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Section 3: Rural Zones

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Rural Plains

The Rural Plains area of the District covers approximately 335,000ha, over half of the total District, extending from the foothills for 48-56km to the sea.

The Plains are bordered by the two important water resources of the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers, as well as being traversed by the Ashburton (Hakatere) and Hinds (Hekeao) Rivers and the smaller Wakanui Stream, although 95-99% of flow is underground. These rivers, along with rainfall and irrigation wastewater contribute to the sizeable underground aquifers of the Plains. The District has a number of important water systems harnessing the Plain's surface and ground water resources for irrigation, stock and domestic water supplies and hydro-electricity production. The main water system is the Rangitata Diversion Race (RDR) which extends for 66km from the Rangitata to the Rakaia Rivers, feeding irrigation schemes, stockwater systems and two power stations. The water is used for irrigation during the summer months, and is utilised by Trustpower to produce hydro electricity at the Montalto and Highbank power stations. The Montalto Power Station produces 1.1 MW during the irrigation season and 1.8 MW at other times, generation from the Highbank Scheme is dependent upon irrigation requirements which take priority during the irrigation season. The scheme is guaranteed water for four months of the year, but typically generates for six to eight months, increasing to eleven to twelve months in particularly wet years.

The significant water systems within the Ashburton District provide for its strong agriculturally based economy and associated industries and services. This is important not only to the economy of the District but also the region and the country, as the Ashburton District provides many products reliant on these water systems such as crop seeds, dairy products and beef for export. The water resources of Ashburton District therefore have importance beyond the boundaries of the district.

The District's coastline extends for approximately 66km between the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers. The coastline is predominantly eroding coastal cliffs and gullies with gravel beaches, broken by only by the five river mouths. Sand dunes are concentrated south of the Rakaia River mouth. The beaches along the coast are mostly undeveloped, because of the limitations imposed by the harsh physical environment.

The Plains support a diverse range of agricultural and horticultural activities from farms running dairy cows to cattle feedlots; from salmon farms to horse breeding and training establishments; and the growing of wheat and grain to evening primrose. It is the extensive irrigation schemes which cover 122,000 hectares (48% of the Plains area) that have allowed and continue to provide for this diversity.

In 2008 dairying accounted for 18% of plains farming with an estimated 125,000 to 130,000 cows being run in the District. However there has been a decline in sheep farming although the District still produces good lambing percentages; lamb weights and wool weights. The Plains also support a number of farms producing venison and deer velvet, and those that are devoted to growing and

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finishing beef cattle. Recent years have also seen growth in the farming of other livestock including alpacas, as well as intensive farming operations such as, nurseries and vineyards. The District also has an important small seed industry, producing a significant proportion of New Zealand's seeds for use nationwide as well as for export. These, together with the important bulk industry, also rely on processing plants in the rural areas.

The other main primary industries are forestry, and lime and gravel extraction. Approximately 4,000ha of the Plains are planted in exotic forest, with most being developed primarily for timber production and shelter purposes. Timber is usually processed at private sawmills for the local building industry. The Plains also support approximately 250 gravel pits with gravel extraction being the predominant extractive industry.

There is limited commercial activity outside of the rural settlements, the largest being Farmers Corner established on State Highway 1. This is a retail outlet and restaurant that provides for tourists and visitors to the District.

The District attracts visitors because of the wide range of recreational activities available on the Plains, especially in or on its rivers. Fishing; particularly on the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers which are internationally recognised for salmon and trout; jetboating, swimming, canoeing, rafting, wildfowl shooting are a selection of the activities available.

There are established settlements within the rural area such as Staveley and Alford Forest, comprising a few dwellings. However, in recent years, the desire to live on rural lifestyle blocks has led to allotments around the main centres of Ashburton (Kapuka), Rakaia and Methven being subdivided to create residential properties. This has led to a gradual expansion of these towns into the traditionally rural environment, in some cases altering its character to semi-urban with further development anticipated over the next 10 years.

3.1.2 Rural High Country

The High Country area, as defined in this Plan includes the entire foothill and mountain ranges through to the Main Divide, the Heron Basin, up the Rakaia River from Little River, the Ashburton River (Hakatere) from the Stour River (Mata kou) confluence, and the Rangitata River upstream from the lower end of its gorge. It is generally north-west of a line which varies between 450m and 500m above sea level.

The High Country experiences a climate that is cooler, wetter and windier than the Plains, although this varies considerably across the High Country. Temperatures, like rainfall, are subject to a high level of annual and seasonal variability. Severe winter frosts and snow falls are common with the heaviest falls often coming in spring. The prevailing wind in the High Country is from the westerly quarter, and in spring and summer the "nor-west" wind can rise to gale force.

High Country soils that have formed on steep mountain slopes have severe limitations for intensive pastoral or forestry use due to poor fertility or a high erosion potential. Where soil profiles are shallow, drought is also a limiting factor. In the valleys and basins, debris brought down by glaciers and rivers has been deposited, and a series of younger soils have formed as a result. These soils are often stony, but areas of finer sand and silts occur, which are not so limited in their range of uses.

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Extensive pastoral farming which became established in the 1850s-1860s as the original Crown leases were taken up continues to characterise land use over much of the High Country today. Although variable, the average run today in the High Country is in the order of 10,000 hectares. Due to the harsh climate and rugged terrain, merinos bred for their fine wool are the predominant livestock type, although beef-cattle and deer are common, particularly in the valleys.

The burning of vegetation to encourage young growth, palatable to stock has meant that the vegetation of tall and short tussock species, matagouri and Aciphylla species has been modified, with short tussock predominating these days. On the lower elevations over-sowing and topdressing have also led to changes in vegetation species. Introduced plants including gorse, broom, and wilding trees are also conspicuous in many areas. These pest plants, as well as pest animals, continue to pose threats to the vegetation patterns and natural character of the High Country.

Approximately 20,000ha of the District remains under indigenous forest vegetation, mainly in Conservation Areas. Most of the indigenous forest is in the High Country, with some of the smaller low-altitude remnant stands remaining in private ownership. Exotic forestry blocks have been established in the past, largely as a result of a requirement of a lease or by those interested in forestry. In addition to these planted forests, there are now areas of exotic trees establishing as a result of the spread of wilding seedlings, such as around Lakes Clearwater, Camp and Heron, although work is being undertaken to remove these trees.

The ultimate effect of the Tenure Review process, which is transferring significant areas of land into private ownership, is currently unknown. Although the process can facilitate the protection of areas of significant nature conservation and indigenous vegetation through the transfer of land management to the Department of Conservation, there may continue to be pressure for development. Economics may cause landowners to seek alternative incomes or to adopt different farming practices. As many stations have only recently completed Tenure Review, it is difficult to predict if and what changes may occur.

The population of the High Country area was approximately 350 people in 2006. Residential development is associated with High Country pastoral runs, or farming properties located around the perimeter of the foothills. There is also a holiday home settlement of 178 huts at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) that is administered by the Ashburton District Council.

The landscapes of the High Country are unique and distinctive due to its vast, open vistas with subtle colourings. This remote, beautiful environment provides recreational opportunities for a variety of different user groups; from hunters, mountaineers and trampers to skiers and hot air-balloonists.

There is a popular camping area at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka), with another located at nearby Lake Heron (Oturoto), which are used over the summer. Accommodation for tourists is available at several lodges including Mount Potts Lodge and Mt Hutt Station. Huts located throughout the mountain ranges are used by trampers for recreational accommodation, and the nearby settlements of Methven and Mt Somers also provide visitor accommodation.

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The Mt Hutt ski field caters for approximately 180,000 people annually and serves both tourists and the residents of Ashburton District and Canterbury. There are also other smaller ski-fields and heli-skiers operating in the High Country.

Fishing is a very popular recreational pursuit on the District's rivers and lakes, with the upper sections of the Rakaia and Rangitata Rivers being important during the salmon spawning season. Most of the High Country lakes are important for angling.

Boating provides both a means of access for fishing and a popular sport on the rivers, although of lower use in the High Country relative to the Plains. Lake Camp is used for power boating, water skiing and jet-skiing, and Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) is popular for yachting, wind surfing and canoeing.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 Sustaining the Life Supporting Capacity of Ecosystems, Soil and Water

The continued cultivation and grazing of both the Plains and High Country requires the protection of the existing ecosystems, water and soil resources. These three factors are intertwined and ensure the current, and if properly managed, future of agriculture in the District. The fate of the District's indigenous flora and fauna are also dependent upon sustaining these resources. This is particularly important in the High Country where farming practices and indigenous vegetation give the area its distinctive character and landscape values. These are fundamental to the tourist industry as well as being important to the local population.

Ecosystems and Soil

Despite continuing modification, the District still contains many diverse communities of indigenous plants and animals in a variety of habitats, particularly in the High Country. Those areas least modified are remnant areas of shrubland and podocarp forest; and allied alpine communities nearer the Main Divide, and areas above 900 metres in altitude. Due to thin and infertile soils and severe climatic factors, plant establishment and growth rates are slow and are therefore particularly sensitive to modification. Large areas of beech forest and some mixed areas of beech/podocarp forests also still remain in the foothills at Alford Forest, Staveley, Pudding Hill and Mt Hutt. Significant examples of tall tussock grasslands, scrubland, and alpine vegetation associations or species also occur in the District. These areas are fundamental to retaining the existing landscape values and areas of significant nature conservation that give the High Country its unique character and are an important draw-card for visitors.

However, the continued use of the tussock grasslands of the High Country for extensive pastoral farming has the potential, if managed inappropriately, to adversely affect the life-supporting capacity of the soil and the robustness and diverseness of the vegetation cover of these areas of the District. Research has indicated that areas transformed from tall tussock grasslands to short tussock grasslands seem to be more vulnerable to invasion by rabbits and hawkweed. This may mean that the techniques of repeated burning and continuous grazing may not be sustainable in the upland tussock grasslands over the long term. In addition, the soil's nutrient status is slowly decreasing with

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loss of nutrients and carbon from the soil; although the rate of this decline is very dependent on the terrain.

The Council is concerned that in some areas loss of vegetation health and cover; changes to vegetation composition; and, over time, decline in soil fertility and health, will damage the land so that it cannot sustain the District's soil, vegetation and landscape resources into the future. Council considers that the health of the vegetation needs to be maintained to ensure that the underlying soil is sustained in order to meet the needs of future generations.

Sustainable management of the land resources of the High Country has importance for many aspects of the District's well-being. Stable and viable rural communities depend upon the implementation and maintenance of sustainable pastoral farming systems which retain soil quantity, fertility and health; protect water and air quality; and are energy efficient. The range of landscape, recreational and nature conservation values associated with the District's High Country are also dependent on the implementation of pastoral farming systems which sustain these values.

On the Plains, the soils are considered to be capable of sustained pastoral, arable and horticultural production. The soils are highly productive and, with irrigation, sufficient rainfall and fertiliser application can provide for a wide range of productive land uses.

However, subdivision and the use of small rural lots for principally residential activities can result in substantial areas of the allotments being covered by buildings and hard-standing which can make the long-term productive use of the soils and their associated irrigation resources unlikely. Given that the present, and probably future, welfare of the people on the Plains is likely to be reliant on primary production, the Council is concerned that the soil resource retains its productive potential for future generations.

Water

Within the High Country there are several streams, wetlands and lakes that are important for nature conservation values, as they provide important habitat for indigenous and recreational fisheries, and often have high natural character and recreational values.

Of significance is the Ashburton Lakes (Lakes Heron (Oturoto), Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka), Camp, Emma and the Maori Lakes (O Tu Whare Kai)) with its system of streams, wetlands and lakes is widely recognised for its plant and bird life. It is important to note that Lakes Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka), Heron (Oturoto) and the Maori Lakes (O Tu Whare Kai) have Wildlife Refuge/Reserve status because of their ecological importance.

It is the diversity of wetlands that provide habitats for a wide variety of wetland plants and birds, including rare small crustaceans, the endangered southern crested grebe, bittern and several plant species that are rare in Canterbury. These wetlands and lakes provide opportunities for scientific study and education, are aesthetically important, and provide for a variety of recreational activities. The best of the areas, from the point of view of vegetation condition, occurrence of native birds and invertebrate animals, are excellent by local, regional and national standards. By contrast, Lake Camp is almost barren of wildlife and only used by a small number of waterfowl species.

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However, the lakes and wetlands are under threat. Farming activities have severely modified many of the wetland areas, through cattle trampling, grazing, drainage, fire, pasture cultivation and top-dressing. Such activities create changes in water nutrient levels and acidity, and invasion by weed species. Some areas may never recover, whereas other areas could recover if protected from the above influences. Other degrading effects include human trampling and littering, nutrient influx from the Lake Clearwater holiday settlement, wave action from power-boating, invasion by willows and pollution from large numbers of introduced birds. At Lakes Camp, Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) and Heron (Oturoto), the Council has provided toilet and rubbish disposal facilities to mitigate some of the adverse effects created by people utilising the lakes.

The smaller rivers are often sensitive to modification of their riparian areas and their catchments. The margins of these rivers and lakes also have nature conservation values, some of which have been identified as being significant to the District. The setting aside of public reserve along the banks of lakes and rivers has the functions of providing for public access and waterfront activities, protecting nature conservation values of the margins, and maintenance of water quality and aquatic habitats.

These water bodies are also important recreational areas but this has to be balanced with the need to sustain their ecological importance. For this reason, powerboats are only permitted on Lake Camp whereas Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) is used extensively by wind surfers and small yachts during the summer months, and Lake Heron (Oturoto) only allows the use of boats powered by oars and paddles. This does not remove all impacts on the flora and fauna but limits the effects especially with regards to wave action created by powered craft, and noise levels.

The Plains, on the other hand, are dominated by braided rivers and their mouths, which are of significant nature conservation value as they provide habitat for a wide variety of birds. The Rangitata, Rakaia, and Ashburton (Hakatere) Rivers are regarded as nationally and internationally important areas, providing habitats for threatened indigenous birds such as the wrybill plover, banded dotterel, black billed gull (tara puka) and South Island pied oystercatcher (torea), as well as providing breeding and feeding grounds for trout, salmon and waterfowl. These rivers are also of value for recreation and the high natural character of their upper reaches.

The margins of the rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands are recognised as being critical areas, not only in providing habitat for plants and animals, but also acting as a buffer to the water bodies from land use activities that produce nutrient-rich or sediment-rich run-off. The ways that the margins of waterways within the District are used and managed are particularly important in determining the effects of land use activities on water quality and quantity.

With the growth of residential activity in the rural areas, there is an expectation that potable water that requires no treatment will be supplied. In recent years, the increase in dairying, associated disposal fields, use of fertilisers and general runoff from land has threatened this potable supply. However, as at 2008, figures from the Canterbury Regional Council show that soil nitrate levels are declining. But, it is still the Council's intention to control land uses adjoining waterways to minimise the effects of such activities on the Plains waterways; in addition to activities such as earthworks, the clearance of vegetation and the planting of exotic trees.

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These rivers are also important for both private and commercial recreational activities from jetboating on the Rakaia River and rafting on the Rangitata River to angling, picnicking, wind-surfing, water-skiing and swimming. These types of activities have the potential to cause adverse effects such as: noise; degradation of river, lake and adjoining wildlife habitats; increased bank erosion caused by wave action or activity on the banks; water contamination from turbidity, exhaust fumes, and human effluent; litter and other wastes generated in the area; and conflict with Takata Whenua values in waahi tapu areas.

The increase in water based activities over recent years has led to greater demand for the construction of structures and facilities alongside or in the margins of the waterways i.e. jetties, launching ramps, toilet and changing facilities and administrative facilities for commercial operations. Such facilities and structures can result in adverse environmental effects relating, for example, to their visual impact; the concentration of pedestrian, vehicle and boating activity; oil and fuel spillages; noise; and the alienation of the foreshore from general public use.

However, the nature conservation values of the rivers in the District do not appear to have been adversely affected by the current levels of recreational activity on the rivers and the main salmon spawning tributary of the Rakaia River is protected from motorised boating. However, there remains a concern to ensure that these values of the rivers are not adversely affected by future growth in activity, particularly by more frequent commercial or organised activities.

3.2.2 Subdivision and Development

In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the number of subdivisions being undertaken in the Rural A and B zones. This has reflected a national trend for rural-lifestyle blocks, catering for those who wish to live in a 'rural' environment but with the convenience of being close to an urban centre such as Ashburton (Kapuka). This encroachment onto productive soils makes their long-term productive use unlikely. With water being such a precious resource and an ever increasing awareness of the effects of fertilisers it is important to retain versatile/fertile soils for productive use.

The Council has taken a proactive approach to this issue and has rezoned additional land for low density living (i.e. a minimum site area of 4,000m²). The availability of appropriately zoned land for lifestyle properties should reduce the need for residential development in the Rural A and B Zones, unless associated with a rural activity, and minimise the loss of productive soils.

Subdivision and subsequent development in the rural zones also has the potential to create reverse sensitivity issues as residential and rural activities increasingly adjoin each other. People moving into these areas are often not aware of the effects created by rural activities in particular odour and noise. The spreading of manure or pig farms and the bellowing of deer result in complaints to the Council, and in some instances restrictions placed on the farmer. At the very least, the expansion of farming operations is rendered difficult by neighbouring residential activities. The Council views the District as an important agricultural area and wishes to see this maintained. The rural area is a managed working environment and should not be limited in its ability to operate as such.

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3.2.3 Rural Character and Amenity

The rural environment has particular amenity and environmental values which are important to rural people. These can include privacy, rural outlook, spaciousness, ease of access, clean air and, at times, quietness. The landscapes of the District are also an integral part of this amenity and character.

Rural A Zone

The Rural A zone adjoins the outskirts of the main settlements of the District; Ashburton (Kapuka), Rakaia and Methven as well as the small villages of Mayfield (Te Puke Tai), Hinds (Hekeao), Mt Somers and Chertsey. The zone is characterised by its proximity to local services and facilities as well as providing residents with a rural lifestyle. The allotments tend to be of a smaller size than in the Rural B zone although the zone still provides a sense of openness. Its landscape is defined by mainly pastoral agriculture with some business development and fenced lifestyle blocks.

In recent years, this zone has come under pressure from those seeking rural lifestyle developments particularly around Ashburton (Kapuka). Such activity has altered the character of parts of the zone with the introduction of a more 'urban' environment as infrastructure is extended outward from existing urban centres. Although allotments tend to be larger than those found in the main centres, the building of large dwellings, accessory buildings; fencing and driveways reinforce the encroaching 'urban' character. However, there are still agricultural practices being undertaken within this zone and this type of development has created issues. There is often a difference between peoples' expectations and the reality of living in a rural area; they often expect a quiet environment with clean air and no odour. However, the rural area is a managed working environment whose character can be both noisy and malodorous. The rural areas are of great importance to the District and as such it is necessary to ensure that residential activities do not prevent the on-going use and development of the land for agricultural purposes.

Intensive Farming

Intensive farming usually requires extensive areas of buildings for the purpose of housing animals and land for effluent disposal. This type of farming may expand over the next decade and Council seeks to control any effects of such activities on the surrounding rural environment.

Intensive rural activity immediately adjacent to settlements can adversely affect the amenity values of those settlements and reduce the quality of the surrounding rural environment, for example:

- Smell nuisance e.g. intensive animal stocking rates, effluent disposal;
- Crop spray nuisance and possible health risk;
- Noise nuisance e.g. traffic movements, ventilation equipment;
- Visual impact e.g. large buildings, bare ground, solid waste piles;
- Dust nuisance e.g. broiler chicken sheds, free-range piggeries.

As such, intensive farming is not anticipated within the Rural A Zone, which immediately adjoins the residential centres of the District.

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The principal complaints have been about odour and noise, which may increase, should ad hoc residential development be permitted to be dispersed throughout the rural areas. To avoid and mitigate these problems it is appropriate to control both the spread and location of residential development in rural areas and to impose buffer separation distances between some rural activities and existing residential development.

Intensive livestock development can also result in an increased number of effluent disposal fields. Unless controlled, the proliferation of effluent disposal fields can lead to a deterioration of groundwater quality; this is particularly of concern where the groundwater table is close to the land surface.

Rural B Zone

The vast flat Plains interspersed by large braided rivers, with views to the Southern Alps and foothills in the west and bounded by coastal cliffs in the east give this zone its character. However these landscapes forming the Plains have been modified as a result of human settlement, reflected in a mosaic of grassland and crops, shelterbelts, roading and settlements.

This zone is characterised by agricultural activities with associated agricultural-based industrial type development such as Silver Fern Farms and the Five Star Beef feedlot at Wakanui. In general, however the zone is anticipated to provide wide, open spaces scattered only with farm houses and associated utility sheds, and small settlements. There can be significant noise from machinery that may operate from early in the morning to late at night, and odour from activities such as manure spreading and pig farming. There can be relatively low volumes of traffic although large tractors and tankers use rural roads. However, at night it is expected that these areas are quiet with low levels of lighting and traffic.

The increase in dairy farms has altered the character of these zones through the introduction of irrigators, larger field sizes and milking sheds. These activities have also promoted the removal of trees and vegetation over much of the Plains.

Activities within the rural settlements have the potential to impact upon the overall character and amenity values of the Rural B Zone. Buildings such as those used for community activities i.e. village halls and schools can be larger than the surrounding residential dwellings with associated car parking and impermeable surfacing. In addition, the use of such facilities can create adverse effects such as noise, traffic generation and loss of privacy. Such effects will be dependant upon the type of activity being undertaken i.e. a church may only be used once or twice a week whereas a school may generate traffic twice a day for 5 days a week. Levels of noise will differ for different types of activities, and the times at which peak volumes occur. However, community facilities are recognised as being important particularly in the outlying villages, as is proximity to the population they serve.

The settlement of Barrhill lies within the Rural B Zone adjacent to the Rakaia River. It is valued for its heritage buildings and street layout; the four tree lined avenues and market square give the settlement its unique character. These characteristics give a hint to the past history of this once bustling, but short lived settlement, and the people of Ashburton District consider that it is important to protect Barrhill. It is not intended to preserve Barrhill as a museum but to allow for growth and sensitively designed development, in keeping with the existing buildings and retaining

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the four avenues. However, it is also important to consider the wider context of Barrhill, and its place within the surrounding rural area. Large scale buildings such as implement sheds adjacent to Barrhill have the potential to affect the character and amenity of the settlement, as well as views looking out from Barrhill. Council therefore seeks to provide a buffer area around Barrhill to protect it from inappropriate development.

Rural C Zone

The Rural C (High Country) landscape with its large-scale, dominating mountains, valleys and basins, with typical erosion features, low vegetation, scattered lakes and wetlands give the zone its distinctive character. These landscapes are vast and spacious with subtle colourings and vegetation patterns, dominated by natural features and extended views.

In 2009, the Canterbury Landscape Study commissioned by the Canterbury Regional Council identified the following areas of the High Country as Outstanding Natural Landscapes: Upper Rangitata River Valley, Upper Rakaia River Valley, Lower Rakaia River and Gorge, Lake Heron and Ashburton Lakes and, Mt Somers.

These areas were identified as outstanding on the grounds of their “natural science” values (geomorphological and biological values, particularly glacial and fluvial features, lakes and wetlands, and vegetation types); “legibility” (expressiveness and ease of understanding); and “aesthetic values” (including visual character and quality, such as memorability, naturalness, and coherence).

Subsequently, the District Council commissioned a report to assess the Ashburton High Country as a distinct area, considering the importance of its landscapes at a district rather than a regional level. The report, using the same criteria as above, identified four different types of outstanding landscapes:

- **Inland Mountain Range** – the main divide and adjacent mountain ranges which include some of the most pristine landscapes in New Zealand, and have high biological values as well as impressive physical form.
- **Front Ranges** including Mt Somers; Mt Hutt Range and Winterslow, Blackhill and Palmer, which contain important geological features and form a notable landscape.
- **Hakatere Basin** – an expansive intermountain basin with a series of sub alpine lakes, which contains important geological features (especially glacial) and nationally important biodiversity values.
- **Major River Valleys** including Upper Rangitata River Valley; Upper Rakaia River Valley and Lower Rakaia River and Gorge – these braided rivers are of international and national importance for their form, geology and ecology. The river valleys contain important glacial features and as well as being impressive and valued landscapes.

Each landscape type expresses different characteristics and values but is identified for its natural landform and biological science values; its expressiveness particularly of glacial and fluvial activity; and its aesthetic values. The report also recognises that existing levels of modification vary greatly within each landscape type, with the Hakatere Basin being considered to be the most vulnerable to change and the Inland Mountain Range less so due to its isolated location. Therefore these

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landscape types require different management techniques and these are reflected in the methods used to control activities such as built development and vegetation removal.

However, it is acknowledged that the High Country is a dynamic landscape with ecological changes, including the spread of hieracium, sweet briar and some wilding trees, and changes as result of agricultural practices, such as shelter planting, ploughing and top-dressing particularly in the Hakatere basin. These changes continue to have an impact on the character of the landscape. At the same time there is a growing awareness and appreciation of the many values of largely unmodified areas of the High Country. In particular, the visual qualities of the High Country are very vulnerable to change by activities, particularly those involving earthworks, establishment of buildings and structures, and the planting of trees. In the near future, the exposed slopes of the High Country may be cited as possible locations for wind farms. The need to often locate turbines on ridgelines or in prominent locations means that their impact on landscapes can be significant especially where that landscape is valued for its 'emptiness' or provides a backdrop to a dramatic vista. Any application for the erection of large or extensive structures will require careful consideration, weighing up the benefits, both locally and nationally where relevant against any effects on the environment. A landscape assessment will be considered a fundamental requirement in this consideration.

Likewise, changes to indigenous vegetation patterns can also affect the visual qualities of the landscape, as they contribute to the colour, texture and naturalness of an area. A change in vegetation cover however, may not always represent a failure to protect a landscape and may not therefore be inappropriate. The challenge is to establish what represents inappropriate use and development in a particular environment and how protection of outstanding landscape qualities can be achieved.

The Council under section 6 of the Act has a requirement to protect significant indigenous vegetation and associated biodiversity values, and although a significant area of the High Country is now under the management of the Department of Conservation, there are still areas of significant indigenous vegetation that remain vulnerable to change and modification.

The Council has therefore identified a number of areas containing significant nature conservation values on the Planning Maps. The values of these areas may be threatened by the spread of wilding species, introduced predators or changing farming practices such as ploughing in the Hakatere Basin, or the grazing of cattle along water ways. Wetland areas, such as the Ashburton Lakes area, are especially sensitive, and can be easily modified from in-flows of nutrient rich waters or from stock damage.

Areas of significant nature conservation value have been identified for their:

- Intactness or little modification by human activity;
- Rarity of species, habitat or community of species;
- Representativeness of vegetation types, habitats or ecological processes;
- Distinctiveness or special ecological characteristics; or
- A high degree of biological diversity or patterns.

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The District Plan contains two groups of areas of significant nature conservation value: Group 1 and 2. Group 1 is a list of all those sites agreed at the time of the last review of the District Plan and subsequently by Council and landowners as containing significant nature conservation values. Group 2 is a list of sites where there remained disagreement over whether they contain significant nature conservation values and/or the boundaries of the site.

The Council has been working with landowners to identify significant nature conservation values on Group 2 sites and to agree site boundaries. This work culminated in a plan change in 2009 to transfer those sites agreed as containing such values to Group 1.

It is Council's intention to continue to work with landowners to confirm if conservation values exist within the remaining Group 2 sites and confirm site boundaries. A further plan change would then be undertaken to transfer sites that have been identified as containing significant nature conservation values to Group 1 or to remove those sites that do not contain conservation values from the Plan. This is a lengthy process but both Group 1 and 2 sites continue to be protected by rules in the Plan.

The District also contains a range of important geological and geomorphological features, which provide evidence of fossils, fault lines, unusual rock formations, and fluvial, glacial or mass movements. These are a fundamental part of the landscape and nature heritage of the District; it is therefore Council's intention to protect such identified features through rules in the District Plan relating to geoconservation.

This zone is not currently under pressure from development and its overall character has changed little in the preceding decade. It remains dominated by natural landscapes, geological / geomorphological features and significant natural areas. Agricultural activities are limited to sheep grazing with some grazing of beef cattle. The expansive landscapes that incorporate both mountain and basin provide characteristic wide vistas and views. The only evidence of human activity is the isolated hill stations, gravel roads, holiday settlement at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) and the camp grounds at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) and Lake Heron (Oturoto). There is potential for this character to change with increased pressure for development. This may be in the form of lodges and/or residential dwellings as people discover the high level of amenity found in the High Country, in particular its spaciousness and peaceful character.

3.2.4 Business Development in the Rural Area

Commercial and General Business

Business activities in the rural area can result in loss of amenity values and other adverse effects on the rural environment; however some business activities will need or wish to be located in rural areas. This may be due to the location of raw materials i.e. gravel extraction or the business may be closely related to agricultural facilities such as a freezing works. Mt Hutt ski-field is required to locate in the High Country as it utilises the local terrain.

Other activities may seek to locate in the rural area due to their scale. The development of activities such as Farmers Corner, require large sites to provide for retail activities, a café and extensive car

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parking. They also need to be easily accessible from the main routes through the District. A suitable site is only likely to be found in the rural area.

Such activities, whilst providing for people's economic well-being have the potential to create a range of adverse effects. The visual impact of large scale buildings and ancillary structures, as well as the likelihood of significantly increased traffic generation is likely to have a cumulative adverse impact on amenity values such as privacy, rural outlook, spaciousness and quietness. In addition the lack of services in the rural area would necessitate these activities to extract sufficient quantities of water for their development and also to establish appropriate large scale onsite waste disposal systems.

Mt Hutt Ski Field

Mt Hutt ski field is an important attraction - regionally, nationally and internationally. Development of the ski field has continued since its establishment in the early 1970's with additional tows, buildings, road and car-parking improvements.

The Department of Conservation now administers the ski field lease agreements as part of its conservation estate under the Conservation Act. The Department of Conservation and the Canterbury Regional Council manage impacts on indigenous flora and fauna, water quality and soil conservation. Whilst acknowledging that the Department of Conservation and the Canterbury Regional Council will continue to have close involvement with Mt Hutt ski field on the above issues, the Council considers it still has a responsibility under the Act to consider the wider impacts of any ski field development.

The future development of any buildings or structures on the ski field has the potential to create a number of effects. These may be in relation to the visual effects on the scenic qualities of the Mt Hutt Basin, nature conservation values, social effects, cultural values, health and safety, the economic wellbeing of surrounding communities and national tourism. The range and significance of effects will be determined by the type and scale of development proposed and will include positive and adverse effects which will require careful consideration. Any proposal to provide visitor accommodation on the Mt Hutt ski field would have to overcome significant issues such as the disposal of waste water and sewerage.

Mineral Extraction

Ashburton District has to date not been of major interest to the mineral extraction industries, but it is important to local operators and local industry. However, this may change as gravel sources in the region are being depleted or are fully allocated and not able to provide for new extraction activities. For example, the Waimakariri River is fully allocated and the Selwyn River cannot provide a continued source of gravel as it does not flood frequently. Therefore the District needs to be prepared for potentially growing interest in its rivers particularly the Rakaia as a source of gravel for the wider region. This will require controls over traffic generation, storage sites and noise to preserve the amenity values enjoyed by adjoining activities.

Mineral prospecting is usually a minimum impact activity; however extraction can create adverse effects. The extraction of minerals these days is often by an open pit method, with heavy earth

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moving machines and cartage trucks being used. Blasting is sometimes required, before earth moving machines can extract the minerals of interest. While producing economic returns and providing employment in the District, major mineral extraction operations can have adverse impacts on the rural amenity and environment. Poorly situated excavations can cause a loss of visual, remoteness or conservation values; or a loss of rural amenity associated with noise, dust or heavy traffic during extraction operations. Gravel pits can also penetrate or interfere with the shallow water bearing gravels used for irrigation or domestic use. Poorly managed rehabilitation and stormwater runoff can result in large quantities of sediment entering waterways with loss of water quality and in-stream values. Excavation on steep slopes can also affect the stability of slopes and terraces. Larger quarries can have significant visual impacts. These impacts are dependent on the sensitivity of the area, the scale of the operation, and how well the operation is managed.

Gravel extraction is by far the most predominant extractive mineral, being used for roading and the building industry although lime quarrying is an increasingly significant extractive activity. Lime quarries produce dust, noise and can increase traffic on local roads; all effects that may impact upon neighbouring residential properties. Earthworks are also regularly undertaken throughout the District, generally in association with subdivision, farm and forestry development and building activity. Other mineral extraction activities may occur at various times within the rural areas.

3.2.5 Natural Hazards

The main natural hazards in the District are flooding, coastal erosion and earthquakes.

The rates of coastal erosion vary depending on a particular area of the coastline and whether many storms have occurred over a particular time period. Over a period of 30-40 years the rate of erosion along the coastline has ranged between 0.5 to 0.65m per year, and this is predicted to continue. Erosion of the coastline is anticipated to be accompanied by rising sea levels. The New Zealand Government (2008) estimates that over the next 40-50 years, sea level will rise by 30-40cm. However, within the rural zones on the coastline, there is little development and public access is limited, therefore it is considered that the main issue is loss of farmland.

Flooding is considered to be a risk along the major rivers especially the Ashburton (Hakatere) River. The main threat is to the settlements; however dwellings and infrastructure within the rural area are potentially at risk too. There is an estimated 1% chance in any year of extensive floods across rural areas, including some rural settlements. In some areas i.e. to the south of Ashburton town (Kapuka), this risk has been reduced by the building of stopbanks along the river to retain a 1 in 200 year flood event. However, the majority of the rural area is not protected and it is anticipated that this will continue to be the case, as the threat to people, infrastructure and services is less than in the urban areas. Although, it is acknowledged that the loss of crops and livestock could potentially have a significant impact on the economy of the District.

Overland flows (flows that are created by excess runoff and ponding) have the potential to affect large areas of the District. Overland flows may also occur at the same time as river flooding causing even greater damage. The area around the settlement of Hinds (Hekeao) is noted as being particularly at risk from overland flows as has been demonstrated in 1945, 1986 and 2000; the two latter events being a combination of local runoff and river flooding. Overland flows in 1945 flooded 14,000ha of agricultural land as well as the settlement of Hinds (Hekeao). Such significant events

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have the potential to cause great damage and inflict huge losses on agricultural communities, and are therefore considered a serious threat within the District.

Fault lines run through the Ashburton District and their existence means that the District is vulnerable to earthquakes. Potentially an earthquake could cause devastation from the High Country to the coastline. It is therefore important to consider this risk with regard to infrastructure especially dams which have the potential to burst during earthquake events and, residential activity.

3.3 Zone Description

3.3.1 Rural A Zone

The Rural A Zone surrounds the settlements of Methven, Mt Somers, Rakaia, Mayfield (Te Puke Tai), Hinds (Hekeao), Tinwald, Ashburton (Kapuka) and Chertsey. The Zone also applies to the Ashburton (Hakatere) River as it flows through Ashburton.

This Rural Zone typically adjoins residential developments and has been under pressure from those seeking to create lifestyle blocks. As such, the Rural A Zone is characterised by residential properties alongside agricultural activities such as pastoral farming and cropping. There is also evidence of diversification into other horticultural practices such as bulb growing.

The purpose of the Zone is to provide for existing and future farming activities, and associated buildings including dwellings. Due to the close proximity of residential activities, this zone is not intended to provide for intensive farming and related effluent disposal. The zone will also act as a buffer between residential activities and the Rural B Zone.

3.3.2 Rural B Zone

The Rural B Zone covers the rest of the Plains and provides for agricultural practices such as dairy farming, cropping, sheep and deer farms etc. It is recognised that there are established business activities located in this Zone, and these will continue to be provided for i.e. Five Star Beef. There are also a small number of established settlements.

The Rural B Zone is a managed working environment: noise such as the use of machinery early in the morning and late at night is not uncommon; odour can be created by the spreading of manure and intensive farming practices such as pig rearing and there may be large vehicles such as milk tankers utilising the roads.

Therefore it is clearly stated that the main purpose of the zone is to provide for agricultural and horticultural activities and the diversification thereof, whether this be into new crops or methods of farming, and a limited number of intensive farms. This zone is particularly important to the livelihoods of many and the economy of not only the District but New Zealand.

3.3.3 Rural C Zone

The Rural C Zone applies to the High Country where agricultural activities can be restrained by the topography, climate and soils. The Zone is renowned for its vast landscapes, wide open spaces, vistas, geology/geomorphology and unique biodiversity. Subsequently, large areas are defined as

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Outstanding Landscapes, in addition to Areas of Significant Nature Conservation Value, which seek to protect the unique flora and fauna.

The types of activities that can occur in this zone are limited by the topography and the need to minimise adverse effects on the landscape. As such the zone is dominated by vast, empty landscapes, scattered dwellings and buildings associated with the hill stations, low noise levels and high amenity values.

The zone provides for sheep grazing, some cattle and deer grazing and limited cropping in the low lying sheltered basins. It is also important for recreation, with the holiday settlement at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna-O Taka) being a focal point of the area. In addition, the high country provides for skiing at Mt Hutt and some of the outlying hill stations; walking, angling, sailing and other water sports.

3.4 Objectives and Policies

Objective 3.1: Rural Primary Production

To enable primary production to function efficiently and effectively in the Rural A and B Zones, through the protection and use of highly versatile and/or productive soils and the management of potential adverse effects.

Policy 3.1A

Provide for the continued productive use and protection of highly productive and/or versatile soils, and their associated irrigation resources, by ensuring that such land is not developed for intensive residential activity and/or non-rural activities and the extent of coverage by structures or hard surfaces is limited.

Policy 3.1B

Provide for growth in the existing Residential Zones and identified areas of the District to reduce pressure in the Rural A and B Zones for residential development, minimise the loss of productive soils, and to avoid the potential for conflict between rural and residential activities.

Policy 3.1C

Avoid the establishment or expansion of intensive farming or other rural activities in close proximity to settlement boundaries and residential activities, to manage the adverse effects created by such activities i.e. noise, odour and dust.

Policy 3.1D

Avoid the establishment of residential activities or the expansion of urban boundaries in close proximity to intensive farming or other rural activities, to manage reverse sensitivity effects that can be created by such activities i.e. noise, odour and dust.

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Policy 3.1E

Protect highly productive and/or versatile soils by discouraging activities such as earthworks and extractive processes that significantly deplete the topsoil or the subsoil.

Explanation and Reasons

The Rural A and B Zones are important agricultural areas providing for the economic well-being of the District. This importance is not anticipated to decrease and therefore it is necessary to restrict activities that may deplete the soil resource. For reasons of resource efficiency, it is also important to protect the versatile soils of the District thereby optimising the use of fertilisers and water.

It is proposed to encourage low density residential activity to occur within the Residential D areas. These are found adjacent to the main settlements of the District and provide for those seeking a 'rural' lifestyle that is in close proximity to amenities and services. Additional land has been zoned for the purposes of residential development and should relieve pressure for subdivision and development in the rural zones. It is the Council's intention to clearly define the urban limits of the major settlements of Ashburton (Kapuka), Methven and Rakaia to protect the surrounding rural resource and promote a policy of consolidation.

The Ashburton Business Estate is anticipated to provide sufficient land for foreseeable future business/industrial development. However, it may be necessary for some development to occur in the rural area due to the nature of the activity. For example, Five Star Beef requires expansive premises and large buildings to undertake its business, and it is related to agricultural activities. Therefore, its location within the rural zone is accepted but the same may not be true of a large out of town retail outlet or manufacturing plant. Again, it is the Council's intention to limit development in the rural area and any such activity will need to seek resource consent to establish, with relationship to a rural activity or resources, and lack of suitable alternative locations being key determining factors.

In addition, the Council considers intensive farming should be guided away from the Rural A Zone as there is a greater potential for conflict with other farming or residential activities. Most of the problems associated with intensive farming activities occur as a result of poorly-sited and designed buildings and enclosures, and poor farm management practices and waste disposal methods. Given that the adverse impacts of these activities are so dependent on the management practices used, and the sensitivity of the surrounding environment, the Council will consider intensive farming proposals on their merit in the Rural B Zone, and have appropriate standards attached to each operation. While many people who live in the rural areas are willing to accept a level of noise or smell associated with some intensive farming, these may be irritating or unacceptable to people living in urban areas. Accordingly, these activities will be discouraged from establishing near the urban environment. Conversely, new residential activities will be discouraged from locating close to intensive farming operations.

Likewise, mineral extraction is only likely to occur within the rural area and the need to obtain resource consent for large gravel extraction operations or lime quarrying will ensure that the effects on the District's soil resource are minimised. Likewise extensive earthworks or mineral extraction

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have the potential to affect the soil resource or identified geoconservation areas and it is Council's intention to control this activity within the rural areas.

Objective 3.2: Biodiversity

Protect, sustain and/or enhance indigenous biodiversity by controlling and managing activities that have the potential to affect the life supporting capacity of soils, water quality in the lakes, rivers and wetlands and significant nature conservation values.

Policy 3.2A

Protect and maintain indigenous biodiversity, in particular areas of significant nature conservation values or land above 900 metres in altitude, by controlling vegetation clearance, the establishment of buildings, planting of trees and earthworks.

Policy 3.2B

Use the following primary criteria to identify areas with significant nature conservation values:

- Intactness – The area is little modified by human activity, comprises a predominantly intact indigenous system and is not affected in a major way by weed or pest species.
- Rarity – The area supports an indigenous species, habitat or community of species, which is rare and vulnerable within the ecological district or threatened nationally.
- Representatives – The best examples of particular vegetation types, habitats or ecological processes which are typical of their ecological district.
- Distinctiveness / Special Ecological Characteristics – The type and range of unusual features of the area itself and the role of the area in relationship to other areas locally, regionally or nationally, including:-
 - presence of species at their distribution limit;
 - levels of endemism;
 - supporting protected indigenous fauna for some part of their life-cycle (e.g. breeding, feeding, moulting, roosting), whether on a regular or infrequent basis;
 - playing an important role in the life-cycle of protected migratory indigenous fauna;
 - containing an intact sequence, or a substantial part of an intact sequence, of unusual ecological features or gradients.
- Diversity and pattern – areas exhibiting a high degree of biological diversity in terms of:
 - vegetation;
 - habitat types;
 - species;
 - ecological processes.

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Policy 3.2C

Consider the following secondary criteria to assist in identifying areas with significant conservation values:

- Scientific Value – The area is a type locality or other recognised scientific reference area;
- Connectivity – The extent to which the area has ecological value due to its location and functioning in relation to its surroundings. An area may be ecologically significant because of its connections to a neighbouring area, or as part of a network of areas of fauna habitat, or as a buffer;
- Size and shape – The degree to which the size and shape of an area is conducive to it being, or becoming, ecologically self-sustaining.

Policy 3.2D

In considering:-

- whether to list in the District Plan those areas identified as having significant nature conservation value under Policy 3.2B;
- whether to include rules in the District Plan to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the values of those areas identified as having significant nature conservation value under Policy 3.2B, and
- resource consent applications where the Council has discretion to consider the effects of activities on nature conservation values,

The Council shall have regard to:

- the economic effects on the landholder (if these are relevant under section 7(b) of the Act);
- the resources required to implement protection;
- the compatibility of the existing land use with the values identified;
- the degree of modification of the site;
- the extent to which the vegetation type, habitat or ecological process is already protected elsewhere;
- the restoration potential of the site;
- the long term ecological viability of the site;
- the presence and level of animal pests and weeds;
- the range of alternative protection mechanisms available and their relative costs and benefits;
- in the case of resource consent applications, the relevant assessment matters

Policy 3.2E

Improve levels and techniques of onsite effluent treatment and disposal to protect the quality of water in lakes, rivers and wetlands.

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Policy 3.2F

Control land uses on land adjoining lakes, rivers and wetlands to maintain or improve water quality and sustain and/or enhance biodiversity values.

Policy 3.2G

Mitigate the adverse effects of motorised watercraft and vehicles by controlling, limiting or avoiding their use in areas of high passive recreation use, significant natural values and known significant wildlife habitats.

Explanation and Reasons

The vegetative cover in the Rural C Zone, which covers the area known as the High Country, is vital to the preservation of soils and therefore areas of significant nature conservation value. It also ensures that pastoral farming can continue to be carried out in these areas.

The District is fortunate in that it still contains a number of areas that have particular nature conservation value; some areas of which harbour nationally significant species. Several sections of Part II of the Act underpin the Council's responsibilities in relation to areas of nature conservation value.

Policies 3.2B and 3.2C set out the criteria that the Council will use to identify areas with significant nature conservation values. These criteria reflect the range of important attributes or characteristics that must be apparent in an area for it to be considered significant. This is not a checklist which must be completed to "qualify" as a significant area nor does meeting only one of the criteria result in a qualification of significance. The policies provide direction on the qualities that are important in the assessment of an area.

In some instances, there remains disagreement regarding the boundaries of, and the values encompassed by, areas that potentially have significant nature conservation values. Confirmation as to the extent and significance of the values and the boundaries of these areas needs to be worked out on a detailed basis jointly between the landholders, the Department of Conservation and the Council. All parties need to be involved in the decisions as to the most appropriate long-term protection mechanisms to be applied to these areas.

The Council undertook a Plan Change in 2009 to consider most of the previous Group 2 sites and transfer those of the sites which were assessed as having significant nature conservation values into Group 1. The Council has set in place a process (refer to 3.1.3.3 Implementation Methods) for considering the remaining Group 2 sites that are awaiting completion of the Tenure Review process and those associated freehold areas awaiting ecological assessment. In future it is anticipated that these remaining Group 2 sites will be subject to a further Plan Change. Where sites remain as Group 2, they are controlled by the relevant Group 2 rule, as well as the general indigenous vegetation clearance rules.

In addition to the natural attributes of the area identified in Policy 3.2B, Policy 3.2D requires the Council to have regard to other matters before listing, or applying rules to, an area as an Area of Significant Nature Conservation Value in the District Plan. These other matters relate to such issues

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as the economic and social wellbeing of affected individuals and the community, and the practicalities and likelihood of achieving the desired environmental outcome. It is also appropriate and necessary to consider the consequences of listing the site and imposing rules on the wellbeing of the owner. Policy 3.2D therefore requires a balanced and comprehensive consideration to be given to issues surrounding the protection of Areas of Significant Nature Conservation Value when considering relevant resource consent applications.

Rules have been included in the District Plan principally for the purpose of protecting indigenous biodiversity and maintaining indigenous vegetation, communities, and habitats generally within the District. Activities involving vegetation clearance, land disturbance through earthworks, and the planting of trees, can destroy indigenous plants and animals directly or indirectly through the modification of habitat. However, these rules will also act to sustain or enhance the life-supporting capacity of the soil resources in the High Country.

The District Plan includes rules controlling vegetation clearance and earthworks:

- in areas above 900 metres above sea level;
- in areas of significant nature conservation value;
- in and adjoining wetlands; and
- generally controlling the clearance of tall tussock grassland of the genus *Chionochloa*, and forest and shrubland vegetation greater than 3m in height.

Although, the Department of Conservation has a crucial role in ensuring the long-term protection of areas of significant nature conservation value, it is acknowledged that Council also has a vital part to play. It is important for the integrity of ecological systems and biodiversity that large expanses of vegetation and undeveloped areas are allowed to remain rather than just small isolated areas. As only the Council can control and influence activities on private land, it is important that the District Plan contain objectives, policies and rules controlling vegetation clearance, tree planting, buildings and earthworks to protect indigenous vegetation beyond areas of significant nature conservation value,

On the Plains indigenous vegetation occurs in scattered remnants although some work is being undertaken to replant areas with native species. As such, any remnant is important and no indigenous vegetation can be removed as of right, reflecting its importance in the District.

The quality of the waters in the District is principally of concern to the Canterbury Regional Council in exercising its statutory responsibilities. However, the Council acknowledges that it has a role in controlling the effects of land uses within the District which may affect water quality and the Council is the major provider of water supplies.

Water quality can be affected by the rate and quality of domestic sewage discharges; a policy has, therefore, been included seeking to improve the quality of these discharges.

Disturbance to the margins of waterways and the loss of natural vegetation can adversely affect water quality by the loss of sediment and nutrients into the waterways. These are particular problems amongst some of the Ashburton lakes and wetlands. In addition, rubbish, stormwater

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runoff and wastewater discharges from the hut settlement at Lake Clearwater (Te Puna O Taka) have the potential to adversely affect water quality. The Council intends to work with the Canterbury Regional Council, other organisations, groups and the landholders, to develop methods to improve water quality and natural habitat in these lakes and wetlands, including land reservation, reducing effluent entering waterways, reducing stock access to waterways and wetlands, reducing erosion and sediment transport within the catchments and riparian vegetation enhancement. Many of these methods do not lend themselves to achievement through rules in a Plan, particularly because many of the activities affecting the waterways will have existing-use rights under the Act and will not necessarily be affected by new rules. The methods will be better achieved through initiatives of both the Councils involved, the other interested groups and organisations and working closely with landowners.

To ensure that the potential adverse effects of recreational activities on the District's lakes and rivers are kept at a minor level with respect to wildlife, recreational and cultural values, some controls over water-based activities are required. In areas with significant wildlife or scenic values, such as the Ashburton lakes, the use of powerboats or other motorised craft is undesirable because of their potential adverse effects. The Council has therefore chosen to control the use of motorised craft in the Ashburton Lakes area. Whereas activities on Lake Hood are controlled by provisions in the Aquatic Park Zone but it is noted that the wildlife values on this artificial lake are less significant than in the Ashburton Lakes area.

Objective 3.3: Natural Character and Rural Values

The protection of the natural character and values of the District's outstanding landscapes, its key geological / geomorphological areas, its coastal environment, lakes, rivers, wetlands and their margins from the adverse effects of development, land use change and for the enjoyment of the public.

Policy 3.3A

Protect and maintain the natural values and character of the District's outstanding landscapes by:

- controlling the planting of non-indigenous tree species
- encouraging the retention of existing indigenous vegetation.
- controlling earthworks
- managing development by controlling location, colour and design of new buildings.

Policy 3.3B

Protect scientifically important geological and geomorphological features from the potential adverse effects of land use change and development, as these are important aspects of the District's natural character.

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Policy 3.3C

Use the following criteria to identify areas with geoconservation values:

- Geological significance: the importance of the feature to the understanding of the geology or evolution of life forms in New Zealand or the Earth
- Rarity: the rarity of the site type and feature
- Scientific Potential: the extent to which potential is there to expand information and understanding of site geology of NZ and history of its biota through scientific techniques
- Representativeness: extent to which a landform or exposure is a good example of the type of feature
- Diversity within feature: number of different geological features or components present
- Visual contribution to landscape: the visual impact or contribution of the landform or feature in the wider landscape
- Intactness: the extent to which the intrinsic attributes of the feature have been damaged by nature or humans
- Education and Interpretation value: the potential to interpret the feature and enhance understanding and appreciation of its formation
- Historical and Community association: the extent to which a feature has historical connotations or is known or valued by the community.

Policy 3.3D

In considering:-

- whether to list in the District Plan those areas identified as having geoconservation value under Policy 3.3C;
- whether to include rules in the District Plan to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the values of those areas identified as having geoconservation value under Policy 3.3C, and
- resource consent applications where the Council has discretion to consider the effects of activities on geoconservation values,

The Council shall have regard to:

- the economic effects on the landholder;
- the resources required to implement protection;
- the compatibility of the existing land use with the values identified;
- the degree of modification of the site;
- the restoration potential of the site;
- the long term ecological viability of the site;
- the range of alternative protection mechanisms available and their relative costs and benefits;
- in the case of resource consent applications, the relevant assessment matters

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Policy 3.3E

Maintain and, where possible, enhance the natural character and nature conservation values of lakes, rivers, wetlands and their margins to assist in protecting water quality and freshwater biodiversity.

Policy 3.3F

Ensure that the use of waterways for motorised craft and/or any other activity avoids any adverse effects on public enjoyment, availability of the waterways and their margins as well as its natural character.

Policy 3.3G

Ensure that the location, design and use of structures and facilities, which pass across or through the surface of any waterway or are attached to the bank of any waterway, are such that any adverse effects on the character of the waterway, safety and conflicts with recreational and other activities on the waterways are avoided or mitigated.

Policy 3.3H

Take esplanade reserves/strips, at the time of subdivision, to provide for public access, and protection of the natural character and nature conservation values of waterways and their margins, and lakes.

Policy 3.3I

Maintain natural coastal processes, ecosystem functioning and coastal and marine habitats to preserve the natural character of the coast.

Explanation and Reasons

In a District the size of Ashburton, there will always be pressures on the physical environment due to development and everyday living. The quality of this development however will not be sustained unless the protection of the District's natural resources, and in particular the visual and landscape qualities of those resources, can be assured. This is because the quality of life and development in the District is, in part, dependent on the quality of the visual and landscape character within which it operates.

The outstanding areas are highly valued for their aesthetic qualities, degree of naturalness and composition and, represent the backdrop to the Plains of the District. The Plan therefore acknowledges the importance of these landscapes and identifies them on the Planning Maps. Controls on activities within these areas are contained within the Rural Zone rules, which require consent for activities which may potentially affect the vegetation pattern, disturb land or require the building of structures.

To sustainably manage the physical resources of the District, some priority is required to ensure the protection of the landscape and visual amenity and in particular the landscapes and natural features which have been identified as being of outstanding value. Other considerations relate to the extent that the landscape expresses past natural (including geological) and cultural processes.

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Tree planting in the Hakatere Basin has the potential to change the landscape as it is the openness of the landscape that is valued, and trees can create an enclosed feeling and be a barrier to views. To minimise these impacts, tree planting will be limited to shelterbelts and their location will be controlled by the Plan as will the species of trees that can be planted. This will also prevent the introduction of non-indigenous species and help control the spread of wilding trees. It is recognised that certain areas already have pine tree plantations but these will not be encouraged elsewhere in the High Country. The Council acknowledges that there is an issue with weed species such as broom in the High Country and it is intended to encourage the clearance of weed species, in conjunction with the Canterbury Regional Council and Department of Conservation, as well as by working with high country farmers

Earthworks have the potential to create adverse effects if located on steep slopes or in visually sensitive areas. Rules in the Plan will encourage earthworks to be appropriately located and where adverse effects are created for these to be mitigated.

It is not the purpose of these policies to prevent development or activity, but to ensure that development in the High Country is undertaken having recognised and provided for the matters of national importance in Section 6 of the Act, which includes the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate use and subdivision. These considerations are important to the welfare of the District and its inhabitants.

Through rules in the Plan, buildings and structures will be encouraged to locate in areas with higher potential to absorb change and avoid skylines, ridgelines, prominent places and features or important views. Form and colour will be controlled to ensure they complement the dominant forms and colours in the landscape. Furthermore, business development within the High Country will be very limited as it is the Council's intention to protect this area from large scale developments that may require a number of substantial buildings. These types of activities may not fit within the High Country landscapes, adversely affecting views, requiring the removal of vegetation and reducing the level of amenity anticipated within the area.

The Council is also seeking to protect scientifically important geological and geomorphological features; these relate to the rarity or representativeness of a particular landform. Importantly, such features often form part of the outstanding landscapes, and their destruction could potentially have a severe impact on how these landscapes are considered i.e. their importance and scientific values. Other geological features are areas where fossils may be found, and although on a much smaller scale they are none the less very important aspects of the District. Geoconservation sites are often located in Areas of Significant Nature Conservation and/or an Outstanding Landscape. In many cases the controls over the planting of trees and earthworks that apply to these areas are sufficient to also protect sites of geoconservation value.

Criteria have been included to assist in definition of areas having geoconservation values. While a range of sites and areas have been identified within the Plan, there are other areas not yet evaluated and therefore not identified on Planning Maps or in the associated schedule. Through the course of resource consent applications or further research, other sites and areas may be identified and evaluated using these criteria.

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Enforcing controls through the District Plan on private recreational water users is difficult unless such controls clearly permit or prohibit activities with simple enforceable performance standards. It is not considered practical or sensible to require private boat owners to obtain resource consents before they go out boating on the waterways. In preference, controls over private water users need to specify clearly what activities can and cannot take place on each waterway without resource consents being involved, and what performance standards must be met.

Many waahi tapu and waahi taoka of value to Takata Whenua are located in the margins of the waterways of the District. Activities on the surface of waterways may result in conflicts with these values, as a result of disturbance from wave action, noise or by providing access to previously inaccessible parts of the waterways. The Council has a responsibility in managing the effects of activities on the surface of waterways, and to increase public understanding of these types of effects.

The Council considers that rules are necessary to control activities such as the building of structures, which occur on the margins of the District's waterways, including rivers and lakes, so the indigenous vegetation and their natural character can be protected. In addition, the Council is also concerned with the protection of Takata Whenua values, which may include access to and protection of waterways; these may be achieved by creating a buffer between waterways and adjoining activities. This can be achieved through the taking of esplanade reserves at the time of subdivision or through negotiation with landowners in areas where development is unlikely to occur. Such rules also enable consideration of the potential for restoration and enhancement of the natural values of the margins of waterways.

Natural erosion processes along the coast and the formation of sea cliffs along most of the District's coastline mean that there is a distinct transition from the coastal marine area to the highly modified rural environment. Due to the severity of much of the coastal environment, the coastal margins are very limited and opportunities for public access are restricted. For these reasons, rules have not been implemented to protect nature conservation values along the coastline, except for the river mouths or particular geoconservation features. However, Council does recognise the existence of hut settlements at Hakatere and the Rakaia and Rangitata river mouths. Although zoned residential these settlements interact with the rural environment and are focal points along the coastline. They too are affected by coastal erosion and therefore, any activity in the rural zone that increases the rate of coastal erosion will also affect these hut settlements.

Objective 3.4: Rural Character and Amenity

To protect and maintain the character and amenity values of the District's rural areas, considering its productive uses whilst providing for non-rural activities that meet the needs of rural communities.

Policy 3.4A

Maintain clear distinctions between the urban and rural areas and avoid the dispersal of residential activities throughout the rural areas that anticipate a higher standard of amenity than rural activities.

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Policy 3.4B

Provide for the establishment of non-rural activities in the rural areas, whilst managing any potential adverse effects on the character and amenity of the rural environment and rural productive activities.

Policy 3.4C

Recognise the historical development of Mt Hutt ski field and its current tourism importance, and enable further development of structures and buildings whilst controlling their location and design.

Policy 3.4D

Protect the visual qualities of the surrounding environment from any adverse effects of night lighting of recreational and business activities.

Policy 3.4E

Retain an open and spacious character to the rural areas of the District, with a dominance of open space and plantings over buildings by ensuring that the scale and siting of development is such that:

- it will not unreasonably detract from the privacy or outlook of neighbouring properties;
- sites remain open and with a rural character as viewed from roads;
- the character and scale of buildings is compatible with existing development within the surrounding rural area.
- the probability of dwellings being exposed to significant adverse effects from an activity on a neighbouring property is reduced.

Policy 3.4F

Ensure that the scale, siting and design and appearance of development in the Barrhill Buffer Area (as defined on the Planning Maps) will not detract from the character, setting and historic values associated with Barrhill.

Policy 3.4G

To restrict the location of future noise sensitive activities in areas adjacent to the Airport whilst at the same time managing existing noise sensitive urban development surrounding the airport.

Explanation and Reasons

The Council considers that the continued use of the District's valuable productive land and water resources for a wide range of productive rural activities is essential for the continuing well-being of the District's community, and to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of the District's future generations. It is important that the District Plan ensures that activities in the rural zones do not make the rural land and water resources less useful for these productive purposes. Of particular concern are the potential adverse effects of pockets of residential development throughout the rural areas on the continued use of the rural resource. The presence of residential activities in the rural areas can make it very difficult for productive rural activities to continue to operate, to expand or to find new sites to establish. Consequently, this will have adverse effects on the social and economic well-being of the present and future communities of the District.

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The Council considers that the retention of the open and spacious character of the rural areas and the avoidance of a dispersal of residential activities will enable the carrying out of a wide range of rural land uses without noise, odour and dust effects being perceived as a nuisance.

In addition, the Council considers intensive farming should be guided away from the Rural A Zone as there is greater potential for conflict with other farming or residential activities. Most of the problems associated with intensive farming activities occur as a result of poorly-sited and designed buildings and enclosures, and poor farm management practices and waste disposal methods. The Council considered setting performance standards for all intensive farming activities. However, given the adverse impacts of these activities are so dependent on the management practices used, or the sensitivity of the surrounding environment, the Council will consider intensive farming proposals on their merit in the Rural A Zone, and have appropriate standards attached to each operation. While many people who live in the rural areas are willing to accept a level of noise or smell associated with some intensive farming, these may be irritating or unacceptable to people living in urban areas. Accordingly, these activities will be discouraged from establishing near the urban environment.

Community and educational facilities within the rural settlements have the potential to impact upon the overall character and amenity values of the rural zones. Buildings such as those used for village halls and schools can be larger than the surrounding residential dwellings with associated car parking and impermeable surfacing. In addition, the use of such facilities can create adverse effects such as noise, traffic generation and loss of privacy. It is therefore Council's intention to control the development of such activities in rural areas.

The Council seeks to allow a wide range of business activities in the rural area, subject to standards and controls to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects. These include home occupations, home-stay accommodation and some commercial activities such as retail of certain primary products grown or reared on site or crafts made on site. In allowing these activities to occur as-of-right the Council recognises that standards are needed to protect rural amenity. However, other business activities can have significant adverse impacts on the rural amenity and environment, irrespective of general standards.

It is recognised that at times people will wish to establish business enterprises in the rural environment. This may be because they have a direct association with a rural resource; are dependent on the natural characteristics and features of the rural areas; or require large areas of open space, remote from urban areas.

The effects of business activities on rural areas may differ from their effects in the urban environment due to the different character, amenity values and environmental quality of the rural environment. For example, the absence of reticulated services may require onsite disposal of wastes, or the generation of traffic may create an unacceptable safety risk for traffic on high speed roads. Large buildings may be visually obtrusive in the open spacious rural environment. The Council therefore wishes to retain the ability to assess the effects of any business activity in the Rural Zones. This particularly applies in the Rural C Zone where such activities may require the clearance of vegetation and may adversely affect the landscapes that provide this zone with its unique character.

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Recreational activities have the potential to create a range of adverse effects; noise from motorbikes; visual effects from signage; trampling and erosion from walkers and vehicles parked along roads. As such, Council wishes to retain control over the establishment of non-passive activities whereas activities such as walking can be undertaken as of right. In addition, farm visits by limited numbers of people are also acceptable and not anticipated to create significant effects.

The Council recognises the importance of Mt Hutt ski field within the District, and its tourism role, which is particularly significant to the economy of Methven. The Council also accepts that any additional development within the ski field area is likely to have limited impact on landscape values given the presence of the existing structures and its location. However, the Council would like to ensure that any further development does take into account the landscape values with appropriate location of buildings or structures, the appropriate design of building and structures in terms of shape, scale, colour and materials.

The Council seeks to control night lighting of recreational and business activities as this can adversely affect views of the night sky, disturb neighbours and affect the safety of road users. Lights close to roads, particularly those that shine or spill onto the road can reduce driver visibility and compromise road safety. In addition, lights that shine onto or into neighbouring properties and dwellings can reduce privacy levels and disturb residents sleep. Furthermore, within the rural area it is anticipated that there will be extensive, clear views of the sky at night. Excessive lighting or unshielded lights have the potential to affect such views and Council feels it is important to address this matter when considering applications for night lighting of activities.

The Council does not want to prevent any development or non-rural activities occurring in the Rural Zones, however it does seek to control their effects on the rural environment. The Rural A and B Zones are characterised by wide, open spaces with scattered dwellings, farm buildings, and particularly in the Rural A Zone, industrial and service activities associated with agricultural production such as seed cleaning and farm machinery supplies. These are not quiet, tranquil environments but working areas that provide the District with its economic stability. The character and amenity values of the Plains are associated with its open, spacious environment and scattered buildings, and spartan vegetation and shelterbelts that result from the agricultural and productive activities that occur here.

The Rural C Zone is unique in that it provides panoramic views, barren landscapes with very few buildings that are associated with agricultural activities. Apart from the holiday huts at Lake Clearwater there is little evidence of human activity. This provides the Rural C Zone with its character and amenity values, which differs from the Rural A and B Zones, where the amenity values and character are closely associated with human activities and changes to the landscape. In the High Country, the character and amenity values are associated with the natural environment albeit with minor changes that have occurred, in the form of farm buildings, shelterbelt planting and the growth of wilding pines, since the establishment of the sheep stations

Barrhill is noted within the District as having a distinct character with important heritage values. The Council considers that development adjacent to Barrhill has the potential to affect these values and as such, should be subject to specific controls.

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The introduction of air noise boundary controls at Ashburton Airport not only protects the Airport but also sets a finite limit on the amount of aircraft noise that could be generated by an expanded airport in the long-term.

Objective 3.5: Extractive Activities

Provide for and manage the effects of extractive activities, including earthworks whilst protecting the amenity values of the rural environment and rural resources.

Policy 3.5A

Control the potential effects of mineral extraction, including mineral prospecting, in order to ensure that the operations avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the amenity values and environment of rural areas and on Takata Whenua values.

Policy 3.5B

Ensure that during and after mineral extraction, sites are progressively rehabilitated to enable the establishment of a land use appropriate to the area.

Policy 3.5C

Control earthworks within the District to ensure minimal adverse effects on amenity values and land stability, whilst protecting important geoconservation sites, landscapes, riparian areas and areas of significant nature conservation value.

Explanation and Reasons

An important facet of the extractive industry is the activities of mineral prospecting and exploration. These activities are needed to enable companies to identify mineral resources of worth. Prospecting is usually a minimum impact activity which may include very limited rock, soil or vegetation sampling. Exploration involves more detailed sampling of areas that have been identified during the prospecting phase as having minerals of possible extractive potential. Exploration may also be a minimum impact activity; although, on many occasions trenching or drilling with explosives may be used in exploration, with up to several hundred tonnes of material being extracted for testing purposes. As a result, substantial clearance of vegetation or earth moving may be required and, temporary roading may also be necessary.

The Council considers that controls are necessary with respect to the extractive activities because the scale of the operations, the sensitivity of the area, and the management of the operations may vary considerably. Consequently the effects on amenity values such as privacy, rural outlook, spaciousness and quietness or the effects on remoteness or recreational, landscape or conservation values may vary considerably. For these issues to be adequately addressed Council considers individual proposals need to be assessed on their merits. This will also enable the Council to set conditions on the management of the operation that are appropriate to the scale of the operation and sensitivity of the area. The Plan will provide for limited extraction as of right to allow for exploration activities that may create minimal adverse effects on the environment.

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Gravel reserves were established on sites throughout the District many years ago. The Council considers that it is important to retain the ability for it to use a few of these gravel reserves, where they are strategically placed and of a suitable quality gravel to be used for the carrying out of essential public works, such as road, bridge and stopbank repairs. These gravel reserves are designated within the Rural Zones, where their location is such that any adverse effects of their use on the surrounding environment will be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Earthworks have the potential to create adverse effects on the environment depending upon their size and location. Council seeks to provide for farm activities such as tracking and the digging of farm pits whilst protecting the amenity values of the rural area. Extensive earthwork activities can affect views, require the clearance of vegetation and increase truck movements on local roads. Council therefore, wants to retain its discretion over large scale earthworks, so such matters can be considered. In addition, it is intended to limit or prevent earthworks in sensitive areas such as areas of significant nature conservation value, outstanding landscapes, riparian areas, and geoconservation sites.

Objective 3.6: Natural Hazards in Rural Areas

Minimise loss of life or serious injury, damage to assets or infrastructure, or disruption to the community from natural hazards.

Policy 3.6A

Ensure that buildings are located and constructed to avoid or mitigate the risks associated with flooding.

Policy 3.6B

Ensure that new buildings, or additions to existing buildings, within close proximity to the coast, are only constructed or extended where there is minimal likelihood of damage to these assets or the risks can be mitigated.

Policy 3.6C

Avoid new coastal protection works or the establishment of new developments including infrastructure such as road and rail links, which may result in a requirement for new coastal protection works.

Policy 3.6D

Avoid adverse effects from natural hazard mitigation activities on the natural character and values of the environment and any cultural values.

Explanation and Reasons

Council considers a co-ordinated approach with the Canterbury Regional Council is required to address the potential risk from natural hazards and mitigation measures.

Over the years stopbanks have been constructed, riverbanks planted and stabilised, riverbed levels lowered by gravel extraction and channels straightened to reduce the potential for flooding by the

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Canterbury Regional Council. In addition, the Canterbury Regional Council has introduced flood-warning measures. While these operations do much to avoid or mitigate flood events, the Council recognises that some controls on building and subdivision in specific areas are required to limit or control the nature of development in flood risk areas.

The Council considers that there are net benefits to the community of Ashburton (Kapuka) town and surrounding rural areas from the upgrading of the stopbank on the North Ashburton River from Jessops Bend to Trevors Road to provide additional protection to the existing buildings and infrastructure within the town that is potentially at risk from flooding. However, it is acknowledged that, despite additional stopbank protection, there will always remain a residual risk of flooding for Ashburton (Kapuka) town and surrounding rural areas as a result of stopbank failure due to overtopping or breaching, or from stormwater ponding behind the stopbank. Therefore it is important to support these mitigation measures with rules requiring minimum floor heights.

The extent of areas subject to potential coastal erosion or inundation from the sea, have been assessed using previous erosion trends plotted from maps. This land and its assets, including buildings and sites of cultural value to Takata Whenua (such as urupa), are potentially at risk of loss or damage from coastal erosion and inundation over the next 200 years. Limiting development in the area will limit the potential loss and damage to property from this potential erosion and inundation from the sea. The Regional Coastal Plan administered by the Canterbury Regional Council provides the primary means of control over development in the coastal area.

Past experience indicates that once assets are threatened by erosion, there is pressure to provide physical protective works; the greater the value of the asset the greater the pressure for protective works. Therefore it is preferable that protection for assets from coastal erosion and inundation is achieved, where possible, by maintaining the coastal cliffs or the coastal beaches and discouraging inappropriate land management practices and activities in the coastal margin. By limiting the range of activities it is hoped to reduce the need for coastal protection works, which may themselves create adverse effects. Cliffs can be susceptible to collapse if saturated from, for example, the disposal of water or effluent near the cliff face. A beach ridge can also be de-stabilised if vegetation is damaged by vehicles.

There may be situations where a number of assets are reliant on coastal protection works. Where removal of these assets is unacceptable due to practical difficulties then maintenance of the existing protection works, financed either by the people concerned or by the Council is required depending on the circumstances.

In addition to the protection of life and assets from natural hazards, a fourth policy acknowledges that activities and structures used to minimise the effects of a natural hazard may also create adverse effects on the environment themselves.

Some natural features within the environment have the effect of mitigating the severity or occurrence of a natural hazard, for example a wetland may reduce the severity of a flood downstream. It is therefore appropriate to consider the effects of natural features as part of a strategy to mitigate the effect of a natural hazard. It is also important to acknowledge that the establishment of protection works has the potential to adversely affect other natural processes,

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which may occur as a result of a hazardous event, or processes such as erosion. This could include the movement of lagoons, dunes or estuaries. It is therefore appropriate to evaluate the effects of protection works on the surrounding environment. The Council considers these adverse effects must also be avoided, remedied or mitigated to assist in the achievement of environmental results anticipated throughout the Plan and the achievement of sustainable management as defined in section 5 of the Act.

3.5 Anticipated Environmental Results

- Protection of the highly productive and versatile soils of the District.
- Retention of a lower density of development in the rural areas, without undue levels of complaints or conflicts relating to rural activities.
- Retention of the amenities, quality and character of the different rural environments within the District.
- Consolidation of business activities within existing settlements, except where there is a need to establish in the rural areas and no reasonable opportunities exist for establishment in the settlements.
- Maintenance of clear distinctions between the settlements and the rural areas.
- Future development and consolidation of the Mt Hutt ski field, in a manner which avoids or mitigates any adverse effects to the Mt Hutt basin or the wider environs.
- Utilisation of mineral resources within the District, providing that the scale of each operation and its effects, both short and long-term, are appropriate to its environment.
- Protection from natural hazards.
- Avoidance of adverse effects on the existing high-voltage transmission lines.

3.6 Methods of Implementation

Through the District Plan

- Rules and standards in the District Plan to control subdivision and development and their effects in all rural areas
- Rules which enable a range of land uses in the rural areas, subject to other objectives and policies
- Rules and standards to control vegetation clearance, tree planting and earthworks throughout the rural area
- Rules and standards to protect indigenous vegetation, areas of significant nature conservation and outstanding landscapes
- Identification on the Planning Maps and listing in Appendix 3-2 of areas, which have been confirmed as having significant nature conservation values in terms of Policy 3.2B (Group 1 areas), and the provision of rules to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the values of these areas from earthworks, tree planting, clearance of indigenous vegetation and the establishment of buildings. The Council undertook a Plan Change in 2009 to consider most of the previous Group 2 sites and transfer those of the sites which were assessed as having significant nature conservation values into Group 1.

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- Identification on the Planning Maps and listing in Appendix 3-2 of areas, which have been identified as potentially having significant nature conservation values in terms of Policy 3.2D (Group 2 areas), but which require confirmation as to the extent and significance of the values and the boundaries of the areas.

The provision of rules to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the values of these areas from the clearance of indigenous vegetation whilst they await confirmation of their boundaries and values. The Council will give strong encouragement to the reassessment of each of these areas by the landholders, the Council and other relevant parties, in order to reach an agreed decision as to the long-term future of each area.

The Council undertook a Plan Change in 2009 to consider most of the previous Group 2 sites and transfer those of the sites which were assessed as having significant nature conservation values into Group 1. Activities within these areas are now controlled by specific rules relating to Group 1 sites.

However, there are several Group 2 sites that are awaiting further assessment following the completion of the Tenure Review process on the properties. Those remaining Group 2 sites that are on freehold land will be assessed by a Council appointed ecologist and a report produced identifying significant nature conservation values and the extent of the site. It is anticipated that this work will continue and another Plan Change will be initiated once all Group 2 site values and boundaries have been assessed.

Any remaining Group 2 sites that are transferred into Crown ownership, under the Tenure Review process and are administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC) will automatically be transferred to Group 1, and included in a future Plan Change. Where the boundaries of Group 2 sites to be managed by DOC do not match those in the District Plan; Council may either choose to accept the DOC boundaries following information from DOC as to the reasons for the boundaries and produce a report explaining the change to the site boundaries, or undertake its own assessment of the site as for any freehold land.

Where permission is not granted for a site visit then the site will be retained in the District Plan as a Group 2 site until an agreed process is determined between the landowner and the Council, or until the Council determines the appropriate process to be used if an agreement on process cannot be reached. Whilst the site is retained as Group 2, it will be controlled by the relevant Group 2 rule, as well as the general indigenous vegetation clearance rules. However, the Council anticipates that all remaining Group 2 sites will be considered and included in a future Plan Change.

It is also anticipated that this reassessment could result in changes to the tenure or the protection mechanisms applying to all or parts of the areas, such as:

- management agreements in terms of section 29 of the Conservation Act;
- permanent protection mechanisms registered on the title to the land in terms of the Conservation Act or any Act in the first Schedule to the Conservation Act, the QEII National Trust Act, or the Resource Management Act;

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- procedures under the Land Act.

Through the Council's LTCCP process

- In conjunction with the Canterbury Regional Council, ensure that flood mitigation measures are in place to mitigate the effects of a natural hazard.
- Continue to provide for community facilities throughout the rural areas.

3.7 Reasons for Rules

3.7.1 Residential Density

Control of the density of residential development is important in rural areas as is maintenance of the open, low density character of the rural zones.

The residential density for the Rural Zones has been set at a level which is consistent with the prevailing rural character. It is intended to retain a sense of spaciousness, rural outlook, privacy on properties and ample opportunities for planting and a variety of rural activities, albeit small-scale on the smallest sites. The character of the Plains, in particular the Rural B Zone, partly arises from the density of development and patchwork of fields. It is intended to ensure this character is maintained whilst providing some opportunity for development. Onsite sewage disposal will be able to be achieved on existing sites, although specifically designed systems may need to be used with the approval of the Canterbury Regional Council.

3.7.2 Building Coverage

To ensure the availability of soils for productive use and retain the open character of the rural areas, it is important to control building coverage.

The maximum building coverage for the Rural Zones have been set at levels which are consistent with the prevailing character and retain a sense of spaciousness. Restricting building coverage limits areas of impermeable surfaces and ensures that soils are available for productive use.

3.7.3 Height of Buildings

This rule seeks to control the height of buildings in the rural zones, so that they do not dominate any landscape or overshadow any neighbouring property.

The height of a building can cause it to be an imposing and dominant feature in the landscape. There is also potential for shadowing of neighbouring properties.

The maximum height of buildings has been set at a level which is in keeping with the existing general scale and character of the rural zones, taking into account the type of rural building and structure likely to be required in the rural areas.

3.7.4 Setback from Neighbours

In rural zones it is intended to provide space around buildings for the purposes of:

- ensuring adequate sunlight admission to buildings on the site;

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- ensuring a degree of visual and aural privacy and protection from noise and odour from neighbouring properties.

A greater setback from internal boundaries has been required than in the Residential Zones. This is due to the larger site sizes and greater opportunities to locate buildings efficiently on the site and to meet the expectations of residents in the Rural Zones generally for greater privacy and separation from buildings.

The setback is considered to be sufficient to provide for the separation of residential activities from established intensive farming activities such as piggeries and dairy sheds. This is intended to ensure that residential properties are buffered from potential noise and odour effects and the farm activities are not limited because of complaints. Furthermore, the required setback is intended to minimise unusable spaces between boundaries and buildings, thereby supporting the protection of the rural resource by limiting the site area required for a dwelling.

3.7.5 Setback of Residential Activities from Gravel Pits and Lime Quarries

In order to protect residential properties from adverse effects that may be created by gravel and lime extraction a buffer between proposed extractive activities and residential properties is required.

A setback from gravel pits and lime quarries is required to protect residential properties from potential adverse effects created by extracting gravel and lime, and to allow the gravel pit or lime quarry to operate without complaints from adjoining dwellings. Gravel and lime extraction can be noisy and dusty; these types of effects can be disruptive to adjoining residential activities, reducing levels of amenity previously enjoyed in the surrounding environment. Conversely, gravel pits and lime quarries can be limited in their operations by complaints from neighbouring residential properties and a wide setback between these activities seeks to avoid such issues.

3.7.6 Scale and Nature of Home Occupations

This rule seeks to ensure that home occupations are kept to a scale that is consistent with the amenity and character of the rural area.

The Plan recognises that home occupations are a desirable and often necessary part of residential activity, providing an important source of employment and local services within the rural areas. However, large scale home occupations, with large numbers of outside employees, have the potential to impact on neighbours both in terms of traffic generation, parking congestion, noise, vibration, glare, loss of privacy and visual effects.

Controls on the maximum floor area of buildings used for home occupations and on the location of the activities and associated materials are a means of restricting the scale of the operation. Controls on location of materials and the activity also restrict noise and visual impacts. These limitations are key factors in ensuring that home occupations are compatible with the scale and effects of other buildings and activities in the rural areas; will not result in visual dominance of buildings or outside activities for home occupations; and will remain incidental to residential activities and buildings on the site. Controlling these factors is intended to ensure that the rural areas of the District remain dominated by rural, rather than non-rural, activities.

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3.7.7 Setback from Stopbanks

This rule has a number of intended consequences including, to avoid or limit the vulnerability of buildings, contents and occupants to extreme flooding events which could occur due to failure of stopbanks, to limit the vulnerability of stopbanks to development, and to maintain separation from waterways to avoid flooding, enable access and provide for mechanical maintenance of waterways.

Stopbanks are designed to protect buildings and their occupants from flooding. However, in the event that they fail, buildings in close proximity to them are highly vulnerable to damage due to the surge effect of water. Failure through overtopping or breaching cannot be predicted in any particular location. It is important therefore to anticipate this vulnerability along any stopbank and to mitigate this by locating buildings back from the stopbank wherever practical.

Also the construction of buildings or carrying out of works in close proximity to or into/onto stopbanks can reduce the integrity of the stopbank. In order to maintain stopbanks and waterways, buildings need to be set back to enable access.

3.7.8 Flood Risk

Flooding has the potential to cause loss of life, injury and serious property damage. Restricting the construction of new residential units and other buildings, or the addition to existing residential units in areas of high flood risk is a means to restrict intensive development in areas, particularly where there are limited flood protection works. In areas of low flood risk location of residential units onto high ground or the raising of floor levels should reduce the risk of damage from flooding even further.

3.7.9 Retail Sales and Commercial Activities

The sale of goods grown, reared or produced on the site is permitted subject to standards relating to gross floor area of the retail space. This recognises that sales of such goods may be an integral and necessary part of farming activities or home occupations on the site and may assist in providing home-based employment and income generation for residents or occupiers of a site. By limiting retail sales from home occupations and rural selling places to a moderate scale and to items produced on site a limit on the potential number of customers is created. With the larger site sizes and greater separation from neighbours, it is considered that such retail sales can be accommodated within the Rural Zones, subject to the prescribed standards and conditions. Tours of farm and residential gardens and properties have been found to have little adverse effect on a rural neighbourhood, provided that they are limited to group visits and are also subject to controls regarding traffic generation. Similarly, the sale of refreshments to group visits to sites in the zone is often an integral part of a garden visit, for example, and has no additional adverse effects on the surrounding environment.

Retail sales by way of vehicle access and/or vehicle crossings to State Highway 1 are strictly limited in order to protect the safe and efficient operation of this nationally important highway that provides for the movement of through traffic, particularly heavy traffic.

With regards to Mt Hutt, the establishment of these buildings and structures, including motorised tows, have a significant potential to diminish landscape and nature conservation values if the

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activities are located, designed or managed incorrectly. However, within the Mt Hutt ski-field, the development of tows, buildings and other structures for skiing is now an accepted aspect of the immediate environs. The imposition of conditions is, therefore, considered an appropriate means of ensuring that any adverse effects on the landscape and nature conservation values are mitigated to the extent that this is possible within that environment.

Within an otherwise dark night time rural environment, extensive lighting of a ski-field for night skiing can be intrusive and adversely affect the visual qualities of the surrounding environment, views of the mountain from the Plains areas and the visibility of the night sky. Prior to any such lighting being installed, Council consideration of its extent, duration and effects is considered necessary.

3.7.10 Indigenous Vegetation Clearance

This rule seeks to promote the protection of areas of indigenous vegetation, that contribute to the natural character, landscape values, habitat values, biodiversity and ecosystem functioning of the District and cultural values of Takata Whenua.

There are areas of indigenous vegetation outside the identified significant sites which are highly natural or contribute overall to biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and amenity generally within the District. While not as significant or valuable as others, these areas also contribute to the colour, texture and naturalness of the landscape, consequently clearance of this vegetation can significantly affect landscape and nature conservation values.

Clearance of vegetation has significant potential to diminish landscape or nature conservation values. The Council therefore retains discretion to refuse consents for this activity or set conditions to mitigate possible adverse effects to landscape and nature conservation values.

Generally, areas above 900 metres in altitude are the least modified environments in the District. Due to thin and infertile soils and severe climatic factors, plant growth rates are slow and these areas are sensitive to modification.

The removal of vegetation can reduce the capacity of riparian margins to buffer water bodies or wetlands from nutrient and sediment run-off. As the vegetation and habitat values vary considerably and the scale and impact of these activities also vary considerably, it is considered that each of these activities need to be subject to individual consideration by way of a resource consent.

In the Rural A and B Zones, it is particularly important to protect remaining remnants of indigenous vegetation as decades of farming activity has led to the removal or alteration of most indigenous vegetation on the Plains. As such any remaining areas are very important.

3.7.11 Tree Planting

Tree planting can cause adverse effects on the landscape values in the Rural High Country, geoconservation sites, and the cultural values of Takata Whenua. Likewise it is important to provide for forestry in the Rural A and B Zones whilst:

- a) ensuring the protection of neighbouring residential dwellings and,

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b) preventing the spread of wilding tree species

In the case of tree planting activities, the rules recognise the greater potential for adverse effects on the landscape value of the High Country from larger-scale tree plantings or from plantings in areas that have not been substantially modified by intensive agricultural use. Such plantings have significant potential to diminish landscape values, including:

- adverse effects on the openness and spaciousness of the landscape, and the apparent naturalness of the landscape;
- adverse effects on the natural landscape pattern, including the underlying landform pattern;
- obscuring of landforms or natural features, including geological or geomorphological patterns or features;
- adverse effects on present vegetation patterns;
- Loss of, or adverse effects on, views of the District's outstanding landscapes from locations to which the public has access.

However, some parts of the High Country are characterised by areas of existing shelterbelts. These have been identified on the Planning Maps as "Shelterbelt Areas" and the Council considers that further shelterbelts can be accommodated in these areas without adversely affecting the values identified above.

Forestry is considered to be an acceptable activity generally in the Rural A and B Zones as the focus is upon the productive use of land rather than the protection of landscapes. However, it is important to ensure that wilding species are not planted particularly where the Rural B Zone adjoins the Rural C Zone where the risk to outstanding and significant landscapes is greatest.

Forestry can affect residential properties when trees are planted too close to dwellings, causing shading and a feeling of 'enclosure'. Furthermore trees planted too close to road boundaries can cause shading of roads and potentially reduce safety. Drivers can become confused and vision can be affected by driving from bright light into shadow, and if this can be prevented, then it provides for a safer road. Shading can also contribute to icing of roads in winter months.

Tree planting, particularly exotic trees, in Rural A, B and C Zones needs to be managed and the type of tree species controlled to avoid the potential for wilding tree spread. Wilding spread, if left unchecked, can affect outstanding landscape values, as well as nature conservation values, access and water regimes. The rules specify the tree species which create the greatest threat of wilding spread.

3.7.12 Earthworks

Earthworks have significant potential to diminish or destroy amenity values particularly where they are located on ridgelines or other prominent locations, especially in relation to landscape or visual values. In addition, earthworks at the margins of water bodies and within wetlands can affect water quality and biodiversity. Earthworks can also require the removal of vegetation and this can have adverse effects on ecosystem functioning. This is of particular concern where indigenous vegetation is removed, especially on the Plains where only remnants remain. Geoconservation sites can also be

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damaged or destroyed by earthworks. Therefore it is Council's intention to control earthworks within the Rural Zones.

Earthworks by necessity remove vegetation which can reduce the capacity of riparian margins to buffer water bodies or wetlands from nutrient and sediment run-off. As the vegetation and habitat values vary considerably and the scale and impact of these activities vary considerably, it is considered that each of these activities need to be subject to individual consideration by way of a resource consent.

3.7.13 Buildings

Buildings and structures have the potential to detract from the landscape values of the High Country where they may be located on prominent ridgelines or hill tops, or when they are finished in reflective colours. Smaller buildings located in the immediate vicinity of homesteads or farm buildings, such as wool or hay sheds, are however less likely to be intrusive as they are screened by the larger buildings and these areas are often surrounded by shelter trees.

Buildings should not generally be located in geoconservation sites or areas of significant nature conservation value as they have the potential to destroy important values through the clearance of vegetation and associated earthworks. Furthermore, land within or close to wetlands and waterways is unsuitable for buildings, not only for aesthetic reasons and the protection of important values but also because these are often unstable areas subject to erosion and inundation.

3.7.14 Deposition of Clean Fill and Demolition Material

This rule seeks to ensure that the activities associated with deposition of clean fill and demolition material avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment.

Deposition of clean fill and demolition material have the potential to create adverse impacts on rural values particularly in relation to visual impacts, as well as land disturbance that can impact on amenity values. Accordingly the Council wishes to closely control such deposition whilst balancing the ability to move small quantities of clean fill e.g. topsoil.

3.7.15 Setback from Roads

The purpose of this rule is to provide for an attractive road outlook, adequate sunlight admission to roads, and reasonable proximity to the road to allow connections to services.

A greater setback has been required than in the Residential Zones, in order to maintain a greater degree of openness of sites as viewed from the roads and neighbouring properties, with ample opportunities for tree planting of frontages, consistent with the rural character of the zone. The rule also promotes the efficient use of land by minimising the site area required for a dwelling thus protecting the rural resource.

A distance of 10 metres is required between buildings and road boundaries to reduce the area of land that may be taken out of productive use. A balance is needed between protecting amenity values and providing for rural activities. A smaller setback may create a more 'urban' type of development that would not be in keeping with the rural area whereas a greater setback would take

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a greater area of land out of productive use. It is considered that 10 metres is a critical width and is therefore set as a zone standard.

However, the setback still allows for affordable connections to be made to services located in the road such as power and telephone. It also prevents the need for extensive driveways, which may be gravelled or sealed, as these can detract from the rural character.

3.7.16 Setback of Farming Activities from Residential Units

Farming activities can cause unacceptable adverse effects including odour, noise and dust and this rule seeks to manage such effects on residential units.

Whilst it is more likely that residential activities will be built adjacent to existing farm activities, it must be anticipated that the reverse may occur. In a District, with an increasing number of dairy farms, a new dairy shed or cow shed could be located adjacent to an existing residential property. It is therefore necessary to protect the amenity values anticipated by the occupants of the residential property as well as the abilities of the farm to operate without undue restriction. The rule is intended to create large setbacks between residential and farming activities to ensure that the potential for conflict between the two activities does not arise and to protect the residential activity from possible nuisance effects.

3.7.17 Effluent Disposal

The intent of this rule is to clarify the status of effluent disposal and make certain that provision for the disposal of effluent in the Rural B and C Zones does not adversely affect the amenity and environmental quality of the Zones.

Provision has been made for the disposal of effluent onto land within the Rural B and C Zones, to allow individual property owners to spread the effluent as they would any other fertiliser or manure. Spreading in this manner is considered to be an acceptable farming practice provided it is undertaken in accordance with the limitations specified in the zone standard. The standard should ensure that nuisance conditions do not prevail and that adverse effects are mitigated to an acceptable level. A combination of management techniques and separation are considered the most appropriate means of mitigating adverse effects.

In cases where the disposal of effluent is on a frequent basis, resource consent for a discretionary activity is required. This will enable the effects to be considered on a site by site basis. Due to the noxiousness of potential effects not all sites may be suitable and the Council considers it appropriate to retain Discretionary Activity status to ensure that the amenity and environmental quality of the area is not adversely affected.

3.7.18 Lighting

It is important to limit the amount of illumination received on properties and roads from lights on neighbouring properties whilst also protecting views of the night sky.

Because illumination from lighting can interfere with the enjoyment of a property, the standard seeks to limit light spillage onto adjacent properties. A general requirement to direct exterior

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lighting away from adjacent properties is considered to give adequate protection to rural properties, given the substantial separation required for residential units from property boundaries. However, where rural zones adjoin settlements the degree of acceptable illumination has been quantified in order to protect the smaller properties.

Inappropriately directed lighting can also cause traffic hazards on roads by distracting, confusing or blinding drivers. This standard has been set to reflect the amount of illumination generally anticipated in the residential areas of the District's towns. Lighting from vehicles and other movable sources has not been included in the standard, in order to give flexibility to night time vehicle and equipment use, and in consideration of the temporary nature and therefore effect of such lighting.

Illumination from lighting can affect views of the night sky. In rural areas it is often anticipated that there will be clear views of the stars but this can be affected by inappropriately directed lighting on properties. By controlling the direction of lighting, it is intended to minimise the effects of illuminating properties or businesses at night.

3.7.19 Surface of Waterways

Protection of the natural and recreational characteristics of the different waterways of the District and cultural values of Takata Whenua is of importance to the community.

Some controls over water-based activities are considered necessary to ensure that any adverse effects on the wildlife, natural, recreational, visual, amenity and safety values of the District's lakes and rivers are kept at a minor level. Other than Lake Camp and any artificial lake developed in the District, the outstanding nature conservation and wildlife values of the High Country lakes are considered incompatible with motorised craft, the noise and wake from which can adversely affect these values. Craft powered by wind and sail are also considered to have the potential to adversely affect these values and have, accordingly, been excluded from all but the above lakes and Lake Clearwater which, despite its high wildlife values, has been traditionally used for sailing.

Structures or moorings on waterways are considered to require resource consent assessment, because of their ability to impact upon landscape, recreational, safety and conservation values associated with a shoreline or shore waters.

3.7.20 Sewage Treatment Plants

It is essential to protect the continued operation of public sewage treatment facilities and to ensure that such facilities do not adversely affect the use of residential activities in their vicinity.

Although generally the District's sewage treatment plants operate without causing any nuisance, from time to time they can release odours which could be offensive to people living in close proximity. These important public facilities have been located on sites which have reasonable separation from existing residential units and the Plan seeks to maintain this separation. The erection of residential units in close proximity to sewage treatment plants could result in nuisance for residents and difficulties in the continued operation of the plants due to complaints from neighbouring residents.

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3.7.21 Ashburton Airport Flight Paths and Noise Contours

Ashburton Airport is a district transportation infrastructure resource that is capable of being expanded to provide both passenger and freight transport services in a manner that is complementary to the air transport facilities currently available at Christchurch International Airport. Further, development and expansion of the airport facilities at Ashburton in response to long-term growth of business and the community in the district will make efficient use of an existing resource.

Specific clearances are required for aircraft above buildings, structures and vegetation. If tall buildings, structures or vegetation are located in the take-off or landing flight paths, adequate clearance may not be able to be obtained. This may mean that a run-way would no longer be able to be used, or could only be used for a shorter part of its length and therefore, only by a limited range of aircraft types. The controls over the height of buildings, structures and vegetation are intended to prevent such restrictions on the safe and efficient operation of the airport occurring.

The introduction of air noise boundary controls at Ashburton Airport not only protects the Airport but also sets a finite limit on the amount of aircraft noise that could be generated by an expanded airport in the long-term. The establishment of suitable noise monitoring procedures will ensure compliance with such restrictions.

3.7.22 Intensive Farming

To avoid unacceptable effects of odour, noise, dust, visual detracting and traffic generation it is important to control the establishment of intensive farming facilities within the rural environment.

The high concentration of animals and the growing of mushrooms even in a rural area have the potential to cause significant adverse impacts, such as odour, noise, dust, visual detracting and traffic generation, particularly if located in close proximity to residential units or settlements. Although occasional smells and other effects from farming activities can be expected in rural zones nuisance conditions should not prevail. People in settlements also need to be protected to a level commensurate with their expected residential amenity.

To mitigate these effects, operations need to establish away from higher density urban environments and from neighbouring properties. Although management methods play an important role in avoiding nuisance from intensive farming, experience has shown that some separation from such activities is necessary to avoid nuisance conditions occurring at times. A combination of management techniques and separation provide the most appropriate solutions to adverse effects from intensive farming, but the most appropriate combination will vary substantially depending on the nature and scale of the proposal and the surrounding environment. The standards, therefore, include separation distances which allow small-scale operations to establish as-of-right; more substantial separation distances from settlements to provide adequate levels of amenity protection in those areas; and resource consent assessment for larger-scale operations to enable consideration of the particular nature and scale of the proposed operation, the management techniques proposed and the nature of the surrounding environment.

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3.7.23 Recreational Activities

This rule seeks to ensure that building developments associated with recreational activity have limited adverse effects on the amenity, landscape, or nature conservation values in rural areas and cultural values of Takata Whenua, whilst acknowledging that due to the nature of some recreational activities, they can only locate in rural areas.

Residents of and visitors to the District require a range of recreational opportunities to meet their needs. These differ from more adventurous activities such as heli-skiing and those requiring substantial facilities such as Mt Hutt ski field to passive types of recreation in tranquil surroundings such as tramping. Conflicts can often occur between those seeking peace and tranquillity and those using mechanised forms of transport or regularly bringing large numbers of people into an area. Conflict between commercial operators involved in some forms of recreational activity can also result in unacceptable risks to public safety, such as jetboating or heli-skiing. Consequently commercial recreational activities are generally subject to resource consent to enable consideration of these issues. In addition, the potential adverse effects of buildings required for such activities also need to be considered especially where these may be located on or near ridgelines, are large in scale or consist of several buildings clustered together.

3.7.24 Visitor Accommodation

The comparatively larger site sizes and the generally greater separation from neighbours of residential units in the rural areas means that a greater scale of home stay and small scale recreation lodges can be accommodated without adversely affecting the amenities of adjoining properties.

The standards recognise that camping grounds may need to establish in a rural area, in order to provide adequate land or to locate close to recreational resources. However, it is intended that visitor accommodation, other than camping grounds, home stays and small lodges, shall generally be located in the District's towns. Within the towns the environmental effects of the accommodation can be better managed and planned for; there is access to environmental services; clear distinctions can be retained between the towns and the rural areas protecting the character and qualities of the rural areas; and a range of activities can be located together with benefits in terms of convenience and energy consumption.

3.7.25 Mineral Extraction and Quarries

The purpose of this rule is to ensure that the activities associated with mineral extraction or quarrying activities avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on amenity, landscape, geoconservation or nature conservation values and cultural values of Takata Whenua.

Mineral extraction has the potential to create the adverse impacts on rural values by creating noise, dust, visual impacts as well as land disturbance that can impact on amenity, nature conservation, landscape, geoconservation or heritage values. Accordingly the Council wishes to retain discretion as to whether mineral extraction or quarrying operations should proceed, and if so, impose conditions to mitigate possible adverse effects. Mineral prospecting is a low impact activity, as is small-scale extraction which is often an accepted component of other activities, such as farming, roading or forestry, and can be permitted within the Rural Zones.

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3.7.26 Community Activities

Community facilities are important in the rural areas and should be provided for where it is possible to also protect the amenity of the rural environment

The community activity needs to be assessed against its role in meeting the needs of residents principally within the surrounding rural environment. Further, the matter of loss of residential activity on a site through the establishment of a community activity in a rural environment is not as relevant as it is in a residential environment, given the generally large size of properties and the separation that already normally occurs between residential units.

3.7.27 Industrial and Service Activities

The rules seek to provide for appropriate industrial and service activities in the rural areas, whilst protecting the amenity of the rural environment.

As there are a wide variety of industrial and service activities in terms of their effects on their surrounding rural environment (including potential cumulative effects), it is considered that each activity needs to be subject to individual consideration by way of a resource consent. Some types of rural service activities such as contractors, seed cleaning and grain drying are appropriate in the rural area but not necessarily on every site. The effects of such activities on the rural environment may also be more difficult to predict and control, such as disposal of wastes and traffic generation.

3.7.28 Barrhill Buffer Area

This rule is designed to protect the character and amenity of Barrhill village from inappropriate development that could impact on the historic and architectural character, setting and form of the area.

Barrhill village is unique within the District with much of its original layout and form intact. Development of the rural area adjacent to the village has the potential to significantly alter the character and historic setting of the village unless there are controls to preserve its special values for future generations.

3.7.29 Setback from High-voltage Transmission Lines

The high-voltage transmission lines provide for the critically important distribution of electricity both within and across the District. However in doing so they also impose a corridor of constraint within the rural areas and in order to maintain efficient and safe operation the transmission infrastructure has to be protected from adverse effects of nearby development. These rules seek to ensure that any development near the transmission corridor does not adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the high-voltage transmission lines

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3.8 Rules – Rural Zone

3.8.1 District Wide Rules

Attention is drawn to the following District-Wide Rules which may apply in addition to any relevant Zone Rules to activities undertaken in the Rural Zones. If any one or more of the District-Wide Rules is breached, the activity may require consent in respect of those rules.

Subdivision	(Refer Section 9)
Transport	(Refer Section 10)
Noise	(Refer Section 11)
Heritage Values and Protected Trees	(Refer Section 12)
Signs	(Refer Section 13)
Utilities, Energy and Designations	(Refer Section 14)
Relocated Buildings and Temporary Activities	(Refer Section 15)
Hazardous Substances	(Refer Section 16)
Definitions	(Refer Section 17)

3.8.2 Permitted Activities

The following activities shall be Permitted Activities, provided that they comply with all of the relevant Site and Zone Standards:

- a) **Farming Activities**
- b) **Intensive farming** in Rural B and C Zones; limited to:
 - farming of poultry consisting of no more than 10,000 birds, and
 - housed no closer than 100m to a property boundary.
- c) **Disposal of effluent from farming activities** in Rural B and C Zones; limited to:
 - the frequency of effluent disposal on to any one site does not exceed 6 days per year; and
 - the rate of effluent disposal does not exceed 200kg of Nitrogen per hectare per year; and
 - no effluent is discharged on to land within 20m of the boundary of any site held in separate ownership from the site on to which the effluent is being discharged; and
 - no effluent is discharged onto land within 20m of a waterway.
- d) **Forestry Activities** in the Rural A and Rural B Zones
- e) **Recreational Activities** (other than on the surface of waterways); limited to:
 - passive recreational activities such as walking and cycling .
- f) **Residential Activities**

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- g) **Home Occupations**
- h) **Commercial Activities**; limited to:
- group visits to sites used for farming or residential activities;
 - retail sales of farm and garden produce grown, reared or produced on the site; or handcrafts produced on the site; or
 - activities within the Mt Hutt ski-field (as defined on the Planning Maps) including, but not limited to, skiing, snowboarding, restaurant, ski-hire and associated facilities.
- i) **Mineral Extraction**, limited to:
- mineral prospecting.
- j) **Visitor Accommodation**; limited to:
- home stays accommodating no more than 10 visitors at any one time.
- k) **Activities on the Surface of Waterways**; except where listed as a Discretionary or Prohibited Activity.
- l) **Deposition of clean fill**, not including deposition of any demolition material; limited to:
- the Rural A and B zones, and
 - a maximum of 200m³ on any one site per annum.
- m) **Earthworks** limited to:
- the Rural A and B Zones, and
 - a maximum volume of 5000m³ over an area no greater than 2000m² on any one site per annum.

3.8.3 Restricted Discretionary Activities

The following activities shall be Restricted Discretionary Activities, provided that they are not listed as a Prohibited Activity, with the exercise of the Council's discretion being restricted to the matter(s) specified in the relevant standard or rule:

- a) **Any Activity** which is listed as a Permitted Activity and which complies with all of the relevant Zone Standards, but does not comply with any one or more of the relevant Site Standards.
- b) **Tree Planting** in the Rural C Zone limited to shelterbelts within the "Shelterbelt Areas" shown on the Planning Maps.
- c) **Indigenous Vegetation Clearance**.
- d) **Earthworks** in the Rural C Zone.

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- e) **Buildings** in the Rural C Zone.

3.8.4 Discretionary Activities

The following activities shall be Discretionary Activities, provided that they comply with all of the relevant zone standards:

- a) **Intensive farming** in Rural B and C Zones; except where listed as a Permitted Activity.
- b) **Disposal of effluent** in Rural B and C Zone, except where listed as a Permitted Activity.
- c) **Forestry Activities** in the Rural C Zone.
- d) **Mineral Extraction or Quarrying**.
- e) **Visitor Accommodation**, except where listed as a permitted activity and limited to:
- camping grounds in the Rural A, B and C Zones;
 - recreational lodges, in the Rural B and C Zones, not accommodating more than 20 visitors and located on the same site as an existing residential unit.
- f) **Community Facilities**
- g) **Activities on the Surface of Waterways**; involving structures or moorings which pass across or through the surface of any waterway or are attached to the bank of any waterway, other than floodgates where fences cross streams.
- h) **Rural Service Activities**.
- i) **Shooting ranges**, including but not restricted to rifles, shotguns and handguns.
- j) **Recreational or Commercial Motorsport activities**.
- k) **Any other Activity**, which is not listed as a Permitted, Restricted Discretionary, Non-Complying or Prohibited Activity.

3.8.5 Non-Complying Activities

The following activities shall be Non-Complying Activities, provided that they are not listed as a Prohibited Activity:

- a) **Any Activity** which does not comply with any one or more of the relevant Zone Standards.
- b) **Intensive farming** in the Rural A Zone.
- c) **Disposal of effluent** in Rural A Zone.
- d) **Commercial Activities**; except where listed as a Permitted Activity.
- e) **Visitor Accommodation**; except where listed as a Permitted or Discretionary Activity.

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- f) **Meat processing and Food and Produce processing.**
 - g) **Deposition of demolition material or clean fill;** except where listed as a Permitted Activity.
 - h) **Buildings** in the Barrhill Buffer Area.
 - i) **Industrial and Service Activities.**

3.8.6 Prohibited Activities

The following activities shall be Prohibited Activities:

a) Surface of Lakes

- the use of motorised craft on any lake, other than on Lake Camp or any artificial lake;
- the use of non-motorised craft powered by any means other than oars or paddles on any lake, other than on Lakes Camp and Clearwater or any artificial lake.

The following activities shall be exempt from this rule:

- use of any waterway for emergency search and rescues;
 - public scientific research;
 - control and management of sportsfish (as defined in the Conservation Act 1987) and game (as defined in the First Schedule of the Wildlife Act 1953) by the Fish and Game Council or its successors, or those persons authorised in terms of the Conservation Act 1987; and control and management of indigenous fish and any other flora and fauna by the Department of Conservation or its successors, for the purpose of exercising their respective duties and functions under the Conservation Act 1987, the Wildlife Act 1953 and the Fisheries Act 1983; or any replacement legislation;
 - resource management monitoring; or
 - hydrological survey.
- b) **Ashburton Airport:** Any new dwelling, visitor accommodation, school, hospital or other sensitive activity inside the Air Noise Boundary and underneath the approach and takeoff flight fans of Main Runway [01-19] and Cross Wind Runway [11-29] inside the Outer Control Boundary as shown on the Planning Maps.

3.8.7 Notification / Consultation / Notes

Resource consents in relation to the following matters shall not be publicly notified:

Setbacks from Stopbanks	Site Standard 3.9.7
Flood Risk	Site Standard 3.9.8

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Consultation with the Canterbury Regional Council will be important in the assessment of resource consent applications in relation to the following standards:

Setbacks from Stopbanks	Site Standard 3.9.7
Flood Risk	Site Standard 3.9.8

Notes:

- No rules are included in relation to coastal hazard areas, with the rules in the Regional Coastal Environment Plan (Canterbury Regional Council) applying to these areas. Any persons intending to subdivide, build, develop or carry out activities within approximately 300 metres of the coastline are advised to contact Canterbury Regional Council to discuss this issue.
- Illustrations provided to explain rules in the Residential section also apply to a number of the rules in this section.

3.9 Site Standards

3.9.1 Residential Density

- a) Workers accommodation shall only be provided in the Rural B and Rural C zones, on sites of greater than 10 hectares.

3.9.2 Site Coverage

- a) Maximum percentage of the net area of any site covered by buildings and impervious surfaces shall be:

Rural A	10% of net site area or 2000m ² , whichever is the lesser
Rural B and C	5% of net site area

Except for:

Existing lots in the above zones less than 8ha in area, but greater than 2ha in area, where the maximum coverage shall be 10% of the net area of the site.

3.9.3 Height of Buildings

- a) Maximum height of any building shall be:
 - 8m in Rural A and B for residential activities.
 - 15m in Rural A and B for farm accessory buildings such as silos.
 - 8m in Rural C.

Note: building heights in some areas are also affected by the Ashburton Airport Airspace Designation; refer to the Planning Maps and Section 14 for more information.

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3.9.4 Setback from Neighbours

- a) Minimum setback of buildings from internal boundaries shall be:

For residential units, excluding accessory buildings which are not used for human habitation 20m

For buildings, other than principal residential buildings, designed and/or used for the housing of pigs 50m

For buildings, other than principal residential buildings, designed and/or used for the housing of other animals including dairy/milking sheds 200m

Buildings designed and used for retail, commercial, home occupations and visitor accommodation 25m

For other buildings greater than 5m² in gross floor area 3m

3.9.5 Setback from Gravel Pits and Quarries

- a) Minimum setback of residential activities from sites containing gravel pits and quarries shall be 100m.

3.9.6 Home occupations

- a) No more than 40m² of the gross floor area of the buildings on the site are used for any home occupation;
- b) No goods, materials or equipment associated with a home occupation are stored outside a building;
- c) All manufacturing, altering, repairing, dismantling or processing of any goods or articles associated with a home occupation are undertaken within a building; and
- d) No more than one full-time equivalent person who resides elsewhere than on the site is employed in undertaking any home occupation on the property.

3.9.7 Setback from Stopbanks

- a) All buildings shall be set back a minimum distance of 100m from the centre line of any stopbank. (Refer Appendix 3-1.)

This standard shall not apply to:

- additions or alterations to existing buildings (excluding existing buildings where the use of the building is being changed to a residential unit), where the addition or alteration will not increase the gross floor area of the building by more than 20m²; or
- the replacement of existing buildings provided the gross floor area of the building is not increased by more than 20m².

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3.9.8 Flood Risk

- a) All new structures, buildings or extensions to existing buildings that are to be constructed on a site identified as being at risk from flooding, shall have a minimum floor height of 150mm above the level of the 1 in 200 year flood event,

except for:

- new buildings or extensions to buildings with a gross floor area up to, and including 60m²; or
- any building with an unsealed or permeable floor.

Note: A report identifying flood risk and the height of the 1 in 200 year flood event can be obtained from the Canterbury Regional Council or a suitably qualified expert.

3.9.9 Retail Sales and Commercial Activities

- a) Retail display and sales are limited to single retail outlets, not exceeding a gross floor area of 40m² and located within buildings.
- b) Group visits to sites used for farming or residential activities shall not result in the maximum number of vehicles visiting the site exceeding 3 buses per week and 25 cars per week.
- c) There shall be no night lighting of any retail sales or commercial activity. Council will restrict its discretion to effects on neighbouring properties, effects on traffic safety and the visibility of the night sky from the surrounding area.
- d) Within the Mt Hutt ski-field Policy Area as shown on the Planning Maps, buildings and structures shall be Controlled Activities in respect of their location, design, alignment, colour and methods of construction.
- e) Within the Mt Hutt ski-field Policy Area as shown on the Planning Maps, there shall be no night lighting for recreational activities, other than lighting for snow grooming and ski field maintenance. The Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion in respect of this matter to the effect of the night lighting on the visual qualities of the surrounding environment, the views of the mountain from the adjoining Plains area, and the visibility of the night sky from the surrounding areas.

3.9.10 Indigenous Vegetation Clearance

- a) No clearance of indigenous vegetation in the Rural C Zone, Group 2 Areas of Significant Nature Conservation, or Hakatere, River Valley, and Front Range Outstanding Natural Landscapes as defined on the Planning Maps shall exceed:
- 1,000m² in area on any site in any continuous period of 5 years; or
 - 100m² in area in any continuous period of 2 years, where the indigenous vegetation has a closed canopy over that area and the average maximum height of that canopy is greater than or equal to 3m; or

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- 100m² in area of matagouri or beech (in one continuous block), in any continuous period of 2 years, where the average maximum height of the canopy of the matagouri is greater than or equal to 1.5m; or
- 500m² of Chionochloa spp (tall tussock) in any continuous period of 5 years, except where this occurs as a secondary component within an area of improved pasture.

Except that within each area separately identified on the Planning Maps as being of significant nature conservation value (Group 2 areas only), no clearance of Chionochloa spp (tall tussock) shall exceed 100m² in any continuous period of 5 years.

- b) In the Inland Mountain Outstanding Natural Landscapes or any Group 1 Area of Significant Nature Conservation as defined on the Planning Maps there shall be no clearance of indigenous vegetation (including by way of uncontrolled grazing).

Except that this rule shall not apply to the maintenance of existing tracks up to 6 metres in width within Areas of Significant Nature Conservation numbers 17, 25 and 36 in the locations identified in Appendix 3-2 (Maps 1, 2 and 5), including but not limited to earthworks and the clearance of vegetation.

Except that within Areas of Significant Nature Conservation numbers 25 and 26 in the location identified in Appendix 3-2 (Map 3), matagouri may be cleared as part of ongoing scrub management for farming purposes as follows:

- 20,000m² (2 ha) in area where the average maximum height of the canopy is less than 1.5m, in any continuous 10 year period; and
- 1,000m² where the average maximum height of the canopy is equal to or greater than 1.5m, in any continuous 10 year period.

Note: The canopy height is to be determined over each area of 1 hectare where the vegetation is greater than 1 hectare in area, or over the lesser area where the area of vegetation is less than 1 hectare.

Except that within Areas of Significant Nature Conservation numbers 25 and 26 in the location identified in Appendix 3-2 (Map 4), matagouri may be cleared as part of ongoing scrub management for farming purposes as follows:

- 70,000m² (7 ha) in area where the average maximum height of the canopy is less than 1.5m, in any continuous 10 year period; and
- 1,000m² where the average maximum height of the canopy is equal to or greater than 1.5m, in any continuous 10 year period.

Note: The canopy height is to be determined over each area of 1 hectare where the vegetation is greater than 1 hectare in area, or over the lesser area where the area of vegetation is less than 1 hectare.

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- c) In, or within 100m of any lake, or 20m of any naturally occurring wetland, river or stream, there shall be no clearance of indigenous vegetation exceeding 100m² in area in any one hectare in any one calendar year, other than the clearance of exotic pest plants.
- d) There shall be no clearance of indigenous vegetation on any sites in the Rural A and B Zones, except where it is planted in a domestic garden or used for shelter purposes.

The Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion in relation to these matters to the effect on nature conservation and landscape values, ecological functioning, Takata Whenua values, natural character, natural hazards and effects on public access, recreation and enjoyment of riparian margins, where appropriate.

3.9.11 Tree planting

- a) All tree planting in the Rural C Zone, other than planting for the purpose of screening buildings and other than within the Mt Hutt ski-field area, shall be limited to shelterbelts located within the "Shelterbelt Areas" shown on the Planning Maps, provided that:

- the establishment of shelterbelts on any one site does not exceed 0.5ha in any continuous period of 10 years; and
- trees of the following species shall not be planted:

Lodgepole pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i>
Scots Pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Corsican Pine	<i>Pinus nigra</i>
Dwarf mountain pine	<i>Pinus uncinata</i>
Mountain Pine	<i>Pinus mugo</i>
Douglas fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
All poplars	<i>Salicaceae species</i>
All larches	<i>Larix species</i>
All alders	<i>Alnus species</i>
All willows	<i>Salix species</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>

- b) Tree planting in the Rural A and B Zones:

- Trees shall be planted a minimum of 30 metres from any dwelling on a neighbouring property; and
- Trees shall be planted a minimum of 5 metres from any road boundary and 2.5 metres from any internal boundary.

The Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion in relation to these matters to the effect on landscape and nature conservation values, including the siting, design, tree species and management of the tree plantings and mechanisms to prevent wilding spread.

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3.9.12 Earthworks

- a) Earthworks (the sum of the cut volume plus fill volume on a site during any 12 month period) in the Rural C zone shall not exceed 50m³ (volume) or 50m² (area) in any one hectare in any continuous period of 5 years, other than the repair and maintenance of operational tracks (except within the Mt Hutt ski-field area); and
- b) Earthworks shall not be located on slopes with an angle greater than 20° (measured as an average slope angle over any 100m length slope), other than the repair and maintenance of operational tracks (except within the Mt Hutt ski-field area); and
- c) Earthworks (the sum of the cut volume plus fill volume on a site during any 12 month period) in any part of the Rural B zone identified as a geoconservation site shall not exceed 50m³ (volume) or 50m² (area) in any one hectare in any continuous period of 5 years, other than the repair and maintenance of operational tracks; and
- d) Earthworks shall not occur:
 - In the areas identified on the Planning Maps as being of significant nature conservation value, except that this shall not apply to the maintenance of existing tracks up to 6 metres in width in Areas 17 and 36 in the locations identified in Appendix 3-2, including but not limited to earthworks and the clearance of vegetation.
 - In, or within 20m of any naturally-occurring wetland;
 - Within 100m of any lake, or 20m of any river or stream.

The Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion in relation to these matters to their effect on natural character, nature conservation and landscape values; natural hazards, Takata Whenua values, and effects on public access, recreation and enjoyment of riparian margins, where appropriate.

Note: "Earthworks" does not apply to digging post-holes, cultivation, tending or landscaping gardens, planting trees or removing dead or diseased trees, or drilling bores.

3.9.13 Buildings

- a) In the Rural C Zone no buildings may be erected except for those buildings 50m² or less in area which are to be located within 50 metres of any existing homestead building or farm accessory buildings (which includes at least one of the following – animal handling shed, implement shed, stock yards, staff accommodation, hay barn or other major farm building) in any two year period.
- b) No buildings shall be erected:
 - in any Area of Significant Nature Conservation Value as identified on the Planning Maps;
 - in or within 20m of any naturally-occurring wetland; and/or within 100m of any lake, or 20m of any river or stream;
 - above 900 metres above sea level (except within the Mt Hutt ski-field area);

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- in the Inland Mountain Outstanding Natural Landscape.

The Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion in relation to these matters to siting, design, and colour of the building and associated landscape plantings.

3.9.14 Deposition of Clean Fill

a) Clean fill shall not be deposited:

- In the areas identified on the Planning Maps or Appendix 3-3 as being a geoconservation site;
- In the areas identified on the Planning Maps as being of significant nature conservation value;
- within any naturally-occurring wetland;
- within 100m of any lake, 20m of any wetland, or 20m of any river or stream.

3.9.15 Frost Fans

- a) Frost control fans shall be located no closer than 500 metres of a dwellinghouse on a separate lot under different ownership or within 500 metres of a residential zone; and
- b) There shall be a total of no more than five frost control fans located between 500 and 1000 metres of any dwellinghouse on a separate lot under different ownership on any other site or of a residential zone (note: the total number includes frost control fans on all sites within that distance, including the application site). For the purpose of this rule, “frost control fan” includes a proposed frost control fan for which an approved building consent and/or resource consent has been granted.
- c) Frost control fans shall only operate when the local air temperature is 2°C or below. The thermometer used to measure the air temperature shall be located at a height above ground relevant to the height of the buds on the plants being protected.
- d) Operation for maintenance purposes shall be restricted to between the hours of 9.00am and 5.30pm weekdays. Test operation may take place only for emergency maintenance purposes outside these hours.
- e) A written log shall be maintained, clearly recording the date and length of time each frost control fan is used. The log shall include the air temperature at which each frost control fan started operation, and include running for maintenance purposes. A copy of the log shall be made available to the Council upon request.
- f) For the purpose of this rule, “dwellinghouse” includes a proposed dwellinghouse for which an approved building consent and/or resource consent has been granted.

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3.9.16 Setback from High-voltage Transmission Lines

- a) Within 32 metres of any High-Voltage Transmission line as shown on the Planning Maps, there shall be:
- no new buildings or structures;
 - no new trees/vegetation which at a mature height would encroach upon the relevant growth limit zone [or notice zone] for the line, as defined in the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003;
 - no earthworks within 12 metres from the outer edge of the visible foundation of any transmission tower;
 - no earthworks that reduce the existing clearance distances from the lines within the transmission corridor.

3.10 Zone Standards

3.10.1 Residential Density

- a) Minimum net area for any one residential unit shall be:

- 8ha Rural A

Except that one residential unit may be built on sites of 2 hectares up to 8 hectares that existed on the date of decisions on this Plan. This exception shall apply for 12 months from the date of decisions on this Plan.

- 50ha Rural B and Rural C

Except that in the Rural B zone, one residential unit may be built on a site greater than 4 hectares, where that site was created after 1 January 2000

3.10.2 Setback from Roads

- a) Minimum building setback from road boundaries shall be 10m; except that:
- buildings less than 5m² in gross floor area may be located within the above setbacks from road boundaries; and
 - for buildings used for retail sales the setback shall be 30m;
 - for residential activities locating adjacent to State Highway 1 or State Highway 77 shall be 80m except where a noise bund is provided or all external windows and doors of the residential units including those installed in the roof are acoustically treated to achieve a sound transmission loss of at least 25dBA with windows and doors closed, then the minimum building setback shall be 30m.

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3.10.3 Setback of Residential Activities from Intensive Farming Activities

- a) Minimum building setback from internal boundaries, except for buildings less than 5m² in gross floor area, shall be 3m except that the:
 - minimum setback for residential units from existing buildings designed and/or used for the housing of pigs shall be 200m.
 - minimum setback for residential units from existing buildings designed and/or used for the housing of other animals including dairy/milking sheds shall be 200m.

3.10.4 Setback of Intensive Farming Activities from Residential Units

- a) Minimum setback of buildings designed and/or used for the housing of pigs from existing residential units shall be 200m.
- b) Minimum setback of buildings designed and/or used for the housing of other animals including dairy/milking sheds from existing residential units shall be 200m.

3.10.5 Flood Risk Rural A and B Only

- a) No new structures, buildings or extensions to existing buildings shall be erected on a site identified as being at high risk from flooding.

Note: A report identifying flood risk and the height of the 1 in 200 year flood event can be obtained from the Canterbury Regional Council or a suitably qualified expert.

3.10.6 Retail Sales

- a) There shall be no retail sales from sites by way of access or vehicle crossings to State Highway No. 1, except for the sale of refreshments to group visits to sites used for farming or residential activities.

3.10.7 General Indigenous Vegetation and Tree Planting

- a) In the Rural C zone, above the Altitudinal Land Use Line (900 metres above sea level) as shown on the Planning Maps, there shall be no removal/clearance of indigenous vegetation (including by way of uncontrolled grazing) except for the clearance of amenity plantings and vegetation clearance within the "extensions to the Altitudinal Land Use Line above 900 metres above sea level" (as shown on the Planning Maps).
- b) There shall be no clearance of indigenous vegetation and no earthworks in, or within 20m of, any naturally occurring wetland which exceeds 1,000m² in area in any continuous period of 5 years.
- c) There shall be no tree planting (other than the planting of indigenous vegetation) on any land above the Altitudinal Land Use Line (900 metres above sea level) (other than in the Mt Hutt ski-field) or within an Area of Significant Nature Conservation as identified on the Planning Maps.

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3.10.8 Intensive Farming and Disposal of Effluent

- a) There shall be no intensive farming and/or disposal of effluent within 1500m of Residential A, B and C Zones and/or within 1200m of the Residential D Zone.

3.10.9 Setback from High-voltage Transmission Lines

- a) Within 12 metres of any High-voltage Transmission line as shown on the Planning Maps, no new buildings or structures shall be erected.

3.10.10 Lighting

- a) All fixed exterior lighting shall be directed away from adjacent properties and roads and angled below the horizontal;
- b) No lighting from any activity shall result in a greater than 3 lux spill (horizontal and vertical) of light onto any adjoining property within a Residential Zone, measured at any point more than 2m inside the boundary of the adjoining property.

3.10.11 Surface of Waterways

- a) No craft on the surface of any waterway shall be used for accommodation.

3.10.12 Sewage Treatment Plants

- a) No residential unit shall be constructed or relocated within 300m of any area designated on the Planning Maps for "Sewage Treatment Plant" or identified on the Planning Maps as "Sewage Treatment Plant".

3.10.13 Ashburton Airport Flight Paths and Noise Contours

- a) Within the areas of the Ashburton Airport Flight Paths shown on the Planning Maps¹, no building, structure, tree or other vegetation shall penetrate the planes of the approach surfaces defined in Designation 205 and described in Section 14 (Appendix 14-7 Description of Ashburton Airport, Airspace Designation), except with the prior written approval of the Ashburton Airport Management Committee, in the first instance.
- b) No new dwelling, visitor accommodation, school, hospital or other sensitive activity, and no alterations or additions to such existing activities, shall be allowed within the area between the Outer Control Boundary and the Air Noise Boundary applying to Ashburton Airport shown on the Planning Maps, without appropriate acoustic insulation to ensure a satisfactory internal noise environment. Such insulation to habitable rooms shall provide an indoor sound environment not exceeding Ldn 40dBA and shall be certified by a registered acoustic engineer as adequate to achieve the design standard.
- c) No alterations or additions to existing dwellings, visitor accommodation, school, hospital and other sensitive activity shall be permitted inside the Air Noise Boundary without appropriate

¹ Urban series maps 22, 23, 26, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 78.
Rural series maps 58, 59, 60, 64, 65, 66, 72, 73, 78, 79, 80, 83, 84.

acoustic insulation to ensure a satisfactory internal noise environment. Such insulation to habitable rooms shall provide an indoor sound environment not exceeding Ldn 40dBA and shall be certified by a registered acoustic engineer as adequate to achieve the design standard.

3.11 Assessment Matters

In considering resource consents for land use activities, in addition to the applicable provisions of the Act, the Council shall apply the relevant Assessment Matters set out below.

3.11.1 Residential Density and Building Coverage

- a) The degree to which the residential density has an adverse effect on the open character of the site and the surrounding area, in particular:
 - in the Rural A and B Zones the extent to which building coverage on the site would visually dominate a site which would be out of character with the local environment;
 - in the Rural C Zone the extent to which residential units or building coverage would impact on the remote experience of the area, or impact on the landscape values of an area, including the values of spaciousness, expressive landforms, extensive tussock and grass cover, and views and panoramas.
- b) The degree to which residential density shall compromise the productivity of Land Capability Classes I and II (New Zealand Land Resource Inventory) in the Rural A and B Zones.
- c) The necessity for a residential unit on a site with a smaller area in order to provide management, supervision or security for a permitted rural activity.

3.11.2 Building Height

- a) The extent to which there is a need for the increased height in order to undertake the proposed activities on the site.
- b) The extent to which the proposed buildings will be compatible with the character of the local environment, including the scale of other buildings in the surrounding area.
- c) The effect of the increased height in terms of visual dominance by buildings of the outlook from other sites, roads and public open space in the surrounding area, which is out of character with the local environment.
- d) The extent to which the proposed building will overshadow adjoining sites and result in reduced sunlight and daylight admission.
- e) The extent to which the increased height would have any adverse effect on other sites in the surrounding area in terms of loss of privacy through being over-looked from neighbouring buildings.

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- f) The extent to which the increased building height will result in decreased opportunities for views from properties in the vicinity, or from roads or public open space in the surrounding area.
 - g) The ability to mitigate any adverse effects of increased height, such as through increased separation distances between the building and adjoining sites or the provision of screening.
 - h) In the Rural C Zone the extent to which the height of the building would impact on the landscape values of an area, including the values of spaciousness, expressive landforms, and views and panoramas.

3.11.3 Setback from Neighbours

- a) The extent to which the intrusion towards the internal boundary is necessary to enable more efficient, practical and/or pleasant use of the remainder of the site.
- b) The extent to which alternative practical locations are available for the building.
- c) Any adverse effects of the proximity or bulk of the building, in terms of visual dominance by buildings of the outlook from adjoining sites and buildings, which is out of character with the local environment.
- d) Any adverse effects on adjoining sites of the proximity of the building, in terms of reduced privacy through being overlooked from or being in close proximity to neighbouring buildings, to an extent which is inconsistent with the surrounding environment.
- e) Any adverse effects of the proximity or bulk of the building in terms of loss of access to daylight on adjoining sites.
- f) The ability to provide adequate opportunities for garden and tree plantings around buildings.
- g) Any adverse effects of the proximity of the building in terms of difficulty of access to the building or to adjoining rear sites.
- h) The extent to which the use of the proposed building will detract from the pleasantness or amenity of adjoining sites, in terms of such matters as noise, smell, dust, glare or vibration.
- i) Any adverse effects of the proximity of buildings housing animals in terms of noise, smell, flies or vermin on adjoining sites.
- j) The ability to mitigate any adverse effects of the proposal on adjoining sites, including through the provision of landscape plantings.

3.11.4 Setback from Gravel Pits and Lime Quarries

- a) Any proposed mitigation measures to control dust and noise.
- b) Proposed hours of operation and the duration of the works.

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- c) Adverse effects on adjoining residential properties amenity values and/or privacy levels.
- d) The frequency of trucks using local roads particularly those that adjoin any residential property.

3.11.5 Home Occupations

- a) The extent to which larger home occupations may impact on the amenity of surrounding sites, particularly in relation to any noise, smell, flies or vermin.
- b) Any adverse effects of the scale of the activity, in terms of visual dominance by buildings of the outlook from adjoining sites and buildings, which is out of character with the local environment.
- c) Any adverse effects on adjoining sites of the scale of the activity, in terms of reduced privacy through being overlooked from or being in close proximity to neighbouring buildings, to an extent which is inconsistent with the surrounding environment.
- d) The extent to which the use of the proposed building will detract from the pleasantness or amenity of adjoining sites, in terms of such matters as noise, smell, dust, glare or vibration.

3.11.6 Setback from Stopbanks

- a) Potential flood conditions at the site, the safety of occupants of buildings and the vulnerability of buildings and associated property to the effects of failure of the stopbank.
- b) The effects of the building on the integrity of the stopbank.
- c) The ability for maintenance activities to be undertaken in or along the margins of waterways.

3.11.7 Flood Risk

- a) The likelihood of the proposed activity, including the addition or establishment of any residential unit, being threatened from coastal erosion, flooding or ponding.
- b) Any available information regarding coastal erosion rates, flooding and ponding levels, and frequency of flooding events, in relation to the site of the building.
- c) The likelihood of the proposed activity, including the addition or establishment of any residential unit, being inundated by the sea.
- d) The value of assets that will be vulnerable to flooding, coastal erosion or inundation by the sea, as a result of the establishment of the proposed activity.
- e) The ability of buildings to be relocated, and estimated cost, and the possible destination of a relocated building.
- f) Any other matter that is relevant to an activity, or residential unit, being vulnerable to flooding or erosion from a river, coastal erosion or inundation from the sea.

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3.11.8 Retail Sales and Commercial Activities

- a) The location, design and orientation of retail buildings and outdoor display areas are such as to encourage vehicles to park on the site.
- b) The extent to which the sale of goods or services may result in the dispersal of retail activity within the District, affecting the character of rural areas.
- c) The extent to which the activity will result in levels of traffic generation or pedestrian activity which are incompatible with the character of the surrounding area.
- d) The extent to which retail sales or commercial activities on the site are an integral and necessary part of other activities being undertaken on the site and/or assist in providing alternative home-based employment and income-generating opportunities for residents or occupiers of the site.
- e) Any adverse effects of the proposed activity in terms of:
 - noise, vibration which is incompatible with the levels acceptable in a rural environment;
 - night lighting on neighbouring residential properties, traffic safety and the visibility of the night sky from the surrounding areas;
 - loss of privacy; and loss of a sense of remoteness or isolation;
 - levels of traffic and/or parking, congestion or reduction in levels of traffic safety which are inconsistent with the classification of the adjoining road;
 - litter and waste;
 - any cumulative effect from the activity in conjunction with other activities in the vicinity.
- f) The extent to which any proposed buildings will be compatible with the character of the local environment, including the scale of other buildings in the surrounding area.
- g) Within the Mt Hutt policy area, whether the location, design, alignment and colour of buildings and structures, including towers, mitigate against the loss of nature conservation values.
- h) Within the Mt Hutt policy area, the affects of night lighting on the visual qualities of the surrounding environment, the views of the mountain from the adjoining Plains area, and the visibility of the night sky from the surrounding areas.
- i) In addition, regard should be given to the following assessment matters as described within this section:
 - Height of Buildings;
 - Setback from Neighbours.

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3.11.9 Indigenous Vegetation Clearance

- a) The degree of significance of a species or community of indigenous plants and animals at the specific locality of the proposed activity. In particular:
- the status of a particular species, whether it is rare, vulnerable or endangered in the District, Region or nationally;
 - the general rate of decline of a particular species in the District, Region or nationally;
 - the distinctiveness or uniqueness of a particular community, or group of communities of plants or animals, to the District, Region or nationally;
 - the range or diversity of species in a particular plant or animal community;
 - the importance of an area providing habitat to animals;
 - the importance of the area to Takata Whenua.
- b) The extent to which the activity threatens the indigenous plants or animals identified at the site.
- c) The extent to which the activity will adversely affect the overall natural character of an area, and indigenous ecosystem integrity and functioning.
- d) The degree to which the activity adversely affects mahika kai, waahi tapu, waahi taoka or cultural values to Takata Whenua.
- e) The extent to which the environment in and adjoining the site is sensitive to modification.
- f) The degree to which the activity will adversely affect natural features, geological and geomorphological sites.
- g) The extent to which previous management practices have already significantly modified the characteristics of the site and the cost to the landholder of being unable to undertake the proposed activity.
- h) the economic effects on the landholder.
- i) the resources required to implement protection.
- j) the compatibility of the existing land use with the values identified.
- k) the degree of modification of the site.
- l) the extent to which the vegetation type, habitat or ecological process is already protected elsewhere.
- m) the restoration potential of the site.
- n) the long term ecological viability of the site.
- o) the presence and level of animal pests and weeds.

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- p) the range of alternative protection mechanisms available and their relative costs and benefits.

3.11.10 General Landscape Values and Tree Planting

- a) The siting, design and colour of buildings and structures.
- b) The siting, design and methods of construction of earthworks.
- c) Any loss of, or adverse effects on, views of the District's outstanding or significant landscapes from locations to which the public has access.
- d) Any loss of, or adverse effects on, public access to the above views or viewpoints.
- e) Any obscuring of landforms or natural features.
- f) Any adverse effects on the natural landscape pattern, including the underlying landform pattern.
- g) Any adverse effects on present vegetation patterns.
- h) Any adverse effects on the openness and spaciousness of the landscape, and the apparent naturalness of the landscape.
- i) The extent to which the activity will adversely affect the overall natural character of an area, or indigenous ecosystem integrity and functioning.
- j) The extent to which the activity will adversely affect the geological or geomorphological values of the geoconservation sites listed in Appendix 3-3. In undertaking such an assessment, the Council will carry out such investigations that are necessary to determine the location and values of the listed sites.

3.11.11 Earthworks, Deposition of Clean fill and Buildings

- a) The location of earthworks, whether these will be on a prominent ridgeline.
- b) Effects on visual amenity, natural character, geoconservation sites, or riparian areas.
- c) The scale or duration of the earthworks.
- d) Site management i.e. control of dust and runoff.
- e) Hours of operation.
- f) Whether any materials will be transported from the site and potential effects on the road network i.e. trucks movements.
- g) The location of buildings, whether these will be on a prominent ridgeline or visually dominant within the landscape.

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- h) The extent to which the activity will adversely affect the geological or geomorphological values of the geoconservation sites listed in Appendix 3-3. In undertaking such an assessment, the Council will carry out such investigations that are necessary to determine the location and values of the listed sites.

3.11.12 Riparian Management

- a) The degree to which the activity will restrict public access and enjoyment of the waterway margin.
- b) The degree to which the activity threatens indigenous plants or animals or their habitat identified in the waterway beds and margins.
- c) The degree of significance of the indigenous plant or animal communities.
- d) The extent of any alteration of a wetland and the subsequent loss of habitat.
- e) The degree to which any increased nutrient levels of a lake or wetland may occur and the effects of any such increased nutrient levels.
- f) The extent to which river, lake or wetland habitat, amenity, or recreational values may be adversely affected.
- g) The extent to which the natural character of the waterway margin will be retained.
- h) The degree to which the activity will result in adverse effects on Takata Whenua values, in particular mahika kai, waahi tapu and waahi taoka areas and resources.
- i) The degree to which fresh water habitat may be compromised by a decline in water yields due to tree plantings.
- j) The degree to which any possible alternative locations or methods for undertaking the activity could occur.

3.11.13 Frost Fans

- a) The degree to which any possible alternative locations or methods for undertaking the activity could occur.
- b) Any adverse effects of the proposed activity in terms of noise or vibration which is incompatible with the levels acceptable in a rural environment.

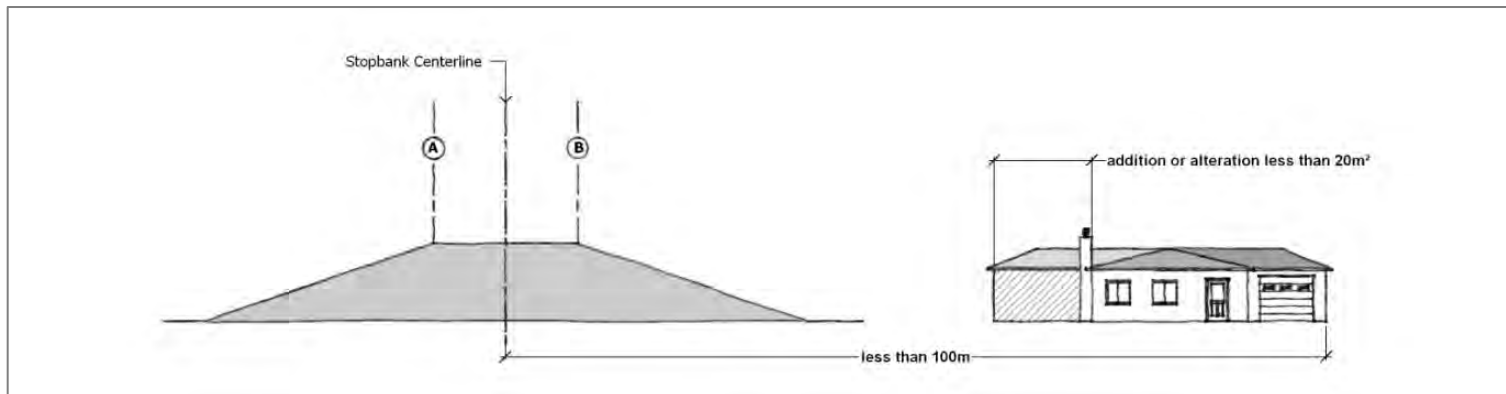
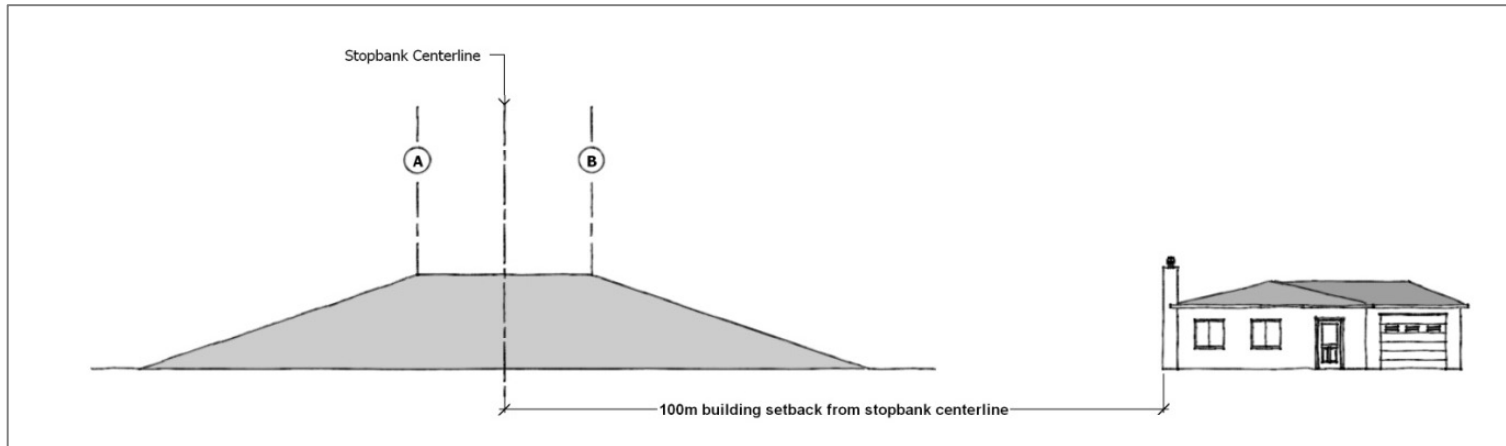
3.11.14 Setback from High-Voltage Transmission Lines

- a) The location of building sites, platforms and works and whether they will inhibit the safe and efficient operation of the National Grid, or result in adverse effects on people's health and safety including:
- The ability for emergency maintenance and inspection of transmission lines, including support structures, and the minimizing of risk of injury or property damage from or to such lines;
 - The extent to which any buildings, structures, construction activities, mobile plant or earthworks could affect transmission lines and support structures;
 - The ability to comply with the New Zealand Electrical Code of Practice of Electrical Safety Distances (NZECP: 34 2001);
 - The nature and location of tree/vegetation planting near the transmission lines and support structures and the ability to comply with the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003;
 - The extent to which the proposal would constrain the operation needs of the national grid; and
 - The outcome of any consultation with the line operator.

Section 3 Appendices

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Appendix 3-1: Setback from Stopbanks



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Appendix 3-2: Areas of Significant Nature Conservation Value

The following sites of known nature conservation significance have been currently identified within Ashburton District. They represent plant and animal communities and habitats which are representative, rare or unique within the District, or otherwise considered to be significant in terms of Section 6(c) of the Resource Management Act. Those habitats, communities and natural features which adjoin or encompass lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands also contribute to the natural character and functioning of these water bodies in terms of Section 6(a).

Sites of nature conservation significance have largely been derived from the following information sources:

1. **Recommended Areas for Protection (RAP):** Identified in the Heron Ecological Region PNAP Survey Report; 1986, the Mathias and Mt Hutt Ecological District PRAP Survey Report, 1990, and the Coleridge, Craigieburn and Cass Ecological District PNAP Report; 1990.
2. **Special Sites of Wildlife Interest (SSWI):** Wildlife habitat sites have been identified as follows:
 - **Rangitata and Rakaia Rivers:** O'Donnell, CFJ and Moore, SM, 1983; The Wildlife and Conservation of Braided River Systems in Canterbury; - NZ Wildlife Service, Wellington.
 - **Ashburton River:** O'Donnell, CFJ, 1992; Birdlife of the Ashburton River, Canterbury, New Zealand; Report prepared for Environment Canterbury. Report No. R92(36), Vol II.
 - **Ashburton Lakes:** Stokes, SJ, Grant, AG, 1992; Birdlife of the Upper Ashburton Catchment and Their Habitat Requirements; - Report prepared for Environment Canterbury, No. R92(36), Vol II.
 - **Other areas:** SSWI database held at Canterbury Conservancy Office, Department of Conservation.
3. **Mathias Ecological Area: Animal and Vegetation Survey 1986/86:** Jane, GT, et al, 1989, Department of Conservation.
4. **Wetlands of Ecological and Representative Interest (WERI):** The WERI database is an inventory of all types of wetlands in New Zealand. It focuses on those wetlands which are ecologically important or significant and which are representative of the natural diversity of the country. The database is administered by the Department of Conservation.
5. **Canterbury Plains Reconnaissance Survey:** A survey of Plains vegetation remnants undertaken by the Department of Conservation in 1992-93. The degree of modification of the original indigenous vegetation has been so great that remaining areas are largely restricted to scattered remnants, groups of plants or individual specimens. These sites are significant because they:
 - represent the only remaining viable seed source of the indigenous vegetation of the Plains;
 - contribute to the maintenance of genetic diversity;

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- provide a basis for ecological restoration, particularly where they still exist on a particular undisturbed soil type, as a basis for ecological restoration;
 - provide scientific benchmarks, contribute to landscape diversity and provide markers to the past state of vegetation on the Plains.
6. **Ecological Reports for Plan Change 10:** A series of ecological reports undertaken generally between 2006 and 2009 to review Group 2 sites for the purpose of evaluation leading to Plan Change 10.

Only the highest ranked sites have been included here. However, retention of all remaining indigenous vegetation remnants on the Plains, particularly those on undisturbed soils, is considered to be important.

Where the site includes RAP(s), SSWI, or has a WERI listing, the name and/or reference number for these is given. RAP's are identified by Ecological District: A = Arrowsmith, H = Hakatere, MtH = Mt Hutt, M = Mathias, C = Coleridge. References in the text to "district" are to the Ecological District.

Group 1 Sites

Where there is a reference to “(Part)” under the Name column in the following table, reference should be made to the Planning Maps to clarify those parts of the area which are identified as a Group 1 Area and which parts are a Group 2 Area.

Table 3-1: Group 1 Areas of Significant Nature Conservation Value

Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
1	Mathias Ecological Area	J34 810 570	NZ Gazette no. 114 p.2432. Held under the Conservation Act, 1987. This site lies at the headwaters of the Mathias River. Because of the outstanding totara forest (<i>Podocarpus halli</i>) the area was gazetted as an ecological area in 1985. Several other important species including rata, cedar (<i>Libocedrus bidwillii</i>), and kamahi are present, and the area includes shrubland and tussock communities.
2	South Ragged Range	J35 580 700	RAP's M10 (South Ragged Range) M11 (Totara Creek), M12 (Twin Creek Fan): RAP M10: Full range of mountain vegetation communities and includes the largest natural forest on south facing slopes. Induced scrub represents an advanced stage of revegetation succession. Several notable plants were recorded. Alpine grasshopper (<i>Sigauss villosus</i>) abundant in the head of Twin Creek. RAP M11: Representation of all vegetation communities in the District, except mountain beech. Several notable landforms i.e. largest tarns in District and most well developed Holocene moraine loops as well as a particularly good example of a protalus rampart. RAP M12: Representative of the diversity of vegetation communities occurring on fans including a climax community of mixed hardwood forest that would once have been more prevalent on these landforms in the District.
3	Mathias/ Upper Rakaia	J35 375 648, K35 014 425	RAP C30 (Rakaia Riverbed), SSWI (Rakaia), WERI (Rakaia): One of the best examples of a braided river in New Zealand and retains significant natural character. Vegetation includes early colonisers such as <i>Epilobium melanocaulon</i> , and a mat daisy <i>Raoulia tenuicaulis</i> . Silver tussock and matagouri establish on higher older surfaces back from the main river channels. The riverbed has significant value as a breeding ground for the many indigenous birds of the High Country, including the threatened wrybill, and the banded dotterel. Black fronted terns and blackbilled gulls also breed in the area. The clean shingle and relatively weed free state of the upper Rakaia above the gorge is of particular importance for these purposes.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
4	Double Hill	K35 735 670	RAP M1: Part of large roche moutonnee. Rare sequence of vegetation from floodplain to hilltop including backswamp turflands. Scrub remnants provide one of the highest natural intact systems including species not recorded elsewhere in the District.
5	Rakaia Faces Forest Remnants. Note: The identified area only includes the areas of forest and shrubland vegetation.	K35 727 632, 739 632, 753 631	RAP MtH14: Representative of mixed species lower montane forest once widespread through District (see RAP3). Notable plants, Miro living at very high altitude for this species, and the only occurrence of <i>Olearia ilicifolia</i> in the District.
6	Glenrock Swamp	K35 806 630	RAP M ² : Example of a floodplain wetland now uncommon in the District. Includes raupo and flax grading to Carex sedgeland. Raupo reedlands are rare in the District.
7	Powerhouse Stream / Turtons (Part)	K35 867 595	RAP's MtH12 (Powerhouse Stream), MtH22 (Turtons): MtH12: Valuable remnant of small mixed hardwood forest remnant with a dense slim tussock sward which is uncommon on north-facing slopes in the District. Dense fescue / silver tussock on the faces between Powerhouse and Donald Stream are the most dense and unmodified representatives on this landform feature. Notable plants <i>Pleurotus rutifolius</i> , <i>Calystegia tuguriorum</i> , <i>Crassula sinclarii</i> . <i>Gnaphalium trinerve</i> and <i>Echinopogon ovatus</i> . MtH22: Extensive area of high natural value. Notable plants: <i>Plantago obconica</i> known only from three other sites nationally. Notable landforms: deep dissected flat-topped low relief outwash terraces and alluvial fan surfaces also low angled mountain slopes are unique in the District.
9	Hutt Stream fan	K35 535 942	RAP MtH7: Contains two notable plants : prostate kowhai and <i>Einadia allanii</i> , both plants
10	Steepface Hill	K35 898 518	RAP MtH21 (Steepface Hill): Area representative of extensive very dense slim snow tussock on south facing slopes and extensive north facing broad leaved snow tussock, the latter now rare in the District.
11	Blackford Swamp	K35 972 461	RAP C2: A small terrace tread flaxland wetland. One of very few on the south side of the Rakaia, and the least modified.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
12	Pudding Hill/Mt Hutt (Part)	K35 907 420	RAP MtH13: Almost the entire area is contained within the Mt Hutt Conservation Area. It contains a high diversity of natural vegetation communities ranging from beech forest to subnival rocklands and fell field communities. Notable plants include <i>Ileostylus micranthus</i> , <i>Gunnera densiflora</i> , <i>Haastia recurva</i> , <i>Epilobium rubromarginatum</i> , <i>Pseudopanax simplex</i> , and <i>Raoulia youngii</i> .
13	Rakaia Gorge	K35 015 425, 985 454	Part RAP C1 (Rakaia Gorge and terraces): This area includes the steep faces and young alluvial terraces on the true right of the Rakaia River about the gorge bridge. The gorge contains spectacular exposures of Tertiary sediments. The face vegetation includes kowhai forest, with broadleaf, kohuhu, cabbage trees and lower montane sub-canopy species, with silver tussock and native grasses on the terrace. The site is one of the few remaining remnants of lower montane vegetation in Canterbury. Notable plants include a vulnerable native broom <i>Carmichaelia kirkii</i> which may still be present, the rare <i>Hebe cupressoides</i> and <i>Anemanthele lessoniana</i> on the gorge islands.
14	Alford Range (Part) Note: resource consent/s granted provide for the following activities to be conducted within part of this area: stockpiling of lime, maintenance and realignment of quarry access roads and clearance of vegetation.	K36 855 370	RAP MtH1 (Alford Range Wetlands), RAP MtH5 (Grahams Creek), RAP MtH6 (Hutt Forest Remnants): RAP MtH1: Contains red tussock and cushion bogs which are rare in the District particularly on mountain top hollows. Notable plants: <i>Centrolepis ciliata</i> which is uncommon in Canterbury. The moss <i>Campylopus bicolor</i> and liverwort <i>Riccardia lobulata</i> are also rare regionally. RAP MtH5: Contains rare Canterbury pink broom in representative <i>Olearia virgata</i> var. <i>rugosa</i> shrubland. RAP MtH6: A number of forest remnants mainly on colluvial mountain slopes in shaded gullies with frequent rock exposures above a number of steep, often cascading streams. Provides example of previous extensive forest cover from interior to High Plains Ecological District with successional distinctive features. Notable geologic feature : contact between Pudding Hill Formation and Clent Hill Group marked by Taylors Stream.
15	Middle Creek (Part)	K35 825 500	RAP MtH9: A relatively large catchment which has escaped recent major fires allowing forest and shrubland species to recover. Contains the most natural vegetation, and in particular, the best scrub representation, in the dry central part of the Mt Hutt District. Vegetation includes the most extensive areas of Halls totara, mountain toatoa scrub and slim snow tussock in the District. Other notable plants include <i>Raoulia petriensis</i> and <i>Colobanthus buchananii</i> .

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
16	Winterslow	K35 770 402	RAP MtH24: Large area of moderate to high natural value containing a diversity of landforms and vegetation representative of the District. Notable landform: Area is example of an infilled, enclosed intermontane basin unique in the District. A type sequence for the Finger Formation is found in the area as well as a reference locality for marine facies of the Clent Hills Group.
17	Mount Somers Note: area identified on Map 1 below which provides for maintenance of an existing track to a maximum 6 metres in width.	K36 789 308	RAP MtH 10: This RAP contains the greatest diversity of natural features in the District including over 400 vascular plants recorded, a wide range of soil parent materials, topography and vegetation communities. Notable plants: <i>Baumea rubiginosa</i> and several bog species rare nationally and regionally including the northern hemisphere <i>Dicranum scoparium</i> , <i>Plantago obconica</i> and <i>Centrolepis pallida</i> . Notable landforms include the volcanic plateau of Mt Somers with its upper surface of ignimbrite. Bird species include falcon and blue duck. An unnamed species of weta is recorded from above Woolshed Creek.
18	East branch Stour River	K36 708 369	RAP MtH4: Representative of vegetation and landforms rarely represented elsewhere in the District including red tussock grassland on lateral moraine and bog pine shrubland on terraces. The northern area contains 20 bog pine.
19	Palmer Range (Part)	J35 690 600	RAP's MtH3 (Double Hill – Glenariffe Streams), MtH11 (Nell Stream), MtH17 (Ribbonwood Stream), MtH19 (Smite-Godley), MtH20 (Station Creek): MtH3: Full altitudinal sequence of natural communities. Largest area of mountain beech and mixed hardwoods in Rakaia system. MtH11: RAP contains a high diversity of very natural vegetation communities ranging from silver beech forest, through tall tussocklands and subalpine scrub, to alpine herbfields and subnival communities. MtH17: Contains a wide range of vegetation communities in a catchment without forest cover including scrub, tall tussockland, flush, tarns, scree and fellfield. MtH19: Contains a wide variety of vegetation communities and glacial landforms representative of the District. MtH20: Largest diversity of vegetation types of any catchment in this part of the District, including dense slim snow tussock and extensive scrub areas.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
20	Charlie Stream	J35 623 577	RAP MtH2: Wide range of vegetation communities with few adventives. Notable for presence of silver beech, as well as mountain beech and species rich sub-alpine scrub.
21	Leach Stream	J35 616 605	RAP MtH8: Representative of the full altitude range in the District and a large number of vegetation communities. Of note is an extensive hummocky moraine in the cirque basin and a 3ha area of forest on river terrace, an ecological unit rare in the District.
22	Shingly Creek Note: The identified area only includes areas of forest/scrub vegetation.	J35 643 635	RAP MtH18: Contains three large mixed hardwood forest remnants, including an area on a terrace tread, and extensive <i>Brachyglottis cassinioides</i> dominated scrub.
24	Lower Lake Stream / Prospect Hill	J35 572 623	RAP M8 (Prospect Hill), A8 (Lower Lake Stream Forest Remnants), H1 (Bush Creek Fan). RAP M8: H1: Represents fan sequence typical of streams draining the adjacent short, steep, east facing catchments of the Arrowsmith District. Contains large areas of dry red tussock, associated cotton plant, and fescue tussocklands. Adjoins the southern part of A8. A8: bush and scrub remnants on the lower steep sided gullies and river gorges facing Lake Stream and the Rakaia. Represents the only pre-European forest vegetation in the District (principally mountain beech) and the only silver beech. These areas provide important fauna habitat (tomtit, brown creeper, rifleman and New Zealand falcon are all found in the area). Also includes shrubland communities representing those found on the northern Rakaia faces. M8: Comprises unusual drumlin-like terminal moraines related to Lake Stream glacial advance, many small tarns, as well as Quagmire Tarn and its margins. Notable plants include bog pine at Quagmire Tarn, and a sedge mossland, a vegetation community not known from elsewhere in the Mathias District.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
25	<p>Cameron / Middle Hill (Part)</p> <p>Note: area identified on Map 2 below which provides for maintenance of an existing track to a maximum 6 metres in width.</p> <p>Note: area identified on Maps 3 and 4 below which provide for removal of matagouri.</p>	J35 533 555	<p>RAP's A7 (Cameron River), A9 (Rocky Gorge), A10 (Lawsley Faces), A11 (Lawsley Red Tussock):</p> <p>A7: The Cameron River valley provides the most extensive example of many of the major vegetation types identified in the ecological region, and is one of the most important representative areas in the District. Contains vegetation communities associated with recent glaciation and good examples of both altitudinal and climatic gradients. Plant associations include fell field, rock and scree communities and moraine sequences. There are extensive high altitude and valley floor tussock communities and shrublands. The catchment provides buffer for wetlands below. Blue duck and New Zealand falcon have been recorded from the area. The upper valley contains a good example of moraine loop in terminal moraine.</p> <p>A9: A medium sized mountain catchment with a winding, deeply gorged stream draining into Lake Stream. Provides a good example of beech forest, tussocklands and shrublands representative of these east facing catchments. New Zealand falcon have been recorded in the area.</p> <p>A10: This area represents the altitudinal variation of vegetation on the front faces. Contains tussocklands in good condition including <i>C. rigida</i>, and <i>C. macra</i>, and shrublands of <i>Dracophyllum</i> spp and matagouri.</p>

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
26	Lake Heron/ Lake Stream (Part) Note: area identified on Map 4 below which provides for removal of matagouri.	J35 630 480	<p>RAP's A11 (Lawsey Red Tussock), H2 (Lake Stream / Cameron Fan / Lake Heron), H3 (Swin Fan), H4 (Longman Range), SSWI (Lake Heron), SSWI (Lake Stream Swamp), WERI (Lake Stream):</p> <p>A11: Unique area of red tussock in a moraine depression, which is dammed downstream by the Lawsley Stream fan. Closely linked with Lake Stream wetland. Contains a gradation of communities including fescue tussock and typical wetland species in less well drained seepage areas.</p> <p>H2: This area comprises the Lake Heron wetland complex and associated wetland systems in the Lake Stream valley, the Cameron fan, and buffer areas. The area contains a number of glacial and alluvial features. Comprises probably the most important lake / wetland complex remaining in the South Island High Country. Lake Heron is the most important breeding site for the endangered southern crested grebe, and one of the two most important overwintering lakes for the species. Blue Duck, marsh creke, and Australasian Bittern have been recorded from the area. The lake supports very high populations of New Zealand scaup. The braided river portion of the Cameron fan supports the threatened wrybill plover, banded dotterel, and the endemic black fronted tern. The lake and an adjoining 40 metre strip is a Nature Reserve under the Reserves Act, and a Wildlife Reserve under the Wildlife Act.</p> <p>H3: The Swin fan supports a good sequence of successional communities and vegetation sequences typical of the alluvial fans and river channels draining these large, west facing catchments, including fescue and blue and silver tussock, and Matagouri shrubland communities. The area provides suitable banded dotterel habitat.</p> <p>H4: This area is located around the Longman Range and is representative of shrubland, bluff and tussockland communities associated with the eastern faces of till covered bedrock. It contains matagouri and bracken shrublands, a tussock lands on moraines, and snow tussock at higher altitudes.</p>
27	Mount Sugarloaf	J35 646 485	<p>RAP H19: Mount Sugarloaf provides an excellent example of a roche mountonee landform and its associated vegetation communities. The area includes an important altitudinal sequence of tussockland, with shrubland around the margins of talus zones.</p>

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
28	Lake Emily (Part)	J36 675 392	RAP H5 (Lake Emily), SSWI (Manuka Lake): These areas comprise Lake Emily and the associated wetlands, tussock grassland communities on the SW face of Emily Hill, and Manuka Lake. The Lake Emily wetlands are one of the best examples of a small lake wetland system in the District. The area contains a mosaic of wetland communities merging into red tussock dominated communities on moraine surfaces. Southern crested grebe are present on Lake Emily and Manuka Lake supports a wide range of waterfowl.
29	Maori Lakes	J36 627 358	RAP H6: An important small lake wetland system which includes large stands of raupo, and a wide range of other wetland species. The lakes and wetlands are slowly being infilled by natural depositional processes. The complex provides attractive habitat for waterfowl, including crested grebe, Australasian bittern, and marsh crake.
32	Upper Harding Stream	J36 565 375	RAP A6: Consists of gently rolling plateau area above Lake Heron with tussock associations on dry, well drained moraine surface, with some damper seepage areas. Contains the most extensive area of red tussock on dry, well drained moraine surfaces in the Arrowsmith District.
33	Upper Lawrence	J35 430 569	RAP A1: This catchment faces the Lawrence River and represents the forest, shrublands, and tussocklands of the higher rainfall, north-western part of the District. The RAP includes the best example of mountain totara forests in the District in addition to good examples of shrub and tussocklands and representative altitudinal sequences.
34	Hermitage Boulderfield	J35 404 538	RAP A2: This site represents a unique vegetation community associated with an old stable rockfall. The rockfall is the result of a slope failure on the mountain slopes of the Jollie Range. The vegetation is characterised by areas of mountain toatoa, broadleaf, <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i> , and <i>Phyllocladus alpinus</i> growing amongst large boulders. There are also patches of snow totara and <i>Dracophyllum</i> spp.
35	Lizard Gully	J35 389 462	RAP A3: Includes representative examples (in altitude and aspect sequences) of several communities typical of the western ranges of the District. Contains the only example of <i>Myrsine divaricata</i> forest in the district, as well as good examples of <i>Brachyglottis cassinioides</i> / <i>Phyllocladus alpinus</i> shrublands, and mountain beech, with tussock grasslands in good condition at the head of the catchment.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
36	Cloudy Peaks Note: area identified on Map 5 below which provides for maintenance of an existing track to a maximum 6 metres in width.	J35 334 443	RAP A12: This site represents the altitudinal, aspect and climatic gradients in the western part of the District. The site runs from river bed to ridge. The range of vegetation reflects these environmental gradients, and includes shrublands and tussocklands, as well as extensive areas of scree, bluff and fellfield habitat.
37	Erewhon beech remnants Note: The identified area only includes areas of forest vegetation.	J35 383 424, 404 404, J36 405 398	RAP A4: Three remnant forest communities dominated by mountain beech, with associated broadleaf, and <i>Coprosma</i> species. They are representative of the original vegetation cover, and provide habitat for forest birds.
38	Potts Gorge	J36 475 395	RAP A20: Remnant shrublands on the steep terrace risers of the Potts River. Contains a diversity of rocky bluff and shrub communities, with tussocklands in rise gullies, and a small mountain beech remnant.
39	Dogs Range	J36 534 375	RAP A5: This area includes excellent examples of tussockland (<i>C.rigida</i> , <i>C.macra</i> and patches of <i>C.rubra</i>) and remnant mountain totara / kanuka associations, and includes the only lake within the ecological district (Mystery Lake). The site forms the upper part of an extensive moraine sequence providing a corridor of tussocklands from the valley floor up onto moraines and the rolling plateau tops.
40	Lake Clearwater/ Clearwater Moraines	J36 504 356	RAP H13 (Clearwater moraines), SSWI (Lake Clearwater), SSWI (Lake Clearwater outlet): An important sequence incorporating Lake Clearwater and extending up the Clearwater moraines to Mystery Lake. Provides a corridor representing altitudinal variations in vegetation communities on the damp, south facing side of the Lake Clearwater basin and links with Site 39. Plant communities include wetland and turf associations, tussocklands, and matagouri dominated shrublands. A rare plant, <i>Triglochin palustre</i> , is located among rush and sedgeland on the lake edge. Lake Clearwater and its associated wetland is a significant habitat area for waders and waterfowl. The lake area supports almost as many species as Lake Heron and crested grebe, New Zealand scaup and grey teal all breed in the area.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
41	Spider Lakes	J36 580 318	RAP H11, SSWI: A unique set of moraine tarns and vegetation communities associated with highly varied topography. Water levels fluctuate in some tarns. The larger tarns have unique turf communities around their margins. The hummocky topography around the lakes supports areas of matagouri, dry grasslands and blue tussock. On terrace surfaces and moraines snow tussock, fescue, cotton plant and golden spaniard are present.
42	Upper Ashburton	J36 583 372, 671 270	RAP H10 (Ashburton Fans) The upper Ashburton above the gorge is a significant stretch of braided river bed relatively clear of vegetation encroachment. The fan supports an important sequence of community types including cushion plants around the stream channel, and matagouri-mixed shrubland, fescue and snow and blue tussock on the terraces. It supports important bird species including wrybill plover and black fronted tern. Banded dotterel, black billed gull are also present. Bittern have also been recorded.
43	Lake Emma	J36 564 288	RAP H12, SSWI (Lake Emma), SSWI (Lake Roundabout): This lake and basin wetland system is one of the most extensive in the District. Sequences of vegetation from open water to dry fans are represented. Behind the shoreline vegetation there is a mosaic of wetland communities, with matagouri dominated shrublands on the Balmacaan Stream fan. Lakes Emma and Roundabout and their linking wetlands provide excellent waterfowl habitat, with high species diversity and bird numbers. New Zealand scaup, New Zealand shoveller, grey teal and crested grebe are present. Grebe have bred in the area, bittern have been recorded, and rails may also be present.
44	Lake Denny	J36 587 250	RAP H22, SSWI: Lake Denny is a typical small lake system on an outwash surface. Raupo on the lake edges indicate that the lake is slowly being infilled. The lake and associated wetland support a variety of waterfowl including endangered and threatened species. Crested grebes and scaup regularly occur at the lake, and New Zealand shoveller, bittern and grey teal are present. Bittern are likely to be breeding in the area, and rails may be present.
45	Moorhouse Range	J36 644 218	RAP H15: A corridor representing altitudinal and aspect variations and representative vegetation communities characteristic of the Moorhouse Range. The area includes <i>Chionochloa rigida</i> , <i>Poa Colensoi</i> , <i>Cyathodes fraseri</i> and <i>Dracophyllum</i> spp. at higher altitudes.
46	North Branch Hinds River	J36 683 232, 701 237	RAP H16: An area of river gorge that contains good shrubland remnants, including scattered bushes of the endangered Canterbury pink broom.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
47	Pudding Swamp	J36 613 176	SSWI : Modified rush and sedge wetland on Pudding Stream.
48	Upper Rangitata River	J35 300 564, J36 669 144	RAP H21 (Rangitata River), SSWI (Rangitata River), WERI: An extensive area of braided river which provides a range of habitats for flora and fauna. Successional sequences are well represented and are maintained by active channelling and periodic reflooding. The bed is relatively weed free and provides an important habitat for several endangered bird species including blue duck (recorded breeding in the gorge), and the wrybill plover. South Island pied oystercatcher, black fronted tern, banded dotterel, and black billed gull are also present. The Potts fan is included in this area because of its habitat value for wrybill plover, banded dotterel, and a black stilt record.
49	Lower Rangitata River	J36 669 144, K38 905 675	SSWI (Rangitata), WERI: This river is one of the largest braided rivers in Canterbury. The river supports all the typical braided river bird species of Canterbury, including the threatened wrybill and black fronted tern, and black billed gull.
50	Coldstream Plains Area	K38 923 721	PLAINS SURVEY NE023: Dense <i>Carex secta</i> threed along a stream.
60	Note: The identified area only includes the area of forest vegetation	K36 843 284	PLAINS SURVEY NW009: Beech forest remnant.
65	Ashburton River	J36 671 270, L37 144 832	SSWI, WERI: Together with the South branch above the gorge, the Ashburton provides some of the most important braided river habitat for birds in Canterbury. The two major branches of the river are over 130km long, and include an important river delta and lagoon. 39 wetland and 25 terrestrial species of birds have been recorded in the river, and there are nationally significant populations of black fronted terns, black billed gulls, banded dotterels and black fronted dotterel. A total of 50 bird species, including 26 wetland species have been recorded at the river mouth.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
67	Lower Rakaia	K35 014 425, L37 466 006	SSWI, WERI (Rakaia River): The largest braided river in New Zealand and of outstanding value for wildlife. A total of 40 species have been recorded, 21 of which are wetland species. Significant species breeding on the river include wrybill, black fronted tern, black billed gull and banded dotterel. The only inland breeding colony of white fronted tern was discovered in 1982, about 25 km from the sea. White winged black tern and blackfronted dotterel have also been noted.

Group 2 Sites

Where there is a reference to “(Part)” under the name column in the following table, reference should be made to the planning maps to clarify those parts of the site which are identified as a Group 2 area and which parts are a Group 1 Area.

Table 3-2: Group 2 Areas of Significant Nature Conservation Value

Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
7	Powerhouse Stream / Turtons (Part)	K35 867 595	RAP's Mth12 (Powerhouse Stream), Mth22 (Turtons): Mth12: Valuable remnant of small mixed hardwood forest remnant with a dense slim tussock sward which is uncommon on north-facing slopes in the District. Dense fescue / silver tussock on the faces between Powerhouse and Donald Stream are the most dense and unmodified representatives on this landform feature. Notable plants <i>Pleurotus rutifolius</i> , <i>Calystegia tuguriorum</i> , <i>Crassula sinclarii</i> . <i>Gnaphalium trinerve</i> and <i>Echinopogon ovatus</i> . Mth22: Extensive area of high natural value. Notable plants: <i>Plantago obconica</i> known only from three other sites nationally. Notable landforms: deep dissected flat-topped low relief outwash terraces and alluvial fan surfaces also low angled mountain slopes are unique in the District.

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
8	Redcliffe	K35 867 558	<p>RAP's MtH 15 (Redcliffe Hill), 16 (Redcliffe Saddle):</p> <p>MtH 15: Shaded slopes contain riparian forest that are remnants of original cover, which is no longer common in the District. A landform feature is the spectacular cliffs of eroded outwash gravels not occurring elsewhere in the District.</p> <p>MtH 16: Redcliffe Saddle. This RAP contains vegetation communities which are uncommon in the District, and not represented in other RAPs including red tussock on ablation moraine and areas of dense short tussock as well as the only valley floor tarn in the District. Bog pines present were the only ones recorded in the northern sector.</p>
12	Pudding Hill / Mt Hutt (Part)	K35 907 420	<p>RAP MtH13: Almost the entire area is contained within the Mt Hutt Conservation Area. It contains a high diversity of natural vegetation communities ranging from beech forest to subnival rocklands and fell field communities. Notable plants include <i>Ileostylus micranthus</i>, <i>Gunnera densiflora</i>, <i>Haastia recurva</i>, <i>Epilobium rubromarginatum</i>, <i>Pseudopanax simplex</i>, and <i>Raoulia youngii</i>.</p>
14	Alford Range (Part)	K36 855 370	<p>RAP MtH1 (Alford Range Wetlands), RAP MtH5 (Grahams Creek), RAP MtH6 (Hutt Forest Remnants):</p> <p>RAP MtH1: Contains red tussock and cushion bogs which are rare in the District particularly on mountain top hollows. Notable plants: <i>Centrolepis ciliata</i> which is uncommon in Canterbury. The moss <i>Campylopus bicolor</i> and liverwort <i>Riccardia lobulata</i> are also rare regionally.</p> <p>RAP MtH5: Contains rare Canterbury pink broom in representative <i>Olearia virgata</i> var. <i>rugosa</i> shrubland.</p> <p>RAP MtH6: A number of forest remnants mainly on colluvial mountain slopes in shaded gullies with frequent rock exposures above a number of steep, often cascading streams. Provides example of previous extensive forest cover from interior to High Plains Ecological District with successional distinctive features. Notable geologic feature : contact between Pudding Hill Formation and Clent Hill Group marked by Taylors Stream.</p>
15	Middle Creek (Part)	K35 825 500	<p>RAP MtH9: A relatively large catchment which has escaped recent major fires allowing forest and shrubland species to recover. Contains the most natural vegetation, and in particular, the best scrub representation, in the dry central part of the Mt Hutt District. Vegetation includes the most extensive areas of Halls totara, mountain toatoa scrub and slim snow tussock in the District. Other notable plants include <i>Raoulia petriensis</i> and <i>Colobanthus buchananii</i>.</p>

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
19	Palmer Range (Part)	J35 690 600	<p>RAP's MtH3 (Double Hill – Glenariffe Streams), MtH11 (Nell Stream), MtH17 (Ribbonwood Stream), MtH19 (Smite-Godley), MtH20 (Station Creek):</p> <p>MtH3: Full altitudinal sequence of natural communities. Largest area of mountain beech and mixed hardwoods in Rakaia system.</p> <p>MtH11: RAP contains a high diversity of very natural vegetation communities ranging from silver beech forest, through tall tussocklands and subalpine scrub, to alpine herbfields and subnival communities.</p> <p>MtH17: Contains a wide range of vegetation communities in a catchment without forest cover including scrub, tall tussockland, flush, tarns, scree and fellfield.</p> <p>MtH19: Contains a wide variety of vegetation communities and glacial landforms representative of the District.</p> <p>MtH20: Largest diversity of vegetation types of any catchment in this part of the District, including dense slim snow tussock and extensive scrub areas.</p>
23	Whaleback Fans	J35 605 643	<p>RAP MtH23: Two merging fans located at the mouths of two separate catchments which have been dammed behind a roche moutonnee. Representative of a natural vegetation community on large fans, which are characteristic of the District but are no longer covered in original natural vegetation. Contains dense tall matagouri, and scattered shrubs.</p>

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
25	<p>Cameron / Middle Hill (Part)</p> <p>Note: area identified on Map 2 below which provides for maintenance of an existing track to a maximum 6 metres in width.</p> <p>Note: area identified on Maps 3 and 4 below which provide for removal of matagouri.</p>	J35 533 555	<p>RAP's A7 (Cameron River), A9 (Rocky Gorge), A10 (Lawsley Faces), A11 (Lawsley Red Tussock):</p> <p>A7: The Cameron River valley provides the most extensive example of many of the major vegetation types identified in the ecological region, and is one of the most important representative areas in the District. Contains vegetation communities associated with recent glaciation and good examples of both altitudinal and climatic gradients. Plant associations include fell field, rock and scree communities and moraine sequences. There are extensive high altitude and valley floor tussock communities and shrublands. The catchment provides buffer for wetlands below. Blue duck and New Zealand falcon have been recorded from the area. The upper valley contains a good example of moraine loop in terminal moraine.</p> <p>A9: A medium sized mountain catchment with a winding, deeply gorged stream draining into Lake Stream. Provides a good example of beech forest, tussocklands and shrublands representative of these east facing catchments. New Zealand falcon have been recorded in the area.</p> <p>A10: This area represents the altitudinal variation of vegetation on the front faces. Contains tussocklands in good condition including <i>C. rigida</i>, and <i>C. macra</i>, and shrublands of <i>Dracophyllum</i> spp and matagouri.</p>

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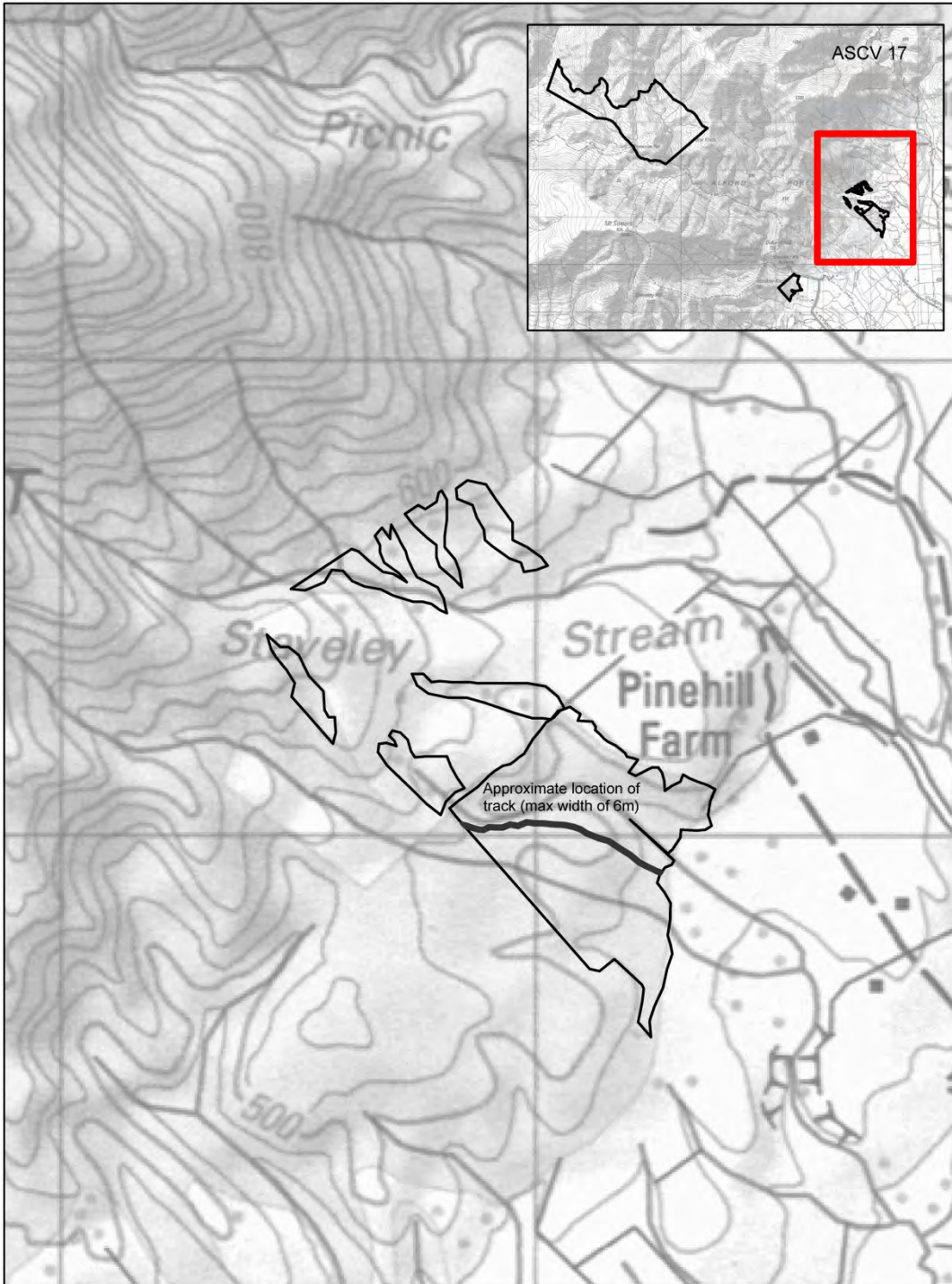
Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
26	Lake Heron / Lake Stream (Part) Note: area identified on Map 4 below which provides for removal of matagouri.	J35 630 480	<p>RAP's A11 (Lawsey Red Tussock), H2 (Lake Stream / Cameron Fan / Lake Heron), H3 (Swin Fan), H4 (Longman Range), SSWI (Lake Heron), SSWI (Lake Stream Swamp), WERI (Lake Stream):</p> <p>A11: Unique area of red tussock in a moraine depression, which is dammed downstream by the Lawsley Stream fan. Closely linked with Lake Stream wetland. Contains a gradation of communities including fescue tussock and typical wetland species in less well drained seepage areas.</p> <p>H2: This area comprises the Lake Heron wetland complex and associated wetland systems in the Lake Stream valley, the Cameron fan, and buffer areas. The area contains a number of glacial and alluvial features. Comprises probably the most important lake / wetland complex remaining in the South Island High Country. Lake Heron is the most important breeding site for the endangered southern crested grebe, and one of the two most important overwintering lakes for the species. Blue duck, marsh creke, and Australasian bittern have been recorded from the area. The lake supports very high populations of New Zealand scaup. The braided river portion of the Cameron fan supports the threatened wrybill plover, banded dotterel, and the endemic black fronted tern. The lake and an adjoining 40 metre strip is a Nature Reserve under the Reserves Act, and a Wildlife Reserve under the Wildlife Act.</p> <p>H3: The Swin fan supports a good sequence of successional communities and vegetation sequences typical of the alluvial fans and river channels draining these large, west facing catchments, including fescue and blue and silver tussock, and Matagouri shrubland communities. The area provides suitable banded dotterel habitat.</p> <p>H4: This area is located around the Longman Range and is representative of shrubland, bluff and tussockland communities associated with the eastern faces of till covered bedrock. It contains matagouri and bracken shrublands, a tussock lands on moraines, and snow tussock at higher altitudes.</p>
28	Lake Emily (Part)	J36 675 392	<p>RAP H5 (Lake Emily), SSWI (Manuka Lake):</p> <p>These areas comprise Lake Emily and the associated wetlands, tussock grassland communities on the SW face of Emily Hill, and Manuka Lake. The Lake Emily wetlands are one of the best examples of a small lake wetland system in the District. The area contains a mosaic of wetland communities merging into red tussock dominated communities on moraine surfaces. Southern crested grebe are present on Lake Emily and Manuka Lake supports a wide range of waterfowl.</p>

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Site	Name	Map Ref	Data Source Description
30	Clent Hills	J36 660 335	<p>RAP's H7 (Potato), H8 (Clent Hill Boulderfield):</p> <p>H7: A very good example of high moraine terrace vegetation dominated by tussock grassland associations. Includes altitudinal sequences with flush zones.</p> <p>H8: The largest of a number of relict screes along the western slopes of the Clent Hills. This area and its boulderfield represents the best example of tussock and shrubland communities in the District. The areas around and below the boulderfield support dense shrubland associations including mountain ribbonwood, <i>coprosma ciliata</i>, <i>hebe rakaiensis</i>, and matagouri.</p>
31	Stour shrub remnants	K36 713 309	<p>RAP H14: This area represents the mosaic of vegetation associations found on the rhyolitic and andesitic volcanic rocks on the Clent Hills. These include mixed shrub communities, snow tussock, and kanuka and mountain beech remnants which are uncommon elsewhere.</p>

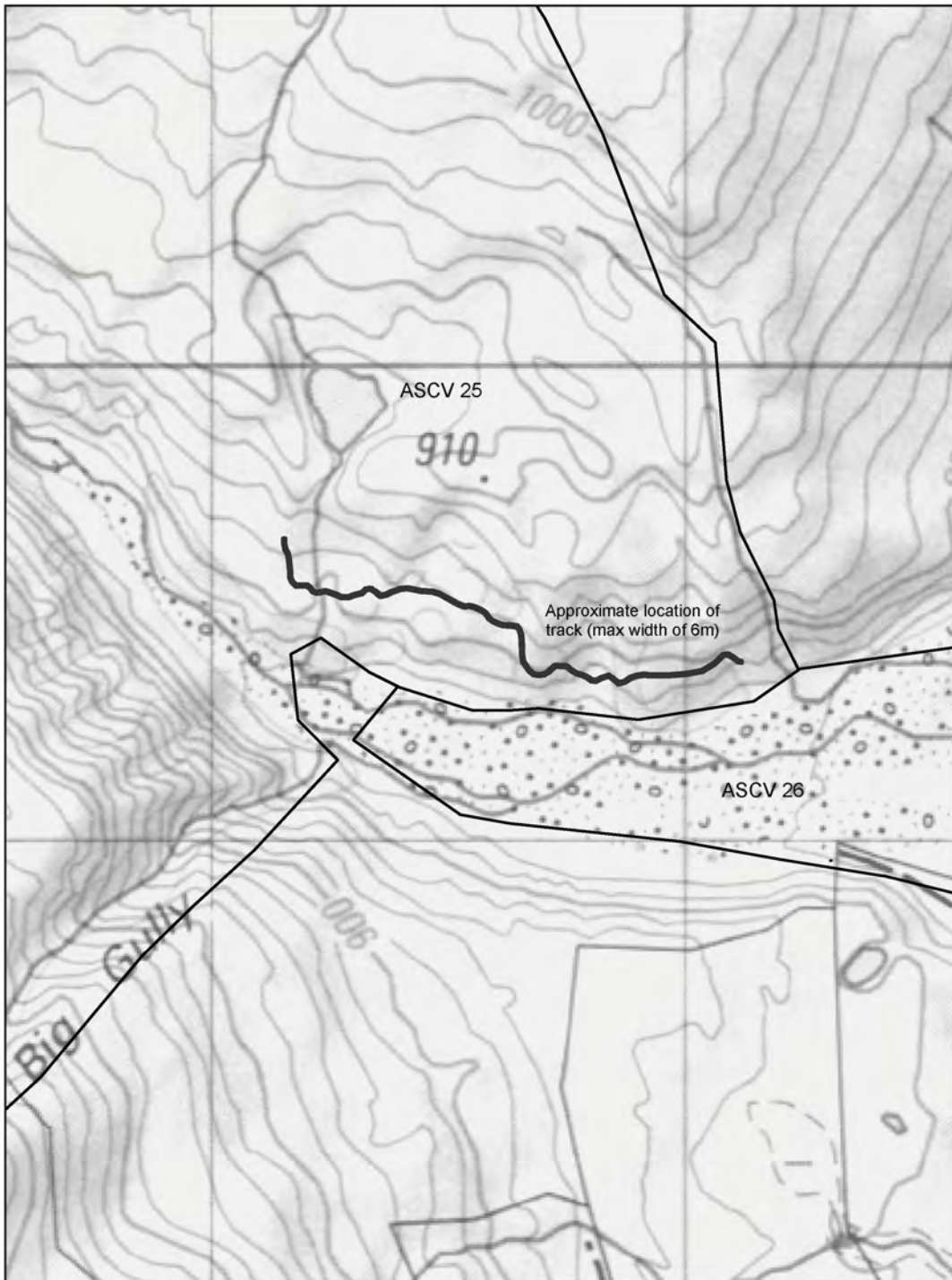
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Maps



Map 1: Provision for Existing Track

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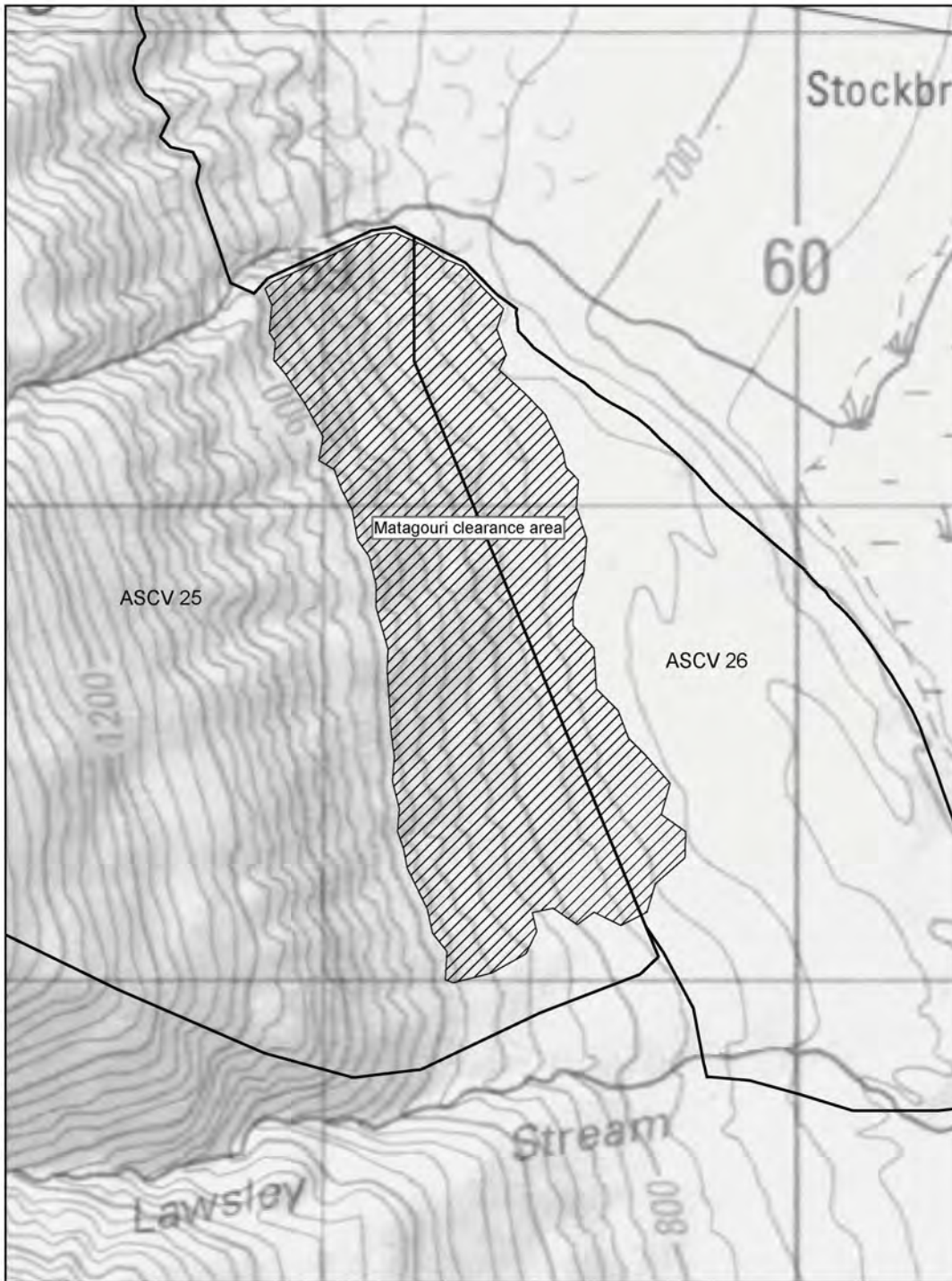
Map 2: Provision for Existing Track

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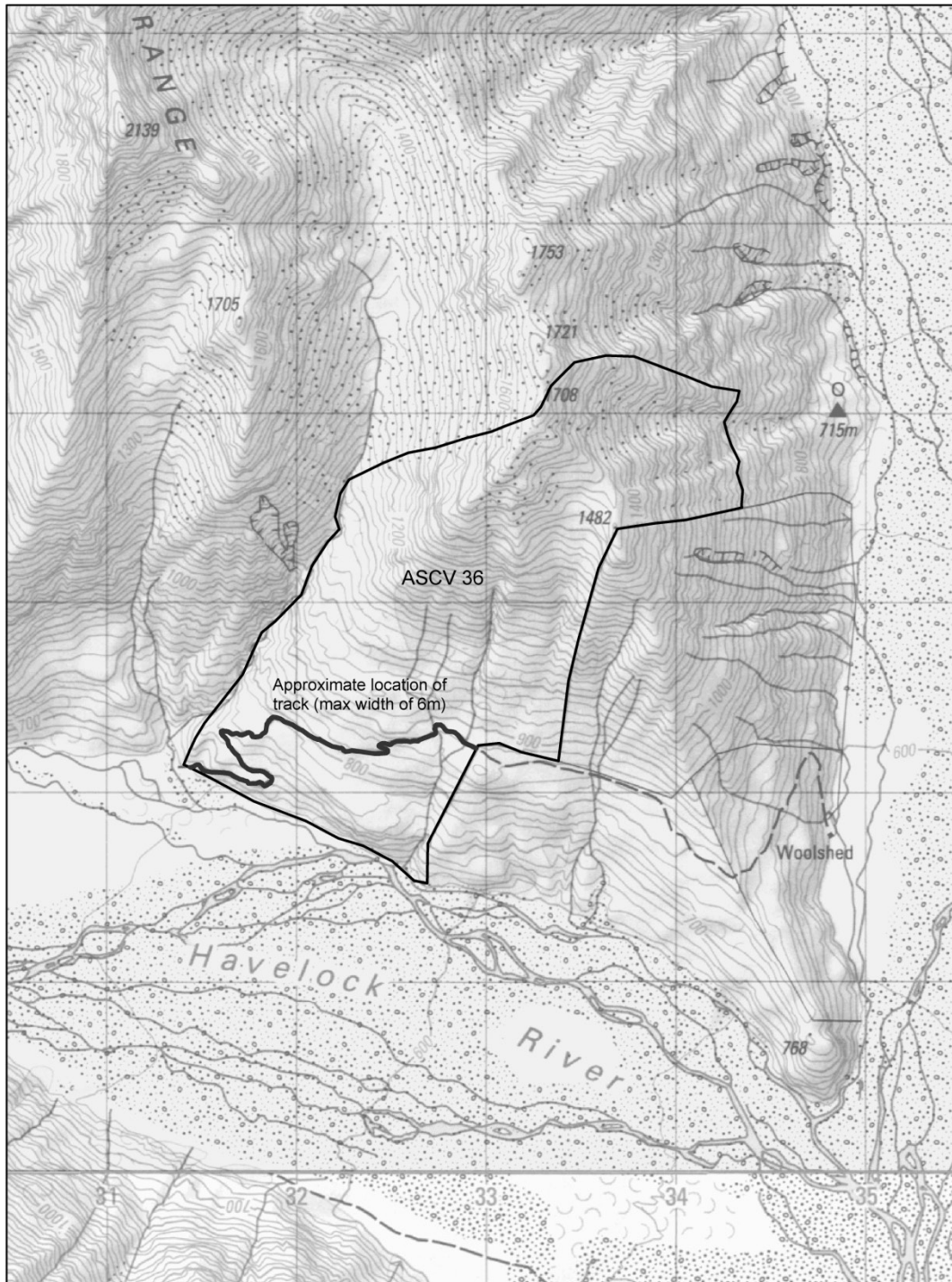
Map 3: Matagouri Clearance Area

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Map 4: Matagouri Clearance Area

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Map 5: Provision for Existing Track

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Appendix 3-3: Geoconservation Sites

The Geoconservation Sites identified in this Appendix were originally sourced from the Geopreservation Inventory held by the Science and Research Division of the Department of Conservation, and published in Kenny, JA, and Hayward, BW, 1993; "Inventory of Important Geological Sites and Landforms in the Canterbury Region", Geological Society of New Zealand Miscellaneous Publication No. 75.

Additional research has been undertaken and is documented in the report "Geoconservation in Ashburton District", September 2006, Riddols Consultants Ltd.

Site	Site Name	Location	Description
1	Protalus rampart, Ragged Range	Totara Stream, Ragged Range, off Rakaia River J34 544729	This feature is a marked ridge of boulders below a cirque marking the edge of a previous cirque glacier. It has not been commonly described in New Zealand.
2	Smite River Oligocene Shark Teeth	Smite River, Lake Heron basin, J35 695562	Abundant sharks teeth in outcrops of Tertiary age greensand.
3	Cameron Valley Moraine	Cameron River, Lake Heron, J35 501576	This is a small well preserved terminal moraine, broken by the Cameron River issuing through the centre of it.
4	Ashburton River Rock Avalanche Splash	Stumpy Stream, South branch Ashburton River, J35 501520	Unusual rock avalanche deposit.
5	Mount Potts Triassic Flora and Fauna	Lizard Gully, Clyde River, Mount Potts, J35 379461	Rich Triassic macroflora and macrofauna including brachiopods, ammonoids and bivalves.
6	Mount Potts Triassic Plant Beds	Tank Gully, Clyde River, Mount Potts, J35 378446	Well preserved fossil plant beds within weathered exposures of greywacke.
7	Balmacaan Middle Triassic Faunas	Balmacaan Stream, Harper Range, J36 518283.	Important fossil locality used to date Torlesse Group rocks.

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Site	Site Name	Location	Description
8	Lake Heron Fault and Alluvial Terrace Offset	Hakatere Basin	<p>The active Lake Heron Fault trends along the west side of the Hakatere Basin from Mount Harper to west of Lake Heron. There is clear evidence of Late Quaternary faulting along several parts of its length. Three specific area of fault trace evidence have previously been proposed for inclusion in the plan.</p> <p>H J36 592343 Fault displacing degradational terraces.</p> <p>I J36 598357 Fault trace is clearly seen as a notch on the terrace edge of the Ashburton River and is perhaps the most visible evidence of faulting.</p> <p>3A4 J36 570313 Moraine is draped over the older fault scarp. The trace is clearly visible from air photos and from any elevation around the basin.</p>
9	Swin River Alluvial Fan	Swin River, Lake Heron, J35 686 438	Active fan being built out into Swin River to the north west and thus the Rakaia catchment and into Seagull lake to south west which is thought to drain into the Ashburton catchment. It is unusual for a fan to be at a catchment divide.
10	Mount Somers Tidal Sand Quarry	13516 Ashburton Gorge Road, K36 727277	Silica sand of Paleogene age was originally quarried to make glass, but now has other uses. The fine grained quartz sand exhibits very good cross bedding.
11	Mount Alford Coal Measures	Mt Alford (Gully on north east side of Mt Alford), K36 875349	This section of Surrey Hills tuff contains terrestrial sediments and coal measures, which are rare for this age of sedimentation.
12	Pudding Hill Stream Triassic Faunas	Pudding Hill Stream, Mt Hutt range, K36 904373	Several localities containing faunas that show relationship between Torlesse and non-Torlesse rocks of Triassic age.
13	Rakaia Gorge and Terraces with Amethyst and Garnet Bearing Rhyolites	Rakaia Gorge, K35 007429	The Rakaia River has cut down through Mt Somers Volcanics exposing rocks at river level which contain amethysts and garnets. Overlying the volcanic rocks are glacial outwash gravels which form very extensive and well preserved terraces, both at the gorge and up and down stream.

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Site	Site Name	Location	Description
14	Blands Bluff	Quarry Road, Mt Somers, K36 727 245	Prominent limestone bluff which has been quarried. Good exposures of paleokarst and shoreline sedimentary facies. Interesting sedimentary sequence interbedded with volcanics. Fossils.
15	Clent Hills Jurassic Plant beds	Haast Stream, Clent Hills, J36 644349	Spectacular remains of fossilised plants and trees.
16	Hakatere Kettle Lakes	Spider Lakes, J36 580316	These small lakes have been formed by glacial ice melting in situ within moraine. The Spider Lakes are a very good example of this type of lake.
17	Mount Somers Landform and volcanic geology	The whole massif of Mount Somers	<p>These Cretaceous age volcanics occur from the Gawler Downs in the South to the Rakaia River in the north. They comprise a range of volcanic rock types including dolerite, andesite, dacite and principally rhyolite. These rocks are particularly well represented on Mount Somers and form some very varied and interesting outcrops and landforms. Geologically they are interesting to study and rock hounds have found many semi-precious stones particularly agates.</p> <p>As well as the interesting geological variability, the actual landform of Mount Somers is an outstanding example of block faulting. The mountain is clearly visible from considerable distances.</p>
18	Rakaia River braids	Rakaia River	The braided nature of this river bed is one of the best examples in New Zealand.
19	Trig H Limestone	Quarry Road, Mt Somers, J36 767227	This is a prominent limestone block very close to the road. It is part of the Otekiake limestone, the same formation as Blands Bluff and is noted for good exposures of cross bedding and large fossil echinoid burrows.

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Site	Site Name	Location	Description
20	Jumped up Downs	Rangitata River Valley	This is an unusual landform created by the overriding of two joining glaciers, one pushing down the Clyde valley to join the Havelock glacier. A good example of ice-sculpted terrain.
21	Rangitata Outwash terraces	Exit of Rangitata River from gorge	A very legible flight of seven terraces cut into outwash gravel.
22	Mount Sunday Island	Rangitata Valley	This is a remnant of bedrock overridden by the Rangitata Glacier and is a good example of ice-sculpted terrain. It also stands out in the valley.
23	Sugar Loaf	Lake Heron	Sugar Loaf is a very good example of a roche moutonnee i.e. it has been overridden by glacial ice with a classic asymmetrical shape and glacial striations. It is clearly visible within the valley.
24	Hakatere –Lake Heron Basin	Basin from Hakatere north to Lake Heron and south to Potts River	This intermontane basin has an outstanding variety of geological features previously described as being an outstanding natural landscape in the District Plan. In particular the glacial deposition features are excellent, with preservation of moraines and outwash surfaces of succeeding glacial advances. Also there is clear evidence preserved of active faulting and folding of these Quaternary sediments.
25	Stour River valley	West branch Stour River	Example of glacial U-shaped valley especially visible from Mt Somers track.
26	Diamond Slip	Diamond Creek, Mt Alford, K36 853357	Exposure in the Surrey Hills Tuff which contains crystals of bipyramidal quartz, which were mistaken for diamonds in the 1860s.
27	The Brothers Volcanic plug	Brothers Road, Mt Somers, K36 782200	The youngest volcanic rocks in the area (Tertiary) well exposed here. In other places interbedded with Otekaike limestone eg at Blands Bluff. Is an interesting and prominent landform in the area.

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Site	Site Name	Location	Description
28	Glenfalloch Permian Fusulinid	Glenfalloch Stream, Palmer Range, J35 658639	Rare occurrence of fusulinid foraminifera in silicified limestone in Torlesse Group rocks.
29	Redcliffs Gully	Tributary stream to Rakaia River	Infaulted block of Tertiary age sediments, overlain by high level glacial moraine deposits which are faulted. The rocks infill prominent notch in the range front fans along the south bank of the Rakaia. A quarry exists within the limestone deposits of the sequence.
30	Rocky Gorge Coal measures	Headwaters of Rocky Gorge Stream west of Lake Heron, J35 561 552	Infaulted sliver of Tertiary age rocks containing coal measures. Best exposure of facies of this age in western Canterbury.
31	Tertiary stratigraphic sequence	Headwaters of North Branch of Hinds river towards Browns Saddle, J36 655217 - 669220	This is designated as a reference section for many of the Tertiary age rocks of the area as being an almost complete stratigraphic sequence
32	Double Hill	Rakaia River valley	This unusual shaped greywacke hill forms an "island" at the confluence of the Mathias and Rakaia rivers, which is clearly visible from many parts of this part of the Rakaia valley. It is the remnant of bedrock which has been overridden by ice, and is also overlain by moraine deposits.
33	Mount Harper fans	East flank Mt Harper	Exceptionally well developed and preserved Recent alluvial fans with characteristic form.
34	Pudding Valley exit to Rangitata gorge	Pudding Valley, J36 615195	The geological features here range from overridden ice-sculpted terrain to spectacular terrace levels and scarps and fans. A lobe of ice from the Hakatere basin area pushed down this valley towards the Rangitata glacier to form these features.
35	Pudding Valley landslide	Pudding valley, J36 580235	A rock avalanche from the slopes of Mount Harper probably caused the damming of Lake Denny and is clearly visible on the valley walls.

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Site	Site Name	Location	Description
36	Range Front	Ashburton River gorge to Rakaia River gorge	This range front is clearly visible from all parts of the District; it rises up sharply from the plains having no low foothills. It is composed of mainly Torlesse rocks but also Mt Somers volcanics. All of which have been pushed up by the action of faulting.
37	Ashburton Coastal Donga	Lower Beach Road	These features are particularly characteristic of the coastal plain in this region. They vary from large open gullies including water courses to small dry gullies. They are developed in the outwash gravel terraces of the plains and all have the same features of steep terrace edges up to 20 m high with flat bottoms.
38	Ashburton Coastal Donga	Lower Beach Road	These features are particularly characteristic of the coastal plain in this region. They vary from large open gullies including water courses to small dry gullies. They are developed in the outwash gravel terraces of the plains and all have the same features of steep terrace edges up to 20 m high with flat bottoms.
39	Ashburton Coastal Donga	Lower Beach Road	These features are particularly characteristic of the coastal plain in this region. They vary from large open gullies including water courses to small dry gullies. They are developed in the outwash gravel terraces of the plains and all have the same features of steep terrace edges up to 20 m high with flat bottoms.

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