



Information kit for the

# NEW

Thames-Coromandel  
District Plan



# Easy to use and understand

Start with your zone and the rest just falls into place.



Everything in the plan starts with the zone assigned to your property. If your zone was a cake, overlays would be the icing and sprinkles.

Use our new SMART Maps and start with your property to find your zone.

Once you've found your zone, look at the overlays to see if any other rules apply. The new District Plan. Like having your cake and eating it too.

## About the District Plan Hearings Panel



- The Hearings Panel was made up of independent commissioners Mark Farnsworth and Ian Munro, and Councillor Tony Fox.
- The District Plan Hearings Panel read the written submissions along with staff analysis. The District Plan Hearings Panel then listened to the submitters who spoke at the hearings.

### Numbers:

**1,233** original submitters

**271** further submitters  
(supporting or opposing original submissions)

**10,671** separate submission points  
(including further submission points)

- After considering the submissions, the Council removed the natural character topic and re-notified a different version with maps and rules more targeted to just the high and outstanding natural character areas in the coastal environment.

This generated: **667** original submission points

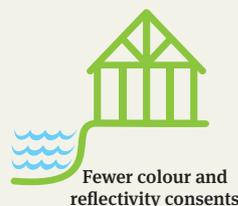
**1,107** further submission points

The District Plan Hearings Panel sat for 34 days over 12 meetings.

- The District Plan Hearings Panel says a few submitters let themselves down with low quality evidence. Some professionals speaking on behalf of submitters had not read the Council's Section 32 Evaluation Report, and did not offer good evidence or a proper planning assessment to support the submitters' requests, especially for rezoning requests.
- The District Plan must give effect to the objectives, policies and methods in the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). Many submitters wanted changes that would conflict with the RPS, especially for biodiversity and landscape rules. Council staff and the District Plan Hearings Panel were unable to support these requests.

## Cuts red tape

It's less hassle to build a granny flat (minor unit). You don't have to get a resource consent just for a house colour if you're in a coastal community. Smaller units or townhouses for singles, retirees and couples now have an easier resource consent status in the Residential Zone.



Noisy kids on a playground? No problem. Tractor early morning on the farm? Go for it. If it's a normal everyday noise for the zone, it's just common sense, now, isn't it?

# Promotes Economic Development

“We’ve worked hard to balance Council’s approach to reduce red tape in many areas to make it easier for people to develop their lives and businesses, and grow the Coromandel’s economy, while still protecting the areas with special values,” says the Hearings Panel.

## More permitted activities\*

- ✔ 29 controlled activities NOW PERMITTED
- ✔ 1 restricted discretionary activity NOW PERMITTED
- ✔ 9 discretionary activities NOW PERMITTED
- ✔ 2 non-complying activities NOW PERMITTED

\* As at December 2013 version



## Support for marine activities

The new Marine Service Zone allows for dynamic marine precincts: fish sales, kayak rentals, restaurants, apartments above ground floor, boat repairs, festivals, events and many other activities. Boat ramps, jetties and wharves are permitted in the Marine Service Zone, the Road Zone, the recreation area or the rural area.

Better for business? You bet.



## Festivals and events

The Coromandel is a great place to run events and we’ve made it easier by making events permitted activities, subject to standards that protect people’s day-to-day lives, and take care of our communities at the same time. Easier, less red tape, but also protecting what we value.



## Home businesses

You can still keep developing your business from home as long as you’re not annoying your neighbours. It’s one thing to have a thriving little hair-dressing business or painting studio in the back garden, but another thing entirely if you think: “I know, I’m going to open up a nightclub or a childcare centre in my basement in my quiet little residential street.”

Want to run a produce stall at your front gate without needing a resource consent? In the country and small coastal settlements, if you grow or produce your own fruit and veg or make your own crafty stuff from home, you now can do it without a resource consent, as long as it’s not on a State Highway.

Of course, if there’s nowhere for your customers to park without blocking up the street or you plan to build a giant marquee on the neighbouring paddock to go with your produce stall or things like that, you really need to check out the plan.

If your home business is a success and outgrows your home, and you think about doing more on your land, you might need a resource consent.

Whatever your goal, the new District Plan has you covered.

## Rural villages

Rural villages are recognised for what they are.



Rural villages are hubs for local rural communities; places like Colville, Hikutaia, Puriri, Coroglen, Matatoki, and Te Rerenga. These places are hubs for the local rural community. They have the community store, local pub, schools, halls, the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker. Instead of automatically requiring resource consents for these activities, these types of activities are now provided for as permitted activities subject to standards\* seeking to protect the amenity of these areas. We support local.

\*Of course, if these standards are not met then resource consent will be required.

## Holiday home and visitor accommodation

We’re sticking with what was in the previous District Plan, which allows for a maximum of six paying guests per property if zoning, parking and noise standards are met.



Does this mean you can’t have more than six of your family over for summer? No. This is only about when you charge more than six people a rental rate. You are welcome to have more than six of your family and friends stay over with you for summer, or even use the bach when you’re not there.

Many bach and holiday home owners were concerned about needing resource consents when they commercialised their holiday homes and advertised them as commercial accommodation. On the other hand more formal accommodation providers, such as motels and backpackers, said they wanted a level playing field with other commercial accommodation providers such as holiday home rentals, bed and breakfast, and small lodges.

The District Plan Hearings Panel heard no compelling evidence from either side to change this standard for visitor accommodation in the Plan.

# Special Values

The Coromandel has outstanding natural areas with unique character, heritage and biodiversity and these are some of the many reasons people come to live or visit here. We're protecting outstanding landscapes, and the natural character of our coastal environment, rivers and streams without stepping on the toes of private landowners. It's about working together to ensure that generations to come can enjoy what we have now.



**Biodiversity**



**Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes**



**Natural Character**



**Historic Heritage**



**Accurate hazard risk maps**

## No SNAs

Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) are not mapped in the plan. We manage biodiversity through native vegetation rules and subdivision incentives.

## Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes

These are the areas the Coromandel is especially famous for, like the Pinnacles and areas around Cathedral Cove and the Moehau ranges. These give the Coromandel a special wow factor, hence the term "outstanding." Of course, we have also made sure existing farming activities in these areas get to continue as they are.

## Natural Character

Natural character is different to natural features and landscapes. Natural character is only mapped within the coastal environment, and we have not included any areas with existing farming activities.

There are two levels of Natural Character mapped on our overlay planning maps:

- Outstanding Natural Character - these are natural areas that are largely unmodified (e.g. the land between Kennedy Bay and Wainuiototo Bay - also known as New Chum Beach).
- High Natural Character - these are natural areas with some degree of modification or development (e.g. the coastal fringe north of Hot Water Beach to Orua Bay).

## Planting and firewood

Some people have assumed we're not going to let them cut their own native wood (manuka and kanuka) for their personal winter firewood. Collecting this firewood for personal needs, such as firewood and traditional cooking, is a permitted activity. Harvesting native wood for other reasons, like for sale or for pastoral farming, will need resource consent.



The District Plan Hearings Panel says this is a good example where submitters showed the District Plan Hearings Panel how they are managing their environment well, and only taking what they need.

Indigenous planting and harvesting for erosion control, bee products, etc. are also permitted under the rules.

The new Thames-Coromandel District Plan - not trying to freeze you to death or leave your family out in the cold.

## Subdivision

In the Rural area, we have created more opportunity for subdivision which protects special values of the District for the public benefit.

On the other hand, the rural lot sizes have been tightened to encourage landowners to think about the special values of their property and protect these when creating additional lots.



## Coastal Erosion Lines v Coastal Environment



On our maps, Coastal Erosion lines are different to the Coastal Environment.

Marking the Coastal Environment on our maps is like marking out the parts of the Coromandel we call "coastal." How far past the sand is the Coromandel still called "coastal?" Undies, togs, undies, togs - where's the line? That's the line.

Coastal Erosion lines are only in some places where erosion could threaten things like housing and roads. A number of landowners and communities submitted on this topic, particularly at Te Puru, Matarangi, Buffalo Beach and Cooks Beach.

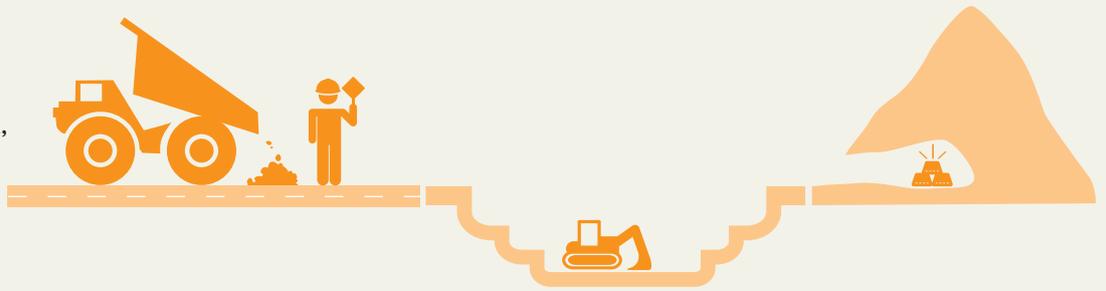
The District Plan Hearings Panel was required to follow the NZ Coastal Policy Statement and Waikato Regional Council's Regional

Policy Statement directions when considering Coastal Erosion Lines and rules, particularly about the consequences of projected sea level rise. The Ministry for the Environment guidelines require councils to consider the consequences of a 0.8 m sea level rise from 1990 to 2090, and 0.1 m rise per decade after that. The timeframes and coastline consequences of sea level rise are not always clear for each particular beach, so it is wise to limit intensification of these beachfront areas so future generations do not have higher costs when managing their own natural hazard risks.

The District Plan Hearings Panel says it was mindful of risk and liability on Council if it allows someone to build their house within those Coastal Erosion Lines.

# Mining

All kinds of mining are covered, from prospecting and exploration, to quarries for the stuff we use to make your roads, to more restrictive controls for the more intrusive types of mining.



If you're talking road chip for your street, or gravel for your drive, or the stuff we need to fix our roads after a storm, then yes, we have information about that type of mining. We call it quarrying.

- Existing quarries are identified on maps, to help limit nearby development that could oppose the legitimate use of the quarry. Quarries have an easier resource consent status than other surface mining activities because of the local economic benefits and less heavy metal contamination risks.
- The District Plan Hearings Panel recognised the significance of the Matatoki Quarry as the largest established quarry in the District with significant economic and social benefits through aggregate use.

What about getting metals like gold out of the Coromandel?

- The District Plan Hearings Panel reports that all submitters understood the issues involved with mining, and were generally reasonable in their arguments. Some submitters were opposed to mining on principle, even though the effects were similar to other activities that were allowed to apply for resource consent, so those arguments didn't sway the District Plan Hearings Panel.
- The activity statuses for major mining activities in the Plan are shown in the table below. 'Prohibited' means no consent can be applied for. 'Non-complying' means the activity can only be granted consent if the adverse effects are minor, or if it is not contrary to the Plan's objectives and policies.

**Table 1 - Activity Status of Mineral Processing, Quarrying, Surface mining, Underground mining and Waste rock/tailings storage**

Zone	Mineral processing	Quarrying	Surface mining	Underground mining	Waste rock/tailings storage
Rural	Non-complying	Restricted discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary	Non-complying
Rural Lifestyle					
Industrial	Discretionary	Restricted discretionary	Prohibited	Discretionary	Non-complying
Light Industrial	Discretionary	Restricted discretionary			Prohibited
Marine Service	Non-complying	Non-complying			Prohibited
Airfield	Non-complying	Non-complying	Non-complying	Discretionary	Prohibited
Road					
Commercial	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Gateway					
Pedestrian Core					
Conservation	Non-complying	Discretionary	Non-complying	Discretionary	Prohibited
Open Space	Prohibited	Non-complying	Prohibited	Non-complying	
Recreation Active				Discretionary*	
Recreation Passive					
Coastal Living	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Non-complying	Prohibited
Extra Density Residential					
Low Density Residential					
Residential					
Village	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Non-complying	Prohibited
Waterfront					

\* If underground without surface expression.

# Additional information



## Rezoning, Structure Plans and Site Development Plans

The District Plan Hearings Panel said that some submissions were de-facto subdivision applications, and did not provide the information necessary to assess the request. The submitters and their agents were characterised by an ethos of “I want to do this because it’s a good idea” but with no thinking or detail about road, traffic, soil stability, water and wastewater planning and implications.

If the rezoning request had been a private plan change, the application would have needed this information.



## District Plan Appeals Committee

A District Plan Appeals Committee has been set up to provide guidance and direction over any appeals to our new District Plan.

Unlike District Courts, the Environment Court is not purely adversarial and it utilises alternative dispute resolution methods like mediation and expert conferencing. Usually this means only a few appeals are likely to continue to the Environment Court, and the scope’s often limited to where the parties have been unable to reach agreement.

Once all the appeals are lodged, they will all be presented to Council along with information about each appeal’s complexity, degree of difference from Council’s Plan decisions, and whether resolution is likely prior to Environment Court hearings.

The District Plan Appeals Committee will guide and advise the appeals process, whether in negotiation, private mediation or Court-assisted mediation.

The Committee members are:

- Deputy Mayor Peter French.
- Mercury Bay Councillor Tony Fox.
- Independent Auckland-based planning consultant Ian Munro.



## Making decisions

Because of the large number of submission points, the District Plan Hearings Panel provided Council with recommended decision reports that addressed topics, rather than every individual submission point.

- The District Plan Hearings Panel has released succinct decisions that address topics, rather than on every individual submission point, because of the large number of points.
- The District Plan Hearings Panel has supported the Council’s approach to reduce red tape in many areas, while protecting the areas with special values. For example:
  - o Self-contained minor units (e.g. granny flats, basement flats) are now permitted if they meet the general zone standards, instead of needing a resource consent as a ‘second dwelling’. The development contributions payable to Council has also been halved.
  - o For many activities that are generally permitted but do not meet a zone standard, the Council will only look at the effect of that standard not met (a restricted discretionary consent) instead of a full assessment of the activity (non-complying consent).
  - o Houses are now permitted (if standards are met) on cross-lease sites, in existing town centre buildings and in the Coastal Zone Residential Policy Area (now part of Coastal Living Zone), compared to previously needing resource consents.



## Tangata Whenua

Some sites of significance to Maori are identified and protected in the Plan. Many more are being identified, in Council files and through the Treaty of Waitangi Settlement process. This list of significant sites may be expanded in the future.

Instead of the current Maori Policy Areas and Iwi Kainga Zone, which do not cover all Maori land, the Plan replaces them with new overlay provisions to allow for papakainga development on Maori land.



## Next steps

29 April 2016:

- District Plan Decisions version released.
- Decisions Version of the Proposed Plan is available online, on CD and on paper. CDs are provided at no charge, but there is a printing charge for paper copies.
- All rules have legal effect (but the previous District Plan still also has legal effect).
- Submitters have 30 working days from 29 April to appeal the Council’s decisions to the Environment Court. People who have not been part of the process to date, as a submitter or further submitter, cannot appeal the decisions.

Late June 2016:

- Provisions that are not under Environment Court appeal are treated as operative, once staff confirm which provisions have been appealed. This means the equivalent provisions in the previous District Plan no longer apply.