

12. CENTRAL AREA

12.1 Introduction

The Central Area comprises the main commercial and business heart of Wellington City and the wider region. The area extends from the Thorndon Railway yards to the Basin Reserve and is bounded generally by the line of the existing motorway to the west, Webb and Buckle Streets to the south and Kent Terrace to the east. [The Lambton Harbour Area, formerly part of the working Port of Wellington, is now included in the Central Area with the objective of integrating this area with the City and strengthening city to sea connections.]¹

The City has grown since 1840, when early colonists moved from Petone (Pito-one) to the deeper and more sheltered waters of Lambton Harbour. Development was initially concentrated along the narrow foreshore area but spread gradually onto land reclaimed from the harbour. Much of the central city is now located on this reclaimed land. The central business district between Parliament and the Civic Centre is characterised by intensive high rise office and commercial development.

Wellington is a port city and the seat of government, and these major functions continue to influence the form of development in the Central Area. However, the city also contains a wide diversity of business, commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment activities of national, regional and local significance. In 1991 some 58,400 people were employed in the central area, most commuting from suburban areas of Wellington City or adjoining cities.

Accelerated social, economic and technological change is prompting changes in the form and function of the Central Area and Council's intention is to encourage positive growth which promotes the City's comparative advantages. This will be encouraged by means of strategic planning initiatives. The District Plan will complement these initiatives by allowing a wide range of uses or activities provided they meet environmental standards.

The Central Area provisions will more directly influence the physical form of the city. Council's vision for the Central Area is based on four guiding principles for steering development: Containment, Arrivals and Bypasses, the "Golden Mile", and City/Harbour Integration.

12.1.1 Containment

The city has a natural tendency towards physical containment. Because of its geological form, an amphitheatre of hills leads down to a natural focus on the inner harbour. This containment aids accessibility and accentuates the urban feel of Wellington. Council believes that this containment should be exploited.

12.1.2 Arrivals and Bypasses

Council believes that traffic entering the Central Area should have a reason for being there, so that travellers regard the area as a destination in itself rather than an obstacle to be negotiated. This means that

¹Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

efficient bypasses should be available for travellers wishing to skirt the Central Area. Such bypasses, if sensitively planned and built, would add containment and improve access.

12.1.3 The "Golden Mile"

The "Golden Mile" refers to the main retail strip which extends generally from the Cenotaph near Parliament Buildings to the eastern end of Courtenay Place. This "Golden Mile" concept reflects the natural form of the Central Area and helps structure the way the city is perceived and the way people move within it. By enhancing this powerful organising influence, a sense of place and orientation can be improved for people. Council aims to ensure that the physical and conceptual links provided by the "Golden Mile" are reinforced where appropriate.

12.1.4 City/Harbour Integration

[The city and sea relationship makes for a dynamic cityscape.

However, to realise the potential of this dynamic cityscape accessibility between the city and the waterfront needs to be improved. The waterfront needs to be linked to the rest of the city in terms of both physical access and visual links such as views and signage. In addition, it should be easy for people to move around the waterfront. A waterfront promenade connecting the different parts of the waterfront should provide a sequence of changing, rich and interesting experiences. It should also be recognised as a part of the city and an extension of the wider city flow of pedestrians. It should provide opportunities for access to the water's edge.]¹

The District Plan is working to promote Council's vision for the Central Area by containing residential and other activities within a defined boundary and rules guiding the form of new development.

Specific rules deal with the siting, design and appearance of new buildings so that the existing urban form is preserved and enhanced. This is achieved through building height and general urban design guidelines.

The introduction of localised character area plans in the Central Area will continue. It is Council's policy to identify special character areas and to enhance them by fine-tuning the Precinct plans to deal with future changes.

[For the Lambton Harbour Area the Council has adopted a vision statement, which is:

Wellington's Waterfront is a special place that welcomes all people to live, work and play in the beautiful and inspiring spaces and architecture that connect our city to the sea and protect our heritage for future generations.

In addition to the specific objective and associated policies for the Lambton Harbour Area, the Council has adopted the *Wellington Waterfront Framework (April 2001)* to guide the development of the waterfront in a way that makes the most of this unique and special part of the city. *The Wellington Waterfront Framework (April 2001)* expresses a number of inter-linking themes that instill a level of coherence along the waterfront and establish its context with the city and its wider harbour setting. The themes are:

¹ Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

- Historical and contemporary culture
- City to water connections
- Promenade
- Open space
- Diversity.

The Framework's values and principles underpin the District Plan objective and policies for the Lambton Harbour Area.

An important consideration in any development on the waterfront is that it is predominantly a public area in public ownership. Thus, the Council is committed to facilitating public engagement on decisions relating to waterfront developments. This commitment is further described in the *Wellington Waterfront Framework (April 2001)* and includes proposed governance arrangements that will require ongoing monitoring by a group which includes both professional and community representatives.¹

With regard to land use, there is minimal direct control over the location of activities. Performance standards are set for noise, pollution and hazardous substances, among others, to promote acceptable standards of environmental quality. In the Central Area, special provisions to promote the protection of important public views and access to sunlight, particularly in parks and pedestrian malls, and control excessive wind around buildings are included. [Special provisions have also been included to control the cumulative effects and location of commercial sex activities. These provisions relate to areas:

- that are considered by operators as prime locations for the establishment of new activities; and
- where due to the special character of the existing mix of activities the adverse effects would be particularly significant; and
- areas with high pedestrian, retail or residential activity, or areas frequented by families or younger age groups.]²

To ensure that development in the Central Area is to a high standard, Council is guided by an urban design strategy. This strategy promotes the co-ordination of all Council-initiated activities and development.

¹Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

² District Plan Change No.2 – Commercial Sex Activities, Courtenay Place (Operative 02 April 2004)

12.2 Central Area Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE

12.2.1 To promote the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources within the Central Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.1.1 Contain Central Area activities and development within a defined boundary.

METHOD

- Rules

The Central Area of Wellington has developed over a long period as the main business and commercial centre of the City and wider region. It has the development and infrastructure needed to fulfil this function. Council recognises the importance of the existing investment and infrastructure in the Central Area and intends to encourage its efficient use by a policy of containment. This helps promote sustainable management objectives by allowing most business and other activities to be conducted within reasonable walking distance, and thus minimises the need for motorised transport. It is Council's view that the Central Area boundary is sufficiently large to accommodate development within the ten-year District Plan period.

Activity and development within the Central Area is also of a type, scale and intensity which clearly distinguishes it from that of the surrounding area. Containment will ensure that Central Area development does not encroach into Residential Areas.

The environmental result of the containment policy will be a more efficient city and the development of the main functions of the Central Area in a way that protects adjacent Residential Areas.

12.2.1.2 Encourage a wide range of activities within the Central Area by allowing most uses or activities provided that the conditions specified in the Plan are satisfied.

METHOD

- Rules

A wide range of uses are permitted within the Central Area, as Council does not wish to direct market activity through regulatory means. Where Council wants to encourage activities such as retailing in particular locations, this is promoted through strategic planning, urban design or similar initiatives.

A flexible approach to the location of land uses or activities will encourage efficiencies in the Central Area by enabling owners or developers to respond appropriately to meet market needs or other economic or technological changes. Performance standards are applied to control potential adverse effects of activities.

Activities under the third schedule of the Health Act are not permitted in the Central Area because of their offensive or noxious nature.

Helicopter landing areas are included as Discretionary Activities (Unrestricted) to ensure that adverse noise effects and public safety issues can be addressed.

The environmental result will be to allow development in the Central Area while avoiding or mitigating potential adverse effects on the environment. [Commercial sex activities are included as Discretionary Activities (Unrestricted) in the Courtenay Character Area to ensure that the amenity and community safety effects can be addressed].¹

OBJECTIVE

12.2.2 To maintain and enhance the amenity values of the Central Area and any nearby Residential Areas.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.2.1 Ensure that activities are managed to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects in the Central Area or on properties in nearby Residential Areas.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Regional Air Quality Plan, Abatement Notices, Enforcement Orders)

The effects generated by the wide range of activities in the Central Area, such as fumes, smoke, smell, vibration, glare or other nuisances, can have adverse impacts both within the Central Area or in areas beyond its boundary. Some activities will be noxious or dangerous wherever they are sited but others, relatively less harmful, become more dangerous if sited in residential or sensitive areas. Council aims to ensure that such activities are contained and do not cause a nuisance or danger.

To do this, Council relies on the general duty of every person under the Act to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of activities (section 17). Where necessary Council will also use the enforcement or abatement provisions of the Act to control nuisances. Other effects identified in the rules are controlled by setting performance standards.

The environmental result will be that uses or activities in the Central Area will not cause a nuisance or danger either within the Central Area or in nearby Residential Areas.

12.2.2.2 Require that where activities in the Central Area adjoin or face a Residential Area, or where Central Area buildings or structures adjoin a Residential Area, they satisfy additional conditions.

METHOD

- Rules

¹ District Plan Change No.2 – Commercial Sex Activities, Courtenay Place (Operative 02 April 2004)

The interface between the Central Area and adjacent Residential Areas is particularly sensitive. The effects of activities within the Central Area can annoy their neighbours in nearby Residential Areas. Additional conditions are imposed in the Plan to avoid, remedy or mitigate such impacts.

The environmental result will be that activities in the Central Area may continue without causing a nuisance to nearby Residential Areas.

12.2.2.3 Control the adverse effects of noise in the Central Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Abatement Notices, Enforcement Orders)

[Peace and quiet are particularly important for people's well-being. For this reason specific rules in the District Plan aim to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of noise between properties within the Central Area and nearby Residential Areas.

Noise levels are nonetheless designed to allow most activities to occur. Noise sensitive activities (including residential ones) may wish to establish in the Central Area but the designers, developers and users of these will need to be aware that higher noise levels are allowed within the Central Area than would normally be provided to adequately protect, say, residential activities. Designers and developers also need to be aware that the wide range of permitted activities in the Central Area may lead to higher noise levels in locations where noise levels may currently be quite modest.

Consequently, specific rules have been included into the District Plan to ensure designers, developers and users of the noise sensitive uses provide for appropriate levels of insulation to buildings to stop possible higher levels of noise from causing intrusion. These acoustic insulation requirements have been purposefully applied across the entire Central Area in order to ensure adequate acoustic protection in the future where permitted activities on any site may be quite different from today.]¹

Noise from some sources such as traffic will not be controlled through rules, and needs alternative action. The enforcement order and abatement notice procedures will be used along with the rules to control unreasonable noise.

The environmental result will be the improvement of the noise environment in the Central Area.

12.2.2.4 Ensure that the buildings are designed to avoid, remedy or mitigate wind problems that they create.

METHODS

- Rules
- Information (Wind design guide)

Tall buildings can induce wind changes at ground level. This can make activities on the ground uncomfortable, difficult and even dangerous. Wind rules will therefore be enforced to ensure that adverse effects are avoided or reduced.

¹District Plan Change No.23 – Central Area Noise Insulation Rules (Operative 25 June 2004)

The environmental result will be that the adverse effect of wind around buildings are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

12.2.2.5 Protect sunlight to identified Central Area parks and pedestrian malls and encourage improved sunlight access to buildings and public places when new building development occurs.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides

People need access to direct sunlight. However, it is accepted that within the Central Area, full access is neither reasonable nor practicable. Council will work to ensure that reasonable sunlight is maintained to identified parks and pedestrian malls where people congregate. Performance standards in the Plan will achieve this. In addition, encouragement will be given to improving sunlight and daylight to buildings and other public places as part of the assessment of new building development, particularly on the northern side of streets and other public places.

The environmental result will be that identified parks and other public places will continue to enjoy the amount of sunlight they already receive, and where possible, sunlight will be increased to buildings, streets and other public places.

12.2.2.6 Protect the panoramic view from the public viewing point at the top of the Cable Car.

METHOD

- Rules

Council considers that the panoramic view of the harbour and distant hills from the Cable Car lookout site is of outstanding importance and should be protected. The building height provisions, particularly the defined height limits in the "High City" area, are designed to protect this view. Any development above the maximum height limits is a Discretionary Activity and assessed for its impact on this public view.

The environmental result will be the protection of the panoramic view of the City from the top of the Cable Car.

12.2.2.7 Protect, and where possible enhance, significant vista views of the harbour, hills and townscape features from within and around the Central Area.

METHOD

- Rules

Specific views of the harbour, local hills and townscape features are an important element of the cityscape, which Council seeks to preserve. Views to be protected are identified in the Plan and are subject to rule provisions. Building development that intrudes upon a view is a Discretionary Activity.

The environmental result will be that identified views will be protected.

12.2.2.8 Generally permit signs below the level of the fourth storey but manage the maximum size and placement of signs on buildings.

METHOD

- Rules

Signs are an integral part of the Central Area environment and are encouraged at street level; however, the size of signs is limited to ensure that larger signs do not intrude too much. The placement of signs on buildings is controlled to protect the visual amenity of the streetscape and the architecture of individual buildings.

The environmental result will be the development of a Central Area environment where signs are not an overly obtrusive element of the cityscape and are located to respect the design and architecture of buildings.

12.2.2.9 Ensure that signs in the Central Area do not adversely effect the amenities of nearby Residential Areas.**METHOD**

- Rules

Illuminated or flashing signs can detract from the amenities of adjacent areas and are controlled to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects.

The environmental result will be the protection of areas adjacent to the Central Area from the effects of illuminated, flashing or unsightly signs.

12.2.2.10 Ensure that verandahs are continuous on streets or access routes where there are many pedestrians.**METHOD**

- Rules

Verandahs add greatly to the comfort of pedestrians in the City, providing shade in summer and protection from wind and rain. Verandahs will thus be required for developments on pedestrian routes identified on the District Plan Maps.

The environmental result will be the better protection of pedestrian routes in the Central Area from the weather.

12.2.2.11 Manage the road network to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of road traffic on the amenity of the Central Area and the surrounding Residential Areas.**METHODS**

- Rules
- Operational activities (Traffic Management)
- Other mechanisms (WCC Bylaws)

Traffic on roads, whether active or stationary, can have major impacts on the amenities of the Central Area and surrounding Residential Areas. Council will continue to use traffic management techniques to control congestion and parking.

Council is also aware of the impact that heavy trucks and similar vehicles can have on the Central Area and residential neighbourhoods in terms of noise and general disturbances and will seek to minimise through-traffic, particularly at night. Bylaws may be used to exclude heavy trucks on certain streets.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of the adverse effects of road traffic in the Central Areas and surrounding Residential Areas.

[12.2.2.12]¹ Control the adverse effects of commercial sex activities on amenity in the Central Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- WCC Bylaws

There is potential for commercial sex activities in areas where they are not currently prevalent to adversely affect the amenity of the Central Area. (Refer also Objective 12.2.9 and Policy 12.2.9.2). Council proposes to use Bylaw mechanisms to control offensive signage in the Golden Mile and touting for commercial sex premises anywhere in the City.

Commercial sex activities in the vicinity of Courtenay Place are controlled by plan rules because of the risk of such activities wishing to establish in this area. This area has developed into a particularly vibrant part of the City that includes theatres, restaurants, cafes and bars. The Courtenay Place area is currently used by all sectors of the community including families and young people. The potential effects of a proliferation of commercial sex premises on the character of this area would be particularly significant.

The environmental result will be protection of the Courtenay Character Area from the adverse effects of commercial sex activities on amenity.

OBJECTIVE

12.2.3 To maintain and enhance the physical character, townscape and streetscape of the Central Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.3.1 Preserve the present general urban form of the Central Area.

METHOD

- Rules

Development in the Central Area is located within an amphitheatre formed by hills and ridgelines to the west and the harbour to the east. The general built form is in two parts: a well-defined and constrained core of high-rise buildings centred on Lambton Quay and Willis Street ("The High City") and the low-rise development to the outer boundaries of the Central Area ("The Low City").

Council intends to maintain and enhance this general urban form by means of building height and height threshold rules for both the "High City" and the "Low City".

[Development in the Lambton Harbour Area will be complementary to and in scale appropriate to the existing buildings around them (except the Museum of New

¹District Plan Change No.2 – Commercial Sex Activities, Courtenay Place (Operative 02 April 2004)

Zealand “Te Papa”). In the North Queens Wharf area buildings will be in scale with heritage buildings.]¹

The environmental result will be the maintenance and enhancement of the Central Area's general urban form.

12.2.3.2 Enhance the public environment of the Central Area by guiding the design of new building development and enhancing the accessibility and usability of buildings.

METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria
- Advocacy
- Design Guides (Central Area, Courtenay, Cuba, Civic Centre, [The Wellington Waterfront Framework])
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)²

The design and appearance of Central Area buildings has a direct bearing on the quality of the public environment and on the Central City's wider public setting. Design Guides are intended to ensure that the design of developments enhances, rather than detracts from, this public environment. The Design Guides identify various design principles to be followed but do not seek to impose aesthetic control.

Enhancing accessibility to buildings is an important aspect of the public environment of the Central Area, so Council will advocate improved provision for older people and all others with mobility restrictions in the refurbishment of those existing buildings which do not provide equitable access in terms of current Building Code requirements.

The environmental result will be Central Area buildings with design qualities which create a positive relationship to public spaces and the wider city setting.

[On the waterfront the environmental result will be an experience of openness and transition between the built up city and the expansiveness of the harbour, with buildings in appropriate cases supporting open spaces, both in their design and their associated uses and activities.]³

12.2.3.3 Maintain the distinctive elements of areas or districts of special character within the Central Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides (Courtenay, Cuba, Civic Centre, [The Wellington Waterfront Framework])
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)⁴

Areas within the Central Area have an identifiable character which Council seeks to protect and enhance. Since 1987 planning provisions have been introduced to promote and enhance the character of defined Central Area districts. For these areas Design Guides provide the criteria for assessing new building development.

[The waterfront area as a whole is an area of special character, which has, nevertheless, five distinct areas at:

^{1,2,3 and 4}Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

- North Queens Wharf
- Queens Wharf
- Frank Kitts Park
- Taranaki Street Wharf / Lagoon
- Chaffers

These areas will each develop their own “sense of place” or local character but collectively contribute to the overall richness and cohesion that makes the waterfront a unique and special part of the city.]¹

The environmental result will be that the special qualities of identified character areas are maintained or enhanced.

12.2.3.4 Maintain and enhance the streetscape by controlling the siting and design of structures on or over roads and through continuing programmes of street improvements.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (Urban Design Strategies)

The design and appearance of streets and the buildings on or over them are a large part of the visual appearance of the Central Area. Council intends to improve the quality of Central Area streetscapes. Through its Urban Design Unit, it will also work to improve the quality of Central Area environments by implementing an urban design strategy. The strategy will coordinate Council action.

Council also undertakes a wide range of works which improve the city's streetscape. The main focus is on enhancing areas with high pedestrian counts. This focus will continue.

Where it is proposed to build in the air space above roads, particular consideration will be given to the impact on the streetscape. Such development will be carefully controlled.

An important component in enhancing the amenity values of the City's streets is the promotion of accessibility for pedestrians (including people with mobility restrictions) in the design and construction of streetworks and street enhancement projects.

The environmental result will be improvement of the quality of Central Area streetscapes.

12.2.3.5 Maintain identified retail frontages within the Central Area.

***Refer rule 13.1.2.10,
13.3.2 and Appendix 8
Chapter 13***

METHOD

- Rules

There are few limitations on the type of activities which may be established in the Central Area. This could affect the character of main shopping streets by breaking existing retail patterns. Council believes that the characteristic retail patterns should be maintained by retaining existing retail frontages.

For this reason the Plan includes a rule requiring continuous retail frontage on identified streets.

¹Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

The environmental results will be the maintenance and enhancement of the visual quality and vitality of main shopping streets in the Central Area.

OBJECTIVE

12.2.4 To ensure that the adverse effects of new subdivisions are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.4.1 Ensure the sound design, development and servicing of all subdivisions.

METHOD

- Rules (compliance with Code of Practice for Land Development)

Council wishes to ensure that all new subdivisions are developed to high standards, and imposes controls to bring this about. To encourage their sound design, development and servicing all subdivisions will be assessed in terms of the Plan and Council's Code of Practice for Land Development. Council seeks to ensure that all new sites in the Central Area are suitable for their intended use.

The environmental result will be the development of well-designed and properly serviced subdivisions in the Central Area.

OBJECTIVE

12.2.5 To maintain and enhance the quality of the coastal environment within and adjoining the Central Area.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.5.1 Maintain the public's ability to use and enjoy the coastal environment by requiring that, except in Operational Port Areas, public access to and along the coastal marine area is maintained, and enhanced where appropriate and practicable.

12.2.5.2 Enhance the natural values of the urban coastal environment by requiring developers to consider the ecological values that are present, or that could be enhanced, on the site.

12.2.5.3 Ensure that any developments near the coastal marine area are designed to maintain and enhance the character of the coastal environment.

12.2.5.4 To recognise the special relationship of the port to the coastal marine area through identification of the Operational Port Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- Advocacy
- Other mechanisms (New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, Regional Coastal Plan)
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)¹

The coastal environment is an important asset for Wellington and Council is concerned that its qualities and character are not lost through inappropriate activities or development. Council aims to maintain and enhance the character and public amenity of the coastal environment by means of rules and strategies. Maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coast is an important issue. However, there are occasions when public access will not be appropriate or practicable. In particular, within the Operational Port Areas access may need to be restricted. “Appropriate and practicable” means:

“Public access may not be appropriate where it is necessary to protect any Area of Significant Conservation Value, Area of Important Conservation Value, sites of significance to tangata whenua, public health or for safety, animal health, security, defence purposes, or quarantine facilities. In other cases, particularly along sections of coastal cliff, access along the foreshore may not be practicable. Practicable includes recognition of both technical and financial constraints.” (Coastal Plan for the Wellington Region - Explanation to policy 4.2.17).

[The development of the Lambton Harbour Area as a unique and special part of the city and as a predominantly public area is an important element of the Council’s coastal policy.

Where in the District Plan information is shown that relates to parts of the Lambton Harbour Area that fall within the coastal marine area (eg. height references to buildings on wharf structures), this is shown for information purposes. The resource management administration of activities and structures on wharves on the seaward side of the coastal marine area boundary (eg. the Outer Tee at Queens Wharf and Overseas Passenger Terminal) is the responsibility of Greater Wellington - The Regional Council (refer Policy 4.2.45 of the Regional Coastal Plan).²

OBJECTIVE

12.2.6 To avoid or mitigate the adverse effects of natural and technological hazards on people, property and the environment.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.6.1 Identify those hazards that pose a significant threat to Wellington, to ensure that areas of significant potential hazard are not occupied or developed for vulnerable uses or activities.

METHOD

- Rules

^{1 and 2} Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

Hazards occur whenever people are in contact with natural or technological phenomena that pose a threat to their health and safety. It is therefore necessary to identify the hazards and risks that people face by living in Wellington.

[Council's hazard management involves four phases – mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Mitigation is addressed through a combination of land use management within the District Plan and Building Act controls. Control can be exercised over some hazards to avoid the hazard (such as technological hazards), whereas other hazards such as fault rupture and ground shaking from earthquakes are unavoidable. However, the risk to life from these unavoidable hazards can be reduced with appropriate mitigation measures.

Not everyone is able to respond to an event in the same way. Portions of the population (due to factors such as age, health and income) may be less able to cope with an emergency and are more vulnerable. Certain high-intensity land uses (such as public assembly sites, schools, high rise housing) may also increase the hazard risk.]¹

Some people, due to socio-economic factors - for example, age, health and income - may be vulnerable and less able to cope with an emergency. Planning should recognise that not everyone is able to respond to an event in the same way. Certain high-intensity land uses, such as sites used for public assembly, may also increase the hazard risk.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of hazards and risks to people in high hazard risk areas.

12.2.6.2 Ensure that the adverse effects of hazards on critical facilities and lifelines are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

METHODS

- Rules
- Advocacy

The services people depend on to help them cope with emergencies include the fire, police, ambulance and civil defence organisations as well as other volunteer services. People also rely on other services such as communications, transport routes, electricity, gas and water to cope after the event. These significant services are known as lifelines. Council considers that critical facilities and lifelines should be located as far as is reasonably practicable from Hazard Areas.

The environmental result will be the establishment of critical facilities and lifelines in locations that avoid, remedy or mitigate the risk from hazards.

12.2.6.3 Ensure that the adverse effects on the natural environment arising from a hazard event are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

METHODS

- Rules
- Advocacy

If a hazard event occurs, its after-effects on the natural environment need to be considered, such as contamination of ground water from ruptured pipelines and storage tanks. The potential for an activity to affect the natural environment under

¹District Plan Change No.22 - Hazard (Fault Line) Area (Operative 27 July 2004)

emergency conditions is also an important consideration. The Plan incorporates rules dealing with flow-on effects.

The environmental result will be the better protection of the natural environment from hazard events.

OBJECTIVE

12.2.7 To prevent or mitigate any adverse effects of the storage, use, disposal, or transportation of hazardous substances, including waste disposal, and formation of contaminated sites.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.7.1 Require that the storage, use, handling and disposal of hazardous substances are subject to analysis using the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure and, where appropriate, the resource consent procedure in order that any potential or actual adverse effects are managed in such a way as to safeguard the environment.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Health Act, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 and its Transitional Provisions, Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1992)

Council is concerned that the community and environment should not be exposed to unnecessary risk from hazardous substances. The District Plan aims to control use of land in order to prevent or mitigate any potential adverse effects of hazardous substances by considering the appropriateness of the site location and other site requirements to minimise the risk of accidental release. Although these are only two facets of hazardous substances management, others are outside the scope of the District Plan.

[The hazardous substance provisions of this Plan work in conjunction with the provisions for hazardous substances under the Hazardous Substance and New Organisms Act 1996. Controls imposed on hazardous substances under the Resource Management Act cannot be less stringent than those set under the Hazardous Substance and New Organisms Act 1996. This requirement is reflected in the rules for hazardous substances in this Plan.]¹

The Regional Council has developed rules in the Regional Plans to control discharge of hazardous substances to land, air and water.

The Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure has been incorporated into the District Plan. Uses which have unacceptable potential effects will be located and contained where their potential adverse effects can be prevented or mitigated. The environmental result will be a safer environment as a result of the safer storage, use and disposal of hazardous substances.

¹ District Plan Change No.35 – Hazardous Substances (Operative 6 July 2006)

12.2.7.2 Reduce the potential adverse effects of transporting hazardous substances.**METHODS**

- Rules (conditions on resource consents)
- Other mechanisms (advocacy and bylaws) [and NZ land transport legislation (including Land Transport Act 1993, Land Transport Rule: Dangerous Goods 1999 and New Zealand Standard 5433:1999)]¹

Because there is always a risk of an accident, the transportation of hazardous substances potentially has adverse effects on the surrounding locality. Where practicable, transport of hazardous substances to a hazardous facility will be restricted to main arterial routes and avoid peak periods of commuter traffic.

The environmental result will be safer communities.

12.2.7.3 Control the use of land for end point disposal of waste to ensure the environmentally safe disposal of solid and hazardous waste.**METHODS**

- Rules
- Operational activities (Waste Management Strategy)
- Designation
- Other mechanisms (Regional Plans [and Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996])²

Unrestricted land disposal of waste by landfilling is increasingly less environmentally acceptable as a method of dealing with the City's waste. For this reason, Council wishes to discourage the proliferation of waste disposal sites.

Council's Waste Management Strategy, which addresses waste disposal in Wellington City, includes guidelines on the environmentally acceptable management of the hazardous wastes produced in Wellington.

The environmental result will be fewer and better-managed waste disposal sites.

12.2.7.4 To require hazardous facilities to be located away from Hazard Areas.**METHOD**

- Rules

The likelihood of an accidental release of a hazardous substance is increased during a natural hazard event.

For this reason, Council wishes to discourage the development of new hazardous facilities in identified Hazard Areas.

The environmental result will be the minimisation of hazards and risk to the environment and people in Hazard Areas.

12.2.7.5 Co-operate with the Regional Council in compiling a database of all contaminated sites in the city.**12.2.7.6 Control activities on any contaminated site.**

¹ and ² District Plan Change No.35 – Hazardous Substances (Operative 6 July 2006)

12.2.7.7 Encourage the restoration of any contaminated sites.**METHODS**

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (Regional Discharges to Land Plan)

Contaminated sites can significantly harm human and ecological health and for this reason Council believes that District Plan restrictions are necessary. Council aims to identify such sites and to restrict activities on them until the contamination is removed and its source controlled.

The environmental result will be the recognition and restoration of contaminated sites.

OBJECTIVE
12.2.8 To enable efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods within the Central Area.
POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.8.1 Seek to improve access for all people, particularly people travelling by public transport, cycle or foot, and for people with mobility restrictions.
METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria
- Other mechanisms (Regional Land Transport Strategy)
- Operational activities (WCC Transport Strategy)
- Advocacy (Council Social Policy)

Good access for all modes of movement is an important element of a sustainable city. Council will use a variety of methods to improve accessibility. Its Transport Strategy includes a broad range of both short and longer-term initiatives to improve access to the Central Area. Programmes and plans under this Strategy are implemented primarily through the Annual Plan process.

The actions of many authorities or organisations, including the Wellington Regional Council, Transit New Zealand and companies involved in the movement of people and freight on land, sea or air, work to shape the City's transportation system. Where there are opportunities for input Council will advocate for improved access. In particular Council will continue to work closely with the Wellington Regional Council on transportation matters and the District Plan will remain consistent with the Regional Policy Statement, the Regional Land Transport Strategy and relevant plans.

An important consideration will be the protection of existing railway links to the City, including the Cable Car. Council will work to ensure that these essential corridors are retained.

Council also acknowledges that an important aim of urban design is to make the city accessible to people with mobility restrictions. In this regard, Council will ensure both equity and safety for people with mobility restrictions by implementing its 'Policy for People with Disabilities' and employing the national standard access design criteria in NZ Standard 4121 (or its successor).

The environmental result will be better access for people and goods in the Central Area.

12.2.8.2 To permit appropriate extensions to the existing road network, and make provision for these.

METHOD

- Rules

Improving access for motor traffic may require additional roads. Where extensions to the existing road network are proposed they will, in most cases, be identified or designated on the District Plan Maps.

The environmental result will be better access for motor traffic to parts of the Central Area.

12.2.8.3 Limit the supply of commuter carparking and require appropriate loading and site access for activities in the Central Area.

METHOD

- Rules

Council's transportation strategy for the central city area seeks to control the growth of commuter traffic, both to avoid, remedy or mitigate congestion and to improve the Central Area environment. The strategy promotes the use of transport modes other than private vehicles. In particular Council seeks a high standard of public transport, pedestrian and cyclist accessibility. One way of controlling the growth of commuter traffic is by limiting parking supply. While the District Plan does not require parking to be provided for activities in the Central Area, where it is provided, a maximum level is set. This is established by a Permitted Activity condition of a ratio between parking and the gross floor area of buildings. Any additional provision will generally only be considered for short-stay parking where this is appropriate for certain activities, such as shopping.

Premises must be able to be serviced safely and efficiently, so that streets are not blocked and people and cars can move freely.

New accessways will not be permitted onto roads where access is prohibited (as identified on the Planning Maps). Well-designed and safe access to sites is needed to help prevent traffic congestion or conflict between street users. Where significant disruption would occur because of the nature of the traffic or pedestrian environment, access may be limited.

Larger developments (developments providing an addition of more than 70 parking spaces) in the Central Area which generate significant vehicular traffic movements to and from a site will be assessed to ensure that any adverse effects on the road network in the vicinity of the site are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

The environmental result will be the improved access to streets in the Central Area.

12.2.8.4 Manage the road system in accordance with a defined road hierarchy.

METHOD

- Rules

A road hierarchy classifies roads according to their function. A road hierarchy is used in the administration of the Plan to ensure that land uses or activities are appropriately related to the network.

The environmental result will be the development of land uses or activities in the Central Area which have better access because they are better related to the function of the roads on which they are sited.

12.2.8.5 Protect and enhance access to public spaces in the Central Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- National standard access design criteria
- Operational activities (Urban design strategies)

Good public spaces and amenities require good access. Council aims to obtain, enhance where necessary, and protect existing accessways. This includes ensuring these public spaces are equitably and safely accessible to all persons within the community, including older people and all others with mobility restrictions.

The environmental result will be the improved access to public spaces in the Central Area.

OBJECTIVE

12.2.9 To promote the development of a safe and healthy city.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.9.1 Improve the design of developments to reduce the actual and potential threats to personal safety and security.

METHOD

- Advocacy (Crime prevention design guidelines)

Urban design measures can minimise or reduce threats to personal safety and security. Guidelines for design against crime are used by Council to advocate for the development of a safe city.

The environmental result will be that buildings or spaces are designed to minimise the incidence of crime.

12.2.9.2 Promote and protect the health and safety of the community in development proposals.

METHODS

- Rules
- Other mechanisms (WCC Bylaws)
- Advocacy

The promotion of a safe and healthy city is being implemented through a broad range of Council actions, including District Plan rules.

Council uses mechanisms such as the Healthy City initiative and general bylaws to promote the health and safety of Wellington's communities. Some involve physical actions while others centre on providing information.

The environmental result will be a Central Area environment that provides for the health and safety of people by controlling the adverse effects of activities.

[Council has established bylaw controls on commercial sex premises in areas particularly sensitive to the effects of commercial sex activities. The use of rules is limited to the vicinity of Courtenay Place where there is greatest risk of a proliferation of commercial sex premises affecting community safety.]¹

OBJECTIVE

12.2.10 To facilitate and enable the exercise of tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga by Wellington's tangata whenua and other Maori.

Maori concepts present a different view for the management of the City's natural and physical resources. In particular, kaitiakitanga is a specific concept of resource management. By acknowledging ancestral relationships with the land and natural world, a basis can be constructed for addressing modern forms of cultural activities.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

- 12.2.10.1 Identify, define and protect sites and precincts of significance to tangata whenua and other Maori using methods acceptable to tangata whenua and other Maori.** *Refer to Chapter 21*

METHODS

- Rules
- Information

Particular features of the natural and cultural landscape hold significance for tangata whenua and other Maori. The identification of specific sites (such as wahi tapu/sacred sites and wahi tupuna/ancestral sites) and precincts will ensure that this significance is respected. For this reason sites of significance and precincts are listed and mapped within the Plan.

The environmental result will be that such sites and precincts are identified and protected from inappropriate development.

¹District Plan Change No.2 – Commercial Sex Activities, Courtenay Place

12.2.10.2 Enable a wide range of activities that relate to the needs and wishes of tangata whenua and other Maori, provided that physical and environmental conditions specified in the Plan are met.

METHOD

- Rules

The Central Area provisions facilitate a wide range of activities, including marae, papakainga/group housing and kohanga reo/language nests. The performance standards for the Central Area are not intended to act as barriers to such uses.

The environmental result of this policy will be that such uses establish if there is a need.

12.2.10.3 In considering resource consents, Council will take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

METHOD

- Rules (conditions on resource consent)

The principles that underlie the Treaty provide a basis for the management of natural and physical resources. These principles include having regard to consultation, partnership and a shared responsibility for decision making. Rules have been included in the Plan requiring consultation in specific situations.

The environmental result will be that developments show greater respect for Maori cultural values.

[OBJECTIVE

12.2.11 To ensure that the development of the Lambton Harbour Area, and its connections with the remainder of the city's Central Area, maintains and enhances the unique and special components and elements that make up the waterfront.

POLICIES

To achieve this objective, Council will:

12.2.11.1 Maintain and enhance the public environment of the Lambton Harbour Area by guiding the design of new open spaces and where there are buildings, ensuring that these are in sympathy with their associated public spaces.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- National Standard Access Design Criteria: NZ 4121:2001

The main focus of the Lambton Harbour Area is to reinforce its role as a primary open space on the waterfront. A series of different open spaces - some green some sheltered and some paved - that cater for diverse uses and activities will predominate.

Furthermore, there will be a network of paths through the area, including a promenade along the length of the waterfront, predominantly at the water's edge. Buildings will support the open spaces, both in their design and their associated uses and activities. The ground floors of buildings will be predominantly accessible to the public and buildings will have "active edges". Particular consideration will be given to providing for equitable access to the water's edge and all other facilities on the waterfront by older people and all others with mobility restrictions.

12.2.11.2 Ensure that a range of public open spaces, public walkways and through routes for pedestrians and cyclists and opportunities for people, including people with mobility restrictions, to gain access to and from the water are provided and maintained.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)

Substantial and varied areas of open space near and adjacent to the water are important to ensure that uninterrupted public access to the water's edge is maintained and enhanced. Some water-based activities (such as rowing) require vehicular access and short term parking. There will be a public walkway/promenade along the length of the waterfront, predominantly at the water's edge. A series of different open spaces that cater for diverse uses and activities will predominate. In addition to Frank Kitts Park there will be a second large green open space at Chaffers.

12.2.11.3 Encourage the enhancement of the overall public and environmental quality and general amenity of the Lambton Harbour Area.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides (The Wellington Waterfront framework)
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Advocacy
- Regional Coastal Plan

The fundamental aim of future development in the Lambton Harbour Area is the achievement of a high quality public environment that provides and supports a range of public spaces and opportunities for vibrant activities, exciting uses and imaginative developments, which in turn encourage an improvement of the amenities of the waterfront for use and enjoyment by the public.

12.2.11.4 Maintain and enhance the heritage values associated with the waterfront.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Advocacy
- Conservation Plans

Heritage and the history of the waterfront are important parts of the identity of the waterfront. There is a range of aspects to the pre and post-colonial history of the waterfront, including maritime, social and economic aspects, and all these stories need to be told.

Heritage buildings are an important aspect of the history of the waterfront and should be restored and reused. Heritage buildings are an important aspect of the history of the waterfront and should be restored and reused under the guidance of a Conservation Plan.

12.2.11.5 Recognise and provide for developments and activities that reinforce the importance of the waterfront's Maori history and cultural heritage.

METHODS

- Design Guides (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Information and advocacy

Maori cultural heritage will have a strong presence on the waterfront and play a key role in identifying the special and unique role that the waterfront has to play in the city. Also refer Objective 12.2.10 and associated policies.

12.2.11.6 Provide for new development which adds to the waterfront character and quality of design within the area and acknowledges relationships between the city and the sea.

METHODS

- Rules
- Design Guides (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)

The waterfront is somewhere to live, work and play. The waterfront will meet the needs of a diverse range of people. There will be an allowance for recreational, cultural and civic uses, and also an allowance for some commercial development. Any development should be of a high quality. Any new buildings will be generally complementary, and in a scale appropriate to, the existing buildings around them. In the North Queens Wharf area buildings will be in scale with heritage buildings.

12.2.11.7 Maintain and enhance the Lambton Harbour Area as an integral part of the working port of Wellington.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)

Parts of the Lambton Harbour Area remain a working port and the area draws much of its character and present activity from port related functions, structures and open space. These functions, including the use of wharves by cruise ships, fishing boats, pleasure boats and other vessels, will be encouraged to continue. Design which relates to the maritime location and port functions will also be encouraged.

12.2.11.8 To provide for and facilitate public involvement in the waterfront planning process.

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)

The waterfront is predominantly a public area, a place owned by all Wellingtonians.

Governance arrangements for the waterfront include a broadly based group consisting of both professional and community representatives. This group will have primary responsibility for the on-going planning and development of the waterfront, as well as responsibility for monitoring all proposed developments. The group will actively engage the public in waterfront decision-making.

Thus, the public will be consulted on the development of plans for the waterfront (Stage 2 of the waterfront planning process) and enabled to participate through the statutory planning process about any proposed new buildings and any significant changes to existing buildings.

12.2.11.9 Encourage and provide for consistency in the administration of resource management matters across the line of mean high water springs (MHWS).

METHODS

- Rules
- Operational activities (The Wellington Waterfront Framework)
- Other mechanisms (New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, Regional Policy Statement, Regional Coastal Plan)

Parts of the waterfront that are below mean high water springs (such as the Outer Tee at Queens Wharf and the Overseas Passenger Terminal) are administered by Greater Wellington – The Regional Council. These areas fall within the jurisdiction of the Regional Coastal Plan for the Wellington Region.

Both the Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington - The Regional Council are committed to working closely together to ensure consistency in administration of the coastal edge.

Policy 4.2.46 of the Regional Coastal Plan signals Greater Wellington - The Regional Council's intention to align the provisions of the Regional Coastal Plan with those of the District Plan. This policy reads:

“To vary or change the Plan, if necessary, as soon as practicable after the Wellington City District Plan becomes operative, to align rules in the Lambton Harbour Area (for activities and structures on wharves on the seaward side of the coastal maritime area boundary) with the rules in Wellington City Council's District Plan for the Lambton Harbour Development Area (for activities and structures on the landward side of the coastal marine area boundary)”.

In explanation of this Regional Coastal Plan policy Greater Wellington – The Regional Council has stated that:

“The Lambton Harbour Development Area has special characteristics that need to be recognised and provided for in the Regional Coastal Plan. At the time of writing the Plan and Committee deliberations, the provisions of the Wellington City District Plan for the Lambton Harbour Development Area were subject to alteration through submission, decision making and appeal process. In order to establish a consistent set of provisions across the line of mean high water springs within the Lambton Harbour Development Area, Greater Wellington - The Regional Council will undertake a variation/change to the Coastal Plan to align the provisions of the coastal plan with those developed by the City Council for the landward side of the coastal marine area boundary. This will achieve a consistent set of provisions for the Lambton Harbour Development Area”.¹

¹Variation 22 – Lambton Harbour Area (Operative 27 July 2004)