

3.4 Natural character, form and function

Objective O17

The natural character of the coastal marine area, rivers, lakes and their margins and **natural wetlands** is preserved and protected from inappropriate use and development.

Objectives 17A, B and C (Conjunctive with 17)

Avoid adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal environment, in rivers, lakes and their margins and in natural wetlands with outstanding natural character.

Avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment and in rivers, lakes and their margins and in natural wetlands.

Areas of the coastal environment and rivers, lakes and their margins, and natural wetlands with high natural character (including areas which are outstanding) are shown on the planning maps.

Objective O18

The ecological, recreational, **mana whenua**, and amenity values of estuaries including their sensitivity as **low energy receiving environments** are recognised, and their health and function is restored over time.

~~Objective O19~~

~~The interference from use and development on **natural processes** is minimised.~~

Policies:

4.4.2 Natural Character

Policy P24: Outstanding natural character

Areas of outstanding natural character in the coastal marine area will be preserved by:

- (a) avoiding adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal marine area with outstanding natural character, and
- (b) requiring use and development to be of a type, scale and intensity that will maintain the natural character values of the area, and
- (c) requiring built elements to be subservient to the dominance of the characteristics and qualities that make up the natural character values of the area, and
- (d) maintaining the high levels of naturalness of these areas, and
- (e) avoiding the adverse effects of activities, including those located outside the area, that individually or cumulatively detract from the natural character values of the outstanding natural character area.

Policy P25: Natural character

Use and development shall avoid significant adverse effects on natural character in the coastal marine area ~~(including high natural character in the coastal marine area)~~ and ~~in the beds~~ of lakes and rivers and natural wetlands, and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities, taking into account:

- (a) the extent of human-made changes to landforms, vegetation, biophysical elements, **natural processes** and patterns, and the movement of water, and
- (b) the presence or absence of structures and buildings, and
- (c) the particular elements, features and experiential values that contribute significantly to the natural character value of the area, and the extent to which they are affected, and
- (d) alternative locations, design or form of development that have less adverse effects, and
- ~~(e)~~ the extent to which the activity is an existing use that has a functional need or operational requirement to be located in the coastal marine area that limits location and development options, and
- ~~(f)~~ the extent to which the activity has a functional need or operational requirement to be located in the coastal marine area that limits location and development options, and
- ~~(g)~~ the benefits associated with the use, operation, maintenance, upgrade or growth of existing regionally significant infrastructure and renewable energy generation activities, and
- ~~(e)(h)~~ the ecosystems, natural flow characteristics and hydrodynamic processes, and the natural pattern and range of water level fluctuations in natural wetlands, and river and lakes and their margins.

4.4.3 Natural processes

Policy P26: Natural processes

Use and development will be managed to minimise effects on the integrity and functioning of **natural processes**.