

8.9 ROAD AND STREET NETWORK AND HIERARCHY

8.9.1 BACKGROUND

The economic wellbeing of the District is heavily dependent on an efficient transport system. Savings in fuel consumption, time and vehicle wear and tear, as well as increased convenience for all, results from having a District that is served by a network of well maintained roads and streets. Social contact is also greatly facilitated by easy access from place to place. All these factors contribute to promoting the purpose of the Act.

The management of roads, streets and the land use activities that obtain access from them are linked. As such there needs to be integrated management and control to ensure that the function of the road or street is not unduly compromised, that the adverse effects of the activities within roads and streets do not create a detriment to the environment or the amenity of land use activities, and vice versa.

Roads and streets require substantial investment of energy and other resources in their construction and maintenance. In addition, the activities (particularly movement of traffic) carried out within them, are substantial consumers of energy and other resources and also contribute to environmental degradation (eg through noise and emission of heat and gases).

The benefits of ease of travel by road, have to be measured against the costs of developing and maintaining the road and street resource. Transit NZ and the District Council have limited resources available to construct and maintain the network. There are a number of factors within the District that influence the road and street network. These include:

- ✍ Weather conditions, particularly flooding in the Paeroa and Waihi areas.
- ✍ The scenic corridor route through parts of the District.
- ✍ Traffic generated by the dairy, horticulture, mining and forestry industries.
- ✍ Lack of road reserve width where large drains have been formed on either side of the road. This limits the capacity of the road to accommodate large vehicles, especially the larger milk tankers.
- ✍ Peat foundation across the Hauraki Plains.

The use of a roading hierarchy is one method which can assist in:

- ✍ protecting the road/street resource;
- ✍ the integrated management of the road/street resource and activities with the land use resource and activities; and
- ✍ setting objectives and policies that clearly state the structure within which the resources (time, materials, funds) will and can be directed to achieve the most equitable and desired result.

The **hierarchy** is used as a tool to assist in:

- ✍ setting the strategy of zones to provide for land use activities;
- ✍ determining the status that activities have (ie the status of the road that access is obtained from, determines the activity status);
- ✍ setting financial contributions for activities that generate significant levels of traffic; and
- ✍ developing the Services Development Plan as it applies to roading and the Annual Plan for the allocation of funds to upgrade and/or maintain roads.

The roading hierarchy has been developed from the information concerning existing traffic movement patterns, traffic types (eg light or heavy, seasonal or constant) and volumes, and the potential changes in this existing traffic. The traffic information determines the road and street design characteristics (eg width, speed, gradients, number of lanes, formation), which is reflected in the status of the road or street in the hierarchy.

Protecting the Road Resource

Two main methods are used to protect the road resource.

First, the status of roads as designations and providing for roading activities "as of right" within the designation, gives roads a statutory authorisation that recognises their importance to the District's functioning (refer to Section 8.1 - NETWORK UTILITIES).

Second, is the use of zones and rules to control and manage land use activities adjacent to roads. With respect to **zones**, there are two sides to this method. One side is to zone land for activities that are not affected by the activities within the road (eg residential zones immediately adjoining a Strategic Highway are avoided), thereby allowing the road to operate without restraint. The other side is to avoid allowing land use activities that generate significant volumes of traffic to establish without assessment through the consent process.

In some situations (eg where the state highway goes through urban areas), the protection of the roading resource for its primary function of carrying traffic efficiently and effectively is difficult to achieve. The roading resource becomes one of the "urban infrastructure" components that are required to sustain the commercial resources of the District.

With respect to **rules**, a range of performance standards are included in the District Plan, which are designed to protect the road resource. These include,

- ✍ Location of parking and loading spaces.
- ✍ Vehicle access and crossings.
- ✍ Protection of traffic sight lines.
- ✍ Corner splays.
- ✍ Glare and lighting.
- ✍ Signs.
- ✍ Provision for cyclists and pedestrians.

Compliance with these performance standards allow activities to establish and operate without unacceptable adverse effects on the roading network.

Integrated Management

The District Plan provides the opportunity for the integrated management of the factors that relate to the roading resource. These factors may be either within or outside the District Plan and include;

- ✍ Objectives and policies.
- ✍ Performance standards.
- ✍ Financial contributions.
- ✍ Services Development Plan.
- ✍ Annual Plan.

Identifying the status of a road or street in the hierarchy enables developers to consider the effects that their activity may have on the hierarchy, enables Transit New Zealand and Hauraki District Council to programme their funding and works for road upgrading and maintenance and gives certainty to people making investment decisions as to the likely effects that may be experienced from adjoining roads.

Alterations in the roading hierarchy through either the resource consent, plan change and/or requirement process are open to public discussion and comment. These processes give the opportunity for Council to consider the implications of the alteration on the District Plan, as well as other facets of Council responsibilities and functions.

In summary, the protection and enhancement of the roading resource (being one of the physical resources of the District) has been recognised as an important objective of the District Plan. The continuation of the State Highway and District roading system to adjoining local authority areas, also makes roading a "cross boundary" issue. There is no one place in the District Plan where all of the matters relating to roading can be provided. Rather, the protection and enhancement of the roading network is a matter that is sought to be achieved by a number of methods in the Plan.

8.9.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The provision and enhancement of a road and street network that allows for the optimum accessibility throughout the District has to be matched with the resources available to achieve this. In addition, detrimental effects on the environment and amenity of the District resulting from traffic must be avoided, remedied or mitigated. The roads and streets of the District must be provided and maintained in a manner that is sustainable for future generations.

8.9.3 ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

The availability of a safe and convenient roading network for the benefit of both through and local traffic.

The avoidance, reduction or removal of adverse effects caused by activities on roads and/or caused by roads upon activities, the environment and amenity of an area.

Integration of land use management and the physical provision and funding of roads and streets.

A development of a roading structure that best serves the community and the environment.

8.9.4 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Objective 1

To provide a network of roads and streets that will meet current and future demands.

Objective 2

To ensure that the planning, traffic management, road improvement and financial programming are matched with existing problems, changing traffic requirements and current environmental protection standards.

Objective 3

To ensure the detrimental effects of activities conducted within the road reserve are avoided, remedied or mitigated, and the adverse effects of activities outside the road reserve on the safety and efficiency of roads and streets are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Policies for Objectives 1, 2 and 3

Objectives 1, 2 and 3 will be achieved by implementation of the following policies:

1. Establishing and updating a hierarchy of roads and streets and to classify roads and streets according to their traffic and access functions and requirements.
2. Developing a Services Development Plan and Annual Plan process to match funding with the required standard of District road or street construction appropriate to the status of the road or street in the hierarchy.
3. Developing a financial contributions strategy to ensure that roads and streets are upgraded and formed to match the demands that specific subdivision and development activities will place upon them.

4. Recognising that activities on a road/street may have a detrimental effect on adjacent land use activities and zoning adjoining land accordingly.
5. Ensuring the effects of activities do not adversely affect the economic and efficient operation of the road or street.

Reasons

1. The interrelationship between, and the effects of roads and streets on land use activities (and vice versa) needs to be recognised and provided for.
2. The District Plan and the roading hierarchy have an important role to play in the integration of roads and streets with land use activities, so as to avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of one on the other.

8.9.5 METHODS TO IMPLEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The principal method by which Council will implement the above objectives and policies through the District Plan is by the use of zones and rules to control and manage the road and street resource, as well as the adjoining land use activities.

Transit New Zealand has management of the state highway network and exercises that management through statutory and non-statutory methods (eg education). In particular, publications such as "Planning for a Safe and Efficient State Highway Network Under the Resource Management Act 1991" is a valuable education and information source.

Council recognises that there are procedures and funding mechanisms outside the District Plan that influence the development and standard of roading and streets in the District. In particular, the funding from Transit New Zealand is an important component.

There are a number of methods to provide for roads under the Act (eg requirement, resource consent or plan change). Changing of a road or street from one level on the hierarchy to another, or for the addition of a new road onto the hierarchy, can be achieved by any of those methods.

Monitoring of a number of elements will need to be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the road and street hierarchy. These include the following:

- ✍ Accident records.
- ✍ Service Development and Annual Plans and reports on achievement of programmes contained within them.
- ✍ Resource consents and compliance with the conditions attached to them.
- ✍ Enforcement action required to achieve compliance with the performance standards.

To integrate roading hierarchies across District and Regional boundaries and to ensure mismatches do not occur, consultation with Environment Waikato will be undertaken.

Reasons

1. Refer to Section 2.0 which sets out Council's main reasons for adopting a zone and rule based approach to the achievement of the objectives and policies.
2. Monitoring is the method proposed to be used for assessing the effectiveness of the District Plan.

