



## Natural Character (NATC)

### What are the key issues we need to think about?

The Natural Character chapter applies to activities that take place on riparian margins. Riparian margins often have a high level of natural character and provide important habitats for plants and wildlife.

New development and structures can detract from the natural character of riparian margins.

Earthworks or the removal of indigenous vegetation from riparian margins can damage natural character, water quality, habitats, erosion and flood protection.

### What are we suggesting in the Draft District Plan?

Riparian margins are defined as land within 20m (in the General Rural Zone) or 10m (in other zones) of the bed of a river or lake, or the edge of a wetland.

The provisions included in this chapter seek to protect riparian margins from inappropriate activities that could adversely affect their natural character.

The key objective of this chapter is to preserve the natural character of the district's riparian margins and avoid subdivision and development within them. There is also an emphasis on restoring and enhancing degraded riparian margins.



### What does it mean for me?

*Any lawfully established existing businesses or activities would have what is referred to as 'existing use rights' and could continue to operate unchanged.*

Activities such as new buildings or vegetation clearance undertaken in riparian margins would require a resource consent if they were not carried out by Councils or do not meet certain standards. Vegetation clearance for the repair and maintenance of existing and lawfully established tracks, yards, irrigation infrastructure, fences etc would not need a resource consent.

Planting indigenous vegetation which preserves legal access to the river, lake, or wetland would be a permitted activity. All other activities would require a resource consent.

### Key changes from the current rules

- This is a new chapter in the District Plan
- The new provisions would allow for some activities such as parks furniture, post and wire fences and hazard mitigation activities on riparian margins to take place without needing a resource consent.

## Find out more

You can view the full draft chapter on our website

visit [www.waitaki.govt.nz/district-plan-review](http://www.waitaki.govt.nz/district-plan-review)

or scan for  
more info



### More questions?

If you have any further questions that aren't covered in this document, or on our website, you can email the Planning Team at [planreview@waitaki.govt.nz](mailto:planreview@waitaki.govt.nz) or call the District Plan Review hotline on 03 433 1661 and leave a message.

## Summary of key rules

### Permitted Activities that would not require a resource consent:

- Park furniture constructed by a Council in a riparian margin in the Open Space and Recreation Zone where it complies with standards.
- Flood or erosion management structures constructed by a Council, or post and wire fences within a riparian margin.
- Earthworks undertaken by a Council within a riparian margin where they comply with standards and conditions. Vegetation clearance undertaken by a Council within a riparian margin where it complies with standards and conditions.
- Planting indigenous vegetation within riparian margins where the planting preserves legal access to the river, lake, or wetland.
- Planting exotic vegetation by a Council within riparian margins where it complies with conditions.

### Activities that would require a resource consent:

- Any activity in a riparian margin that does not meet the permitted activity requirements

### Prohibited activities:

- Planting of any identified pest species.

