

## **Activity Planning -2012-2022 Ten Year Plan Safeguarding the Environment - Natural and Cultural Heritage**

### **The main matter that the Council is being asked to consider is....**

- Whether or not to increase the levels of service for the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity.

### **1. Council direction**

The direction provided to staff by the Council in December 2010 was to:

- Retain existing levels of service
- Continued facilitator role
- Proactive role in trust fund establishment
- Proposes some rules around where the Council would provide funding assistance and why. Picking up on work done to date in the Heritage and Biodiversity strategies.

### **2. What the activity does**

This activity is about coordinating the Council's approach to heritage and biodiversity, including coordination of partnerships with heritage and biodiversity organisations as well as involvement with other Council activities such as parks and reserves and cemeteries.

Council also owns heritage buildings which need to be cared for.

### **3. What the legislations says**

The Resource Management Act 1991 is the principle legislative document regarding heritage management. It states that local authorities have the statutory responsibility to recognise and provide for the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development in the context of sustainable management. Local Authorities must give effect to s.6 (e) RMA for Maori Heritage sites, and s.6 (f) which requires protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Furthermore, under the Act, both regional and territorial local authorities are required to, as a 'matter of national importance', recognise and provide for "*the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna*".

### **4. Proposed activity objective**

The proposed activity objective for the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity is:

*To promote the protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of the Coromandel Peninsula.*

NB: this is unchanged from the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan.

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**5. How this activity currently would contribute to the Council Outcomes**

The activity will contribute to the achievement of the Council Outcomes as follows:

Council Outcome	The Natural and Cultural Heritage activity...
A prosperous district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps maximise economic opportunities (e.g. tourism) by showcasing the unique character of our district provided by our natural and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Co-ordinates and supports partnerships that promote and protect historic heritage</li> </ul>
A liveable district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes and values the district's historical and cultural heritage.</li> <li>• Respects local identities through 'place-making (heritage and special environment protection).</li> </ul>
A clean and green district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to the protection of our unique environment and natural ecosystems.</li> <li>• Coordinates and supports partnerships that protect natural heritage.</li> </ul>

The Blueprint places expectations on the Natural and Cultural Heritage Activity to advocate and develop partnerships, increase understanding and develop alternatives in a range of areas that protect the natural environment and enhance biodiversity.

**6. Things to be aware of**

- As at July 2009 there were 174 historic sites and historic areas registered with the Council's District Plan. There are 183 sites registered with the Historic Places Trust. On going promotion of the identification and registration of such building and sites should see these numbers increase.
- Conservation covenant monitoring and the provision of funding to the EnviroSchools education programmes is consistently enhancing landowner and community awareness around protecting and caring for our valuable biodiversity resources.
- At recent meetings of the District Plan Review Committee several Committee members raised the possibility of Council preparing non-statutory guidance and providing financial assistance (eg. to cover some of the cost of having to obtain resource consent, etc) to support and assist the owners of heritage buildings and natural heritage features in the management of their property.

**7. A word from our community....**

- The 2010 survey shows that "promoting local history and looking after historic buildings" sits at 3.12 out of 5, and is ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of the 27 activities surveyed. "Promoting the need to look after the District's biodiversity" sits at 3.55, and is ranked 21<sup>st</sup> out of the 27 activities surveyed. This activity remains a low priority activity, as determined by the community, when compared to other Council activities.
- Community support and acknowledgement of heritage sites and buildings is essential to ensure these features are available for the future. This support allows projects to proceed, community groups to continue heritage work and for the preservation of heritage to continue. *Snapshot 09* (a progress report on Choosing Futures) noted that 70% of residents believe that there is enough protection given to natural heritage sites, as well as 65% of residents thinking that the District does a good job of protecting and valuing the history of the area.

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### 8. Strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats

- A strength is that this activity aligns strongly with the Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint and the Council Outcomes.
- A strength is that this activity coordinates the Council's approach to heritage and biodiversity, which would otherwise not occur. A coordination role can cost little, but has the potential to achieve a lot.
- There is a risk that the current level of resourcing provided for this activity does not match the expectations around what this activity will achieve.

### 9. Proposed Levels of Service options

The proposed level of service options exist for the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity:

Level of service	Option 1: Maintain existing levels of service, with some efficiency gains	Option 2: Increased levels of service
<b>The Council works with others to protect heritage and biodiversity in our District</b>	<p>This activity provides for liaison with Environment Waikato and other agencies, facilitating the Heritage Hauraki Coromandel Forum.</p> <p>Funding is allocated to the Waikato Biodiveristy Forum and New Zealand Historic Places Trust.</p>	<p>Increasing this level of service to would mean increased liaison with Environment Waikato and other agencies, facilitating the Heritage Hauraki Coromandel Forum.</p> <p>Funding allocated to the Waikato Biodiveristy Forum and New Zealand Historic Places Trust could be increased.</p>
<b>The Council promotes landowner awareness and enhancement of heritage and biodiversity in our District</b>	<p>Presently the Council carries out this level of service in part through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conservation covenant development, monitoring and reporting</li> <li>- regulatory controls on protected trees and heritage buildings.</li> </ul> <p>Many Council owned heritage buildings are leased therefore there is a risk that adequate maintenance may not be carried out by the by those who hold the lease.</p> <p>The delivery of this existing level of service relies on reserve management plans to care for heritage and biodiversity on reserves.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to reduce expenditure by no longer deprecating some heritage buildings associated with this</p>	<p>There is an expectation from the community that private landowners will care for heritage and biodiversity on their properties for greater public good.</p> <p>This level of service could provide important guidance and support for landowners in this situation.</p> <p>Improved delivery of this level of service could include providing financial assistance and professional advice to landowners that have heritage buildings, protected trees. This would help balance the 'public good vs private burden' situation when requiring resource consent to alter heritage buildings/sites and care for protected trees</p> <p>Part of this level of service is that Council leads by example through maintenance and enhancement of Council owned heritage buildings, sites and areas of natural value.</p>

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Level of service	Option 1: Maintain existing levels of service, with some efficiency gains	Option 2: Increased levels of service
	activity, and by reducing maintenance, through ensuring that maintenance forms a stronger part of the lease arrangements going forward.	Educational information provided to landowners that have heritage buildings and protected trees could be provided annually (possibly alternating between trees and buildings each year).
<p><b>The Council provides funding for heritage and biodiversity initiatives in the District.</b></p>	<p>Council provides funding for some community projects/initiatives, similar to a contract for community service.</p> <p>Council actively supports the EnviroSchools Programme which educates primary school children about caring for the environment.</p> <p>Council provides funding to the Waikato Biodiversity Forum on an annual basis.</p>	<p><b>Option A: Funding more contracts for Community Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional funding could mean more initiatives are supported by Council.</li> <li>• Council's reputation may be enhanced by supporting heritage and biodiversity initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Option B: funding a heritage and biodiversity "trust fund"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council supports community initiatives through a dedicated fund.</li> <li>• Criteria about the distribution of trust funds would need to be developed.</li> <li>• Ongoing administration of a trust fund would require a dedicated resource (could be the activity manager or an external party).</li> <li>• There could be the expectation that the trust fund would be ongoing therefore would need to be funded consistently into the future. Council should consider the commitment that comes with a trust fund being established.</li> </ul>

**Option 3: Council does not provide this activity**

Council has the option to not provide this activity. Some heritage and biodiversity actions would get done through other Council activities, and Council owned heritage buildings would need to be taken care of by another activity. The organisation would lose the point of co-ordination for heritage and biodiversity activities if this were to be the case.

**10. How is this activity managed?**

This activity is implemented by TCDC staff.

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**11. What do we currently spend on this activity?**

As a proportion of the Council's annual budget for the 2011/2012 year, the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity represents approximately 0.19% of total spend.

<b>2011/2012 Draft Annual Plan</b>	
Operating Expenditure (excluding internal interest cost)	\$0.19m
Capital Expenditure	n/a
<b>Total budgeted spend for Natural and Cultural Heritage for 2011/2012</b>	<b>\$0.19m</b>
Total Budgeted spend for Council for 2011/2012	\$100.97m
Total percentage of budget spent on Natural and Cultural Heritage	0.19%

<b>2009-2019 Ten Year Plan</b>	
Operating Expenditure (excluding internal interest cost)	\$1.87m
Capital Expenditure	n/a
<b>Total budgeted spend Natural and Cultural Heritage for 10 years</b>	<b>\$1.87m</b>
Total Budgeted spend for Council for 10 years	\$1,295.64m
Total percentage of budget spent on Natural and Cultural Heritage	0.14%

**12. How this activity is funded, and why.**

The Natural and Cultural Heritage activity is currently funded as follows:

*Funding rationale summary as outlined in the 2009-2019 Ten Year Plan*

It is considered that the public generally benefits from the community outcomes this activity strives to achieve.

*The funding mechanisms used for operating expenditure are:*

General Rates	UAGC	Targeted Rates	Fees & Charges	Grants & Subsidies
	80-100%			

*The funding mechanisms used for capital expenditure are:*

Develop. &/or Financial Contribution	Borrowing	Asset Sales	UAGC	Depreciation	General Rates	Targeted Rates	Fees & Charges	Grants & Subsidies	Lump Sum Contribution
	✓		✓	✓				✓	

Staff recommend no changes to the current funding policy for this activity.

**13. Staff recommendation**

- In light of the Council's direction to align the annual rates increase to CPI, with regards to the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity staff recommend Option 1, maintaining existing levels of service with some efficiency gains.
- Staff recommend no changes to the current funding policy for the Natural and Cultural Heritage activity.