

13 RESIDENTIAL AND RURAL-RESIDENTIAL

13.1 RESOURCES, ACTIVITIES AND VALUES

Note: This chapter is subject to reference which affects the area zoned Rural-Residential at Bog Roy on Maps 7 and 9 and the area zoned Residential at Aviemore on Map 10. New objectives and policies affecting only this land could be introduced.

Housing is one of the most fundamental needs of the District's population. People's well-being is amongst other things a reflection of their quality of housing and general living environment. Approximately two thirds of the District's population live in an urban residential environment. Oamaru as the District's principal settlement, accounts for over 50% of the population or 12,686 persons in 1991 (See Table 1 - below). The other settlements having a predominantly residential, rather than semi-rural form, are Weston, Palmerston, Omarama, Otematata and Kurow.

Waitaki District generally exhibits population trends typical of the rural Districts nationally. That is, the average household unit is becoming smaller, moving towards 2.4 persons per household. This reduction in the number of people per household is particularly evident in the urban areas. This has resulted in further residential building activity (and subsequently an increase in the number of occupied dwellings) concurrent with an ageing and slightly declining population (See Table 1).

	Population (usually resident)				Occupied Dwellings			
	1986	1991	1996	% Change (1986-96)	1986	1991	1996	% Change (1986-96)
Oamaru*	13,215	12,745	12,686	-4.2	4,885	5,054	5,064	3.5
Weston	754	692	731	-3.2	236	239	260	9.2
Palmerston	841	883	905	7.1	336	364	360	6.7
Other	6811	6814	6520	-4.5	2,534	2,690	2,864	11.5
Total	21,621	21,134	20,842	-3.7	7,991	8,347	8,548	6.5

Source: 1996 Census of Population and Dwellings.

* includes Pukeuri, Ardgowan, Cape Wanbrow, Oamaru North, Orana Park, Oamaru Central, Oamaru South

There has also been an upsurge of demand for rural-residential blocks, particularly around Oamaru and Weston. This has been a nation-wide trend due to a desire by some people to live in a rural environment without necessarily having any employment connection with that country area.

While some of these people will choose to make some productive use of the land others will simply use the land for residential purposes. The amount of land required for rural-residential living will depend on a variety of factors including the desire for privacy and isolation, the extent of production from the land, the use of the land for recreation e.g. horse grazing, and the ability of the land to dispose of effluent within the site.

Concentrated residential activity or suburban housing, or housing in rural-residential blocks, does not evolve independent of other economic or social forces. Rather there is a close relationship between residential development and sources of employment. Similarly people

may seek a suburban or rural-residential property in times of retirement or schooling, to be close to social and community facilities or services. The size and characteristics of any urban residential environment is therefore a reflection of the wider elements, including the demographics of the settlement or rural surrounds.

13.2 ISSUES - Introduction

Enabling people to provide for their residential needs within the District is a one of the Council's functions under the Resource Management Act 1991. The purpose of the Act is the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, which includes enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well being and for their health and safety" (Section 5). This can only be achieved within a framework that adequately addresses the needs of present and future generations, the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems, and the adverse environmental effects of activities.

Meeting the residential needs of the District's urban population can largely be accommodated within existing settlements and their surrounds, that is those areas where employment, infrastructure and other services are essentially already established. However, the Council recognises that there is a demand for residential living within rural areas by people wishing to enjoy the quietness and natural environment of the countryside. These needs must also be able to be met. In deciding how to best meet the living environment needs of the residents of the District, the Council must have particular regard to several other matters of relevance under Section 7 of the Act:

- the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources
- the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values
- the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.

These issues are considered below.

13.3 ISSUE 1 - Availability of Land for Residential Activities

Demand for land for residential and rural-residential use that can compromise the sustainable management of resources, including existing services, and threaten lives and property.

13.3.1 Explanation

Although generally subject to population decline, the need for further land for residential purposes arises with the continuing growth in new housing stock and a changing preference of some people for a very low density alternative to suburban living.

In Oamaru there is a demand for new housing subdivisions. The majority of these subdivisions in recent years have been on hill sites to the south of Oamaru and off Essex Street in Weston. In both Oamaru and Weston, the demand for very low density rural-residential living has created a demand for additional land for this activity. There are, however, a number of constraints to making land available for residential or rural-residential activity in around Oamaru and Weston. In making land available for residential and rural-residential use, the Council must balance the need for and direction of urban expansion against a statutory requirement promoting the sustainable management of the locality's resources. This includes the following important considerations:

- continuing productive use of versatile and productive land;
- population can be close to existing employment, services, commercial and community facilities to limit transportation and energy use;
- proximity of existing serviced development that can use existing urban infrastructure, such as water supply and sewage disposal systems;
- ensuring lives and property are not placed at risk from natural hazards.

Productive Land - Oamaru is surrounded by large areas of land that contain soils which are capable of being used intensively to produce a wide variety of plants. These soils are called "high class" soils and were identified as part of a recent study commissioned by the Otago Regional Council to determine the extent of such soils in the Otago region. The present, and probably the future, welfare of the residents of the District is principally reliant on primary production. Subdivision and use of high class soils for residential use would result in them being covered by buildings, hard-standing and other unproductive investment, making their long-term productive use most unlikely and preventing them from being able to meet the needs of future generations for primary production.

Energy - For reasons of energy conservation, it is prudent to enable people's place of residence to be within as short a distance as possible from their workplace, shopping facilities, schools and other social or community facilities. This enables people to limit the time and distance travelled by motor vehicle and thus potentially constrains the use of fossil fuels. The proximity of inter-related uses also gives rise to the possibility of shared or public transport systems that limit the demand for fossil fuels and reduce the need for extra vehicles on the roads. Oamaru is the principal employment, business, educational and social centre for the District. Concentration of additional residential activity in close proximity to this town and intensification of residential activity within the town, provide the most efficient means of energy conservation. Unfortunately no vacant areas of land suitable for residential development other than on a very small scale exist close to the town centre with all of the areas set aside for future residential development in Oamaru and Weston being on the fringe of or outside Oamaru.

Servicing - The zoning of the previous District Plans provided for further residential development within and on the periphery of Palmerston, Omarama, Otematata and Kurow, provided they could be adequately serviced by existing public systems. The availability of servicing has been taken into account for additional land which has been provided for residential development around Oamaru and Weston. It is expected on the basis of current growth rates that servicing residential areas would be sufficient for the next ten years, however, if that was not the case the Council could consider any requests for further residential development or zoning either by way of resource consent or a request for a Plan Change.

Neighbouring Activities - The extent or direction of future growth of Oamaru and Weston must take into account potential conflicts with nearby activities. The surrounding rural areas are used for a range of activities, with some, such as piggeries, airfields or meat works, having the potential to cause unacceptable adverse effect of noise, smell or dust, for example, if located too close to residential properties. There is a need to protect not only the amenity of future residential areas from the adverse effects of these activities, but also the rights of farmers and other rural landowners to use their land in a manner provided for by the District Plan without the threat of complaint likely with closer settlement.

Natural Hazards - Flooding is a problem in the area to the north-east of Palmerston and in an area of Kurow and Omarama.

13.3.2 Objective 1

Sufficient land in a diversity of localities to enable the residential needs of the District's present and future urban populations to be met, subject to the various constraints imposed by the natural and physical environment.

13.3.3 Policies

- 1 *To maintain clear distinctions between the urban and rural areas by way of zoning, in order to assist in protecting the quality and character of the surrounding rural environment.*
- 2 *To provide for rural-residential development around Oamaru, Weston, Omarama, Otematata and Kurow within defined Residential and Rural-Residential Zones, providing the impacts of natural hazards, loss of amenity and the loss of productive soils are, where possible, avoided or mitigated and to ensure there is adequate means to supply water and dispose of effluent.*
- 3 *To confine the Residential Zoning within Oamaru, Weston, Palmerston, Omarama, Otematata and Kurow to those areas of the towns which are, or are likely to be, provided with infrastructural services of formed and sealed roading, footpaths, reticulated water supply and sewage treatment and disposal.*
- 4 *In assessing the future residential needs of the District, should pressures arise in respect of its urban environments, to have regard to:*
 - *efficient use of public utility networks, including roads, sewerage and water;*
 - *proximity to community and employment facilities, and the implications for energy efficiency;*
 - *compatibility with existing uses, such as industrial activities, piggeries and poultry farms, and recreational facilities;*
 - *avoidance or mitigation of significant risk from natural hazards;*
 - *avoidance of the loss of High Class Soils, unless this is outweighed by the protection of other resources;*
 - *maintenance of the visual amenity and character of the surrounding rural environment;*
 - *effects of proposed natural hazard mitigation measures.*

13.3.4 Explanation and Reasons

The main concern for Council in accommodating future residential growth is the impact on natural and physical resources. Indirectly there is a need to provide certainty and direction for persons buying into and developing property. In view of the nature and intensity of urban housing, the Council believes these matters are best addressed by way of zoning land for residential and rural-residential purposes and to otherwise introduce methods to control the extent of non-residential activities and adverse environmental effects that may result with development.

The policies recognise the existing level of development, services and infrastructure of the District's six main settlements. There is generally opportunity for greater use of these resources and accordingly the policy seeks to encourage consolidation or infill of these residential areas.

Should there be a need for further residential land in Oamaru and Weston, in addition to initiatives for redevelopment and infill, developers must consider matters such as flood risk, versatility of soils and efficient use of public services. In relation to services, the Council sees a need for the efficient long-term management of existing facilities. In the absence of an area suitable in all respects, some trade off was required. The area of land between Reservoir Road and Frome Street contains soil of medium quality (being Class III land, New Zealand Land Resource Inventory) and therefore has some limitations for arable or horticultural use. The Council has therefore chosen to set this land aside for residential activity, but because of its slope, an engineering certificate is required verifying that a building can be safely located on a site prior to development. The amenity is attractive for residential development, in part, due to the views afforded from many aspects. The area between Weston Road and the Ngapara Railway is considered a suitable area for a modest extension for residential activity. Existing homes on residential sized sections are to be recognised with a residential zoning along Maudes Road as they are unsuitable for the establishment of rural activities.

Similar principles apply in respect of the District's rural-residential areas. These are largely undeveloped with the exception of the Oamaru and Weston areas. The Council will provide for the consolidation of these areas in addition to making available further land for rural-residential development at Oamaru and Weston, where justified by local demand and existing development

Council realises that there may be unforeseen changes in population trends or predictions, and accordingly residential needs. In the event of Changes to the Plan to cater for such growth, Policy 5 for Issue 1 (see 8.2.3 (5), page 52) gives important considerations which must be addressed in any proposal.

13.4 ISSUE 2 - Urban Form

The form of development of an urban area can affect the potential for energy conservation, the convenience and accessibility of services and facilities to residents, and the visual and general amenity of the town.

13.4.1 Explanation

Urban form essentially relates to the spatial pattern of a settlement and the way in which it uses its resources. It determines the character and scale of the urban environment.

There is a growing trend in New Zealand towards infill housing and redevelopment, both in the form of new houses on vacant parts of sections within the already built-up area or redeveloping sites with the building of multi-unit flats and apartments. Reasons for this trend include a desire to live closer to the centre of a town, the desire for a smaller section requiring less maintenance, and a move towards grouped housing developments, such as retirement villages.

As outlined above, the philosophy of sustainable management incorporates energy conservation. The motor car has become an integral part of everyday life particularly in the urban environment. Sustainable management of fossil fuels requires a compact urban form, or spatial pattern, achieved in part through higher densities of residential development and containing the dispersal of housing. In relation to any settlement this can be achieved by promoting the consolidation of development within a clearly defined urban boundary. This also serves to increase the convenience and accessibility of urban services and

facilities to residents, particularly those without vehicle transport. The retention of rural areas around the urban environment also provides for safer, more efficient functioning of roads, particularly along arterial roads.

In Oamaru most infill housing has occurred on the flat to the north of the town centre in the Orana Park area. This development is mostly higher density flats and townhouses. A demand may also develop in the main towns of the Waitaki District for residential intensification, and infill, of areas on the periphery of the town centre. The service industry areas in Oamaru to the west of Thames and Severn Street and near the railway line is one such example. If these areas are not required by service activities, or if these activities are controlled in a way which limits any adverse impact on adjoining uses, then it may be appropriate to permit residential development in these areas making the need for to use a car to travel to town centre unnecessary.

13.4.2 Objectives 2 (a) & (b)

- a A compact urban form that is readily distinguished from the rural environment and promotes the efficient use of fossil fuels, existing services and infrastructure.**
- b The central commercial areas within the District's settlements being the main focus of economic and community activity in the urban context, with the concentration of residential activity being related to these.**

13.4.3 Policies

- 1 To promote compact urban areas and efficient use of energy, services and infrastructure by containing the outward spread of urban areas and concentrating rural-residential development around the urban areas.*
- 2 To promote the concentration of residential and rural-residential activity in and around urban areas, as opposed to enabling residential activity to be dispersed throughout the rural areas, in order to encourage the use of shared transport and maintain the potential for public transport.*

13.4.4 Explanation and Reasons

Urban form is a key factor influencing the magnitude of energy consumption and the efficient use of existing resources, including land and infrastructure. The policy is aimed at consolidating the urban form, with residential activity related to and readily accessible to a central commercial area. The Council considers this policy will be the most effective in stemming the increased use of private motor vehicles. It will have a simultaneous effect on the efficient use of existing resources and infrastructure, while catering for the residential needs of the District's urban population.

Rural-residential areas may in time provide a logical growth sequence for urban areas. With this in mind the Council will promote such areas adjoining the main towns, on land of suitability for future higher density housing if necessary.

13.5 ISSUE 3 - Diverse Living Environments

Satisfy a demand for diversity in living environments.

13.5.1 Explanation

People have different housing needs and lifestyle preferences in terms of cost, location, design, size and style of housing. The needs of residents are wide ranging and changing, and may include detached dwellings, rental accommodation, boarding houses, family flats and elderly persons housing. The rural-residential area provides a very low density alternative to the predominant suburban residential environment. The Plan must recognise and provide for the diversity in living environment sought by the District's residents, whilst still maintaining the quality of environment valued by residents.

13.5.2 Objective 3

A diverse range of living environments expressed in built form, density of development and housing types.

13.5.3 Policies

- 1 *To enable a mixture of housing and lifestyles in urban areas by avoiding the distinction between, and restrictions on, various residential types.*
- 2 *To provide for low to medium density development residential housing to satisfy the needs of the community while restricting building coverage to ensure open space and planting maintains the character and amenity of the residential neighbourhood.*
- 3 *To enable the establishment of certain non-residential uses, such as home occupations, as an integral component of different living environments.*
- 4 *To encourage individual and community expression in building design whilst protecting the residential amenities of neighbours.*
- 5 *In promoting low to medium density development as the predominant residential character, to require family flats be relocatable so they can be removed when no longer required by a dependent relative.*
- 6 *To distinguish between the District's smaller townships and the larger towns, recognising that these offer an alternative living environment from that of the residential areas in the larger towns.*

13.5.4 Explanation and Reasons

The housing needs and lifestyle preferences of the District's population differs according to influences such as an individual's stage in life and socio-economic factors. While detached family homes may be the predominant residential property, they are not representative of the needs of the community as a whole, in particular the elderly or retired, disabled, or single person. The Plan must recognise and provide for diversity in living environments consistent with these needs, while ensuring the overall character and amenity of the residential neighbourhood is maintained.

Policy 1 expresses Council's intention to consider residential development generically, without distinction between the various types of housing. This is based on a belief that the difference in impact of various types of housing is insignificant in the context of any living environment. Only in exceptional circumstances will standards be imposed in respect of

specific residential activities where potentially adverse effects of development have been identified.

The policies address matters which may influence and contribute to variation between living environments. In particular, the Residential Zone has a minimum subdivision allotment size of 300m² compared to 600m² and a minimum average lot size of 1000m² for the Residential 1 Zone. The latter zone recognises a lower density is appropriate in some areas to retain a higher level of amenity in terms of living area and spaciousness. The "family flat" is recognised as important in enabling residents to care for their relatives, particularly the elderly. However the Council will impose controls on such flats to avoid their future use as rental accommodation in a manner contrary to the existing residential amenity.

Townships and rural-residential environments are part of range of living environments within the District. The former will be addressed in greater detail in subsequent policy discussion.

13.6 ISSUE 4 - Amenity

The location, nature and design of buildings and activities within residential areas can result in adverse effects on the amenity of those areas.

13.6.1 Explanation

People's perception of well-being is enhanced by a coherent and pleasant living environment. This is often a reflection of the existing character of their living areas. Components of this character are the location and scale of open space, density of residential development generally and within sites, height of buildings and dominant building styles. Most of these components lead to a general appreciation of an area, while others relate to the development of individual sites. The way individual sites are developed and their relationship to adjoining sites are important factors in ensuring that residential properties have adequate access to sunlight, daylight and privacy and a feeling of not being closed in or overlooked. In controlling these matters, however, the desirability of allowing reasonable individual flexibility in siting, layout and building design must be acknowledged, including the need to maximise the benefits from good access to solar energy.

Residential areas have always contained a range of complementary non-residential activities relating to the educational, spiritual, social, recreational and day-to-day economic needs of the residents. Many of these require a residential location because of the local service they provide to residents, such as doctors' surgeries and pre-schools. Some of these activities can have a significant impact when they involve the generation of significant traffic and on-street parking, such as occurs with some churches, sports clubrooms and schools. In addition, the activity itself may give rise to noise or glare, particularly from the use of outside areas, which causes annoyance to neighbours. It is an issue, therefore, to ensure compatibility between residential and non-residential activities if the standard of pleasantness and amenity in these areas is to be maintained at an acceptable level.

The operation of business activities based in homes, commonly called "home occupations," provides residents with a source of employment with many social and economic advantages, but which can cause problems in residential areas. The range of home occupations and their character and scale vary considerably. Like other non-residential activities, it is often the traffic-generating and noise aspects of these activities which is of concern. The likely rate at which traffic is drawn to a site often relates to the scale of service provided and the extent of retailing involved.

The issues relating to rural-residential use are in part those of residential use previously discussed. For example, rural-residential dwellers are often considered to be more sensitive to noise, odour, and chemical drift than their rural neighbours. These matters are

discussed in detail in Part II, Chapter 16 Rural Issues, Objectives and Policies. For these reasons, all new intensive farming operations will require a resource consent. However, other matters such as shadowing, privacy, building coverage are usually not so much of a concern.

13.6.2 Objectives 4 (a) & (b)

- a The location of appropriate activities within residential or rural-residential areas which benefit local communities or constitute an appropriate interim use of residential land, but do not detract from the amenities of the area.**
- b Individual and community expression in built form, while otherwise controlling development in order to achieve a pleasant residential or rural-residential environment.**

13.6.3 Policies

- 1 To enable the continued use of land for some types of farming which are compatible with residential activity.*
- 2 To enable the establishment of certain non-residential activities in residential and rural-residential areas, in circumstances where, for example:*
 - a local need is demonstrated;*
 - the predominant use of the site remains residential; or*
 - the activity is compatible in terms of its potential effects on those of a residential nature;*
- 3 To limit the use of land for only certain types of livestock for domestic purposes and horticulture for domestic purposes in the residential zone, and to limit pigs and poultry only for domestic purposes in the rural residential zone; in order to avoid the potential for conflict between these activities and the level of amenity or character sought by these zones.*
- 4 To ensure the design and siting of development - building height, building coverage, recession lines and setbacks, provision of outdoor living and service areas - is such that:*
 - development will not unreasonably deny neighbouring properties of privacy, outlook, sunlight or daylight;*
 - ample on-site provision of outdoor living space oriented to the sun;*
 - an open and attractive street scene; and*
 - maintenance of a character and scale of buildings and open space which is compatible with the anticipated residential environment.*
- 5 To ensure an essentially low density, low scale residential environment within the District's settlements, with a dominance of open space and planting over buildings, in order to retain the pleasantness and amenity of the residential areas.*
- 6 To limit traffic in residential areas, for the convenience and safety of residents and visitors and to maintain the amenity of residential streets.*
- 7 To ensure all activities meet standards in respect of noise and glare measured at or within the property boundary, the level of such standards being that which will not compromise the qualities of the residential or rural-residential environment generally.*

- 8 *To limit aspects of development, for example retail sales, the keeping of animals, hours of operation or storage of hazardous substances, where these are inappropriate for a residential neighbourhood in terms of noise, glare, odour, loss of privacy and security, hazards and visual amenity.*
- 9 *To avoid the establishment in residential areas of non-residential activities which, for reason of their nature or specific aspects of their operation, will detract from the residential character and amenity of the locality.*
- 10 *To encourage the incorporation of public open space and plantings within subdivision design for amenity purposes.*
- 11 *In assessing resource consent applications, to avoid or mitigate development which would detract from the predominant character, scale and amenity of the particular residential or rural-residential environment*

13.6.4 Explanation and Reasons

The quality, harmony and coherence of elements within the urban context are important in the evolution of settlements as pleasant places in which to live, work, play or visit. These attributes are broadly referred to as "amenity values", natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of it. An enhanced residential amenity will have a positive effect on the community's perception of well-being.

These objectives and policies are designed to allow for activities appropriate to a residential or rural-residential environment, but otherwise control land uses which may detract from such amenity. Residential activities are considered to be the predominant land use and will be permitted as of right. The Council does not want to stifle design creativity and individuality in buildings, but will enforce a range of development standards intended to avoid the adverse effects of activities in residential and rural-residential areas.

The standards cover such matters as building setback, height and coverage, residential density, outdoor living and service spaces, parking and access, outdoor activities, retail sales and noxious or nuisance elements, including noise, hazardous substances and animal nuisance. They have been set at a level which reflects and will enhance the existing or proposed residential amenity. Activities that cannot meet these standards will have to obtain as resource consent from the Council, at which time the merits and consequences of such use in a residential or rural-residential neighbourhood will be assessed.

13.7 IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

To achieve the policies through:

- 1 the provision of Residential and Rural-Residential Zones and rules to control the use, development and subdivision of land in those zones.
- 2 appropriate local traffic and street improvements;
- 3 maintenance and where appropriate the upgrading of public open space;
- 4 where appropriate the retaining of significant street trees;
- 5 maintenance and where appropriate, improvement of reticulated sewage, water supply and stormwater services.

- 6 liaison with service authorities to encourage an on-going programme of installation of underground wiring in towns.
- 7 The provision of Rules and Standards to avoid or mitigate against the adverse of natural hazards.

13.8 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED

- 1 Retention of the predominant character and scale of development within and around the District's settlements.
- 2 A compact and coherent urban form which recognises the need to achieve:
 - protection of good quality land on the urban fringe;
 - a well-defined edge between urban and rural activities;
 - residential accommodation close to employment and social services;
 - energy efficiency;
 - protection of property and lives from the effects of natural hazards;
 - efficiency in the provision of public infrastructure.
- 3 Residential coherence, except in circumstances of established activities or where a local need prevails for activities ancillary to the surrounding living environment.
- 4 Diversity in housing and lifestyle types, to meet a range of community needs.
- 5 A high degree of residential and rural-residential amenity, expressed by way of:
 - dominance of open space and plantings over buildings
 - limited high density housing
 - a safe and efficient residential transport network
 - compatibility between activities, with the dominance being residential use.
- 6 Diversity in built form, providing for individual and community expression, but while achieving a reasonable degree of coherence in urban character.
- 7 Maintenance of water quality and availability for urban and rural-residential use particularly where reticulated sewage disposal is not available.