

THE DRAFT WHAKAMAHERE WHAKATŪ NELSON PLAN KEY INFORMATION

The Draft Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan combines the current resource management plans for Nelson into one combined Plan that reflects Central government requirements and direction, current best practice, and the latest research and local information. Once notified, the Nelson Plan will guide how we use our natural resources, where and how we develop land, and how we protect our environment.

ECOSYSTEMS AND INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

What is meant by ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity in the Draft Nelson Plan?

'Ecosystems' refers to the collection of plants, animals and micro-organisms, and their interaction with each other.

'Indigenous biodiversity' refers to the variety of ecosystems, vegetation, fauna and their habitats that naturally occur in an area.

Areas across Whakatū Nelson are home to many of New Zealand/ Aotearoa's unique indigenous plants, animals and micro-organisms. These include coastal and freshwater environments and public lands that are managed by the Department of Conservation and Nelson City Council (Council). Others are located on private land and these are identified by Council as 'Significant Natural Areas' (SNAs).

What is Council trying to achieve in this chapter?

This chapter intends to protect against the loss of areas around Whakatū Nelson which are home to many unique plants, animal and micro-organisms. Additionally, it aims to enhance the biodiversity corridors for the benefit of our unique ecosystems.

It aims to ensure that our unique and fragile natural environments are appreciated by residents and owners for their environmental and cultural values.

By Identifying SNAs and including provisions in the Nelson Plan, Council can support their protection and enhancement, as one way to meet its obligations under the Resource Management Act.

Under the Draft Nelson Plan, activities within an SNA which would not affect identified values would be permitted.

Activities that would result in damage or loss to the important

values of an SNA would likely be managed through the resource consent process.

A significant threat to Nelson's ecosystems and biodiversity comes from unwanted pest plants, animals and micro-organisms and the effects of climate change.

With careful management and support from Council initiatives such as Nelson Nature, Council and its partners can help SNA owners to deal with these threats.

While this chapter of the Draft Nelson Plan focuses on privately-owned SNAs, similar provisions do apply to areas of public land with the same values

More information on those provisions can be found in the information sheets on the chapters for the Open space and recreation zones, Land and freshwater, and the Coastal marine area.

What activities would I be able to do without a resource consent?

The Draft Nelson Plan proposes that certain activities would be permitted within an SNA, including the following:

- clearing small areas of indigenous vegetation to keep existing tracks, rights of way, power lines, fences, gardens, buildings and fire defensible spaces clear from obstruction;
- clearing indigenous vegetation to construct new walking tracks up to 1.2m in width, where no large indigenous trees are removed;
- clearing indigenous vegetation to construct perimeter fences to exclude stock or pest animals;



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- clearing indigenous vegetation up to 100m² for constructing new dwellings and other buildings, where subdivision approval for the location of those buildings has already been obtained;
- clearing any exotic vegetation; and
- planting indigenous plants and trees to enhance the biodiversity of the area concerned.

What activities would need a resource consent?

Some activities within an SNA may need resource consent before they can be undertaken, including:

- clearing indigenous vegetation where it involves the clearance of areas greater than those mentioned above; or
- planting exotic vegetation.

For more details on the draft rules and associated requirements refer to Chapter ECO – Ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity of the Draft Nelson Plan. Where an activity does not or cannot meet one or more of the rule requirements a resource consent would be required.

How would a resource consent be assessed?

Within an SNA a resource consent application would look at:

- whether adverse effects on identified biodiversity values can be at best avoided, or otherwise remedied, mitigated or, in some circumstances, offset; and
- whether there are opportunities to clear less significant areas instead or replant indigenous vegetation in cleared areas.
- Applications for resource consent would likely need to be accompanied by an ecological assessment.

How has this changed from the current Nelson Resource Management Plan (NRMP)?

The NRMP currently identifies a limited number of SNAs. Their identification was based on incomplete ecological information available at the time.

For that reason, controls around vegetation clearance and walking and access tracks in the NRMP do not provide enough protection for indigenous vegetation.

Further information on the Nelson Plan

Work is ongoing regarding the Nelson Plan provisions relating to managing Whakatū Nelson's ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity, therefore these may result in changes following public engagement.

The Council is keen to hear your comments and feedback. We are also interested to hear your views on how we can best manage the region's indigenous biodiversity.

This key information sheet is a summary of the provisions in the Draft Nelson Plan that relate to Ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity. It should not be used as a definitive representation of content.

To view actual Draft Nelson Plan content, please go to shape.nelson.govt.nz. To find the Ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity provisions refer to Part 2 ECO – Ecosystems and biodiversity; Part 3 ECO – Ecosystems and biodiversity.

Related provisions include Part 2 NFL – Natural features and landscapes; Part 3 NC – Natural character; Part 3 NFL – Natural features and landscapes; Part 3 NOSZ – Natural open space zone.

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