

## CHAPTER 9: LANDSCAPE

### 9.0 INTRODUCTION

Tasman District is renowned for its diversity and quality of landscape and spectacular views. Mountain landscapes are protected in the Nelson Lakes and Kahurangi national parks. Coastal landscape is partly protected in the Abel Tasman National Park.

The river and floodplain landscapes, apart from those in National Parks, are working landscapes largely maintained by the rural community. While the urban environment is a significant part of the District, important landscapes are those mainly related to the non-urban environment and the coastal urban environment. The District's landscapes and views are comprised of different combinations of landforms – some striking, like the rock formations of the northwest coast and the Takaka Hill, water bodies like Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa, indigenous and exotic vegetation, and land uses that form part of the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the District.

Landscapes are also a valuable economic asset capitalised on by the District's growing tourist industry. However care is needed to ensure that the effects of supporting facilities do not encroach on the landscape values in an adverse way.

The Act places increased importance on the protection of landscape values, with Sections 6(a) and (b) identifying a number of landscape matters of national importance which must be provided for. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement emphasises landscape as an essential part of the natural character of the coastal environment. Amenity values are also recognised by the Act.

A Council study (Works Consultancy Services Ltd 1995) has identified landscapes and natural features outside the conservation estate that are outstanding or of regional significance on the basis of their character, quality and visibility. Some of these areas are shown on the planning maps and are subject to special development controls. An assessment of likely development pressures was carried out and recommendations for future management were made. The principal landscape issue is to decide what is appropriate subdivision, use and development of land in relation to the protection of the outstanding landscapes, natural features, natural character and amenity of the District.

### 9.1 OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPES AND NATURAL FEATURES

#### 9.1.1 Issues

Landscape issues are:

- 9.1.1.1 Identification and protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes outside and adjoining the conservation estate.
- 9.1.1.2 Managing the effects of subdivision and development, especially urban, in the rural and coastal landscapes. Haphazard expansion of settlements and rural residential areas can change the existing landscape and reduce its quality. The location and type of activity can affect landscape quality especially in areas such as the St Arnaud locality.
- 9.1.1.3 The District has a number of sensitive and important landscape features which could be degraded by inappropriate development and plantings. For example, St Arnaud and the Upper Buller Valley have glacial and indigenous vegetation features that form part of their landscape character. Similarly the karst landscape and vegetation of the Takaka Hill has a very high landscape value because it is unusual and highly visible.

## 9.1.2 Objective

Protection of the District's outstanding landscapes and features from the adverse effects of subdivision, use or development of land and management of other land, especially in the rural area and along the coast to mitigate adverse visual effects.

## 9.1.3 Policies

*Refer to Policy sets 5.1, 6.4 – 6.7, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.2, 10.1, 11.2, 12.1, 14.1 – 14.4.*

*Refer to Rule sections 16.1 - 16.4, 16.6, 16.10, 17.2 - 17.7 – 17.12, 18.1, 18.2, 18.5 - 18.7, 18.11, 18.12.*

**9.1.3.1** To encourage broadscale land uses and land use changes such as plantation forestry and land disturbance to be managed in a way that avoids or mitigates the adverse effects on natural landform, surrounding natural features and on visual amenity values.

**9.1.3.2** To require that aerial structures be co-sited if this is technically feasible and satisfactory agreements can be reached between collocating operators and landowners.

**9.1.3.3** To ensure that structures do not adversely affect:

- (a) visual interfaces such as skylines, ridgelines and the shorelines of lakes, rivers and the sea;
- (b) unity of landform, vegetation cover and views.

**9.1.3.4** To discourage subdivision developments and activities which would significantly alter the visual character of land in outstanding landscapes (including adjoining Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes and Kahurangi national parks).

**9.1.3.5** To promote awareness and protection of landscape (including seascape) values.

**9.1.3.6** To manage activities which may cause adverse visual impacts in the general rural area.

**Proposed as at 1 November 2008**

**9.1.3.7** To ensure that land disturbance, including vegetation removal and earthworks, does not adversely affect landscape character and rural amenity value in the Coastal Environment Area in locations of public visibility, particularly where there are distinctive natural landforms.

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**9.1.3.8** To encourage innovative roading and footpath design which uses carriageway width, alignment, and surface material to enhance the quality of design and visual appearance in the St Arnaud Landscape Priority Area.

**9.1.3.9** In the Takaka-Eastern Golden Bay Area, to ensure that all coastal margins are assessed for landscape values, namely visual amenity, outstanding landforms and natural heritage values, prior to the rezoning of land for residential purposes.

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## 9.1.20 Methods of Implementation

### 9.1.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Rules regulating the adverse effects of:
  - buildings and plantings in landscape priority areas at St Arnaud and on the Takaka Hill;
  - buildings on identified ridgelines and in the coastal environment.

- (b) Visual assessment criteria in the Plan for consents for tracking on steeplands, mineral extraction, erection of high structures, modification of significant natural areas and clearance of indigenous vegetation.

#### **9.1.20.2 Investigation and Monitoring**

- (a) Undertaking of further investigation in conjunction with landowners and other interested parties on the location of outstanding landscapes and natural features and of the areas and rules necessary for the appropriate protection of such landscapes and features by 2002.
- (b) Photographic monitoring programme in the Upper Buller Valley of key landscape features.

#### **9.1.20.3 Education and Advocacy**

- (a) Production of Council or industry-developed landscape guidelines.
- (b) Education through provision of information in Council publications.

#### **9.1.20.4 Financial Incentives**

- (a) Land purchase where land has outstanding landscape values and other methods are inappropriate.
- (b) Financial incentives (such as rates relief) for the protection of valued landscapes and features on private land.

### **9.1.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation**

While the Act encourages a focus on protecting outstanding or special landscapes, it is also necessary to recognise and protect visual values in the general rural landscape, as these are important to the community. Some activities, including tracking on steep slopes, mineral extraction, and the erection of high structures such as towers and aerials, create visual effects that justify specific management in the rural area.

Some landscapes (including seascapes) are more vulnerable to change than others. The natural landscape often has highlights and significant features. The coasts are particularly well endowed with them. They may include wetlands, lookouts, peaks, tors, cliffs and steep faces. In the context of protecting Landscape Priority Areas and natural features such as the open river terraces and roche moutonnees of the Upper Buller Valley from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, the main activities with visual effects are:

#### **9.1.30.1 Change in Vegetation Cover**

While establishment and removal of shelter belts and amenity trees may have a localised visual impact, the scale of logging and establishment of plantation forestry and removal of indigenous forest is likely to significantly affect the visual character of a landscape. This is especially so in coastal landscapes and landscapes with distinctive landforms such as the St Arnaud and Takaka Hill landscape and on identified ridgelines and skylines in the District.

#### **9.1.30.2 Land Disturbance**

Land disturbance from mining, quarrying, building excavation, road works and tracking can result in stark and unnatural changes in colour and form in the landscape, especially when displayed on hilly landscapes and along coastal and river margins.

#### **9.1.30.3 Structures**

Structures, especially in the coastal environment, on identified ridgelines and skylines, and adjoining national parks, have the potential to impact adversely on landscape character through inappropriate location, size, shape and colour. Many of these effects can be mitigated

through careful design and use of colour and tree planting. Golden Bay has many sensitive skylines and ridgelines which are generally not built on.

Clustering of masts on one hilltop is a preferable visual outcome to having structures on several prominent hilltops. It is realised that there are some situations where this is technically impractical.

#### 9.1.30.4 Subdivision

Ad hoc subdivision changes the open space character of the landscape by introducing new lines of fencing and plantings.

### 9.1.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

9.1.40.1 Changes in the assessed landscape values of significant landscapes resulting from specified subdivision and land use activities.

9.1.40.2 Results of community perception study on the quality of visual change in rural areas.

## 9.2 RURAL LANDSCAPE VALUES

### 9.2.1 Issues

9.2.1.1 Opportunities for landscape design and enhancement of visual amenities.

9.2.1.2 The need for recognition of local as well as wider landscape character and values as a basis for evaluating the acceptability of proposals for subdivision and development.

9.2.1.3 Urbanisation of rural landscapes through reduced setback distances, urban fencing styles and planting in rural areas. The overall effect has been a loss of open character.

### 9.2.2 Objective

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Retention of the contribution rural landscapes make to the amenity values and rural character of the District, and protection of those values from inappropriate subdivision and development.

### 9.2.3 Policies

*Refer to Policy sets 5.1, 6.3 – 6.6, 7.2 – 7.4, 8.2, 10.1, 11.2, 12.1, 14.1 – 14.4.*

*Refer to Rule sections 16.1 - 16.4, 16.6, 16.10, 17.4 - 17.8, 17.10 - 17.13, 18.1, 18.2, 18.5, 18.6, 18.7, 18.12.*

9.2.3.1 To integrate consideration of rural landscape values into any evaluation of proposals for more intensive subdivision and development than the Plan permits.

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*[Policy 9.2.3.2 deleted]*

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9.2.3.3 To retain the rural characteristics of the landscape within rural areas.

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9.2.3.4 To encourage landscape enhancement and mitigation of changes through landscape analysis, subdivision design, planting proposals, careful siting of structures and other methods, throughout rural areas.

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- 9.2.3.5** To evaluate, and to avoid, remedy or mitigate cumulative adverse effects of development on landscape values within rural areas. C9 7/07  
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- 9.2.3.6** In the Takaka Eastern Golden Bay Area, to ensure that: C8 7/07  
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- (a) rural amenity values, rural landscapes and un-built green-space areas, including open space between neighbouring settlement areas, are protected from inappropriate residential development;
  - (b) any new development consolidates within and around areas where there is already an enclave of residential development and community amenities such as schools, churches, playing fields or clubrooms;
  - (c) greenbelts and open-space areas in between every settlement area are protected from inappropriate built development;
  - (d) highly visible rural landscapes, especially ridgelines and hilltops, are protected from inappropriate residential development;
  - (e) low impact building design solutions are required for any built development on highly visible rural landscapes;
  - (f) the adverse effects of high density development on karst terrain are avoided;
  - (g) the adverse effects of development on outstanding karst land formations are avoided;
  - (h) alternative solutions to continued expansion onto rural landscapes is considered, such as eco-village concepts and more compact forms of low-impact design for the construction of housing and other buildings.

## **9.2.20 Methods of Implementation**

### **9.2.20.1 Regulatory**

- (a) Rules for subdivision and development as permitted or controlled activities in rural zones at an intensity that ensures protection of rural landscape character and qualities.
- (b) The application of landscape based design guidelines for subdivision and development in rural areas which have been identified as having potential for further residential development, as criteria for the consideration of applications for more intensive residential and rural residential subdivision and development.
- (c) The ability to consent to more intensive subdivision and development proposals that are consistent with the design guidelines.
- (d) In the Rural 3 Zone, the ability to consent to more intensive subdivision and development proposals that are consistent with the ‘Coastal Tasman Area Subdivision and Development Design Guide’. C6 7/07  
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### **9.2.20.2 Education and Advocacy**

- (a) Encouragement for potential subdividers and developers of more intensive residential proposals in rural areas to liaise at an early stage with Council officers, and to obtain adequate visual/landscaping advice in putting together proposals.
- (b) Encouragement of a high standard of design in accordance with existing visual and landscape character for subdivision and development in rural areas.
- (c) Encouragement of a high standard of design within any subdivision and land use proposal in the Coastal Tasman Area by the promotion of the ‘Coastal Tasman Area Subdivision and Development Design Guide’. C6 7/07  
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### 9.2.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation

The District's rural landscapes are a valued resource with social and cultural meaning, and with economic value in terms of tourism and recreation, in addition to production from the land.

Rural landscapes in some parts of the district are large and expansive. In other areas they are small and localised. Both scales of landscape may have significant values, with the small intimate landscape in valleys and secluded coastal and inland areas being particularly vulnerable to major change. Larger, highly visible, landscape units may also be vulnerable to change, especially where visually prominent land forms are affected.

The rural landscape changes seasonally and in the longer term as patterns of use change. Land fragmentation and development of structures, roads and utility services can have a major impact on the rural landscape, particularly over time as cumulative effects of more intensive use and development begin to emerge. Subdivision is usually a precursor to development, so it is important to take potential effects on landscape values into account at the time that subdivision consents are sought.

### 9.2.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

- 9.2.40.1 Changes in the assessed landscape values of rural landscapes across the District's rural areas.
- 9.2.40.2 Results of community perception study on the extent and quality of visual change in rural areas.

## 9.3 VIEWS FROM KEY VIEWPOINTS

### 9.3.1 Issues

- 9.3.1.1 Protection of views from public viewpoints.

### 9.3.2 Objective

Protection and enhancement of views from public viewpoints.

### 9.3.3 Policies

*Refer to Policy sets 5.3, 7.3, 14.4.*

*Refer to Rule sections 16.1 - 16.4, 16.6, 16.10, 17.2, 17.3, 17.5 - 17.11, 17.13, 18.1, 18.2, 18.5 - 18.7, 18.12.*

- 9.3.3.1 To protect and enhance significant views from key viewpoints on tourist routes within the District.

### 9.3.20 Methods of Implementation

#### 9.3.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Rules relating to structures and plantings near specific viewpoints identified on the planning maps.

**9.3.20.2 Works and Services**

- (a) Physical works (such as low indigenous planting, seating, weed clearance) at viewpoints.

### **9.3.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation**

There are a number of vantage points located along the state highway network and on Council roads where visitors and the community can obtain panoramic views of priority and other landscapes. These views are an amenity of the District. Some of these viewpoints in the Takaka Hill priority landscape area are proposed to be upgraded by New Zealand Transport Agency, and others may be upgraded as part of the Top of the South Heritage Highway project. Such viewpoints need active management to prevent plantings and structures interfering with views.

### **9.3.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators**

9.3.40.1 Assessed changes in quality of views from sampled viewpoints.

## **9.50 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED**

9.50.1 Protection of outstanding landscapes from visual degradation.

9.50.2 Protection and enhancement of views from key viewpoints.

9.50.3 Minimisation of adverse visual effects in the rural and coastal areas.

9.50.4 Increased protection of natural features.

9.50.5 The maintenance of rural landscape values and character in the Rural 1, 2 and 3 zones.

9.50.6 In the Rural 3 Zone, maintenance of a rural landscape based on an overall ratio of 25 percent developed area and 75 percent of the zone area retained in open or green space for productive, conservation, or amenity purposes.



