

the waitakere ranges heritage area

5B THE WAITAKERE RANGES HERITAGE AREA - PPC Δ 35

5B.1 Introduction to Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area

On 8 April 2008 the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area received royal assent. This legislation recognises the national, regional, and local significance of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and promotes the protection and enhancement of its heritage features for present and future generations.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 details the relationship between it and the Resource Management Act 1991. The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 requires that a Regional Policy Statement and the Waitakere District Plan give effect to its purpose and objectives.

Part 5B of the District Plan sets out the objectives, policies and methods that specifically relate to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. The objectives relate to the purpose and objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008. The objectives, policies and methods in section 5B are in addition to those outlined in the preceding sections of the District Plan that also, where relevant, apply to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

The Waitakere Ranges and foothills boundary (Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area) is identified in



Policy Map X and in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 as Area A shown on SO Plan 361780, Area B shown on SO Plan 361452, Area C shown on SO Plan 361452, Area A shown on SO Plan 64997. The heritage features of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area are identified within the framework of the objectives.

Resource consent applications for activities within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area should consider the objectives and policies of both sections 5 and 5B of the District Plan.

The Waitakere Ranges and its foothills and coasts comprise an area of some 27 720 ha of public and private land located between metropolitan Auckland and the west coast. The area is of local, regional, and national significance.

The area is outstanding in northern New Zealand for its terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, which include large continuous areas of primary and regenerating lowland and coastal rainforest, wetland, and dune systems with intact ecological sequences. The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area contains distinctive and outstanding flora, fauna, and landscapes, including working rural landscapes.

The Waitakere Ranges (part of a remnant volcanic landform) are the western visual backdrop to metropolitan Auckland. Their forested hills and coastal areas are a combination of rural, urban, and natural landscapes that create an important transition and buffer zone to the forested part of the Ranges.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area has a long and rich human history. It is a distinctive cultural domain for Maori and lies within the rohe (district, territory or area) of both Te Kawerau A Maki and Ngati Whatua. European settlement began more than 160 years ago with one of the first attempts at organised colonial settlement of New Zealand made in the south of the area, at Cornwallis in 1841. A century of resource exploitation followed that has left its mark on the whole area. Past human occupation and resource use had contributed to the landscape character reflected in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area today.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area includes the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. The Park, protected at local, regional, and national levels, is an area of some 17,000 ha, established over a period of 110 years through gifts, grants, purchases, and vestings (including legislation promoted by Auckland City Council in 1941 to create the Auckland Centennial Memorial Park, commemorating the centenary of the Metropolitan District of Auckland).

The Waitakere Ranges also contribute to metropolitan Auckland's water supply. They are, in part, a water catchment and the location for a series of storage and supply systems that have sustained, and continue to sustain, metropolitan Auckland since 1902.

In 2005, more than 21,000 people lived in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area (outside the Regional Park), mostly in forest dominated urban, rural, or coastal communities.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area is subject to development and urban intensification pressures. These pressures are compounded by the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area's proximity to metropolitan Auckland, and threaten to undermine the unique natural, landscape, cultural, historic, and community features of the area, including its farming and rural character.

5B.1.1 Issue - Effects on the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area

Local planning guidance is necessary to better protect the Waitakere Ranges, their foothills and coasts, in particular in relation to:-

- (a) managing the cumulative and precedent effects of development on the landscape, the desired future character and amenity of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, and the ecological and biological environment;
- (b) maintaining a rural character for the communities in the foothills;
- (c) maintaining low density urban areas and coastal villages in which the built environment is subservient to the natural landscape;

(d) managing activities adjacent to the boundary between urban and rural areas (particularly in relation to the Auckland Metropolitan Urban Limit boundary); and

(e) protecting heritage features.

5B.1.2 Objectives - Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area

The objectives of establishing and maintaining the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area are:

5B.1.2.1 To protect, restore, and enhance the nationally significant Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and its heritage features, which individually or collectively contribute to its significance. The heritage features of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area are

- (a) its terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of prominent indigenous character that
 - (i) include large continuous areas of primary and regenerating lowland and coastal rainforest, wet land, and dune systems with intact ecological sequences:
 - (ii) have intrinsic value:
 - (iii) provide a diversity of habitats for indigenous flora and fauna:
 - (iv) collect, store, and produce high-quality water:
 - (v) Provide opportunities for ecological restoration:
 - (vi) are of cultural, scientific, or educational interest:
 - (vii) have landscape qualities of regional and national significance:
 - (viii) have natural scenic beauty:
- (b) the different classes of natural landforms and landscapes within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area that contrast and connect with each other, and which collectively give the area its distinctive character:
- (c) the coastal areas, which

(i) have a natural and dynamic character and

(ii) contribute to the area's vistas and

(d) ~~differ significantly from each other: the naturally functioning streams that rise in the eastern foothills and contribute positively to downstream urban character, stormwater management, and flood protection:~~

(e) ~~the quietness and darkness of the Waitakere Ranges and the coastal parts of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area:~~

(f) ~~the dramatic landform of the Ranges and foothills, which is the visual backdrop to metropolitan Auckland, forming its western skyline:~~

(g) ~~the opportunities that the area provides for wilderness experiences, recreation, and relaxation in close proximity to metropolitan Auckland:~~

(h) ~~the eastern foothills, which~~

(i) ~~act as buffer between metropolitan Auckland and the forested ranges and coasts and~~

(j) ~~provide a transition from metropolitan Auckland to the forested ranges and coast:~~

(k) ~~the subservience of the built environment to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area's natural and rural landscape, which is reflected in~~

(i) ~~the individual identity and character of the coastal villages and their distinctive scale, containment, intensity, and amenity and~~

(ii) ~~the distinctive harmony, pleasantness, and coherence of the low density residential and urban areas that are located in regenerating (and increasingly dominant) forest settings and~~

(iii) ~~the rural character of the foothills to the east and north and their intricate pattern of farmland, orchards, vineyards, uncultivated areas, indigeno~~



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us vegetation, and dispersed low-density settlement with few urban-scale activities:

- ~~(f) the historical, traditional, and cultural relationships of people, communities, and tangata whenua with the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and their exercise of kaitiakitanga and stewardship;~~
- ~~(k) the evidence of past human activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, including those in relation to timber extraction, gumdigging, flax milling, mineral extraction, quarrying, extensive framing, and water impoundment and supply;~~
- ~~(l) its distinctive local communities;~~
- ~~(m) the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and its importance as an accessible public place with significant natural, historical, cultural, and recreational resources;~~
- ~~(n) the public water catchment and supply system, the operation, maintenance, and development of which serves the people of Auckland;~~

5B.1.2.2 To ensure that impacts on the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area as a whole are considered when decisions are made affecting any part of it.

5B.1.2.3 To adopt the following approach when considering decisions that threaten serious or irreversible damage to a heritage feature:-

- (i) carefully consider the risks and uncertainties associated with any particular course of action; and
- (ii) take into account the best information available; and
- (iii) endeavour to protect the heritage feature.

5B.1.2.4 To recognise and avoid adverse potential, or adverse cumulative, effects of activities on the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area's environment (including its amenity) or its heritage features.

5B.1.2.5 To recognise that, in protecting the heritage features, the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area has little capacity to absorb further subdivision.

5B.1.2.6 To ensure that any subdivision or development in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, of itself or in respect of its cumulative effect:-

- (i) is of an appropriate character, scale, and intensity; and
- (ii) does not adversely affect the heritage features; and
- (iii) does not contribute to urban sprawl.

5B.1.2.7 To maintain the quality and diversity of landscapes in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area by:-

- (i) protecting landscapes of local, regional, or national significance; and
- (ii) restoring and enhancing degraded landscapes; and
- (iii) managing change within a landscape in an integrated way, including managing change in a rural landscape to retain a rural character.

5B.1.2.8 To manage aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area to protect and enhance indigenous habitat values, landscape values, and amenity values.

5B.1.2.9 To recognise that people live and work in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area in distinct communities, and to enable those people to provide for their social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing.

5B.1.2.10 To provide for future uses of rural land in order to retain a rural character in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

5B.1.2.11 To protect those features of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area that relate to its water catchment and supply functions.

5B.1.2.12 To protect in perpetuity the natural and historic resources of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the people and communities

5B.2 Local Area Planning in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area

5B.2.1 Introduction and Explanation - Local Area Planning

Local area planning takes place within the context of the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and is a counterpoint to this national significance in that the distinctive local character of individual places within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area is a contribution to that national significance. Local Area Plans have an important role to play in the implementation of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008. Local Area Plans address and contribute towards:

- (i) The purpose and objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008;
- (ii) Long-term certainty about the character of a local area and long term consistency of approach by regulatory agencies;
- (iii) The avoidance of adverse cumulative effects of development on the amenity, environment and character of places in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area;
- (iv) Defining “amenity” and “future amenity” as they apply to local areas within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, so that they have improved certainty of meaning. That is, so that “amenity” is not treated as an ephemeral, subjective, personal and changing matter, but one that can be measured, planned for, and used to give long-term confidence and certainty;
- (v) Ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of community distinctiveness, character and identity within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area;
- (vi) Framing futures for local areas that take a sustainable development approach, where people are the centre of concern, and where people have the expectation to live healthy, productive lives in harmony with the environment;
- (vii) Providing for the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area; and
- (viii) Enunciating the parameters and boundaries of “transition” from historical but redundant rural character to new, vital rural character in the

foothills to maintain a qualitative different western rural edge to metropolitan Auckland.

- (ix) Maintaining the areas high quality landscape values.

5B.2.2 Explanation to the Content of Local Area Plans

Section 25 of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 explains that the purpose of Local Area Plan is to:-

- (i) promote the purpose of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 and its objectives;
- (ii) provide objectives (particularly long-term objectives) in relation to:-
 - (a) the future amenity, character, and environment of the local area to which the Local Area Plan applies; and
 - (b) the well-being of the local community within that area (including its economic and social wellbeing); and
- (iii) inform decision-making processes that relate to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

Section 25 of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 states that a Local Area Plans must:

- (i) define the local area to which the Local Area Plan applies;
- (ii) identify the extent and nature of the heritage features existing in the local area;
- (iii) state how it is intended that the objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 will be promoted in relation to the local area;
- (iv) identify the distinctive natural, cultural, or physical qualities or characteristics of the local area that contribute to the local area’s long-term:-
 - (a) pleasantness or aesthetic coherence; or
 - (b) cultural or recreational attributes; and
- (v) state policies and objectives in relation to the amenity, character, and environment of the local area.

Section 28 of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 provides for the Council to include in its District Plan any part of a Local Area Plan that relates to managing the use, development, or protection of natural and physical resources.



5B.2.3 Long Term Character and Amenity - Local Area Plans

Local Area Plans change the scheme of the District Plan from a primary focus on control of adverse effects on the environment to also more fully embrace the setting of long term objectives to be achieved through decisions made under the District Plan. The statements of desired future character and amenity are key to defining these long term objectives and matters for applications to consider in whether they contribute to the achievement of that desired future.

The heritage features of each local area can be threatened by the cumulative effects of individual developments, resulting in the unintended loss of their valued heritage features, character and amenity. Section 5B.3 identifies the distinctive natural, social, economic, cultural, and physical qualities and characteristics of each local area that are valued by the community and are important to each area's long-term character and amenity.

Each Local Area Plan includes a statement of 'existing character and amenity' and 'desired future character and amenity'. These are included in subsections for each local area within section 5B.3. The future character and amenity statement defines the future that is articulated in or contributes to the objectives identified in section 5B.3 so that decisions can be made about whether proposed activities contribute to, or detract from the achievement of that desired future character and amenity and the objectives in sections 5B.1 and 5B.3. These provisions provide a method of testing whether activities appropriately manage their adverse effects, particularly cumulative effects.

The objectives and policies of each Local Area Plan indicate how the character, amenity and environment of the local area will be managed. Decisions about proposed activities can be made within a framework that achieves the purposes and principles of the Resource Management Act and the purpose and objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008.

5B.3 Local Area Plans

5B.3.1 Oratia Local Area

5B.3.1.1. Introduction

This section first identifies the distinctive natural, landscape, cultural, historic and community heritage features of Oratia that are important to its environment, character and amenity. It then provides a statement of the environment, character and amenity that is desired in Oratia into the long-term future.

Oratia is located in the eastern foothills of the Waitakere Ranges and within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. Oratia's climate, location and history has resulted in regionally significant landscapes and character. The upper valley forms part of the visual backdrop to Auckland, against the western skyline. Located between metropolitan Auckland and the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, Oratia is subject to development and urban intensification pressures which threaten to undermine the unique features of the area, including its natural and rural character.

The Oratia local area is identified on Policy Map 5B.3.1.1.

5B.3.1.2 Statement of Oratia's Existing Character and Amenity

Oratia is the place in Maori tradition where the sun (ra) always rests, a reference to its liveability and warm, sheltered micro climate. It has a history of diverse rural uses, ranging from timber extraction, gum digging and flax milling in the early days to later family-based farming, vineyard and orchard enterprises. The Oratia valley was once known as the 'fruit bowl of Auckland'. Although most of the horticultural activity has now declined, the area's rich rural history is still visible in its rural landscapes and the many old orchard buildings.

Rural Oratia provides distinct rural transition between metropolitan Auckland and the forested Waitakere Ranges and west coast.

This statement articulates those elements of character and amenity which are valued and contribute to Oratia as a rural place and community. The existing environment, character and amenity of Oratia is defined by the following distinctive qualities:

i) Landscape and Landform

There are three distinct bands of landscape and landform in the Oratia Valley:

- (a) The rural and gently undulating 'lower valley', which is characterised by lowland alluvial flats and an intricate pattern of mainly exotic vegetation, working and derelict orchards, pastoral, horticulture and vineyard activity, uncultivated wild areas, farmland, remnant shelter belts that criss-cross the landscape, sparsely settled areas and pockets of indigenous vegetation. There are rural, cultivated, ordered views from main roads into the valley. Regenerating indigenous vegetation covers the steeper areas of the escarpments and the riparian margins of the Oratia Stream and its tributaries.
- (b) The partially forested and steeper rural 'upper valley' with its steep dissected ridgelines and ravines has a complex landscape character, dominated by vegetation, with many of the steeper valley sides remaining in native forest. Areas of pasture, exotic shelterbelts and orchards are mainly confined to the ridges. The upper valley includes areas of bush, actively managed pasture and orchards and derelict land that was formerly used for orchards and farming.
- (c) The 'forested core' of the Waitakere Ranges which includes the main ridgeline that contributes to the dramatic western backdrop of metropolitan Auckland. Here, landscapes become more vegetated, enclosed and private, and have limited visibility from the roads.

ii) Building, Infrastructure and Activities

Outside the village, Oratia is characterised by low density settlement with few urban-scale activities. Buildings in Oratia still reflect the area's rural history and are subservient to the natural and rural landscapes. Dwellings and packing sheds in the lower valley are clearly visible from the roads, with expansive views between buildings of open rural and natural landscapes. Although many sites in the valley are served with reticulated water supply, reticulated wastewater infrastructure is generally absent. Roads are often winding, without formal concrete kerbs,

gutters or footpaths. Low levels of street lighting, low density settlement and houses screened by vegetation contribute to a relatively dark night sky and a sense of sparse settlement, particularly in the rural and forested areas of the 'upper valley' and 'forested core' (although these areas also include isolated historic pockets of suburban-scale residential in a forested setting distant from urban services and amenities).

The area's settlement pattern is in transition through the implementation of the Oratia Structure Plan, which will establish a predominance of small rural holdings distributed throughout the landscape.

Most business in the area take the form of home occupations or are focused towards rural production such as orchards, vineyards, greenhouses and gardens.

iii) A Gateway to Rural Waitakere

Oratia sits between metropolitan Auckland and the forested Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and west coast. There is a clear divide between urban Auckland and rural Oratia which is viewed as a 'gateway' or edge. People moving through this gateway experience an immediate change from urban to rural and vice versa. From the rural area they can move up through to the 'forested core' of the Waitakere Ranges and to the west coast. This transition contributes to the diversity of the region's landscape experience.

The open and spacious views from Parrs Cross Road/Pine Avenue southwards across the rural Oratia valley are particularly important in defining this visual edge of metropolitan Auckland. West Coast and Forest Hill Roads also mark a clear transition from urban to rural character and a gateway into the rural area.

iv) Natural Environment

The areas of contiguous native forest, the remnant and regenerating areas of indigenous vegetation and the naturally functioning Oratia Stream and its tributaries have intrinsic value and provide a diversity of habitats for indigenous flora and fauna. They are part of the intricate pattern that makes up the distinctive rural character of Oratia, and are an important part of the western backdrop to

wider Auckland. The forested upper valley and stream edges also help to reduce flooding in the downstream urban catchments.

v) Village as Community Focus

The village is the historic centre of the local area. Centred on the primary school, it is today a loose assemblage of buildings and activities (hall on the site of the first coop packing shed, the petrol station, the cemetery, the bowling club, the church, the orchard shop). It has a recognisable village form, but this is incomplete and disconnected with gaps t view rural Oratia through. The village is a valued place in the community, providing a centre for local facilities, meeting and socialising.

The views north from the village to the forested escarpment, with open rural land in the foreground, make an important contribution to the rural character of Oratia Village.

vi) Significance to Tangata Whenua

Oratia is significant to Tangata Whenua, notably Te Kawerau a Maki who have a long history of occupation and use of the land. These relationships endure through recognition of Te Kawerau a Maki as kaitiaki of the resources of the Heritage Area, and are reflected in the naming of places, streams and other features in Oratia.

5B.3.1.3 Statement of Oratia's Desired Future Character and Amenity

Building on the existing character and amenity of Oratia, the community has identified a desired future for Oratia in which the environment, character and amenity are retained and enhanced, and residential, and appropriate business and recreation activities exist in harmony and in sympathy with the environment and the amenity of the local area. This desired future environment, character and amenity is:

i) Achievement of a Rural Character

The Oratia Structure Plan (operative 2003) creates a subdivision framework that allows for a significant increase in lots and population within an environment that is still rural in character and amenity. The Oratia local area will have a larger

population predominantly living on small rural holdings but Oratia will continue to be a rural place with strong links to its productive past.

In the lower valley and the open rural areas on the ridgelines of the upper valley, exotic vegetation and productive rural activities will continue to contribute to the area's rural landscape and character. New plantings of fruit trees, vines and shelter belts together with managed remnants of exotic vegetation from former vineyard and orchard activities will form part of the layout of new development, enabling it to integrate well into Oratia's rural landscape.

New development will be designed to be subservient to the rural and natural landscape. New sites will be self servicing in terms of onsite wastewater treatment, and a sense of spaciousness will be achieved through the location and design of buildings, structures, rural infrastructure and vegetation. Heritage buildings and sites will be protected, reused, restored, enhanced and celebrated. Urban-scale activities will be avoided in the rural landscape.

ii) Restoration of the Environment

In the steeper areas of the valley, indigenous vegetation will increase in prominence and quality, creating extensive ecological corridors. Stream margins throughout the valley will have continuous indigenous vegetation cover, improving habitat and water quality. The number and extent of environmentally damaging weeds and pests will be reduced through active management.

iii) A Distinct Urban-Rural Edge

Oratia's role as a gateway marking a distinct change from metropolitan Auckland to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area will be clearly defined, articulated and reinforced by rural activities and landscape enhancements within the boundaries of the Heritage Area. Where Oratia is adjacent to the Auckland Metropolitan Urban Limit in the vicinity of Parrs Cross Road/Pine Avenue, a dramatic boundary will be maintained between metropolitan Auckland and rural Oratia. The rural character of the views into Oratia will be maintained. To preserve this urban-rural boundary of Oratia, urban-scale

activities will be avoided in the rural landscape. The vegetated backdrop within the rural landscape will be maintained.

iv) Future Rural Uses

Oratia will be appreciated by people seeking rest, respite, recreation and lifestyle within a natural and rural environment. It will provide opportunities for people to connect with and experience nature, rural, wilderness, history, food, wine, creative endeavour, culture, gardens, ecology, landscape, health and wellbeing and the outdoors. The establishment of a diverse range of new and innovative rural business activities in the valley will provide for the future use of Oratia's rural land in order to retain a rural character and a worked-in landscape. These will be small-scale activities with an intensity, character and context appropriate for a rural area, and that will enhance the community's social, cultural and economic wellbeing and/or the productive use of rural land.

More intensive neighbourhood-scale activities will be concentrated in the Oratia Village.

Off road recreation trails for pedestrians and cyclists will connect metropolitan Auckland (including the Sunnyvale Train Station, Henderson and the CBD) to Oratia and Arataki, the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and Scenic Drive. Trails will also run north from Oratia through the foothills to Swanson and south to Titirangi. These trails will connect nodes of activity and provide a framework for future rural activities to locate close to.

Activities will reuse existing structures where practicable. Any new buildings and associated infrastructure, will be located and designed to retain rural character and amenity.

Oratia will continue to have a high proportion of residents working from home, drawn to the lifestyle and opportunities to work on the land while retaining ease of access to urban facilities and services and high speed telecommunications.

v) Strengthening the Role of Oratia Rural Village

The Oratia Village and school will continue to be the centre of the community. The Village will be contained within clear boundaries, and will attract a

limited range of activities including small-scale convenience, arts and crafts, service and cafe/restaurant activities. It will have a stronger focus as a place to meet, celebrate and socialise. The Village will be grounded in its local history, maintaining a rural character and form through the careful clustering of activities and spacing of buildings. Existing buildings will be reused and new development will be small-scale and integrate with the rural character of the Village. Large-scale activities more appropriate to an urban area will be avoided. Car parking areas and infrastructure will reflect the area's rural character. Reticulated services will be managed to support the development of the Village provided that its form is contained and the pattern of development maintains a rural character.

The Village will be planted with street trees and fruit trees in an orchard or vineyard to provide a visual differentiation and sense of place, and to enhance its rural gateway form and function. Views of the open rural landscape will remain visible between buildings.

The Village will connect with metropolitan Auckland and surrounding rural activities through a network of trails.

vi) Strengthening Tangata Whenua Relationship with the Local Area

The natural environment will be protected and restored and the kaitiaki role of Tangata Whenua in achieving this will be acknowledged. The history of occupation by Tangata Whenua will be reflected through the protection of archaeological sites, and the establishment of interpretation signage and statements.

5B3.1.4 Issues

Effects on Oratia's Environment, Character and Amenity

The existing character and amenity of the Oratia Local Area (see section 5B.3.1.2) contributes to the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. Activities, including subdivision, use and development, that are of a character, intensity and scale inappropriate in a rural area, can have adverse effects on the quality of the environment, its

natural features (including vegetation and streams), its landscapes, and the rural character and amenity of the foothills.

Factors such as changing patterns of trade competition and nationwide produce markets during the 1980s significantly reduced the economic viability of traditional orchard and vineyard operations in Oratia. At the same time, greenfields subdivision was bringing Auckland's urban boundary ever closer, fuelling both expectations and fears that urban-style subdivision would eventually overtake the rural land. The development of the Oratia Structure Plan (operative 2003) was in part a response to these events, and the Oratia Local Area Plan went further in outlining the future character and amenity desired by the people of Oratia for their area.

It is expected that once the level of subdivision provided by the Oratia Structure Plan is completed, there will be very little additional subdivision potential in the Oratia Local Area. Subdivision beyond the extent enabled by the Oratia Structure Plan risks compromising the natural environment and rural character and amenity.

With the decline of traditional rural viticulture, orchard and farming uses, Oratia's economy is in a period of transition. There is a need to provide for new rural business activities in Oratia in order to retain a rural character and to enable people that live there to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing. At the same time, future changes of rural land use need to be provided for in a manner that enables a diversity of rural activities in Oratia while retaining a rural character and the subservience of built development to the natural and rural landscapes.

An enhanced small-scale rural village and service centre can provide for the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the community. Development of the Oratia Rural Village needs to be managed to ensure that the location, scale and character of activities and buildings reinforce the rural village character and amenity of the area.

The following are significant resource management issues in Oratia:

General

- Potential degradation of Oratia's natural environment and rural character and amenity through inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Specific

- Potential adverse effects on the environment and rural character and amenity of:
 - Subdivision
 - New development
 - New rural business activities

5B.3.1.5 Objectives Oratia Local Area

The objectives and policies set out in Section 5B.1 relating to the whole of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area apply to the Oratia Local Area. Specific objectives and policies that manage issues particular to Oratia are as follows:

5B.3.1.5.1. Oratia Local Area

To recognise the contribution that the heritage features, character and amenity of Oratia make to the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges and foothills. To ensure any subdivision, use or development within the Oratia Local Area retains and enhances Oratia's character and amenity and contributes to the achievement of Oratia's desired future character and amenity (see section 5B.3.1.3).

5B.3.1.5.2 Oratia Rural Village

To provide for a neighbourhood-scale rural village in Oratia that supports the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the community and is clearly connected to the history, community, and rural character of the area.

Explanation

The Oratia community has expressed the desire to build on and reinforce the existing rural village. The objective is for an attractive and distinctive small-scale rural village and service centre; a place easily accessed by the local community for meeting, socialising and purchasing their everyday needs. Development of the Oratia rural village must be

managed to ensure that the type location, scale and character of activities in the buildings within the clearly defined confines of the village maintain and reinforce the rural village character and amenity of the area.

5B.3.1.6 Policies: Oratia Local Area

5B.3.1.6.1

Activities (including subdivision), within the Oratia Local Area shall contribute to the achievement of Oratia’s desired future rural character and amenity (see section 5B.3.1.3) by:

- (i) Maintaining links with Oratia’s productive past, including:**
 - (a) retaining and maintaining, where practicable, remnants of former orchards, vineyards and shelterbelts; and**
 - (b) designing landscape elements in new development to reflect Oratia’s orchard and viticulture past;**
- (ii) Designing new development to be subservient to the rural landscape;**
- (iii) Where practicable, protecting, re-using, restoring and/or enhancing existing rural buildings;**
- (iv) Maintaining a sense of rural spaciousness through the careful placement and design of buildings, structures, rural infrastructure and vegetation;**
- (v) Maintaining a clear boundary between metropolitan Auckland and rural Oratia along the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area boundary, and reinforcing this boundary through ensuring design and placement of rural activities and associated infrastructure on the rural side of the Heritage Area boundary;**
- (vi) Management of development within identified rural view shafts within the Oratia Local Area (refer Policy Map 5B.3.1.2);**
- (vii) Maintaining the rural character and appearance by managing the location of close board or solid fences on land within 5 metres of a road boundary;**

(viii) Avoiding any further loss of significant areas of indigenous vegetation and indigenous habitat; and

(ix) Promoting the establishment of off-road walking and cycle trails as identified on Policy Map 5B.3.1.3.

Explanation

This policy seeks to avoid cumulative adverse effects on Oratia’s rural character and amenity and to ensure that any activities contribute to the achievement of Oratia’s desired future character and amenity.

Methods

- Foothills Environment Rules
- Natural Area Rules
- Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay Rules
- Maintain Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area boundary
- Enforcement of the Auckland Metropolitan Urban Limit
- Rural view shafts in the Oratia Local Area (Refer Policy Map 5B.3.1.2)

5B.3.1.6.2

Activities (including subdivision) in the Oratia Local Area will have particular regard to the achievement of the desired future character and amenity of Oratia (refer section 5B.3.1.3) by, in particular:

- (i) Retention, enhancement and maintenance of indigenous vegetation in the steeper areas of the valley and along stream margins;**
- (ii) Avoiding any further loss of significant indigenous vegetation and indigenous fauna habitat, beyond that provided for in the District Plan;**
- (iii) Promoting the establishment of off-road walking and cycle trails as identified on Policy Map 5B.3.1.3.**
- (iv) Avoiding transport infrastructure of an urban scale and character, such as concrete footpaths and concrete curb and channel; and**
- (v) Avoiding the establishment of reticulated wastewater infrastructure, except in the Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay area.**

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Explanation

Avoidance of urban-style infrastructure in Oratia and retention of indigenous vegetation is important in maintaining the character and amenity and heritage features of the area. The need to provide on-site sewerage infrastructure services is intended to reinforce the rural character of the area.

Methods

- Foothills Environment Rules
- Bush Living Environment Rules
- Waitakere Ranges Environment Rules

5B.3.1.6.3

The Oratia Structure Plan shall be given effect to within the Structure Plan boundaries.

Explanation

Subdivision that is in accordance with the structure plan must contribute to the achievement of Oratia's desired future character and amenity. This will be achieved by applying the policies applicable to the Foothills Environment in the Oratia Local Area to structure plan subdivision applications.

5B.3.1.6.4

~~In considering Subdivision within the triangle bounded by Pine Avenue, Forest Hill Road and Holdens Road, applications will be assessed against whether the subdivision shall:~~

- (i) contributes to the achievement of Oratia's desired future rural character and amenity (see section 5B.3.1.3);
- (ii) accords with a density that is no greater than the average density for the Oratia Structure Plan;
- (iii) locates building platforms away from roads;
- (iv) promotes the productive use of land maintains the rural character of land; and
- (v) promotes the protection, restoration and enhancement of the area's heritage features, streams, wetlands and green network and maintains stormwater runoff at pre-development levels.

Explanation

The area bounded by Pine Avenue, Forest Hill Road and Holdens Road and identified as Foothills

Environment falls outside the Oratia Structure Plan boundary, and was not therefore considered along with the rest of the valley as part of that structure plan process. Special policy provision is therefore made for this area. Subdivision is provided for as a discretionary activity.

5B.3.1.6.5

Subdivision within Oratia local area shall be in accordance with the relevant District Plan provisions, provided that:

- (i) It is recognised that, in order to protect the area's rural character and amenity, and to achieve Oratia's desired future rural character and amenity (see section 5B.3.1.3), Oratia has little capacity to absorb further subdivision beyond that provided for in the Oratia Structure Plan.
- (ii) A precautionary approach is taken to ensure that the subdivision does not damage the area's heritage features or detract from or undermine the achievement of the desired future character and amenity of Oratia (see section 5B.3.1.3);
- (iii) In the Oratia Rural Village, limited subdivision will be provided to enable development to proceed in accordance with the provisions relating to the Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay;
- (iv) It encourages the retention and enhancement of rural landscapes through the management of existing vegetation and replanting of exotic vegetation; and
- (v) It avoids transport infrastructure of an urban scale and character.

Explanation

Through the Oratia Structure Plan process, there has been close scrutiny of the ability of the Oratia rural landscape to absorb subdivision and development. Once the Oratia Structure Plan has been implemented, little capacity remains without compromising the desired future rural character and amenity of the area. In the bushed areas, subdivision beyond that provided for by the rules is likely to impact adversely on the green network and desired future character and amenity of Oratia. A precautionary approach is therefore required in

respect of any application for subdivision beyond that provided for by the District Plan.

5B.3.1.6.6

Oratia rural village shall be developed in a manner that:

- (a) protects, restores and enhances its heritage features, particularly as can be seen in rural views to the north;**
- (b) ensures the qualities of a small neighbourhood-scale rural village form, amenity and character are enhanced;**
- (c) supports the social, economic and cultural well-being of the Oratia community;**
- (d) supports its role as a gateway marking the edge between the metropolitan area and the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area;**
- (e) maintains a distinction from metropolitan Auckland by its form, location and scale of activity;**
- (f) becomes a focus for local creative endeavour and innovation; and**
- (g) contributes to the achievement of the desired future character and amenity of Oratia (see section 5B.3.1.3).**

This development is to be achieved by:

- (i) enabling a limited range of small-scale non-residential activities within the Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay;**
- (ii) recognising the contribution the school, Open Spaces Environment and community facilities make to the community and village;**
- (iii) limiting the type, scale and intensity of activities and buildings to maintain a low density and spacious rural village character;**
- (iv) promoting the reuse of existing buildings;**
- (v) ensuring that high standards of design are achieved that reinforces the rural setting, and contributes to the character and amenity of the village;**
- (vi) ensuring adequate separation between buildings and within Areas 1 and 2 of the Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay limiting buildings to a one storey form to maintenance of views shafts to the surrounding rural landscapes;**

(vii) recognising the availability of on-street car parks to support the function of the village and its activities;

(viii) providing landscape enhancements that reflect the horticultural-based productive history and character of Oratia;

(ix) providing a limited extension to reticulated wastewater infrastructure to serve the village;

(x) maintaining a clear boundary between rural Oratia and the Oratia rural village; and

(xi) avoiding signs dominating the visual amenity of the village.

Explanation

The Oratia statement of character and amenity (section 5B.3.1.2) and desired future character and amenity (section 5B.3.1.3) recognises the importance of the Oratia rural village to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the community and its residents. The rural village is the centre of the Oratia community with its focus on the school, hall and other local facilities and services, which provides places for the community to meet and socialise. It provides local convenience and service activities for the Oratia community and the communities of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Aea, and the policy seeks to enhance opportunities associated with this rural focal point.

This policy sets parameters for the enhancement of the Oratia rural village in a way that ensures the achievement of a small-scale rural village form, character and amenity, and maintains a separation from metropolitan Auckland and integrates with the surrounding rural landscape. The rural village will continue to be low density, with small low scale buildings and a limited range of activities, separated from one another and located in a productive landscape setting. This involves the continued use of existing orchards, or the replanting of new fruit trees or vines so that the village is integrated within an orchard and/or vineyard landscape to reflect the horticultural traditions and history of Oratia.

A low density village with buildings separated from one another maintains rural views shafts to the surrounding rural landscape and the escarpment to the north which significantly contribute to the

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character of the village. In order to ensure the village retains a low density form, policies promote the use of existing buildings and limit to total number and size of additional buildings that can locate in the Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay.

The Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay is located to the west of the metropolitan urban limits and includes the existing buildings and activities associated with packing sheds, fruit shop and the dairy. Along with the school and community facilities, these provide a focal point and clear differentiation in scale and surrounding landscape context to the adjoining urban areas.

In order to achieve the desired future character and amenity of Oratia, it is important that the rural village does not extend into the surrounding rural area. A defined boundary is required between the village and the surrounding rural area.

Methods

- Oratia Rural Village Non-Residential Activity Overlay rules
- Design Guidelines

5B.3.2 Waitatarua Local Area

5B3.2.1. Introduction

Waitatarua is located in the heart of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. It encompasses the Scenic Drive ridge and the forested upper reaches of the Oratia and Opanuku Stream catchments. The western and southern edge of Waitatarua is bounded by large continuous areas of primary and regenerating indigenous rainforest, the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and the public water supply catchments. By contrast, the eastern edge is bounded by the orchards and farms of Oratia and Opanuku/Henderson Valley.

The Waitatarua local area is identified on Plicy Map 5B.3.2.

5B.3.2.2 Statement of Waitatarua's Existing Character and Amenity

This statement articulates those elements of character and amenity which are valued and contribute to Waitatarua as a unique forest-clad place and community. The existing environment,

character and amenity of Waitatarua is defined by the following distinctive qualities:

(i) Landscape and landform

Waitatarua is a landscape of national and regional significance. It has outstanding scenic beauty, and forms the dramatic visual backdrop to metropolitan Auckland. It has outstanding views from its elevated location to metropolitan Auckland, the Waitemata Harbour and the Waitakere Ranges.

There are two distinct bands of landscape in Waitatarua:

- (a) The 'core ranges' - the ridgelines, steep slopes, valleys and ravines of the forest-clad core of the Waitakere Ranges. Here the continuous areas of indigenous vegetation are extensive and markedly dominant, including areas of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. Much of the main ridge line in Waitatarua along the Scenic Drive is identified as 'sensitive ridgeline' in the Waitakere District Plan; and
- (b) The Upper Eastern Foothills - contain many of the characteristics of the core ranges, but development within the forest-clad slopes is more extensive. This area includes moderate to gently rolling landform around the upper valleys. Native forest on the higher slopes extends down stream sides, giving way to rolling pastoral land associated with the rural areas of Oratia and Henderson Valley.

(ii) Natural Environment

Waitatarua is dominated by terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of prominent indigenous character. The western and southern edges of Waitatarua are also bounded by the large continuous areas of primary and regenerating indigenous rainforest of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and the public water supply catchments. Waitatarua's ecosystems are of national significance and comprise a rich diversity of indigenous flora and fauna.

The topography of Waitatarua is rolling to steep, including deeply dissected valleys and ravines that are potentially unstable, several streams and numerous water courses. The naturally functioning Oratia and Opanuku Streams have intrinsic value and provide a diversity of habitats for indigenous flora and fauna.

Waiatarua has a high rainfall, which increases with altitude. Clouds and mist blanket the area during inclement days.

(iii) Building, Infrastructure and Activities

Waiatarua's form of residential living is a rare and scarce feature in the region. Residents desire to live in close proximity to nature, for tranquility, quiet, privacy and the views. Residents enjoy both the proximity to, and the relative remoteness from metropolitan Auckland.

Waiatarua is a distinctive low density residential community with a form based on a pattern of lots falling away from the ridgeline with building and development concentrated, ribbon-like, along the forested ridgelines. This leaves continuous and expansive area of rainforest on the slopes, valleys and ravines.

The area has a sparse and widely spread population, with parts of the community separated a considerable distance from one another by the forest, Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and landform.

Buildings are subservient to the natural landscape, being nestled into the regenerating and increasingly dominant forest setting and generally obscured from the road by vegetation.

Amenity at the individual property level is characterised by a strong sense of privacy and remoteness from neighbours, with the forest restricting view from public places into properties - 'looking out rather than in'.

The public amenity of the area is based on the expansive views from Scenic Drive, panoramic views into the area from metropolitan Auckland and contained views along the roads running along the ridgelines.

Sites are partially self-servicing with onsite wastewater infrastructure. Roads are located on ridgelines and are generally winding, without formal concrete kerb, gutters and footpaths. There are low levels of street lighting and a relatively dark night sky. These attributes contribute to a sense of sparse settlement.

There is an absence of urban-scale activities in Waiatarua. Many residents work from home.

(iv) Community Facilities

Waiatarua has a good range of community facilities and places to meet, partly as a consequence of its location along the route to the west coast beaches. Community facilities include the fire station, hall, play centre and library. Waiatarua has a strong sense of community.

(v) Significance to Tangata Whenua

Waiatarua is significant to Tangata Whenua, notably Te Kawerau a Maki who have a long history of occupation and use of the land. These relationships endure through recognition of Te Kawerau a Maki as kaitiaki of the resources of the Heritage Area, and are reflected in the naming of places, streams and other features in Waiatarua.

5B.3.2.3 Statement of Waiatarua's Desired Future Character and Amenity

The community has identified a desired future where Waiatarua should generally remain the same as it is now, with very little change other than the continued growth of the forest. This desired future environment, character and amenity is:

(i) Maintenance of a Forested Character

The character and amenity of Waiatarua will continue to be derived from retaining and enhancing its forested character, scenic beauty, quiet, darkness and sense of enclosure.

Infill subdivision and development, beyond that provided in the District Plan, will be avoided to maintain a low density residential community. Buildings will be nestled within and be subservient to the natural landscape in a manner consistent and compatible with existing patterns of development

(ii) Restoring the Environment

The native forests will continue to increase in prominence and quality. The number and extent of environmentally damaging weeds and pests will be reduced through active management.

Heritage buildings and sites will be protected, reused, restored, enhanced and celebrated.

(iii) Working from Home

Waiatarua will continue to have a high proportion of residents working from home, drawn to the lifestyle and high speed telecommunications. Business activities will be based around existing

facilities, with other small-scale home-based activities related to the area's outstanding beauty and recreation value.

(iv) Valuing Community Facilities

The Waiatarua community will continue to value, maintain and enhance existing community facilities.

(v) Strengthening Tangata Whenua Relationship with the Local Area

The natural environment will be protected and restored and the kaitiaki role of Tangata Whenua in achieving this will be acknowledged. Archaeological sites will be protected.

5B.3.2.4. Issues

Effects of activities (including subdivision) on Waiatarua's environment, character and amenity.

The existing environment, character and amenity of the Waiatarua Local Area (see section 5B.3.2.2) contributes to the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. Activities, including subdivision, use and development, have the potential to adversely affect Waiatarua's forested character, scenic beauty, quiet, darkness, privacy and sense of enclosure, and the quality of the natural environment and the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park.

It is expected that very little additional subdivision or development will occur in the Waiatarua Local Area, without the risk of compromising the natural environment, and character and amenity. New business activities in the area are likely to be home occupations, small-scale home-based activities related to the area's outstanding beauty and recreation value, or activities based around existing facilities. The following are significant resource management issues in Waiatarua:

General

- Potential degradation of the natural environment, character and amenity of Waiatarua through inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Specific

- Potential adverse effects on the environment, character and amenity of Waiatarua of:
 - Subdivision
 - New residential development
 - New business activities

5B.3.2.5 Objectives: Waiatarua Local Area

The objectives and policies set out in Section 5B.1 relating to the whole of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area apply to the *Waiatarua Local Area*. Specific policies to manage issues particular to Waiatarua are outlined below:

5B.3.2.5.1 Objective Waiatarua Local Area

To recognise the contribution that the heritage features, character and amenity of Waiatarua make to the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges and foothills. To ensure any subdivision, use or development with the Waiatarua Local Area retains and enhances Waiatarua's character, and amenity and landscape values and contributes to the achievement of Waiatarua's desired future character and amenity (see section 5B.3.2.3)

5B.3.2.6 Policies: Waiatarua Local Area

5B.3.2.6.1

Activities (including subdivision), within the Waiatarua Local Area shall contribute to the achievement of Waiatarua's desired future character and amenity (see section 5B.3.2.3), in particular by:

- (i) Retention and enhancement of indigenous vegetation;**
- (ii) Retention and enhancement of intact terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and habitat;**
- (iii) Retention and enhancement of the natural landscape character and landscape values;**
- (iv) Designing and locating new development to be subservient to the natural environment;**
- (v) Locating new development so that adjoining homes are afforded privacy;**

-
- (vi) Maintaining identified public view shafts from the Scenic Drive (Appendix K);
 - (vii) Avoiding transport infrastructure of an urban scale and character, such as concrete footpaths and concrete kerb and channel;
 - (viii) Limiting the provision of new street lighting; and
 - (ix) Avoiding the establishment of reticulated wastewater infrastructure.

Explanation

This policy seeks to avoid cumulative adverse effects on Waiatarua’s environment, character and amenity and to ensure that any activities contribute to the achievement of Waiatarua’s desired future character and amenity. Avoidance of urban-style infrastructure in Waiatarua and retention and enhancement of indigenous vegetation is important in maintaining the character, amenity and heritage features of the area. The requirement to provide on-site sewerage infrastructure services is intended to reinforce the non-urban character of the area.

Methods

- Bush Living Environment Rules
- Waitakere Ranges Environment Rules

5B.3.2.6.2

Subdivision within Waiatarua shall be in accordance with the relevant District Plan provisions, provided that a precautionary approach is taken to ensure that the subdivision does not damage the area’s heritage features or detract from or undermine, the achievement of the desired future character and amenity of Waiatarua (see section 5B3.2.3).

Explanation

In Waiatarua, subdivision beyond that provided for by the rules is likely to impact adversely on the green network and desired future character and amenity of Waiatarua. A precautionary approach is therefore required in respect of any application for subdivision beyond that provided for by the District Plan.

5B.3.3 Titirangi Village Δ37

5B.3.3.1 Introduction

This section first identifies the distinctive natural, landscape, cultural, historic, community and heritage features of Titirangi Village that are important to its environment, character and amenity. It then provides a statement of the environment, character and amenity that is desired in Titirangi village into the long-term future. The village’s heritage features can be threatened by the cumulative effects of individual developments, resulting in unintended loss of its valued heritage features, village form, character and amenity.

Titirangi is unique in that it is a forested community located both within the Auckland Metropolitan Urban Limits and the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. Titirangi village is the focal point for this community and supports the community’s social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing. Titirangi village is located within distinctive landscapes and landforms which have a character that contributes to the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

The Titirangi village local area is identified on the Human Environment Planning Maps G9 and G10.

5B.3.3.2 Statement of Existing Character and Amenity of Titirangi Village

The valued existing character and amenity of Titirangi village is defined by the following distinctive qualities. The heritage features of the area need to be protected, restored and enhanced in the future.

(i) Dramatic Natural Landscapes and Landforms

Titirangi village sits within the nationally significant Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and within a landscape and landform of regional and local significance which has outstanding scenic beauty, and forms part of the dramatic visual backdrop to metropolitan Auckland. From its elevated location within the Waitakere Ranges, it has views to metropolitan Auckland, the Manukau Harbour and the Waitakere Ranges.

Titirangi village is dominated, defined and enclosed by the surrounding natural landforms and

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forested landscapes. Defining landform features are Rangiwai Hill and Mt Atkinson, which are located at each end of the village and the elevated forested area located on the northern side of Titirangi Road (opposite Lopdell House). The village is located on the sensitive ridgeline which stretches between these landform features.

The surrounding forest has a rich biodiversity of indigenous flora and fauna.

(ii) Built Environment

Titirangi is well known for Lopdell House and a number of dwellings designed by notable New Zealand architects. Lopdell House is an important landmark, it dominates the village, and is iconic and valued by the community.

The village is well defined as a retail, commercial and community focal point. The village is becoming enclosed within an increasingly dominant forest setting. Views of the village are generally becoming obscured from the wider residential area because of the forest. Overall, buildings within the village are subservient to the surrounding vegetation and landforms. The pattern of village development is compact and contained within distinctive boundaries.

The village is generally pedestrian focussed, laid out in a ribbon-like mainstreet pattern of retail and commercial activity between Rangiwai Hill and Mt Atkinson. Development is focussed towards the ridgeline and Titirangi Road, leaving the rear of sites free of development and in indigenous forest.

Buildings generally provide active frontages at street level, weather protection over footpaths and because of their scale and location there is good solar access to footpaths.

(iii) Community Focal Point

The village is a distinctive place in the Auckland region because of its setting, character, scale, form and function. It is both a gateway to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and a destination and meeting place for residents and visitors. Much of the village's character and amenity is derived from this role of being a desirable destination within the wider regional context, while also providing for the wellbeing of the local Heritage Area community.

A range of businesses and services provide for the needs of residents and visitors, creating a village atmosphere and offering local employment opportunities. The provision of local street-level retail on Titirangi Road is fundamental to the village's role as a focal point.

As a community focal point, the village is well served by community facilities which are focussed towards South Titirangi Road. These community facilities are an essential part of the village. The village is a well used, intimate, pleasant, busy yet tranquil place that is popular for meeting and social activity.

(iv) Significance to Tangata Whenua

The name "Titirangi" literally means "long streaks of cloud in the sky" in Te Reo, but this is often given as "fringe of heaven". Titirangi is significant to Tangata Whenua, especially Ngati Whatua who fought a battle in the area, and who along with Te Kawerau A Maki have a long history and relationship with this area. These relationships endure through recognition of their role as Tangata Whenua and as kaitiaki of the resources of the Heritage Area. This is also reflected in the naming of places, streams and other features in Titirangi.

5B.3.3.3 Statement of Future Character and Amenity of Titirangi Village

The District Plan, through the objectives and policies, seeks to contribute to the existing character and amenity of Titirangi village. It seeks to create a future in which the village continues to provide for the community's wellbeing and achieves a quality pedestrian and built environment and protects the surrounding landscapes and forest setting. The desired future environment, character and amenity is:

(i) Strengthening the Village's Built Environment

The village will be strengthened as the focal point for local retail, services and non-residential activities. 'Living above the shop' is also appropriate. Opportunities for socialising, meeting and street-based interaction will be enhanced through a range of local business activities, improvements to street-based amenity and enhancements to public spaces.

The village will continue to be the focal point for the local community, a destination for Aucklanders and a gateway to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

The number of local businesses and services in the village will increase, particularly the provision of local retail at street level on Titirangi Road. Buildings will have a height of two storeys above street level on Titirangi Road, with some limited opportunity for three storey buildings provided they remain at a lower height and protect the visual integrity of Lopdell House, protect identified heritage features and maintain important views of the elevated forested area located on the northern side of Titirangi Road (opposite Lopdell House) and to Mt Atkinson and Rangiwai Hill as viewed along the view shaft provided by Titirangi Rd.

The development of a limited range of small-scale non-residential activities (than in the Community Environment) will occur within a delineated area on South Titirangi Road and around the periphery of the village to acknowledge existing non-residential activities. This will complement the village (and not undermine the Community Environment's primary retails and commercial function) and provide further opportunities to accommodate activities that support the wellbeing of the community. The existing character of South Titirangi Road and the village periphery will be retained through the reuse of existing buildings for these new activities, or where new buildings occur these will achieve a residential scale, intensity and character. Non-residential activities including churches and community facilities located on the periphery of the village will continue to provide for the wellbeing of the community.

New buildings in the village will exhibit qualities consistent with a high standard of architectural and urban design, providing additional development opportunities, enhancing the mainstreet form of Titirangi Road and its visual appearance and pedestrian amenity. Buildings on Titirangi Road will create a pedestrian scaled village and provide opportunities for a range of retail and commercial activities with a focus for retail at the ground floor. Developments will avoid a visual clutter of signs.

Buildings will continue to be contained along the Titirangi Road ridgeline and will enhance their

relationship of buildings to the pedestrian footpath and opportunities for improved pedestrian and footpath amenity. Buildings, access and car parking will avoid intrusion into the existing forested slopes below the Titirangi Road ridgeline. Car parking will be managed to provide further spaces in the village, although this will not predominate over the anticipated building design and location outcomes.

Heritage buildings, vegetation and sites, particularly Lopdell House will be protected, reused, restored, enhanced and celebrated. Lopdell House will continue to be a focal point for creative endeavour in the village.

Pedestrian amenity will be improved through footpath upgrades and managing traffic speeds in the village. The pedestrian environment will be further enhanced through landscape, public art and carefully designed spaces that support adjoining business activities, including outdoor seating.

(ii) Protecting, Restoring and Enhancing the Natural Character

The environmental character and amenity of Titirangi village will continue to be derived from retaining its dominant forested character, scenic beauty and sense of enclosure provided by the surrounding natural features. The forests will increase in prominence and quality. The number and extent of environmentally damaging weeds and pests will be reduced.

Future patterns of development will ensure that buildings continue to be nestled within the natural landscape and be subservient to the surrounding landforms and forest setting.

5B.3.3.4 Issue

A failure to manage development in Titirangi village may result in:

- (i) a loss of valued character and amenity;
- (ii) a loss of existing distinctive boundaries;
- (iii) a dispersal of non-residential activities throughout the adjacent community;
- (iv) poor building form and design;
- (v) compromised pedestrian amenity;

- (vi) intrusion of development into locally and regionally significant contiguous areas of forest;
- (vii) adverse effects on heritage features; and
- (viii) dominance of the natural environment and landscapes by inappropriately high buildings; and
- (ix) a loss of local retail and services and potential for people to drive extended distance for basic shopping and service.

5B.3.3.5 Objective Titirangi Village

To ensure that development in Titirangi village local area:

- (i) provides for the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the local community (particularly those communities of the Heritage Area) and enhances it as the focal point of social activity and meeting;
- (ii) contributes to the diversity of activity in, and the quality and character of, the village;
- (iii) contributes to and enhances the village's function as a cultural destination and a gateway to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area;
- (iv) retains the village's distinct and distinguishable boundaries;
- (v) is well designed and provides a variety of quality architectural outcomes that contribute to peoples' appreciation of the village's pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes;
- (vi) achieves a mainstreet form with active building frontages to Titirangi Road;
- (vii) maintains and enhances the quality of public and pedestrian spaces;
- (viii) protects, restores and enhances the area's heritage features, particularly the dramatic scale and enveloping nature of the forest setting and landforms and important views of these;
- (ix) is of an appropriate scale and intensity which integrates well with the surrounding forested landscape and natural landforms; and
- (x) contributes to the achievement of the statement of future character and

amenity for Titirangi village (refer 5B.3.3.3)

5B.3.3.6 Policy Titirangi Village

Titirangi village local area shall be developed in a manner that:

- (a) supports the social, economic and cultural well-being of the Titirangi community (particularly those communities of the Heritage Area);
- (b) enhances its role as a gateway to the Waitakere Ranges Area;
- (c) creates a desirable destination for people, the community, creative endeavour and culture;
- (d) protects, restores and enhances its heritage features; and
- (e) ensures the qualities of its village form, amenity and character are maintained and enhanced.

This development is to be achieved by:

- (i) consolidating non-residential activities, other than home occupations, within the Titirangi Community Environment, the Open Space Environment and the Titirangi Non-Residential Activity Overlay;
- (ii) recognising the Community Environment as the centre of the village and location for retail and non-residential activities;
- (iii) providing for a limited range of community, commercial and restaurant activities and maintaining a residential scale and form of buildings and development in the Titirangi Non-Residential Activity Overlay;
- (iv) providing for community facilities and activities in the South Titirangi Road Open Space Environment, including the provision of shared car parking facilities;
- (v) recognising the contribution that Lopdell House and its activities makes to the character, amenity, identity and provision of activities in the village, including its role as a western edge of the village, and providing for its continued use and enhancement;

- (vi) requiring development to ensure that, in terms of layout, pedestrian amenity and visual appearance, a high standard of design is achieved that avoids extensive shadowing of pedestrian spaces, establishes significant areas of glazing at street level fronting pedestrian spaces, and contributes to the character, amenity and visual landscape of the village;
- (vii) enclosing Titirangi Road by buildings with a maximum height of two to three storeys, and subject to design requirements, maintenance of Lopdell House as the dominant built element within the village and maintenance of views to identified features, to a maximum of three storeys. Locating a predominance of retail sales activity at street-level and developing building facades that enhance the experience of the pedestrian and provide continuous pedestrian cover over the footpath;
- (viii) maintaining and extending the continuous building frontages on the southern side of Titirangi Road;
- (ix) requiring new buildings on the northern side of Titirangi Road to generally provide for a continuous active building frontage to the street;
- (x) avoiding inappropriate vehicle access and minimising vehicle crossings to Titirangi Road;
- (xi) avoiding car parking areas adjoining the street frontage on Titirangi Road and within forested areas by taking a flexible approach to the provision of car parking to ensure that the form and character of the village is not compromised;
- (xii) controlling and managing the use of footpaths and outdoor areas to achieve the active use of these spaces by providing a quality of amenity that encourages restaurant and social activity in the village while maintaining pedestrian access;
- (xiii) avoiding signs dominating the built form of the village; and
- (xiv) retaining areas of contiguous indigenous forest and habitat and the forested backdrop to the village.

5B.3.3.7 Methods

District Plan Rules:

- Community Environment (Titirangi Village) Rules
- Open Space Environment Rules
- Bush Living Environment Rules (Titirangi Non-Residential Activity Overlay)

Other Methods

- Local Area Plans

5B.4 Wellbeing of People and Communities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Δ36

5B.4.1 Issue

Failure to provide for appropriate non-residential activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area will adversely affect the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people and communities of the Area.

Failure to manage the scale, intensity and character of non-residential activities may result in adverse effects on the heritage features of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and/or lead to activities locating in the area that are more appropriately located in the metropolitan urban limits of Auckland.

Failure to provide for future uses of rural land may result in dereliction of rural land, inefficient supply of food from local resources, pressure for urbanisation or countryside living and decline of rural character in the rural areas of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

Failure to provide opportunities for nature, rural and wilderness experiences, recreation, and relaxation in close proximity to metropolitan Auckland will not assist Aucklanders' and other

New Zealanders' access, enjoyment and use of the area and their wellbeing.

5B.4.2 Objective

To provide for appropriate local and small scale social, cultural and economic non-residential activities of an appropriate size and scale that benefit the people and communities

of, and visitors to, the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. These activities shall be clearly connected to the wellbeing of those people and communities, or to the enjoyment, protection or enhancement of the natural and rural character and amenity of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

5B.4.3 Policy

To enable the people of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area to provide for their social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing in a way that is compatible with and/or enhances the heritage features and character of the area. The scale, intensity, context and character of activities will seek to retain and/or enhance a rural or natural character or social and cultural (including spiritual) association with the area. This is achieved by:

In the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area:

- (i) ensuring activities protect, restore and enhance heritage features and avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects, including cumulative effects on the environment (section 5B.1.2.1);
- (ii) ensuring activities contribute to the achievement of the desired future character and amenity of a local area (as specified in section 5B.3);
- (iii) avoiding activities that because of their scale, intensity and characteristics are contrary to the long term goals for the area (as specified in section 5B.1 and 5B.3), and/or are more appropriately located within the metropolitan urban limits of Auckland;
- (iv) avoiding the development of activities that do not rely on or support the productive use and capacity of rural land, or the character, amenity, communities, recreational or attributes of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and coast;
- (v) limiting any commercial and office activities to home occupations and activities that support the area's distinctive communities, creating opportunities for local business support and innovation;

- (vi) limiting any commercial overnight accommodation to that associated with home occupation activities, existing commercial accommodation, and on large properties in the Waitakere Ranges and Foothills Human Environments, to small scale commercial overnight accommodation and camping grounds.
 - (vii) providing for small scale local convenience retail and services in appropriate locations to support the wellbeing of the area's distinct communities and help reduce the need for travel outside of the area;
 - (viii) encouraging creative endeavour, creative industries, including filming and arts and crafts;
 - (ix) providing opportunities for the appropriate expansion of existing activities to ensure they continue to provide for the wellbeing of the community and/or the quality of the visitor experience;
 - (x) enabling nature, rural and wilderness experiences, outdoor recreation and pursuits, and relaxation activities that are compatible with, and appropriate to, the amenity of the area and the natural and rural environment;
 - (xi) encouraging the reuse of existing buildings that relate to the historic and/or rural character of the area and controlling the design, scale and location of new buildings, structures and development to ensure they are appropriate to the area, avoid remedy or mitigate adverse effects on road and/or streetscape, and are subservient to the natural and/or rural landscapes of the area;
 - (xii) avoiding activities that result in appropriate earthworks and vegetation removal;
 - (xiii) avoiding activities that result in adverse noise, lighting and odour effects on adjoining properties;
 - (xiv) avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse amenity effects on adjoining properties.
- And in the Foothills Environment:
- (xv) enabling a diversity of small-scale rural business activities with a focus on food production, eating and drinking,

history, culture, creative endeavour and innovation, festivals and events, outdoor recreation activity and activities focused on health and wellbeing that have a clear and genuine connection with the resources, communities or the character and amenity of the rural areas of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area;

- (xvi) enabling greenhouse activities provided that their adverse effects on the environment can be avoided, remedied or mitigated;
- (xvii) limiting any industrial activities to those that support the productive use of rural land and/or provide services to rural activities, and involve the manufacturing of goods from, or processing of agricultural and horticultural produce;
- (xviii) limiting any storage activities to those that are ancillary to home occupations, rural activities or the manufacture or processing of agricultural and horticultural produce;
- (xix) encouraging the on-going maintenance and enhancement of rural landscapes and rural character by enabling rural business activities that maintain connections with the foothills' productive past, including retaining and maintaining farming orchards, vineyards and shelterbelts, and designing landscape elements in new activities to reflect the area's history and rural production;
- (xx) requiring enabling rural business activities to contribute to rural character and amenity through the re-establishment of continued management of agricultural or horticultural activities on site;
- (xxi) developing Oratia Rural Village as a distinct rural community and service centre, different from the metropolitan urban limits of Auckland (refer section 5B.3.1);
- (xxii) limiting retail activities outside of the Oratia Rural Village to small scale home occupations, nurseries, garden centres, creative endeavour, food and beverages and agricultural and horticultural produce;
- (xxiii) maintaining a clear visual boundary and contrast between metropolitan

Auckland and the Foothills Environment and reinforcing the metropolitan urban limit boundary through design and location of rural business activities and associated infrastructure on the rural side of the boundary, to reinforce rural character and amenity; and

- (xxiv) locating buildings to retain a rural road character and roadscape distinct from urban residential or commercial streets.

Explanation

In 2005, more than 21,000 people lived in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area (outside the Regional Park), mostly in forest dominated urban, rural, or coastal communities (Bush Living, Waitakere Ranges, Coastal Village and Foothills Environments). The objective and policy provides for these people and communities to provide for their wellbeing through the provision of appropriately scaled activities.

The policy creates two distinctions about the appropriateness of non-residential activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. The first is that activities need to relate to the communities they are located within, to the recreation amenity of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, to creative endeavour or to rural character and the productive use of rural land.

As there are distinctive communities within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, including rural communities, the policy recognises that these communities need many of the convenience retail, services and community facilities that are found at the neighbourhood level in metropolitan Auckland. In the distinctive communities of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area definitions of urban and rural activities are not clear cut.

The second policy approach is to manage non-residential activities by avoiding activities that because of their scale, intensity, context and characteristics are contrary to the long term goals for the area and are more appropriately located within the metropolitan urban limits of Auckland.

Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area has a high proportion of residents working from home, drawn to the lifestyle and/or opportunities to work on the land, while retaining ease of access to urban facilities and services. Opportunities for home occupations

the waitakere ranges heritage area

enable business services, business innovation and the incubation of new business activities. The majority of business activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area will comprise home occupations, some of which cater for the visitor market through the provision of commercial overnight accommodation. These activities, as they are home based occur at a small-scale and are appropriate to the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

There are a wide range of existing non-residential activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, including retail, services, commercial overnight accommodation, restaurants and community facilities and community based-groups. These existing activities provide for the wellbeing of people and the community and are an existing resource. The policy provides for limited expansion of these activities in appropriate circumstances so that they may continue to provide wellbeing to people and communities.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area is appreciated by people seeking rest, respite and recreation within a natural and rural environment. The value of the area for appropriate recreation is recognised as a matter of national significance. The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, and particularly the Foothills Environment, provide opportunities for people to connect with and experience nature, rural, wilderness, history, food, wine, creative endeavour, culture, gardens and the outdoors. The policy supports existing activities and the establishment of a diverse range of new and innovative activities focused on rural production, creative endeavour and visitor experiences (particularly visitors from metropolitan Auckland).

It is also recognised that the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park is an important community resource which protects natural and historic resources for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the people and communities of Auckland and New Zealand. In addition to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park ~~The Waitakere ranges Regional Park is under pressure from visitors and is under pressure from visitors~~ and the approach of the policy is to enable ~~provide~~ alternative visitor and recreation experiences, ~~to draw visitors away from the Park,~~ particularly in the Foothills

Environment to ease visitor pressure on the Regional Park towards the Foothills Environment.

The establishment of a diverse range of new and innovative rural business activities in the Foothills Environment will provide for the future use of rural land in order to retain a rural character and a worked-in landscape. These will be small-scale activities with an intensity, character and context appropriate for a rural area, and that will enhance the community's wellbeing and/or the productive use of rural land. The policy focuses on the rejuvenation of rural land through requiring many non-residential activities to be directly associated with rural activities such as farming, orchards and vineyards, and for their continued management to provide food and rural context and landscapes. Provision is also made for greenhouses to support the growing of food in close proximity to Auckland.

The policy provides for the wellbeing of rural producers by allowing small scale manufacturing, processing and retail sales of agricultural and horticultural produce. The policy seeks to support economic vitality by enabling activities that to add value to agricultural and horticultural produce through various levels or stages of production and marketing, often on the same site. In so doing, it allows people to better provide for their wellbeing by reducing their reliance on commodities as being their primary (or even sole) source of income. As an example, integration of the wine industry involves the location of wine making activities and cellar door sales and in some cases associated restaurants/cafes, on the same site as a vineyard (hence the integration of primary production, wine production, retailing and visitor activities).

Rules for non-residential activities should not be considered as part of any permitted baseline comparison with residential activities or subdivision in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

For objectives and policies for Oratia Rural Village refer to section 5B.3.1 For objectives and policies for Titirangi Village refer to section 5B.3.3.

Refer also to the objectives and policies within section 5.

Methods

- District Plan Rules