

District Planning

Activity Management Plan 2021-31

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Document control

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1. Introduction

Ashburton District Council is a Territorial Authority under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the RMA). This requires the Council to, among other things, create and maintain a District Plan for land use activities in the district, to process resource consents within statutory timeframes and to anticipate and react to the changing requirements of the district.

2. Key issues for District Planning

There are several anticipated issues for the district, these include:

- Population trends and particularly population aging and resultant changes in anticipated land use.
- The implications of advances in technology which may require changes to the District Plan to anticipate and react to them.
- The need for integrated structure planning and infrastructure.
- The renewal of the Ashburton CBD following the Canterbury earthquakes and changes to strengthening requirements for buildings.
- The impact of climate change, including related central and regional government regulation
- The implications of international recession on developers and investment in the district.
- Reacting to and anticipating greater ecological and sustainability requirements both through legislative change and public expectation.
- Increased consenting exemptions (such as within the Building Act) may increase enforcement and compliance activities.

3. Activity description District Planning

3.1. What we do

Council's planning team is responsible for providing a statutory planning framework to assist the community in controlling and directing development and land uses in the district.

This is achieved primarily through the District Plan. This document contains objectives, policies, rules and standards for a range of land use activities that reflect the responsibilities of the Council under the RMA and the identified direction of the Council.

The key functions of the district planning activity are:

District Plan preparation, monitoring and review

The second generation Ashburton District Plan was adopted and made operative by Council in 2014 and the next review is intended to be notified in 2024. This process will work closely with other parts of Council to ensure that the District Plan co-ordinates with other Council documents including the

Long-Term Plan and infrastructure strategies.

Between formal District Plan reviews, staff monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the district Plan by monitoring land use activities and resource consents. The Council has initiated and processed two Plan Changes since the District Plan was made operative. These sought to fine tune the Plan by correcting several small matters.

Projects include structure planning for the district's residential growth and ensuring economic productivity and resilience, while ensuring that all parts of the district are integrated and ecologically sustainable.

District Plan administration (Consent processing)

Consent processing is a significant part of the district planning activity and includes the processing of applications for resource consent (subdivisions and land use), certificates of compliance and designations for public works such as roads, water supplies and electricity transmission. District planning is also responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of land use activities.

Ashburton town centre renewal and related projects

The Council embarked on a comprehensive town centre streetscape regeneration process which was implemented in 2020 and 2021.

Planning staff have an ongoing role ensuring that the Town Centre is economically viable and attractive, and that controls within the District Plan are fit for purpose.

Policy advice

The planning team provides policy advice on planning and development, conservation, design, heritage, and transportation issues that affect Ashburton District as well as commenting on relevant proposed plans and documents from other Councils and policy and legislation from central government. Council has a standing commitment to the Canterbury Planning Managers' Group which consists of representatives of all TAs in Canterbury and Environment Canterbury, and which provides joint advice to the Canterbury Policy Forum and nationally when required.

3.2. Why we do it

Council has responsibilities under Section 31 of the RMA to undertake integrated environmental planning to control any actual or potential adverse effects of the use, development, or protection of land within the district. This is achieved primarily through the District Plan, which has environmental objectives, policies and rules to achieve the responsibilities of Council under the Act. By providing advice and advocacy this responsibility is made more effective.

The functions undertaken in this activity are aimed at assisting the community in managing the use of natural and physical resources so that they are sustained for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

A key activity of Council is to plan for future growth. In planning for growth, a balance needs to be found between protecting the existing environment of the district, and the economic and social needs and expectations of the community.

4. Goal for District Planning

The District Planning activity seeks to achieve a fit for purpose function which meets its statutory obligations and meets customer expectations while anticipating and reacting to the changing needs of the District.

Our principles

These are the guiding principles for how we will function and deliver activities and services to the community.

- Plan and provide fit for purpose services.
- Work with the community and engage in meaningful conversations.
- Lead the community with clear and rational decision-making.
- Represent the district on regional / national issues and partner with others when needed.

Contribution to Community Outcomes

Regulatory Services contribute to the following Community Outcomes as shown below.

	Residents are included and have a voice	A district of great spaces and places	A prosperous economy based on innovation and opportunity	A balanced and sustainable environment
District Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓

5. Levels of service and performance measures for District Planning

5.1. What are we trying to achieve (levels of service)

The district planning activity seeks to achieve a fit for purpose function which meets its statutory obligations and meets customer expectations while anticipating and reacting to the changing needs of the District.

- We provide quality district planning services
- Council responds to concerns with district planning services within required response times
- The majority of residents are satisfied with the standard of our district planning services

5.2. How will we know if we are achieving it (performance measures)

What we're aiming for: To achieve a fit for purpose function which meets statutory obligations and customer expectations, while anticipating and reacting to the changing needs of the district.

WHAT WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS (Levels of service)	HOW WE'LL MEASURE PROGRESS (Performance measures)	HOW WE'RE PERFORMING NOW (2019/20 results)	WHAT WE'RE AIMING FOR				
			2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 – 2030/31	
We provide quality district planning services	Resource consent applications and exemptions are determined within statutory timeframes	99.5%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Subdivision plan approval certificates (RMA s.223) are determined within 10 working days	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Council responds to concerns with district planning services within required response times	District planning service complaints are responded to within 2 working days	New measure	100%	100%	100%	100%	
The majority of residents are satisfied with the standard of our district planning services	Residents are satisfied with the standard of Council's planning services	82%	80%	80%	80%	80%	

6. Changes made for District Planning

The review of the second generation District Plan was completed in late August 2014. The next Ashburton District Plan is proposed to be notified in the second half of 2024.

The RMA has been significantly amended in recent years with the production of National Environmental and Policy Standards and a significant amount of additional reporting of statistical data.

The District Planning function can be expected to see significant changes through the life of the LTP. Proposals at the time of writing include National Environmental Strategies and Policies related to residential land supply, biodiversity, freshwater and protection of versatile soils. Additionally, central government responses to stimulate growth propose to streamline processes by allowing the call in of nationally significant projects, and the Kaianga Ora – Homes and Communities Bill gives wide powers to this agency to obtain and develop land for housing.

More changes are proposed through the Resource Management Amendment Bill (introduced to the House in September 2019) and perhaps most significantly, the comprehensive review of the Resource Management System chaired by Hon Tony Randerson QC, the findings of which were yet to be released at the time of writing and which could fundamentally alter the planning system as we know it.

7. Key projects for District Planning

- Responding to changes to RMA.
- Continued implementation and fine tuning of digitisation of services (EPlan, online lodgement etc).
- Continued monitoring of efficiency of District Plan and creation of Plan Changes as required.
- Commencement of an overall assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the District Plan in preparation for the next review.
- Work with other Teams to develop and implement strategic visions including Structure and Development Plans.
- Participation in Ashburton Town Centre Revitalisation projects.

8. Management of activity for District Planning

8.1. Programmed actions years 1 - 3

- Investigate and implement E-Plan electronic District Plan management.
- Continue to progress changes to the District Plan in order to address issues with District Plan efficiency and to incorporate national level legislative change.

- Participate and assist with revitalisation of Ashburton CBD.
- To investigate and implement through the District Plan review process, the creation of a 3rd generation plan, including structure plans and other such provisions which will provide strategic direction and confidence and take into account emerging issues such as climate change and natural hazards.

8.2. Future directions for years 4 – 10

- Implement District Plan and respond to other arising issues.
- Anticipate (in conjunction with other teams and agencies including Environment Canterbury) and make changes to relevant documents regarding the implications of climate change on the district.
- Continue to assist other teams with the creation and implementation of strategic documents and projects.

9. Costs for District Planning

For Regulatory Services

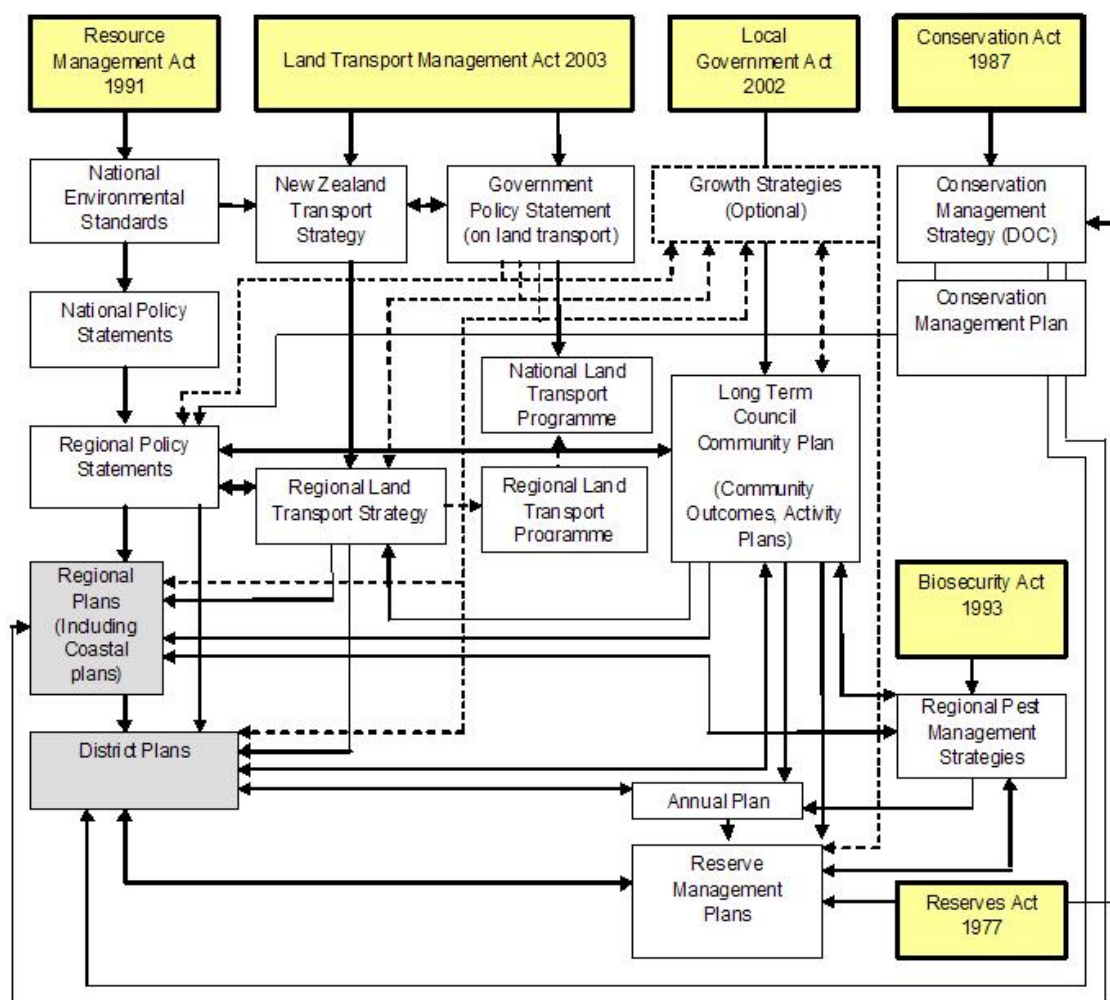
	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Operating Funding											
Sources of operating funding											
General rate, UAGC*, rates penalties	1,722	1,377	1,734	1,975	1,997	2,082	2,158	2,255	2,141	2,321	2,367
Targeted rates	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subsidies and grants for operating purposes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fees and charges	2,971	2,987	3,081	3,137	3,223	3,313	3,412	3,471	3,583	3,625	3,733
Internal charges and overheads recovered	121	96	99	101	104	106	109	112	115	118	121
Local authorities fuel tax, fines, infringement fees and other receipts	446	361	362	372	383	394	405	417	429	442	455
Total sources of operating funding	5,260	4,821	5,275	5,586	5,706	5,895	6,084	6,255	6,268	6,506	6,676
Applications of operating funding											
Payments to staff and suppliers	3,394	3,328	3,490	3,557	3,598	3,707	3,761	3,883	3,948	4,085	4,168
Finance costs	33	22	19	16	13	10	9	6	5	4	4
Internal charges and overheads	1,645	1,643	1,818	1,888	1,943	2,028	2,152	2,203	2,278	2,379	2,466
Other operating funding applications	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
Total applications of operating funding	5,075	4,995	5,328	5,463	5,556	5,746	5,924	6,094	6,234	6,471	6,641
Surplus/(deficit) of operating funding	185	(174)	(53)	123	150	149	160	161	34	35	35

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Capital Funding											
Sources of capital funding											
Subsidies and grants for capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Development and financial contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/(decrease) in debt	(137)	(137)	(137)	(137)	(137)	(34)	(141)	(141)	(13)	(13)	97
Gross proceeds from sale of assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lump sum contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other dedicated capital funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total sources of capital funding	(137)	(137)	(137)	(137)	(137)	(34)	(141)	(141)	(13)	(13)	97
Application of capital funding											
Capital expenditure											
- to meet additional demand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
- to improve the level of service	0	0	0	0	0	103	0	0	0	0	118
- to replace existing assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/(decrease) in reserves	48	(311)	(190)	(14)	13	12	18	20	21	22	15
Increase/(decrease) in investments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total applications of capital funding	48	(311)	(190)	(14)	13	115	18	20	21	22	133
Surplus/(deficit) of capital funding	(185)	174	53	(123)	(150)	(149)	(160)	(161)	(34)	(35)	(35)
Funding Balance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Expenditure by activity

	Annual Plan 2020/21 \$000	Year 1 2021/22 \$000	Year 2 2022/23 \$000	Year 3 2023/24 \$000	Year 4 2024/25 \$000	Year 5 2025/26 \$000	Year 6 2026/27 \$000	Year 7 2027/28 \$000	Year 8 2028/29 \$000	Year 9 2029/30 \$000	Year 10 2030/31 \$000
Emergency management	203	126	214	193	197	201	205	211	217	223	228
Environmental health	505	537	573	590	602	620	647	660	677	701	720
Building regulation	2,240	2,092	2,202	2,275	2,303	2,400	2,459	2,549	2,591	2,706	2,759
Alcohol licensing	191	199	210	217	222	229	237	243	250	258	266
Land information	118	99	102	105	108	111	113	116	120	123	126
Parking	329	291	288	287	291	299	321	330	339	350	361
Animal control	460	508	537	551	563	580	600	614	632	652	671
District planning	1,091	1,190	1,246	1,280	1,302	1,338	1,383	1,414	1,452	1,503	1,554
Total operating expenditure	5,138	5,041	5,372	5,498	5,588	5,778	5,966	6,137	6,277	6,515	6,685
less depreciation	64	46	44	35	32	31	41	43	44	44	44
Total applications of operating funding	5,075	4,995	5,328	5,463	5,556	5,746	5,924	6,094	6,234	6,471	6,641

10. Key legislation / industry standards and relationship with other planning / policy documents for District Planning



11. Risk management for District Planning

Key risks for performance of district planning are:

- loss of key staff and difficulty in recruitment of suitably skilled and experienced replacements
- reliance on computer systems and the effect that service disruption has on the ability to meet statutory deadlines
- legislative changes and increased performance monitoring demands by central government place stress on the ability to meet statutory deadlines.

12. Stakeholders and consultation for District Planning

Key stakeholders include:

- Neighbouring Authorities;
- Canterbury Regional Council;
- Iwi (primarily but not exclusively Te Runanga o Arowhenua);
- Network providers (telecommunications, water, electricity, transportation);
- Other NGOs eg. Forest and Bird, Federated Farmers, Heritage New Zealand);
- Elected officials (local, regional and national level).

13. Improvement programme for District Planning

13.1. Process overview

EPlan

Funds for implementation are budgeted within years one to three. There will be an ongoing requirement for maintenance of this system. The fine detail of the project will depend upon levels of service demanded by the regulations and requirements set out by Government and any joint processes with neighbouring Councils that may be established.

Efficiency and Effectiveness of the District Plan

Plan changes are intended to be “rolling” in that as one concludes another will commence. This strategy seeks to ensure that any matters requiring attention within the District Plan are addressed promptly. It is anticipated that this will be largely undertaken with existing internal resource.

Many of the changes to be implemented through the most recent (2017) changes to the RMA are able to be introduced without the standard “Schedule 1” plan change process. Other changes to the District Plan required by RMA amendments will be incorporated into the plan through the plan change process as required.

Efficiency and effectiveness of District Planning activity

Statistics are collected monthly which include the time taken to process resource consents and respond to enquiries from other teams on behalf of the activity. Staff monitor processes and improvements are undertaken as identified. Increasingly, staff are moving into proactive monitoring of consents and permitted activities.

District Plan review

The review of the District Plan is governed by Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991. This requires multiple steps of consultation before finalising. It is intended to commence the process in the 2019/20 financial year with decisions expected around early to mid-2023. This will be to some

extent dependent on externalities such as further changes at national level, staffing and the extent of public participation.

13.2. Training

Staff training and skill progression is identified through the annual performance development review process and budget is allocated for professional training. Technical staff utilise a professional development matrix to allow them to learn and participate in increasingly more complex and technical parts of the activity.

13.3. Improvement actions

Continue to monitor processes as well as upskilling staff so as to ensure the most efficient and robust systems.