

NFL - NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES

Introduction

The Manawatū District is home to a range of natural features and landscapes worthy of recognition and protection. As landscapes they contribute to the identity of the Manawatū, and particularly for those people who reside in and visit the Manawatū.

The District's landscapes extend from the expansive and densely vegetated Ruahine Ranges through to the deep, meandering river valleys and terraces of the various rivers within the District through to the undeveloped coastal foredunes of the Manawatū coastline.

The purpose of this chapter is to:

- a. Recognise and protect outstanding natural features and landscapes (ONFLs) from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
- b. Recognise those areas of the District that do not meet the criteria for Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes but have amenity values and characteristics that distinguish them from the wider rural area as Significant Amenity Features.
- c. Respond to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) and the One Plan, including the Regional Policy Statement requirements to identify and protect ONFLs.

Council has identified two (2) Outstanding Natural Landscapes, thirteen (13) Outstanding Natural Features, and three (3) Significant Amenity Features. Each ONFL has its own characteristics and values which justify their classification as outstanding and make their use, development and protection important when considering future management of these areas. Each area is mapped as an overlay.

This chapter must also be read alongside Chapter 3A Network Utilities and Chapter 3D Earthworks. For activities involving Network Utilities within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features the more specific provisions in Chapter 3A Network Utilities apply. Earthworks within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes are provided for in Chapter 3D Earthworks.

Objectives

NFL-O1

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features are identified within the Manawatū District.

Relevant policies 1, 2

NFL-O2

The characteristics and values of the Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1 are protected from inappropriate use and development.

Relevant policies 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

NFL-O3

The characteristics and values of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features are protected from the fragmentation of ownership arising from subdivision.

Relevant policies 13, 14

NFL-O4

The characteristics and values of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes, and Significant Amenity Features are maintained or enhanced.

Relevant policies 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

Policies**NFL-P1**

To identify the characteristics and values, and spatially define Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes consistent with the following criteria:

- a. Natural science factors
- b. Aesthetic values
- c. Expressiveness (Legibility)
- d. Transient values
- e. Shared and recognised values
- f. Cultural and spiritual values for tangata whenua
- g. Historic heritage values.

NFL-P2

To identify and spatially define Significant Amenity Features.

NFL-P3

To avoid inappropriate use and development within Outstanding Natural Features identified in NFL-APP1 which adversely affects the identified values and characteristics of the areas, including:

- a. The extensive unbuilt coastal strip along the Manawatū Coastline Outstanding Natural Landscape.
- b. The unmodified and continuous indigenous vegetation values and the ridges and hilltops of the Ruahine Ranges Outstanding Natural Landscape.

NFL-P4

To restrict the use and development within Outstanding Natural Features identified in NFL-APP1 except where it is demonstrated that the identified characteristics and values of the area are protected and maintained.

NFL-P5

To recognise the Rangitikei River Outstanding Natural Feature includes existing farming activities and provide for the continuation of these existing activities where they do not adversely affect the characteristics and values identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P6

To avoid significant adverse cumulative effects from use and development on the characteristics and values of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P7

Except as required by NFL-P6, avoid adverse effects on Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes as far as reasonably practicable and where avoidance is not reasonably practicable, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the characteristics and values identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P8

To enable passive recreation, conservation and customary activities within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1 where this does not adversely affect the characteristics and values of those areas.

NFL-P9

To avoid the development of new buildings or structures within Outstanding Natural Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P10

To restrict the development of new buildings or structures within an Outstanding Natural Feature where these are visible from a public space and create a visual intrusion or has an adverse effect on characteristics and values of the feature identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P11

To restrict the removal of indigenous vegetation from Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P12

To restrict the introduction of exotic vegetation species, including forestry, within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P13

To avoid subdivision within Outstanding Natural Landscapes except where the fragmentation of land does not significantly affect the characteristics and values of the Landscape identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-P14

To manage subdivision within Outstanding Natural Features and Significant Amenity Features to ensure the characteristics and values identified in NFL-APP1 are not adversely affected by fragmentation of ownership arising from subdivision.

NFL-P15

To protect existing indigenous vegetation.

NFL-P16

To encourage restoration and planting with locally sourced indigenous species of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features.

NFL-P17

To enable the continuation of existing stock grazing within Significant Amenity Features where this does not compromise the characteristics and values identified in NFL-APP2.

NFL-P18

To control use and development within Significant Amenity Features to those activities which do not adversely affect the characteristics and values identified in NFL-APP2.

NFL-P19

To restrict the introduction of exotic vegetation species, including forestry, within Significant Amenity Features identified in NFL-APP2.

Rules

Unless otherwise stated, rules in this chapter apply to all activities within the areas identified as being Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes, and Significant Amenity Features as spatially defined in Appendix NFL-APP1 and NFL-APP2. For activities involving Network Utilities within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes the more specific provisions in Chapter 3A Network Utilities apply. Earthworks within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes are provided for in Chapter 3D Earthworks.

Permitted Activities

The following activities are Permitted Activities within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features:

- NFL-R1** The use and maintenance of existing tracks and walkways for passive recreation, conservation, and customary activities within public areas.
- NFL-R2** Planting and restoration of indigenous vegetation within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and Significant Amenity Features using indigenous species.
- NFL-R3** Removal and control of weeds and pests, including wildling pines.
- NFL-R4** Fencing off of areas.
- NFL-R5** Indigenous vegetation clearance only for the purpose of:
 - 1) Clearance of up to 1m from a fence designed for the exclusions of stock and or pests
 - 2) The gathering of plants in accordance with Māori customs and traditions
 - 3) Removal of vegetation that endangers human life, existing structures or network utilities
 - 4) Maintaining existing roads, tracks or fences and the clearance is within 1m either side of that road, track or fence.

Guidance Note: Trimming of vegetation near electricity transmission lines shall comply with the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003.

- NFL-R6** Maintenance of existing lawfully established structures as at 7 February 2020.
- NFL-R7** Construction and use of buildings and structures within the Totara Reserve Regional Park no greater than 50m² in area.
- NFL-R8** Continuation of existing stock grazing within the Rangitikei River Outstanding Natural Feature and within Significant Amenity Features as at 7 February 2020.
- NFL-R9** Earthworks associated with a permitted activity listed above and consistent with Rule 3D.4.2.

Guidance Notes:

1. Except as provided for in NFL-R9, earthworks within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes are specifically provided for in Chapter 3D Earthworks.
2. Earthworks are also regulated by the Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council and a resource consent may be required under the rules of the One Plan.

Restricted Discretionary Activities

The following activities are Restricted Discretionary Activities:

NFL-R10 Development consistent with the Reserve Act status or relevant Management Plan for the specific Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape.

For these activities, the Council has restricted its discretion to considering the following matters:

MD1 Effects, including cumulative effects, on the characteristics and values of the specific Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape identified in NFL-APP1.

MD2 Bulk and location of any buildings

MD3 Sighting and visibility of buildings from public viewing locations.

Discretionary Activities

The following activities are Discretionary Activities within Outstanding Natural Features and Significant Amenity Features:

NFL-R11 Subdivision within an Outstanding Natural Feature or Significant Amenity Feature as identified in NFL-APP1 or NFL-APP2.

NFL-R12 Construction, alteration or addition of buildings, or new passive recreation tracks within an Outstanding Natural Feature and Significant Amenity Feature as identified in NFL-APP1 or NFL-APP2.

NFL-R13 Stock grazing, horticulture and cropping in Outstanding Natural Features and Significant Amenity Features, except for the existing stock grazing within the Rangitikei River Outstanding Natural Feature and Significant Amenity Features.

Non-Complying Activities

The following activities are Non-Complying Activities:

NFL-R14 Construction, alteration or addition of buildings within an Outstanding Natural Landscape as identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-R15 Subdivision within an Outstanding Natural Landscape as identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-R16 Stock grazing, horticulture and cropping within an Outstanding Natural Landscape as identified in NFL-APP1.

NFL-R17 New Plantation Forestry within an Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape and Significant Amenity Feature.

NFL-R18 Any activity not otherwise provided for as a Permitted, Restricted Discretionary or Discretionary Activity.

Guidance Note

1. Except as provided for by Rule NFL-R9, earthworks within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes are provided for in Chapter 3D Earthworks.
2. The National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry (2017) also applies to activities within Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes and a resource consent may also be required under those provisions.