7.9 TRANSPORT NETWORK

7.9.1 BACKGROUND

(1) The economic, social and cultural wellbeing of people and communities in the District is heavily dependent on a safe, sustainable, integrated and affordable transport system. Savings in fuel consumption, time and vehicle wear and tear, as well as increased convenience for all, result 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 Resource Management Act 1991.

(2) The management of roads and streets is affected by the land use activities that obtain access from them. As such there needs to be integrated management between land use and transportation function in the roading hierarchy, so that roads and streets are not unduly compromised. There is also a need to ensure 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.

(3) Roads and streets require substantial investment in funding, energy and other resources in their construction and maintenance, so it is important to ensure value for money. 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 contaminants to air).

(4) The benefits of new road development have to be measured against the costs of developing and maintaining the road and street resource. New Zealand Transport Agency 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, including the following:

- **(a)** Weather conditions, particularly flooding in the Paeroa and Waihi areas.
- **(b)** The scenic corridor route and tourist destinations through parts of the District.
- **(c)** Traffic generated by the dairy, horticulture, mining and forestry industries.
- **(d)** 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.
- **(e)** Peat and other weak foundation conditions across the Hauraki Plains.

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

- **(a)** protecting the road/street resource;
- **(b)** the integrated management of the road/street resource and activities with the land use resource and activities;
- **(c)** 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.

(6) The hierarchy is used as a tool to assist in:

(a) setting the strategy of zones to provide for land use activities;

(b) determining the status that activities have (eg the status of the road that access is obtained from determines the activity status);

(c) obtaining financial contributions for activities that generate significant levels of traffic;

(d) developing the Asset Management Plan as it applies to roading and the Hauraki Long Term Plan and Annual Plan for the allocation of funds to upgrade and/or maintain roads.

(7) 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.

(8) PROTECTING THE ROAD RESOURCE

(a) 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.

(b) Zones and rules are used to control and manage land use activities adjacent to roads. With respect to zones, there are two aspects to this method. One is to zone land for activities that are not affected by the activities within the road (eg residential zones immediately adjoining a state highway are avoided), thereby allowing the road to operate without restraint. The other is to avoid allowing land use activities that generate significant volumes of traffic to establish without assessment and adequate provision of mitigation measures through the consent process.

(c) 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 community resources of the District.

(d) With respect to rules, a range of provisions are included in the District Plan, which are designed to protect the road resource. These include:

(i) Location of parking and loading spaces.

(ii) Vehicle access and crossings.

(iii) Protection of traffic sight lines.

(iv) Corner splays.

(v) Glare and lighting.

(vi) Signs.

(vii) Provision for cyclists and pedestrians.

(e) Compliance with these provisions allow activities to establish and operate without unacceptable adverse effects on the roading network.

(f) The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) also has a role in protecting the safety and efficiency of the state highway network by authorising the location and design of side road intersections and works within the state highway road corridor (including vehicle crossings).

(9) INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

(a) 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 New Zealand Transport Agency 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.

(b) 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's responsibilities and functions.

(c) In summary, the protection and enhancement of the transportation network (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 throughout the Plan.

7.9.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

(1) The efficient operation of the transport network has the potential to be adversely affected by the connection between the network and adjoining land, as well as through the adverse effects of land use activities and subdivision.

(2) Ad-hoc land use development which does not meet long-term strategic planning outcomes can adversely affect the transport network.

(3) The multi-function use of the transport network has the potential to impact on the safe and efficient functioning of the transport network.

(4) Sensitive land use developments in close proximity to roads carrying large volumes of traffic are exposed to nuisance effects such as noise and pollution.

(5) The roads and streets of the District must be provided and maintained in a manner that is sustainable for future generations.

7.9.3 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

(1) OBJECTIVE 1

Provide and maintain a safe and efficient transport network that will meet current and planned future demands with minimal effects on the environment and adjoining land uses.

(2) OBJECTIVE 2

Ensure the adverse effects of activities outside the road reserve on the safety and efficiency of the transport network are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

(a) Policies

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

(i) Establish and maintain a hierarchy of roads and streets and require the design and formation of the roads and streets according to their traffic and access functions and road user (including pedestrians and cyclists) requirements appropriate to the location.

(ii) Develop an Asset Management Plan, Hauraki Long Term 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.

(iii) Develop financial and/or development contributions strategies to ensure that roads and streets are upgraded and formed to match the demands that specific subdivision and development activities will place upon them.

(iv) Recognise that the function of the transport network may have a detrimental effect on adjacent land use activities and manage the development of adjoining land accordingly.

(v) Manage land use, vehicle access and traffic management to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the transport network, especially the regionally significant roading infrastructure.

(b) Reasons

(i) The transport network is a significant physical resource and asset that contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the District and Region. Managing this 'resource' and the effects associated with the use of this resource is an important element in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

(ii) The District Plan and the roading hierarchy have an important role to play in the integration of the transport network with land use activities, so as to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of one on the other.

7.9.4 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

(1) The availability of a safe and convenient transport network for the benefit of both through and local traffic.

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

(3) Integration of land use management and the physical provision and funding of the transport network.

(4) The development of a transport network that best serves the community and the environment.

7.9.5 RULES

(1) *Rules* that determine the type, scale and nature of activities permitted within the designated *road* reserve are contained in Section 7.4.5.

(2) Performance standards are provided in Sections 8.4.1 to 8.4.8, which set out the standards required to be met in relation to avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of land use activities on a *road* or street, and in Section 8.4.9 which sets out the standards required to be met by *roads* in avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of *roads* on adjoining land use activities.

(3) The formation and use of a proposed *road* (including an existing legal unformed *road*) which is part of a *subdivision* or *development* that is a *permitted*, *controlled*, *discretionary* or *non complying activity* shall assume the same activity status as the *subdivision* or *development*, and shall be assessed accordingly.

(4) Any proposed *road* (including an existing legal unformed *road*) that is not part of an activity as provided for in Rule 7.9.5(3) above, shall be assessed as a *discretionary activity*, unless the proposal is submitted as a requirement to designate or plan change or otherwise provided for in accordance with Section 7.4.5.

(5) *Rules* in Section 7.10 – FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS set out the circumstances and the method for assessing the level of contribution required to address the effects that *subdivision* or *development* place on *roads*.