Table 1 when developing objectives, policies and methods, including rules, for the control of land use for the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards.

Table 1: Allocation of responsibilities for land use controls for natural hazards

| | Responsibilities for developing objectives | Responsible for developing policies | Responsibilities for developing rules | Responsibilities for developing other methods |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Land in the coastal marine area and beds of lakes and rivers | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council |
| Other land | Districts and city councils and Wellington Regional Council | District and city councils and Wellington Regional Council | District and city councils | District and city councils and Wellington Regional Council |

Explanation

In accordance with section 62 of the Resource Management Act, policy 62 sets out the local authorities in the Wellington region responsible for specifying the objectives policies, and methods, including rules for the control of the use of land to avoid or mitigate *natural hazards* or any group of hazards.

Table 1 shows that Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils share responsibility for writing objectives, policies and other methods for the control of the use of land (other than in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers) for the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards.

District and city councils have primary responsibility for writing land use rules (other than in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers).

The Wellington Regional Council has primary responsibility for the control of the use of land for the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers.

Policy 63: Allocation of responsibilities for land use controls for hazardous substances

Regional and district plans shall recognise and provide for the responsibilities listed in Table 2 when developing objectives, policies and methods, including rules, for the control of the use of land for the prevention or mitigation of any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal or transportation of hazardous substances.

Table 2: Allocation of responsibilities for land use controls for hazardous substances

| | Responsibilities for developing objectives | Responsibilities for developing policies | Responsibilities for developing rules | Responsibilities for developing other methods |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Land in the coastal marine area and the beds of lakes and rivers | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council | Wellington Regional Council |
| Other land | District and city councils | District and city councils | District and city councils | District and city councils |

Explanation

In accordance with section 62 of the Resource Management Act, policy 63 sets out the local authorities in the Wellington region responsible for specifying the objectives, policies and methods, including rules, for the control of the use of land for the prevention or mitigation of any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal or transportation of *hazardous substances*.

Under this allocation of responsibilities, rules to restrict the use of land for petrol stations in residential areas, or the transportation of hazardous substances through tunnels could only be adopted in district plans, while a rule to restrict the installation of a gas pipe over a river could only be adopted in a regional plan.

This policy applies only to land use controls. Controls on the actual storage and use of hazardous substances are imposed by the Environmental Risk Management Agency. Controls on discharges of hazardous substances to the environment – as with controls on discharges of any contaminant to the environment – are imposed in regional plans.

Chapter 4.4: Non-regulatory policies

This section contains policies that outline non-regulatory actions required to help achieve the objectives of this Regional Policy Statement.

Policy 64: Supporting a whole of catchment approach – non-regulatory

Take a whole of catchment approach that recognises the inter-relationship between land and water, and support environmental enhancement initiatives to restore and enhance:

- a) coastal features, ecosystems and habitats;
- b) aquatic ecosystems and habitats; and
- c) indigenous ecosystems and habitats.

Explanation

Taking a whole of catchment approach is promoted within this Regional Policy Statement. It means considering the full mix of purposes, uses or activities within a catchment, in terms of how these interact and contribute to outcomes within the catchment and for receiving environments beyond – such as in relation to *indigenous ecosystems*, soil productivity, water quality, erosion and stormwater control, or *natural hazards*. This approach suggests a need to work with multiple parties to establish shared objectives for a catchment and to ensure uses and activities are working towards the same goals or at least are not working against their attainment.

The natural character of the coast has been degraded. Restoring and enhancing *coastal features* and *ecosystems* helps restore natural character and enhances people's use and enjoyment of the *coastal environment*.

A regulatory approach cannot restore aquatic ecosystems from the effects of many existing and historical activities. Resource consent holders cannot be obliged to remedy existing effects unless they are caused by their particular activity. Where historical activities have affected an aquatic ecosystem, restoration measures such as mitigating the effects of existing fish pass impediments, *riparian* planting or the removal of concrete linings or contaminated material can help restore the habitat.

Setting right the effects of historical activities that have reduced the extent and quality of indigenous ecosystems and habitats in the region can be facilitated by providing information about the importance of these ecosystems and habitats, and by providing financial incentives to promote their maintenance, enhancement and restoration. Wellington Regional Council and district and city councils can, through their operations, play a role in the restoration and enhancement of indigenous ecosystems and habitats – such as, in reserve management plans, pest control, stormwater management, and roadside vegetation management. Providing assistance to community groups and promoting initiatives involving community participation are key elements that will help implement policy 64.

Policy CC.7: Protecting, restoring, enhancing and sustainably managing ecosystems that provide nature-based solutions to climate change – non-regulatory

Work with and support landowners, mana whenua / tangata whenua, and other key stakeholders to protect, restore, enhance or sustainably manage ecosystems that provide nature-based solutions to climate change.

Explanation

Policy CC.7 recognises the value that natural ecosystems can provide as nature-based solutions for climate change. This policy recognises the critical importance of working with and supporting landowners and other key stakeholders to improve the health and functioning of ecosystems that provide benefits for nature and the wider community. Methods CC.6 and CC.9 will support the implementation of this policy.

Policy CC.15: Improve rural resilience to climate change – non-regulatory

Support rural communities in their climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation efforts, including by:

- a) providing practical and easily accessible information on climate change projections at a local level; and
- b) promoting and supporting land management practices and/or land uses, including nature-based solutions, that improve resilience to climate change, including rural water resilience and food security; and
- c) promoting and supporting land management practices and/or land uses that will reduce gross greenhouse gas emissions; and
- d) giving preference to climate change efforts that also deliver benefits for indigenous biodiversity, land, fresh and coastal water.

Explanation

This policy promotes and supports low emission agriculture and increased rural resilience to climate change.

Policy CC.16: Climate change adaptation strategies, plans and implementation programmes – non-regulatory

Regional, city and district councils should with mana whenua / tangata whenua and engage local communities in a decision-making process to develop and implement strategic climate change adaptation plans that map out management options over short, medium and long term timeframes, using a range of tools and methods that may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori approaches; and
- b) dynamic adaptive planning pathways or similar adaptive planning approaches;

and

- c) district or regional plan objectives, policies and rules that address subdivision, use and development for areas impacted by climate change and sea level rise; and
- d) options for managed retreat or relocation; and
- e) a consideration of *Te Mana o te Wai* and the relationship of mana whenua / *tangata whenua* with indigenous biodiversity; and
- f) hazard mitigation options including *soft engineering, nature-based solutions* and methods to reduce the *risks* from *natural hazards* exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise; and
- g) equitable funding options required to implement the programme.

Explanation

Policy CC.16 provides a range of options for development and implementation of adaptation strategies or plans to suit a particular programme or local circumstances. In some instances, the outcomes may require implementation as objectives, policies, and rules in regional or district plans, but this is not expected to be a requirement.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy CC.15 and Method CC.8 that address rural resilience to climate change, food and water security.

Policy CC.17: Iwi climate change adaptation plans – non-regulatory

Regional council will assist mana whenua / *tangata whenua* in the development of *iwi climate change adaptation* plans to manage impacts that may affect Māori relationships with their whenua, *Tikanqa* and kaupapa Māori, sites of significance, wai Māori and wai tai values, *mahinga kai*, *wāhi tapu* and other *taonga*.

Explanation

Policy CC.17 recognises that climate change will disproportionately affect Māori, especially as a lot of Māori land is located in hazard prone areas near *rivers* and the *coast*. This policy directs the regional council to assist mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, where appropriate, with the development of *iwi-led climate change adaptation* plans.

Policy CC.18: Increasing regional forest cover to support climate change mitigation: “right tree-right place” – non-regulatory

Promote and support the planting and natural regeneration of *permanent forest* to maximise the benefits for carbon sequestration, *indigenous biodiversity*, erosion control, freshwater and coastal ecosystems, and the social, cultural, and economic well-being of local communities, including by:

- a) identifying where to promote and incentivise the planting and regeneration of permanent *indigenous* forest representative of the natural type expected in the

area in preference to exotic species; and

- b) prioritising planting and regeneration of permanent *indigenous* forest and associated browsing pest animal control on *highly erodible land* and in catchments where water quality targets for sediment are not reached and in areas where it will support significant *indigenous biodiversity* values.

Explanation

Policy CC.18 promotes the planting of trees to contribute to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 while seeking an increase in forest extent that maximises the co- benefits for *indigenous biodiversity*, land stability, aquatic *ecosystem health*, and social and economic well-being, as directed by Objective CC.5.

Policy 65: Supporting and encouraging ~~Promoting~~ efficient use and conservation of resources – non-regulatory

~~To promote~~ Support and encourage the conservation and efficient use of resources by:

- a) applying the 5 Rs (~~R~~educing, ~~R~~eusing, ~~R~~ecycling, Recover, and recycling and Residual waste management); and
- b) reducing *organic waste* at source from households and commercial premises; and
- c) increasing the diversion of wastewater sludge from wastewater treatment plants before deposition to municipal landfills; and
- d) encouraging efficient municipal landfill gas systems; and
- e) increasing the proportion of energy generated and used from renewable sources; and
- f) using water and energy efficiently; and
- g) conserving water and energy.

Explanation

Policy 65 supports and encourages the efficient use of resources to reduce emissions. The policy endorses the waste hierarchy, supports increasing generation and use of renewable energy and also promotes similar principles for efficient water and energy use.

~~For waste, using resources efficiently means following the waste hierarchy: reducing unnecessary use of resources, including reducing packaging; reusing unwanted goods that are still ‘fit for purpose’; recycling new products from waste materials; and recovering resources (such as energy) from waste before disposing of the remaining waste safely. If resources are used efficiently, the amount of unwanted materials disposed of at landfills and at sewage treatment plants will be reduced.~~

~~Similar principles apply for reducing energy demand and conserving energy. This includes~~

minimising the use of energy, reducing the need to use or being more efficient in use.

Some of the ways to efficiently use or conserve water include reducing water demand and wastage by:

- Setting targets for reducing leakage from reticulated water supplies within each district
- Providing information to water suppliers and water users on how to conserve water and use it as efficiently as possible
- Providing information about long term rainfall and drought predictions
- Investigating the use of transferable water permits

Leaks from water reticulation systems can waste over 15 per cent of treated water. Water supply authorities already have programmes for repair and maintenance, and it is vital that targets are set so that development of such programmes continues and water wastage is reduced.

Water efficient household appliances and garden watering tied to garden needs, along with fixing dripping taps and planting locally appropriate plants, are some of the ways that people could make the water delivered to their house go further. Greywater irrigation and recycling, and the use of rainwater tanks, are ways that households can make more efficient use of water.

Weather predictions can help people prepare for possible weather extremes, for example by buying in stock feed or ensuring water reserves are at full capacity. Transferring water permits, or parts of water permits, allows allocated water to be used by as many people as the resource can sustain.

Policy FW.7: Water attenuation and retention in rural areas– non- regulatory

Promote and support water attenuation and retention in *rural areas* including:

- a) *nature-based solutions* including slowing water down in the landscape and increasing *groundwater* recharge (*riparian* management, *wetland enhancement/restoration*, flood management); and
- b) built solutions including storage at community, farm, and domestic (rain tanks) scales, groundwater augmentation, built retention (wetlands, bunds) while ensuring appropriate consideration of the *health needs of people*.

Explanation

Policy FW.7 promotes and supports natural and built solutions to attenuate and retain water in *rural areas*.

Policy FW.8: Land use adaptation – non regulatory

Promote and support water resilience and *climate change adaptation* in land use practices and land use change including:

- a) preparing and disseminating information about *climate-resilient* practices; and
- b) promoting water resilience in Freshwater Farm Plans; and
- c) supporting primary sector groups and landowners in researching and promoting *climate-resilient* and lower emission land uses and pathways to move to new land uses; and
- d) prototyping, researching, and promoting *nature-based solutions* that support water resilience, such as *swales* and *bunds*.

Explanation

Policy FW.8 promotes and supports water resilience and *climate change adaptation* in land use practices and change.

Policy IE.3: Maintaining, enhancing, and restoring indigenous ecosystem health – non-regulatory

To maintain, enhance and restore the ecosystem health, ecological integrity and ecological connectivity of the region's indigenous ecosystems, and the ecosystem processes that support them, giving effect to the decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity, the Regional Policy Statement shall, as soon as practicable:

- a) identify the characteristics required for the region's indigenous ecosystems to be in a healthy functioning state, including the processes that enable them to persist over the long-term; and
- b) identify strategic targets and priorities to ensure that management and restoration of indigenous ecosystems and habitats (including pest management) are directed at areas where the greatest gains can be made for indigenous biodiversity. Where possible, priorities should also deliver benefits for climate change mitigation and/or climate change adaptation, and freshwater; and
- c) in relation to the terrestrial environment, and other environments as appropriate, the priorities identified in clause (b) above must include:
 - (i) areas with significant indigenous biodiversity values with degraded ecological integrity;
 - (ii) threatened and rare ecosystems representative of naturally occurring and formerly present ecosystems;
 - (iii) areas that provide important connectivity or buffering functions;
 - (iv) natural inland wetlands whose ecological integrity is degraded or that no

longer retain their *indigenous* vegetation or *habitat* for *indigenous* fauna;

- (v) areas of indigenous biodiversity on specified Māori land where
- (vi) restoration is advanced by the Māori landowners; and
- (vii) any other priorities specified in regional biodiversity strategies or any national priorities for *indigenous biodiversity restoration*; and
- d) focus restoration efforts on achieving the strategic targets and priorities identified in (b); and
- e) identify opportunities to promote the *resilience of indigenous biodiversity* to climate change, including by:
 - (i) allowing and supporting natural adjustments of *habitats* and *ecosystems* to climate change; and
 - (ii) *maintaining* and promoting the *enhancement* of the connectivity between *ecosystems*, and between existing and potential *habitats*, to enable migrations so that species can continue to find viable niches in response to climate change.

Explanation

Policy IE.3 will be implemented by the Wellington Regional Council in partnership with *mana whenua* / *tangata whenua* and in collaboration with landowners, territorial authorities, communities, and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Policy IE.3 gives effect to Objective 16A, identifying the characteristics required for the region's *indigenous* ecosystems to be in a healthy functioning state, providing *resilience* to the impacts of increasing environmental pressures, and identifying strategic priorities and targets for *restoration* to ensure that regional conservation actions are applied efficiently, prioritising protection of the *ecosystems* and *habitats* of most pressing concern. Policy IE.3 also identifies national priorities for *restoration* consistent with those identified in the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity 2023 and provides direction on how to promote the *resilience of indigenous biodiversity* to climate change.

Policy IE.4: Recognising the roles and values of landowners and communities in the management of indigenous biodiversity – non-regulatory

Recognise and provide for the values of landowners and communities as stewards of the *indigenous biodiversity* of the Wellington Region, by:

- a) involving communities in the identification of targets and priorities for protecting, *enhancing* and *restoring indigenous biodiversity*; and
- b) supporting landowner and community *restoration of indigenous* ecosystems.

Explanation

Policy IE.4 recognises and provides for the important role that landowners and the community have as environmental stewards.

Policy 66: Enhancing involvement of tangata whenua in resource management decision-making – non-regulatory

To enhance involvement of tangata whenua in resource management decision-making by improving opportunities for iwi authority representatives to participate in local authority decision-making.

Explanation

Active engagement by *local authorities* with *tangata whenua* requires an open mind and a genuine willingness to allow the views of tangata whenua representatives to influence decision-making.

Māori have a long history of settlement of the Wellington region, known as Te Upoko o te Ika a Māui (the head of the fish of Māui). *Iwi authority* refers to the body that represents an iwi and is recognised by that iwi as having the authority to do so. Refer to Chapter 2 for a list of the current iwi authorities representing tangata whenua in the Wellington region.

Policy 67: Establishing, maintaining and enhancing a compact, well designed, climate-resilient, accessible and environmentally responsive ~~and sustainable~~ regional form – non-regulatory

To establish, maintain and enhance a compact, well-designed, *climate-resilient, accessible, and environmentally responsive* and sustainable regional form with well- functioning urban areas and rural areas by:

- a) implementing the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol and any urban design guidance, including mātauranga Māori, that provides for best practice urban design and amenity outcomes, including for *high density development* and *medium density residential development*; and
- b) promoting best practice on the location and design of rural residential development; and
- c) recognising and enhancing the role of the region's open space network; and
- d) ~~encouraging~~ supporting the provision of a range of housing types and developments to meet the community's social, cultural, and economic needs, including affordable housing, and to improve the health, safety and well-being of the community; and
- e) implementing ~~the non-regulatory actions in the Wellington Regional Strategy for the Regional Focus Areas~~ Wellington Region Future Development Strategy, or the regional and local strategic growth or development framework or strategy that describes where and how future urban development will occur in that district or region; and
- f) partnering with mana whenua / tangata whenua to prepare papakāinga design

guidelines and other urban design guidelines that are underpinned by kaupapa Māori; and

g) safeguarding the productive capability of ~~the~~ *rural areas*.

Explanation

Policy 67 supports the non-regulatory measures, such as urban design guidance and other best practice guidance, to contribute to achieving Objective 22.

Policy 67 recognises that non-regulatory actions are required to support the implementation of best practice urban and rural development. The policy outlines the actions that local authorities in the Wellington Region can undertake to ensure that the way development occurs achieves a compact, well-designed, *climate- resilient*, accessible, and *environmentally responsive regional form*, with well- functioning urban and *rural areas*.

~~The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol promotes a national cross-sector commitment to the principles of good urban design. It provides access to resources, training and a network of signatories with a range of urban design experience.~~

~~The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol plays an important role in improving the quality of urban design in the region.~~

~~Rural residential activities offer investment, development and growth opportunities, but present challenges in terms of rural productivity, provision of infrastructure and sustainable management.~~

~~Best practice guidance will look at how districts and cities can benefits from rural residential activities while:~~

- ~~• Maintaining rural economies that are functioning and productive~~
- ~~• Managing sensitive environmental and amenity values~~
- ~~• Avoiding natural hazards~~
- ~~• Considering infrastructure limitations and requirements~~
- ~~• Managing urban development and protecting future urban development areas.~~

~~The region's open space network has helped define the region's existing urban form and is a fundamental element of quality of life for residents. The region's open space is managed by a number of organisations, including Wellington Regional Council, the region's district and city councils and the Department of Conservation. Policy 67 seeks to enhance the role of the region's open space network in supporting the region's compact form. This will require authorities to work together and identify gaps and opportunities.~~

~~The location of the Regional Focus Areas is shown in Figure 3 below. These are areas predicted to either come under significant development pressure (for example, the northern Waikanae edge and Pauatahanui Inlet) or provide significant development opportunities for a range of land use activities (for example, Porirua, Aotea, Linden and Upper Hutt). They are~~

areas of critical importance to the achievement of a compact and well designed regional form. Developing growth and/or development frameworks or strategies, as identified in the Wellington Regional Strategy, for each of the Regional Focus Areas is therefore an important action to be carried out by the relevant district and city councils.

Housing design and the quality of housing developments can have a significant role in improving housing choice and affordability. Different housing types, particularly those that are less land intensive, can offer greater opportunities for more affordable housing. Likewise, housing developments that incorporate, or are well connected to, transport infrastructure and services, employment opportunities and community centres are likely to enhance the social and economic wellbeing of residents.

At present housing in the region generally becomes more affordable with distance from the regional central business district and other places of work. This has negative implications in terms of travel demand, associated living costs, access to employment and community networks. It can also limit economic development opportunities by reducing the ability of businesses to attract and retain a workforce with appropriate skills.

Policy 68: Minimising soil erosion – non-regulatory

To minimise soil erosion by encouraging sustainable land management practices and take a whole of catchment approach.

Explanation

Sustainable land management practices are methods and techniques that reduce soil erosion – such as soil conservation plantings, land retirement and conservation tilling. These practices can apply to activities such as pastoral farming, plantation forestry, subdivisions and roading.

Taking a whole of catchment approach is promoted within this Regional Policy Statement. It means considering the full mix of purposes, uses or activities within a catchment, in terms of how these interact and contribute to outcomes within the catchment and for receiving environments beyond – such as in relation to indigenous ecosystems, soil productivity, water quality, erosion and stormwater control, or natural hazards. This approach suggests a need to work with multiple parties to establish shared objectives for a catchment and to ensure uses and activities are working towards the same goals or at least are not working against their attainment.

Policy 69: Preventing long-term soil deterioration – non-regulatory

To retain healthy soil ecosystem functioning by promoting and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices that do not cause soil contamination, compaction or loss of minerals or nutrients.

Explanation

Soil compaction, mineral and/or nutrient depletion, and soil contamination may cause irreversible degradation to soil ecosystem health. Retaining soil on land avoids contamination of water bodies.

Soil compaction occurs when the weight of livestock or heavy machinery compresses soil, causing it to lose pore space. Soil contamination, in the context of this policy, refers to the presence of pesticides and heavy metals in the natural soil environment.

Chapter 4.5: Methods to implement policies

This section contains the methods for implementing the policies set out in sections 4.1 to 4.4. It is divided into two main groups of methods: regulatory methods that implement the policies in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3; and non-regulatory methods that implement the policies in section 4.4 or support the delivery of the other policies.

The non-regulatory methods are subdivided into four types:

- Information and/or guidance
- Integrating management
- Identification and investigation
- Providing support.

Under each non-regulatory method, the key organisations who may implement the methods are indicated. An asterisk * indicates the lead authority responsible for implementation, if this is designated. Stakeholders will also be involved as methods are developed and implemented.

The delivery and timing of methods is subject to long term council community planning and annual plan schedules. Prioritisation and implementation of methods, over the ten year period of the Regional Policy Statement, will be outlined in an Implementation Plan. The Plan will be prepared by Wellington Regional Council, with the region's city and district councils, and in consultation with stakeholders. The Implementation Plan will be reviewed after the preparation of each State of the Environment Report (see Chapter 5).

Chapter 4.5.1: Regulatory methods

Method 1: District plan implementation

The process to amend *district plans* to implement policies 1, CC.1, CC.2, CC.2A, CC.3, CC.4, CC.8, 3, 4, 7, 11, 15, FW.2, FW.3, FWXXA, 21, 22, 23, 24, 24A, 24B, 24C, 24CC, 24D, IE.1, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, UD.1, UD.4, and 34, will commence as soon as reasonably practicable, unless otherwise specifically directed within the policy, and be notified in the next relevant plan change or full plan review, unless an alternative timeframe for notification is specifically directed within the policy. ~~on, or before, the date on which the relevant council commences the ten year review of its district plan, or a provision in a district plan, pursuant to section 79 of the Resource Management Act 1991.~~

District and city councils that will implement method 1 are:

- Wellington City Council
- Porirua City Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Hutt City Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- South Wairarapa District Council
- Carterton District Council
- Masterton District Council
- Tararua District Council for land within the Wellington Region.

Policies 3 and 4 with respect to the *coastal environment* do not apply to Upper Hutt City Council.

Only a small portion of rural *land* in the Tararua District is within the Wellington Region. The rest of the district is within the Manawatu-Wanganui region. The following Policies do not apply to Tararua District Council: 1, CC.1, CC.2, CC.2A, CC.3, CC.4, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 15, 21, FW.2, FW.3, FWXXA, 22, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32 and UD.4. ~~do not apply to Tararua District Council so as not to create conflict with the policy direction in the One Plan for the Manawatu-Wanganui region.~~

Method 2: Regional plan implementation

The process to amend *regional plans* to implement policies 2, CC.1, CC.4A, CC.5, CC.6, CC.8, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 18A, 18B, 19, 20, FW.1, FWXXA, FW.X, 21, 22, 23, 24, 24A, 24C, 24CC, 24D, IE.1, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and UD.4 will commence as soon as reasonably practicable unless otherwise specifically directed within the policy, and be notified in the next relevant plan change or full plan review, unless an alternative timeframe for notification is specifically directed within the policy. ~~on, or before, the date on which the relevant council~~

~~commences the ten year review of its district plan, or a provision in a district plan, pursuant to section 79 of the Resource Management Act 1991.~~

Method 3: Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy implementation

The process to amend the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Strategy to implement policies 9, EW.1, ~~10~~ and 33 will commence on, or before, the date on which Wellington Regional Council commences the review pursuant to section 74 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003.

Method 4: Consideration – resource consents, notices of requirement and when changing, varying or reviewing plans

Policies 35 to 60, IM.1, CC.9, CC.10, CC.11, CC.14, CC.14A, FW.5, FWXXB, IE.2, IE.2A, UD.2, UD.3 and UD.5 will be implemented, where relevant, when considering a resource consent, notice of requirement, or when changing, varying or reviewing a

district or *regional plan*.

Local authorities ~~District and City councils~~ that will implement method 4 are:

- Wellington Regional Council
- Wellington City Council
- Porirua City Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Hutt City Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- South Wairarapa District Council
- Carterton District Council
- Masterton District Council
- Tararua District Council where a proposal relates to land within the Wellington Region.

Method 5: Allocation of responsibilities

Local authorities are responsible for the land use control for *biological diversity, natural hazards, and hazardous substances, and freshwater*, as described in policies 61, 62, ~~and~~ 63 and FW.6.

Local authorities ~~District and City councils~~ that will implement method 4 are:

- Wellington Regional Council

- Wellington City Council
- Porirua City Council
- Kāpiti Coast District Council
- Hutt City Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- South Wairarapa District Council
- Carterton District Council
- Masterton District Council
- Tararua District Council where a proposal relates to land within the Wellington Region.

Method FW.1: Freshwater Action Plans

Prepare Freshwater Action Plans in partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, and through engagement with communities, stakeholders and city and district councils, as required by the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 to contribute to achieving the target attribute states set in the Natural Resources Plan, for each whitua no later than December 2026. The freshwater action plans may describe both regulatory and non-regulatory measures to achieve target attribute states.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Chapter 4.5.2: Non-regulatory methods – information and guidance

Method CC.1: Climate change education and behaviour change programme

Support, enable and implement climate education and behaviour change programmes, that include Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori perspectives in partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua, to support an equitable transition to a low-emission and climate-resilient region.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method CC.2: Develop guidance on avoiding, reducing and offsetting greenhouse gas emissions

Wellington Regional Council will work with city and district councils and mana whenua / tangata whenua to develop guidelines to implement the hierarchy approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Policy CC.8 by the end of 2024, including how to prioritise avoiding and reducing gross greenhouse gas emissions and when and how to allow for greenhouse gas emissions to be offset.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.*

Method CC.3: Travel choice assessment

The Wellington Regional Council will assist city and district councils with determining land use thresholds for triggering a requirement for a travel choice assessment, as well as guidelines for a travel choice assessment that city and district councils can provide to developers to assist them with mitigating the travel movements and associated greenhouse gas emissions arising from new subdivision, use and development.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.*

Method CC.3A: Whole of life greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Develop guidance to support the development of whole of life greenhouse gas emission assessments, in accordance with Policy CC.11.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method IE.1: Partnering with mana whenua / tangata whenua to give local effect to the decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity

Partner with mana whenua / tangata whenua to identify the local approach to give effect to the decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity and develop guidance on how to implement this, including protocols to enable and support mana whenua / tangata whenua engagement in resource management decision-making to provide for the matters set out in policies IE.1 and IE.2, and establishment of criteria and/or thresholds to trigger their engagement in resource consent processes.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, city and district councils, mana whenua /

tangata whenua.

Method 6: Information about reducing air pollution

Prepare and disseminate information to promote:

- a) best practice techniques to reduce discharges of odour, smoke, and dust;
- b) understanding the causes of air pollution and the steps people can take to reduce it;
- c) homeowners adopting cleaner forms of heating and insulation for their houses; and
- d) good agrichemical management practice.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 7: Information about high natural character in the coastal environment

Disseminate information held by Wellington Regional Council about places, sites and areas with high natural character in the coastal environment.

*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.**

Method 8: Information about restoration and enhancement of degraded water bodies and the natural character of the coastal environment

Prepare and disseminate information about the restoration and enhancement of degraded water bodies and the natural character of the coastal environment, including about eco-sourcing.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 9: Information about travel demand management

Prepare and disseminate information about how travel demand management mechanisms can be encouraged through district plans.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method 10: Information about energy efficient subdivision, design and building development

Prepare and disseminate information about how to carry out energy efficient subdivision design and building development.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 11: Information about water conservation and efficient use

Prepare and disseminate information about water conservation and the efficient use of water.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 12: Information about techniques to maintain and enhance indigenous ecosystems

Prepare and disseminate information about the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of indigenous ecosystems and habitats.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 13: Information about best practice for earthworks to protect Māori archaeological sites, other significant sites and kōiwi

Prepare and disseminate information about best practice, in consultation with iwi authorities, for resource consent holders, applicants and others undertaking earthworks, to ensure Māori archaeological sites and other significant sites and kōiwi (human bones) are appropriately protected.

Implementation: Iwi authorities, Wellington Regional Council, and city and district councils.

Method 14: Information ~~about~~ on natural hazards and climate change effects

1. Undertake research, ~~Prepare~~ and disseminate information about *natural hazards* and climate change effects in order to:
 - a) guide local authority planning and decision-making; and
 - b) raise awareness and understanding of *natural hazards* and climate change.
2. In partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, research Te Ao Māori and Mātauranga Māori understanding of *natural hazards* and risk management approaches in order to broaden hazard risk management awareness, planning and decision making.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, city and district councils and Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.*

Method 15: Information about sustainable land management practices

Prepare and disseminate information about sustainable land management practices, including:

- a) soil capability in terms of its limitations;
- b) soil conservation methods and techniques, including the retirement of erosion prone land from pastoral farming;
- c) causes of poor soil health, and practices and techniques to improve degraded

| |
|--|
| <p>soil health and ecological function; and</p> <p>d) best practice techniques to prevent soil erosion and sediment run-off from vegetation clearance and earthworks.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.</i></p> |
| Method 16: Information about locations with good access to the strategic public transport network |
| <p>Prepare and disseminate information to support the identification of locations with good access to the strategic public transport network.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils.</i></p> |
| Method 18: Regional structure planning guide |
| <p>Prepare a structure planning guide about integrating land use with infrastructure and for delivering high quality urban design.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils.</i></p> |
| Method 19: Regional structure planning guide |
| <p>Prepare and disseminate information, for resource management decision-making, on the meaning and application of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the Wellington region.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Iwi authorities*, Wellington Regional Council and city and district council.</i></p> |
| Method 20: Information to assist with the identification of places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values |
| <p>Prepare information to assist with interpretation of the criteria set out in policies 21 and 22, which require the identification and protection of places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils.</i></p> |
| Method 23: Information about natural features to protect property from natural hazards |
| <p>Prepare and disseminate information about how to identify features in the natural environment that can offer natural protection to property from the effects of erosion and inundation.</p> <p><i>Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils</i></p> |
| Method 24: Database of sites at risk of contamination |
| <p>Maintain a database of sites:</p> <p>a) with a history of storing, using or manufacturing hazardous substances;</p> |

- b) where major spills involving hazardous substances have occurred; and
- c) where analysis of soil or water samples has confirmed that the site is contaminated.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method 25: Information about the provision of walking, cycling and public transport for development

~~Prepare and disseminate information about how to provide for walking, cycling and public transport.~~

~~*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council*~~

Method UD.1: Development manuals and design guides

In partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua, prepare the following development manuals and design guidance where appropriate:

- a) Urban design guidance to provide for best practice urban design and amenity outcomes in accordance with Policy 67(a); and
- b) Papakāinga design guidance that are underpinned by Kaupapa Māori in accordance with Policy 67(f); and
- c) Urban design guidance and development manuals to assist developers to meet Policy CC.4, Policy CC.4A, Policy CC.14, Policy CC.14A and Policy FW.3, as well as direction to reduce transport emissions associated with subdivision, use and development in Policy CC.9.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, city and district councils and iwi authorities.

Chapter 4.5.3: Non-regulatory methods – integrating management

Method IM.1: Integrated management - ki uta ki tai

To achieve integrated management of natural and physical resources, the Wellington Regional Council, district and city councils shall:

- a) partner with and provide support to mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to provide for their involvement in resource management and decision making; and
- b) partner with and provide support to mana whenua / *tangata whenua* to provide for mātauranga Māori in resource management and decision making; and
- c) work with communities to achieve effective integrated management outcomes; and
- d) work together with other agencies to ensure consistent implementation of the objectives, policies and methods of this Regional Policy Statement; and
- e) enable connected and holistic approach to resource management that extends beyond organisational or administrative boundaries; and
- f) recognise that the impacts of activities extend beyond the immediate and directly adjacent area; and
- g) require Māori data, including mātauranga Māori, areas and sites of significance, *wāhi tapu* and *wāhi tūpuna* are only shared in accordance with agreed *Tikanga* and kawa Māori; and
- h) share data and information (other than in (f) above) across all relevant agencies; and
- i) incentivise opportunities and programmes that achieve multiple objectives and benefits.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method IM.2 Protection and interpretation of Mātauranga Māori and Māori data

By 2025, the Wellington Regional Council in partnership with each mana whenua / *tangata whenua* will develop and uphold *Tikanga* and kawa for Māori data sovereignty, including but not limited to:

- a) how Māori data and information is collected, stored, protected, shared and managed; and
- b) how mātauranga Māori and other forms of Māori data is analysed and

- c) interpreted.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and mana whenua / tangata whenua.

Method FW.2: Joint processing of resource consents for urban development or regionally significant infrastructure that relate to freshwater

When processing resource consents for *urban development or regionally significant infrastructure* that affect *freshwater*, the Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils shall:

- a) jointly process publicly notified resource consents (where both regional and district consents are publicly notified) for *urban development* and *regionally significant infrastructure*; and
- b) engage early with mana whenua / *tangata whenua* about the effects of the proposal on *freshwater*; and
- c) encourage resource consent applicants to engage with mana whenua /
- d) *tangata whenua* early in their planning; and
- e) collaborate on pre-application processes; and
- f) collaborate on the processing of non-notified resource consents; and collaborate on monitoring of consent conditions except where specific responsibilities are specified in consent conditions; and
- g) share information and data to support integrated management.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 17: Reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions from waste streams ~~Information about waste management~~

Work in partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua* and with city and district councils, the waste management sector, industry groups and the community to:

- a) reduce organic matter at source; and
- b) work towards implementing kerbside recovery of *organic waste* from households and commercial premises; and
- c) encourage development opportunities for increasing the recovery of biogas from municipal landfills; and
- d) increase the diversion of *organic waste* (sludge) from the waste stream before deposition to municipal landfills.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, iwi authorities, city and district councils.

~~Prepare and disseminate information about how to reduce, reuse, or recycle, residual waste.~~

~~Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils*~~

Method 22: Integrated hazard risk management and climate change adaptation planning Information about areas at high risk from natural hazards

Integrate hazard *risk* management and *climate change adaptation* planning in the Wellington Region by:

- a) developing non-statutory strategies, where appropriate, for integrating hazard risk management and *climate change adaptation* approaches between local authorities in the Wellington Region; and
- b) supporting the development of consistency in *natural hazard* provisions in district and regional plans; and
- c) assisting mana whenua / *tangata whenua* in the development of iwi *climate change adaptation* plans; and
- d) ~~Preparing and disseminating information about how to identify areas at high risk~~ classifying risks from natural hazards as low, medium and high to ensure regional consistency, as relevant to the development of hazard management strategies to guide decision-making.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method 26: Prepare airshed action plans

Prepare airshed action plans, where needed, to determine how levels of fine particulate matter will be reduced.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method 27: Integrate management across mean high water springs

Clarify local authority management across mean high water springs by:

- a) reviewing memoranda of understanding between local authorities for matters that cross mean high water springs; and
- b) developing other non-statutory plans, where necessary, for areas and issues that impact on the coastal environment.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method 28: Prepare a coastal and marine ecosystems action plan

Identify degraded indigenous habitats and ecosystems in the coastal environment that warrant restoration or enhancement programmes, and prepare a coastal and marine ecosystem action plan.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method 29: Take a whole of catchment approach to works, operations and services

Take a whole of catchment approach that recognises the inter-relationships between the values of natural resources when undertaking and planning works, operations and services.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils*

Method 30: Implement the harbour and catchment management strategy for Porirua Harbour

Implement the harbour and catchment management strategy for Porirua Harbour, in partnership with *mana whenua / tangata whenua*, to address the *restoration* of Porirua Harbour and reduce the discharge of sediment, nutrients and *contaminants* into the harbour.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council and Wellington City Council.

Method 31: Protocol for management of earthworks and air quality between local authorities

With interested parties, prepare protocols and definitions to guide changes to *district* and *regional plans* to avoid gaps, uncertainty and unnecessary overlaps in the regulation of management of odour, smoke, and dust.

- a) ~~earthworks, including vegetation disturbance, cultivation and harvesting; and~~
- b) ~~management of odour, smoke and dust.~~

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method 32: Partnering Engagement with *mana whenua* / *tangata whenua*, and partnering where appropriate and engaging with stakeholders, landowners and the community in the identification and protection of significant values

1. Partner with *iwi*, *hapū*, marae and/or *whānau* to identify and protect areas and sites of significance to *mana whenua* / *tangata whenua*; and
2. ~~Involve~~ Partner with *iwi*, *hapū*, marae and/or *whānau*, and partner where appropriate and engage with stakeholders, landowners, and the community ~~in~~ the to:
 - a) ~~identification and protection of~~ significant places, sites and areas with significant *historic heritage* values; and
 - b) ~~identification and protection of~~ outstanding *natural features* and *landscapes*, and identify and managing the values of special amenity *landscapes*; and
 - c) ~~identification and protection of~~ *indigenous* ecosystems and *habitats* with

significant biodiversity values, other significant *habitats* of *indigenous* fauna, and the *ecosystem processes* that support these ecosystems and *habitats* and, where appropriate, to *enhance* and *restore* these to a healthy functioning state; and

- d) develop and implement a regional biodiversity strategy described in Method IE.3; and
- e) ~~protection of the values associated with the *rivers* and *lakes* identified in Appendix 1.; and~~
- f) identify *nature-based solutions* to climate change as described in Method CC.6; and
- g) identify and protect highly productive land for use in *land-based primary production*, both now and for future generations.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council (all clauses) and city and district councils (clauses 2(a), (b), (c) and (g).

Method 33: Identify sustainable energy programmes

~~Identify sustainable energy programmes, to improve energy efficiency and conservation, reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and minimise the region's vulnerability to energy supply disruptions or shortages.~~

~~*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils*~~

Method 34: Prepare a regional water supply strategy

Prepare a regional water supply strategy, in partnership with mana whenua / *tangata whenua*, and consultation with communities, to guide local authorities on how to:

- a) improve and maximise efficient allocation of water including economic, technical and dynamic efficiency; and-
- b) reduce leakage and wastage from reticulation systems; and
- c) encourage efficient use of water including through onsite storage; and
- d) secure sustainable water supplies for communities across the Wellington Region, preparing for climate change, water scarcity, population growth and improving operational resilience; and
- e) plan additional sources of water, including through storage (including rain tanks), treatment, and distribution systems, while considering the health needs of people; and
- f) manage water demand including through ~~demand management and water conservation programmes and security of supply; and~~

- g) developing methods to protect future and existing sources, taking into account the requirements of Taumata Arowai; and
- h) implement water safety plans and other requirements of Taumata Arowai as appropriate; and
- i) apply ki uta ki tai to source protection.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and water infrastructure providers.*

Method 35: Prepare a regional stormwater action plan

~~Prepare a regional stormwater action plan that is developed and agreed to by the region's local authorities.~~

~~*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council* and city and district councils*~~

Method 36: Support industry-led environmental accords and codes of practice

Support industry-led environmental accords and codes of practice where these will lead to the achievement of objectives of this Regional Policy Statement.

Implementation: Industry and Wellington Regional Council.*

Method 37: Involve tangata whenua in resource management decision making

In consultation with iwi authorities, appoint representatives with current accreditation in the Ministry for the Environment 'Making Good Decisions Programme' to committees that hear applications for resource consents, notices of requirement and changes, variations or replacements to district or regional plans or the Regional Policy Statement that affect matters of significance to tangata whenua.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.

Method 38: Iwi authorities prepare planning documents

Prepare planning documents, where iwi authorities wish to do so, to support the implementation of policy 49 and identify:

- a) sites and resources where there has been a loss of mauri and the priorities for restoration;
- b) values associated with water bodies, including water bodies that should be managed for customary purposes, and criteria for their management;
- c) mahinga kai (customary food gathering areas) and areas of natural resources used for customary purposes and priorities for their protection and restoration;
- d) places, areas and site with significant spiritual or cultural historic heritage values, and appropriate behaviours in relation to those places, sites and areas;

and/or

- e) areas that should be monitored and the indicators to be used to measure the state of:
 - (i) mauri of natural resources;
 - (ii) water bodies managed for cultural purposes;
 - (iii) mahinga kai and areas of natural resources used for customary purposes;
and
 - (iv) places, areas and sites with significant spiritual or cultural historic heritage value.

Implementation: Iwi authorities, Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method 39: Prepare protocols for tangata whenua access to mahinga kai and natural resources used for customary purposes on public land

Prepare protocols to define where and how tangata whenua can access significant mahinga kai and areas of natural resources used for customary purposes, on public land managed by local authorities.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council, iwi authorities and city and district councils.

Method FW.X: Engagement with Water Regulators

Engage with Taumata Arowai and the water services economic regulator (when established) to ensure a consistent approach to *Te Mana o te Wai*, including consideration of limits, measures, targets and relationships, particularly where there are overlaps in functions and roles.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

~~Method 40: Sign the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol~~

~~Become a signatory to the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol and develop a joint local authority urban design action plan.~~

~~*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils*~~

Method 41: Integrate public open space

~~Identify gaps and opportunities to improve integration and use of public open space and develop a regionally agreed action plan.~~

~~*Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy*~~

Method 42: Develop visions for the regionally significant centres

Develop a vision for each regionally significant centre identified in policy 30, and formulate a statement about the role that each plays in contributing to an overall vision for the region.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method 43: Develop principles for retail activities

Develop regional principles to manage the location of retail activities that are consistent with the provisions of Policy 30.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method 44: Analysis of industrial employment locations

Analyse factors and trends affecting supply and demand of industrial based employment locations.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method 45: Develop principles for rural residential use and development

Develop regional principles to guide the identification of areas suitable for rural residential development and promote best practice rural residential use and design.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method 46: Develop strategies or development frameworks for each Regional Focus Area

Develop growth and/or development frameworks or strategies for each Regional Focus Area.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method 47: Analysis of the range and affordability of housing in the region

Complete a regional analysis of housing, including range and affordability, and explore with private sector developers innovative housing design and/or developments that increase the range of types and affordability in the region.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Strategy

Method UD.2: Future Development Strategy

Prepare a *Future Development Strategy* for the Wellington Region in accordance with Subpart 4 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020. The *Future Development Strategy* will set out the high-level vision for accommodating urban growth over the long term, and identifies strategic priorities to inform other development-related decisions, such as:

- a) district plan zoning and related plan changes; and
- b) priority outcomes in long-term plans and infrastructure strategies, including decisions on funding and financing; and
- c) priorities and decisions in regional land transport plans.

The Future Development Strategy will provide a framework for achieving well- functioning urban environments in the Wellington Region, including specifying how and where future growth will occur to provide for sufficient capacity to meet future growth needs over the next 30 years, support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and provide for climate-resilience.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils (via the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee).

Method FW.X: Technical Guidance for Stormwater Management in Urban Development

Prepare technical guidance for *stormwater* management in *urban development*, in collaboration with city and district councils and Wellington Water, that addresses *hydrological control* and *hydraulic neutrality* processes, methods, devices, and outcomes for application in the integrated planning and design of *urban development*.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method FW.XX: Best practice guidance for managing urban development effects on freshwater

Develop best practice guidance for managing the effects of *urban development* on waterbodies and *freshwater* ecosystems.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Chapter 4.5.4: Non-regulatory methods – identification and investigation

Method CC.4: Prepare a regional forest spatial plan

By December 2024, prepare a regional forest spatial plan, using a partnership approach with mana whenua / tangata whenua and other key stakeholders, as appropriate, to identify where to promote and support planting and natural regeneration of permanent forest and associated browsing pest animal control, to give effect to Objective CC.5 and contribute to achieving water quality targets for sediment, to inform the requirements of Policy CC.6.

This plan to include:

- a) a target for an increase in permanent forest extent in the Wellington Region to support achieving Objective CC.5; and
- b) evaluation of the potential impacts of increased afforestation on rural production and social well-being, and development of an approach that will maximise the environmental, social, and economic benefits; and
- c) ways to implement and support capability for increasing the area of indigenous forest, including the provision of incentives; and
- d) identification of the types of indigenous forest to prioritise for re- afforestation, including links to the strategic indigenous biodiversity targets and priorities identified through Policy IE.3 and Method IE.3; and
- e) use of high-resolution spatial data to support identification of areas appropriate for permanent forest or plantation forestry, site-appropriate indigenous forests and other planting types; and
- f) a process to monitor and report on changes in the extent and health of permanent forest.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council*, city and district councils at their discretion

Method CC.5: Confirm regional response to reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions

By 31 December 2024, Wellington Regional Council will confirm the preferred policy approach and timeframe to implement Policy CC.5, taking into account changes in agricultural land use and land management practices, predicted changes in greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture sector in the Wellington Region, regulatory and non-regulatory responses, and relevant national policy direction and initiatives.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method CC.6: Identifying nature-based solutions for climate change

By 30 June 2024, the Wellington Regional Council will, in partnership with *mana whenua / tangata whenua* and other stakeholders as appropriate, identify ecosystems in the Wellington Region that should be prioritised for protection, *enhancement*, and *restoration* for their contribution as a *nature-based solution* to climate change, including those that:

- a) sequester and/or store carbon (e.g., forest, peatland); and
- b) provide *resilience* to people from the impacts of climate change, including from *natural hazards* (e.g., coastal dunelands, street trees, and *wetlands*); and
- c) provide *resilience* for *indigenous biodiversity* from the impacts of climate change, enabling ecosystems and species to persist or adapt (e.g., improving the health of a forest to allow it to better tolerate climate extremes).

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method CC.7: Advocating for the use of transport pricing tools

Actively advocate to the Government to introduce new regulatory functions or tools for councils to manage congestion and *greenhouse gas emissions* within major *urban areas* through use of pricing tools and/or taxes.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method IE.2: Inventory of biodiversity offsetting and biodiversity compensation opportunities

Partner with *mana whenua / tangata whenua*, and interested parties to develop a regional inventory of opportunities for offsetting or compensating for any residual adverse effects on ecosystems and habitats with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values and other significant *habitats of indigenous fauna*.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council city and district councils, and iwi authorities.*

Method IE.3: Regional biodiversity strategy

Develop and implement, in partnership with *mana whenua / tangata whenua* and in collaboration with territorial authorities, communities and other key stakeholders, a regional biodiversity strategy to promote the landscape-scale *maintenance, enhancement, and restoration* of the region's *indigenous biodiversity* incorporating both Mātauranga Māori and *systematic conservation planning* and meeting the requirements in Appendix 1E (regional biodiversity strategies).

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method 21: ~~Information to assist with the identification~~ Identification and protection of indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values and other significant *habitats of indigenous fauna*

The regional council will liaise with the region's territorial authorities to ensure that all *district plans* include, as soon as reasonably practicable and by no later than 4 August 2028, a schedule of *indigenous* ecosystems and *habitats* with significant *indigenous biodiversity* values and other significant *habitats of indigenous fauna* in the terrestrial environment and plan provisions to protect them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Where a district-wide *indigenous biodiversity* assessment has not been initiated by 30 June 2024, the regional council will liaise with the territorial authority to agree on a programme of works and an understanding as to whether:

- a) the territorial authority shall continue to have sole responsibility; or
- b) the territorial authority and the regional council shall share responsibilities.

~~Prepare and disseminate information to assist with the interpretation of the criteria set out in policies 23 and 24, which require the identification and protection of indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values.~~

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils.*

Method UD.3: Opportunities for Kaupapa Māori based frameworks for urban development

Partner with mana whenua / tangata whenua to identify opportunities for enabling the development and adoption of Kaupapa Māori based frameworks for *urban development*.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method UD.4: Definitions of marae and papakāinga

City and district councils will develop a definition of marae and papakāinga in partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua and include these in their *district plans*.

Implementation: City and district councils.

Method 48: Water allocation policy review

Review water allocation policy in the *regional plan* so that:

- a) *freshwater* is allocated and used efficiently; and
- b) all existing over-allocation is phased out and future over-allocation is avoided; and
- c) water allocation limits set in the regional plan are not exceeded; and
- d) water allocation efficiency is improved, including consideration of transferable permits; and

- e) iwi and hapū rights, interests and responsibilities are provided for; and
- f) alternatives to the first in first served approach to water allocation are considered and equitable allocation of water is provided for; and
- g) water allocation policy supports *climate change adaptation*; and
- h) land use change to lower emission or more *climate-resilient* uses is promoted.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council.

Method 49: Investigate use of Māori names for rivers, lakes and places of cultural significance in the region

Investigate ways in which Māori names for rivers, lakes and places of cultural significance in the Wellington region can be used

Implementation: Iwi authorities, Wellington Regional Council, and city and district councils.

Method 50: Prepare a regional landscape character description

Develop and disseminate a landscape character description for each territorial authority within the region that describes and categorises the landscapes within the district or city to assist with identifying outstanding natural features and landscapes, and special amenity landscapes.

Note: The landscape character descriptions will not identify outstanding natural features and landscapes, and special amenity landscapes. Instead, they will define and describe the region's landscapes. They will also provide a good base upon which to embark on a landscape assessment leading to the identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes and special amenity landscapes.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district council.*

Method 51: Identify areas for improved public access

Identify areas of the coast, lakes and rivers where public access should be improved.

*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council * and city and district councils.*

Method 52: Identify the region's significant mineral resources

Identify the location of significant mineral resources in the region

*Implementation: Wellington Regional Council * and city and district councils.*

Chapter 4.5.5: Non-regulatory methods – providing support

Method CC.8: Programme to support low-emissions and climate- resilient agriculture – non-regulatory methods

By June 2024, develop and start implementing a targeted climate change extension programme, with mana whenua / tangata whenua and relevant stakeholders, to actively promote and support changes to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and increase rural land use resilience to climate change, including by:

- a) providing practical and easily accessible information on projected climate change impacts at a local level; and
- b) providing base data held by the regional council to support the development of farm greenhouse gas emission profiles; and
- c) promoting and supporting actions to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions and/or increase climate resilience; and
- d) identifying appropriate areas and species for tree planting/natural regeneration in farm plans as part of implementing the regional spatial forest plan (see Method CC.4); and
- e) identifying other on-farm nature-based solutions that will increase the resilience of a farm system and/or catchment to the effects of climate change; and
- f) identify and assist catchment groups and water user groups in the development of adaptation plans; and
- g) supporting central government and industry climatechange programmes/initiatives.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Method CC.9: Support and funding for protecting, enhancing, and restoring indigenous ecosystems and nature-based solutions

Provide support, and seek new sources of funding, to incentivise or implement programmes, including mana whenua / *tangata whenua*-led programmes, that protect, enhance or restore the priority ecosystems identified by Methods IE.3 and CC.6 for their *indigenous biodiversity* values and/or their contribution as *nature- based solutions* to climate change.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Method CC.10: Establish incentives to shift to low and zero-carbon multi-modal transport including public transport and active modes

Establish, support and promote a range of incentives for uptake of low and zero-carbon multi-modal transport, including public transport and active modes, to reduce *greenhouse gas emissions*, and to support an equitable and inclusive transition.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Method IE.4: Kaitiaki indigenous biodiversity monitoring programme

Work in partnership with *mana whenua / tangata whenua* to establish and resource kaitiaki programmes to:

- a) monitor and evaluate the *ecosystem health* and trends of the region's *indigenous biodiversity* and the extent to which the *decision-making principles for indigenous biodiversity* are being given effect to; and
- b) develop action plans to respond to the monitoring results, including informing the identification of targets and priorities through Method IE.3.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Method 53: Support *mana whenua / tangata whenua* and community restoration initiatives for the coastal environment, rivers, lakes, and wetlands

Provide practical support for *mana whenua / tangata whenua* and community restoration initiatives for the coastal environment, rivers, lakes and wetlands, with a focus on achieving the targets and priorities identified by Methods IE.3, CC.4 and CC.6.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils

Method 54: Assist landowners to maintain, enhance, and restore indigenous ecosystems

Assist landowners to *maintain, enhance* and/or *restore indigenous* ecosystems, with a focus on achieving the targets and priorities identified by Methods IE.3, CC.4 and CC.6, including by, but not limited to:

- a) assisting with the costs of legally protecting *indigenous* ecosystems by way of open space covenants with Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust (QEII); and
- b) considering opportunities for partnerships (e.g., through Ngā Whenua Rāhui), advice, education, support and incentives, such as rates rebates; and
- c) assisting with the costs of controlling pest plants and animals; and
- d) supporting landowners to *restore* significant *indigenous* ecosystems by fencing and planting.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils

Method 55: Assist landowners to protect erosion prone land

Assist landowners to protect erosion prone land through soil conservation planting.

Implementation: Wellington Regional Council

Method 56: Assist the community to reduce waste and use water and energy efficiently

~~Assist the community to adopt sustainable practices to:-~~

- ~~a) reduce, reuse or recycle waste;~~
- ~~b) use water and energy efficiently; and~~
- ~~c) conserve water and energy.~~

~~Implementation: Wellington Regional Council and city and district councils~~