

7 OBJECTIVES/POLICIES: Greenbelt Residential Environment

7. GREENBELT RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

There is increasing demand for rural living in the Horowhenua. The Greenbelt Residential zone is at the urban edge and provides a residential choice for people wanting the opportunities that come with larger areas of open space and a semi-rural context. The opportunities include larger sized gardens, small scale productive activities, and a relatively open outlook.

The locations of the Greenbelt Residential Zone have been identified to provide ready proximity to urban day-to-day services, to enable short trip distances to the centres they relate to, and to provide an urban edge interface with rural areas that limits reverse sensitivity conflicts and provides for the protection of permitted rural activities and those lawfully established activities, in the Rural Zone and the more open landscape of the District.

The layout of the Greenbelt Residential Zone will be planned in more detail as part of its implementation through the District Plan to provide publicly accessible walking/cycling links around and into urban areas for recreational and non-vehicular transport purposes. They will also be planned to provide linked road networks within and between different land title ownerships, potential service infrastructure, sustainable stormwater management, and clusters of housing which will allow for shared open space outlook.

Within the Greenbelt Residential Zone exists the Foxton Beach North Overlay and Waitarere Rise Overlay.

Issue 7.1

The need to provide for a choice of different types of residential environments and ancillary activities to enable current and future residents to meet their lifecycle and lifestyle aspirations within the District.

ISSUE DISCUSSION

Providing a range of choice in residential environments enables people to decide what place best suits their particular lifecycle needs and lifestyle aspirations. By enabling a range of choices within the District, people have an opportunity to remain within the same community but to change the type of residential property they live in depending on their life stage or lifestyle at the time.

With the lower density of residential development provided for in the Greenbelt Residential Zone, provision is able to be made for a range of small scale typically only rurally possible land uses, such as small scale hobby farms, orchards or other activities which rely on larger sites. It is expected that land within the Greenbelt Residential Zone will transition over time, but primary production, including dry stock grazing, horticulture and forestry could continue until take up for residential purposes occurs.

The Greenbelt Residential Zone is part of the District-wide strategy of providing a range of residential living environments. To date, this type of residential environment has not been specifically provided for in a planned manner and larger lot rural-residential developments have tended to be scattered across the rural area. It is now recognised that identifying appropriate locations for this type of residential environment will encourage a more sustainable form of development for the future. Particular care will need to be taken to

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ensure natural hazards such as sand inundation and dune movement will not compromise residential development in the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone, and avoidance or mitigation may need to be incorporated into any future subdivision design.

Locating the Greenbelt Residential Zone immediately adjacent to existing or future residential areas of the existing urban areas would enable the sustainable management of the natural and physical resources. In these locations, if reticulated infrastructure is available, it can be extended in an efficient manner to minimise the effects on the natural environment, such as groundwater. In addition, being adjacent to urban areas enables the effective connection to the existing transport infrastructure, and for different modes of transport to be used for people to move from where they live to access day to day amenities such as schools, shops and other services.

Objectives & Policies

Objective 7.1.1

To provide for residential and ancillary activities that maintain and enhance the character and amenity values of the Greenbelt Residential Zone, while avoiding or mitigating natural hazards.

Policy 7.1.2

Identify areas that are suitable for Greenbelt Residential purposes, that are in close proximity to an urban settlement, have capacity for reticulated infrastructure or managed servicing on-site, have the ability to connect to the existing urban area; with the expectation that significant natural hazards will be avoided and the potential effects of natural hazards managed to a degree that reflects the risk.

Policy 7.1.3

Provide for a range of activities within the Greenbelt Residential Zone to enable sufficient flexibility for residential living and other compatible activities that are consistent with the character and amenity values for the area.

Policy 7.1.4

Maintain overall low density of development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone with large section sizes, sufficient to accommodate a standard contemporary house and a large area of open space for amenity and/or productive purposes except as provided for in Policy 7.1.13.

Policy 7.1.5

Maintain a high quality and open streetscape.

Policy 7.1.6

Maintain the residential character and high standards of building quality and appearance in the Greenbelt Residential areas.

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Policy 7.1.7

Maintain low overall building height with exceptions for necessary community facilities and utility services where such height would not adversely affect local environmental amenities.

Policy 7.1.8

Maximise opportunities for sunlight access to buildings and private areas of open space; and minimise shading of private open space and buildings caused by structures on adjacent sites.

Policy 7.1.9

Maximise opportunities for the creation of private outdoor spaces on greenbelt residential properties, to maintain and enhance amenity values.

Policy 7.1.10

Minimise the amount of signage present in the landscape of the Greenbelt Residential Zone, so as not to detract from the character or visual amenity of the area.

Policy 7.1.11

Maintain overall quiet daytime and night-time noise conditions in the Greenbelt Residential Zone with few extraordinary loud noise events and minimal noise nuisance to residents.

Policy 7.1.12

Ensure that subdivided sections have sufficient area, shape, and access suitable to maintain the character, scale and intensity of development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone, including recognising the different servicing capacity in different locations.

Policy 7.1.13

Provide for subdivision within the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone in a manner that:

- ensures that subdivided sections have sufficient area shape, and access suitable to maintain the character, scale, and intensity of development in the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone and shall be generally in accordance with the Foxton Beach North Overlay Design Guide contained in Schedule 14;
- enables the number and sizes of residential sections created by subdivision to be varied in response to the amount of open space retained within the development, on the basis that more open space supports a higher number of smaller sections; and
- identifies, through a site-specific assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced geomorphological expert, any significant hazard to the sections that may arise from sand inundation and/or dune movement inside or outside the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone, and avoids or mitigates that hazard and its effects. Avoidance or mitigation may include on-site and/or off-site measures;
- ensures roading networks for each stage of development are designed to be sufficient for roading and network utility demands of the ultimate development of the

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site and to provide linkages to adjoining areas of development in a manner that is consistent with the roading hierarchy set out in the Plan.

Policy 7.1.14

Maintain residential environments that are safe from traffic hazards and have a high quality of streetscape amenity including managing the location and design of street lighting to a level appropriate for the Greenbelt Residential Zone.

Policy 7.1.15

Ensure that all activities involving delivery and collection of wastes and goods and materials are provided with easily-accessible spaces for vehicle loading and unloading clear of conflict with pedestrian and vehicle users of public roads.

Policy 7.1.16

Ensure that any storage of goods, materials, or waste products is contained within individual sites; is maintained in a tidy manner without causing litter to spill beyond the site; and without detracting from the visual amenities of the environment.

Policy 7.1.17

Where no reticulated servicing is available, ensure that all activities within the Greenbelt Residential Zone dispose of wastes in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects.

Policy 7.1.18

Require any activity which does not comply with minimum environmental standards to be considered as an application for resource consent in terms of the policies and criteria of this plan and the effects on the environment.

Policy 7.1.19

Ensure that subdivided sections in the Greenbelt Residential Waitarere Rise overlay have sufficient area, shape, and access suitable to maintain the character, scale, intensity, and amenity of the Waitarere Rise subdivision development, including recognising that the original subdivision predated the introduction of the Greenbelt Residential zone and that the development is serviced by a reticulated pressurised grey water system.

Explanation and Principal Reasons

The Plan acknowledges that the Greenbelt Residential Zone provides an area for people to reside, as well as other ancillary activities which are compatible with this residential character and amenity. The Plan intends to enable the establishment and operation of activities and will specify minimum standards for their establishment and operation. However, other activities, such as intensive farming and industrial activities may be incompatible with the character and amenity values of this Zone. The policies clearly identify the environmental qualities and amenities that are to be maintained and enhanced.

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In addressing subdivision, the Waitarere Rise overlay area is recognised as having unique characteristics which warrants a specific policy relevant to its management in addition to all other policies applicable to other Greenbelt Residential areas. The area within the Waitarere Rise overlay was approved for subdivision and partially developed prior to the introduction of the Greenbelt Residential zone to the District Plan. The original design of the Waitarere Rise development contemplated limited further subdivision of the larger lots through imposing private covenants requiring compliance with a minimum shape factor. This shape factor is considerably greater than that in other Greenbelt zones due to the coastal lifestyle character that forms an integral part of the Waitarere Rise development and is sought to be maintained. The Waitarere Rise development was designed as a rural/residential lifestyle development without access to a Council reticulated water supply. Effluent disposal for this development is by a reticulated pressurised grey water system. The development including the existing wastewater system and roading network, have been designed for a limited level of additional subdivision before infrastructure upgrades are necessary. Specific recognition of these factors through the subdivision process is necessary to maintain the character, scale, intensity, and amenity of the development. The specific minimum lot size for the Waitarere Rise overlay reflects the characteristics and historical consented development of this area, and is independent of the provision of reticulated water supply.

The Plan recognises that the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone has specific characteristics such as its relationship with the coastal environment, the natural dune forms within the site, the influence of coastal processes, and the more rural and natural surroundings that enable a different residential environment to be created compared with the wider Greenbelt Residential Zone. Subject to an appropriate response to natural hazards and/or their effects, this area is suitable for a style of development such as clustering of smaller allotments and providing for shared (rather than individually owned) open space that emphasises and retains significant areas of open space and controls disturbance of existing landform features. The Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone has, like the remainder of the Greenbelt Zone, a direct connection to an existing settlement which creates opportunities for urban connectivity and efficient servicing with roads and other infrastructure.

While the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone provides opportunities for residing in a different residential environment, it is important that natural hazards are avoided or carefully managed. Any application for subdivision consent in this Zone will need to assess the potential for sand inundation and dune movement on to or within the Foxton Beach North Overlay area and, if necessary, identify any subsequent avoidance or mitigation measures. Careful consideration should also be given to management of public access to and through the coastal reserve to the west of the area, where ad hoc establishment of pathways through the dune field may destabilise dunes.

Methods for Issue 7.1 & Objective 7.2.1

Plan Rules

- Plan maps will define the geographic extent of the Greenbelt Residential Zone including those based on the areas identified in the Horowhenua Development Plan.
- Rules will identify permitted land uses with the Greenbelt Residential Zone.
- Rules will specify minimum standards for the effects or amenities discussed in the policies above.

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- Any activity or proposal which is not a permitted activity or does not comply with stated standards will be considered pursuant to an application for resource consent.
- Land use consents will be assessed in terms of their effects and the policies outlined above.
- In assessing resource consent applications the Council will have regard to relevant industry codes of practice/guidelines.
- Council will encourage land users to use Codes of Practice and other good practice guidelines.

Standards expressed as Plan rules are considered to be the most appropriate and effective method of maintaining minimum standards for the matters over which the Council has jurisdiction; Rules provide certainty for resource users and for neighbours which is important for community understanding of what environmental quality is expected.

Other Statutory Plans

- The Horizons Regional Council will control discharge to air, land and water under the provisions of its regional plans.

Annual Plan

- Council will continue to maintain and develop public infrastructure services, recovering costs from users as appropriate over time.

Council is operator of most public infrastructure services.

Issue 7.2

The recognition of reverse sensitivity effects between activities within the Greenbelt Residential Zone, and at the interface with the rural and urban areas.

ISSUE DISCUSSION

Within a rural district such as the Horowhenua there is a risk of urban areas encroaching on the viability of land based production activities due to the incompatible nature of resident's urban environment expectations relative to the working needs of rural activities. These incompatibilities tend to occur at the edges of urban areas where they interface with the rural context.

Reverse sensitivity can occur from the sensitivity of urban residents to, for example, odour, air quality, noise, pet roaming, and building scale.

The Greenbelt Residential Zone provides an opportunity to moderate the level of incompatibility between urban and rural land uses by introducing a larger lot density (and so more space for dispersing the rural effects), fewer resident people (so less potential for sensitivity), greater tolerance (given people's aspirations to live in the greenbelts close to rural areas), more opportunity to provide for careful planning and design of development in a greenbelt zone (in terms of the location of houses relative to the rural areas), and greater certainty for rural operators to know where the residential areas are located (compared to a more random distribution of lifestyle blocks).

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In the same way that compatibility with the rural areas needs to be considered, the compatibility of land uses within the Greenbelt Residential Zones must also be recognised and provided for to ensure that more intensive land base production activities (for example poultry or pig farming) are not established where those effects could not be avoided or mitigated within the zone.

Objective 7.2.1

To provide for compatible land use activities in the Greenbelt Residential Zone, and avoid or mitigate the adverse effects of activities within the Zone and at the urban and rural zone interfaces.

Policy 7.2.2

Provide for land uses in the Greenbelt Residential Zone that have similar amenity expectations, and are managed through environmental standards and resource consent conditions as necessary to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects.

Policy 7.2.3

Provide buffers or other interface measures at the immediate interface between Rural and Greenbelt Residential Zones to mitigate the adverse effects of primary production on permitted, or otherwise lawfully established, activities in the Rural Zone on residential activities in the Greenbelt Residential Zone.

Policy 7.2.4

Provide buffers or other interface measures on primary production and other activities, including residential activities, in the Greenbelt Residential Zone that may have adverse effects on adjacent activities, such as reverse sensitivity effects on infrastructure.

Explanation and Principal Reasons

Providing for a wide range of activities within the zone increases the potential for conflict between activities. Similarly, there is also potential for inter-zone conflicts to occur between activities on adjoining zones. Where conflict occurs, it is usually at the boundary between activities.

These policies seek to ensure the ongoing efficient and effective function of activities in the Rural Zone, as well as maintaining the amenity values in the adjoining urban environments. Minimising reverse sensitivity effects both within the Greenbelt Residential Zone and at its boundaries with other zones, will ensure the respective amenity values of the adjoining areas are not compromised. These policies will require controls on siting of sensitive activities, such as dwellings, to avoid or mitigate the potential for reverse sensitivity effects. Conversely, the policies manage activities which may create significant adverse external effects to avoid future conflicts. Setback distances for activities from boundaries are an important method in implementing these policies.

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Methods for Issue 7.2 & Objective 7.2.1

Plan Rules

- Rules on those activities within the Greenbelt Residential Zone that could conflict with the amenity values of residential activity, or efficient functioning of the adjoining Rural Zone.
- Any activity or proposal which is not a permitted activity or does not comply with stated standards will be considered pursuant to an application for resource consent.
- Land use consents will be assessed in terms of their effects and the policies outlined above.
- In assessing resource consent applications the Council will have regard to relevant industry codes of practice/guidelines.
- Council will encourage land users to use Codes of Practice and other good practice guidelines.

Standards expressed as Plan rules are considered to be the most appropriate and effective method of maintaining minimum standards for the matters over which the Council has jurisdiction; Rules provide certainty for resource users and for neighbours which is important for community understanding of what environmental quality is expected.

Other Statutory Plans

- The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council will control discharge to air, land and water under the provisions of its regional plans.

Issue 7.3

The pattern of subdivision and development and nature of access and servicing could compromise the efficient use of land and infrastructure.

ISSUE DISCUSSION

The Greenbelt Residential Zone indicates an area of land that is generally suitable for low density rural-residential development. Care is required in the design and layout of the Greenbelt Residential areas to ensure the land and infrastructure is developed and used in an efficient manner. In addition, residents in the Greenbelt Residential Zone value the special opportunities and qualities of these locations, in that it provides an environment in which they reside as well as satisfying the demand of some residents to be able to undertake small scale ancillary activities. Some of the particular qualities that are important to these areas and are important in managing the pattern of subdivision and development include:

- The level of accessibility and connections by walking and cycle paths to urban areas and within the zone are important for the distance and time of trips required to access urban services and amenities – long trips (due to lack of connections or distance of zone from an urban area) means less accessibility, reliance on motor vehicles and more impact on road infrastructure. Short trips enable people to walk, cycle or use cars less for day to day needs saving time and cost for residents and increasing accessibility to all including those without access to a vehicle (such as children).

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- The level of public space provision and linked reserve or public accessible open space is important to establish and maintain a network for recreation or movement at the edges to urban areas – no connected recreational networks means people will drive to walk/cycle for recreation, and the opportunity to provide for alternatives to roads as a way to connect to urban centres is missed. Connected networks of open space within the zone mean that the ‘townbelt’ concept can start to form, recreational needs are provided close to each neighbourhood, people have alternative routes for walking or cycling to and from destinations, and the ‘greenbelt’ concept gains some public support for retention as a public asset and so prevents urban areas from sprawling further into rural land.
- The level of planning for infrastructure provisions is important to enable efficient servicing of the zone - no planning means services are circuitous, more expensive and less efficient to maintain and less flexible to accommodate change. A planned network of services enables the costs to be known in advance and apportioned fairly to the user, for the most efficient placement and at the least cost, as well as providing best for future change. This applies to both Council-provided infrastructure as well as privately funded infrastructure.
- The nature of development design is important to ensure that it reflects the low density residential environment for the Greenbelt Residential Zone. No design, or poor design, means there will be a tendency for each subdivider to do their own unconnected and individual development. Appropriate development design means a hierarchy of roads which are generally low speed lanes that connect to one another, tree lined lanes and roads with stormwater management that enhance the ‘greenness’ and ecological performance, and separation of walking and cycle paths from vehicular traffic, houses which are situated in clusters or groups to enable the larger open areas to have a ‘shared’ visual amenity, publicly accessible walking paths, and the use of appropriate fence, hedges and lighting to define boundaries and street frontages.

Objective 7.3.1

To ensure areas within the Greenbelt Residential Zone are developed in an efficient and sustainable development pattern responding to the natural and physical resources of the area.

Policy 7.3.2

Manage the form and pattern of development and subdivision within the Greenbelt Residential Zone on a comprehensive basis to ensure a structured and integrated pattern of development, which recognise the environmental qualities and physical resources of the land are fully identified and sustainably managed.

Policy 7.3.3

The form and pattern of development and subdivision seeks to:

- Ensure the location, density and orientation of developable areas are compatible with the character and amenity values of the location; including implementing any design guide contained within a Schedule to this Plan;
- In reticulated areas, ensure the coordinated and integrated provision of infrastructure; and in unreticulated areas, ensure either the sustainable on-site provision of water

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supply, wastewater disposal and stormwater management or, where appropriate, the provision of provision of private infrastructure;

- Ensure a connected transport infrastructure for different modes of transport;
- Provide a connected and accessible network of open space;
- Protect and enhance natural features, areas of ecological value and sites of historic heritage importance;
- Avoid or mitigate the risk of natural hazards through design or otherwise;
- Minimise amenity conflicts with adjoining land uses; and
- Provide opportunities for energy efficiency through road layout and lot orientation.

Policy 7.3.4

Manage subdivision and development to connect with the existing infrastructure and transportation network, according to the capacity limitations of that network and the potential requirements for upgrading its capacity.

Policy 7.3.5

Ensure that staging of development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone is efficient, consistent with and supported by adequate infrastructure and that development is otherwise deferred until the required upgrading of infrastructure has occurred.

Policy 7.3.6

Manage subdivision, use and development to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of these activities on the efficient and safe operation of infrastructure and network utilities, including the National Grid.

Explanation and Principal Reasons

The subdivision and development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone needs to be undertaken in an effective and efficient manner to ensure the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The development process should occur in a planned and structured approach, taking into account the environmental qualities and features of the land, as well as the need to provide strong and efficient connections with the existing urban area.

New subdivision and development will be assessed to ensure they have access to existing water and wastewater systems, roads and reserves or that new infrastructure can be provided. Any additional demand from new activities on existing infrastructure, will be assessed to ensure the designed capacity of the system is not overloaded through servicing new users. If services need to be upgraded, the subdivider would be required to provide reasonable contribution to fund such improvements or extensions.

Furthermore, where significant upgrades or extensions to existing infrastructure are required prior to the area being developed, a deferred zoning will apply and remain until such time as infrastructure is sufficient. This deferred zoning method signals the long term use of the land while providing for its continued use by rural activities.

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In the case of Waitarere Rise, a comprehensive and integrated approach to the development has been taken. As for other Greenbelt Residential zoned areas (and consistent with these policies generally), if any services (including the grey water pumping stations) need to be upgraded to accommodate this additional level of development or if the scale and intensity of development proposed has the potential to lead to the need for such an upgrade, then the consent holder shall carry out the required work with the cost of such work offset against the development contribution paid in relation to that service to fund such onsite improvements, extensions or upgrades, provided such work has been included in the Council's Development Contribution Policy. The incremental subdivision of smaller lots would undermine the original subdivision development. To this end only limited further subdivision of the larger lots has been provided for within this development.

Network utilities are a significant physical resource as they contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of the Horowhenua, as well as at a national level. It is therefore important to protect them from the adverse effects of new development or activities, such as locating buildings close to power transmission lines. Where the activity and development is compatible with infrastructure and network utilities, these land uses are provided for.

Methods for Issue 7.3 & Objective 7.3.1

Plan Rules

- The Council will prepare Structure Plans to guide development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone. The Structure Plans will where appropriate identify the location of key movement routes, provision of infrastructure, and open space network and other obvious features (there may be other features not noted on Structure Plans that are important to consider and retain). Development within an area covered by a Structure Plan shall be in accordance with the Structure Plan.
- Assessment of environmental effects through the resource consent process for development and subdivision proposals.
- Proposed subdivisions and developments will be assessed in terms of Plan criteria (including Design Guideline) and standards for new services and road connections.
- Proposed new roads will be considered, subject to resource consent applications for subdivision, in terms of the accepted roading hierarchy.
- Plan rules will set minimum standards for connection to and extension of infrastructure services.
- Plan rules for the Greenbelt Residential Zone (Deferred) to manage subdivisions prior to a Structure Plan for an urban growth area being adopted.

Standards expressed as Plan rules are considered to be the most appropriate and effective method of maintaining minimum standards for the matters over which the Council has jurisdiction; Rules provide certainty for resource users and for neighbours which is important for community understanding of what environmental quality is expected.

Other Statutory Plans

- The Horizons Regional Council will control discharge to air, land and water under the provisions of its regional plans.

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Annual Plan

- Council will continue to maintain and develop public infrastructure services, recovering costs from users as appropriate over time.

Council is operator of most public infrastructure services.

Design Guides

- Council will prepare a design guide to promote the pattern and form of subdivision and development in the Greenbelt Residential Zone. This guide will assist landowners and subdividers to be innovative in the development of the Greenbelt Residential Zone, and to assist Council in assessing resource consent applications.
- There is a design guide for the Greenbelt Residential (Foxton Beach North Overlay) Zone tailored to the specific characteristics of that area and contained in Schedule 14. The design guide performs the same role as the design guide for the wider Greenbelt Residential Zone, but provides additional guidance to landowners, subdividers and the Council so that development is responsive to the landscape and geomorphological setting of that site.

ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

The environmental results for the Greenbelt Residential environment which are anticipated to result from the combined implementation of the above policies and methods are as follows:

- 7(a) Structured urban development that is well connected to and compatible with the adjacent urban and surrounding rural environment.
- 7(b) Form and pattern of land use and development that is compatible with the values, character and qualities of a predominantly residential environment with some ancillary activities based on an open space network.
- 7(c) The provision of a range of transport modes and infrastructure servicing able to meet the needs of the residents long-term and not adversely affect the environment.
- 7(d) A living environment which recognises and provides for its natural features and so promotes an attractive, distinctive and 'place-based' design.