

SECTION 6 : URBAN AREAS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The urban areas identified in this plan comprise the townships and settlements of the District. These can be grouped into three broad categories:

- Substantial towns with a strong commercial core that act as the District's major servicing, distribution and administration centres.
- Towns that contain a limited range of commercial activities but are important residential and local servicing towns.
- Rural settlements that have a low density of residential development with minimal commercial activities.

For a full description of the District's urban areas refer to Section 2.6 Built Environment on page 2:31 of this plan.

Within urban areas a number of distinct environments can be identified. These environments include the residential areas where people live; the business environments where people work, shop and socialise; and the industrial areas of the district.

This section of the plan identifies the issues relating to the District's urban areas; the objectives and policies to address those issues; the methods of implementation; and the environmental results anticipated. These provisions provide the basis for the more specific provisions contained in Sections 7-11 of this plan. Sections 7-11 each contain objectives, policies and rules specific to the distinct environments found within the component parts of the District's urban areas.

6.2 ISSUES

The significant resource management issues of the District's urban areas are set out below. Issue 6.2.1 to 6.2.3 are discussed in further detail in Sections 2.6 and 2.7 of the Plan.

6.2.1 Management of the District's Towns and Settlements, and Associated Services

The District's towns and their associated services are a significant resource of the District. Sustainable management of these resources must recognise that development patterns and amenity standards vary throughout the District's towns and settlements and therefore the acceptability of effects within certain categories of towns and settlements will be different. The managed development of the District's towns and settlements, and associated services, enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety whilst ensuring potential adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Cross Reference
Section 2.6.1
Objectives 6.3.1,
7.1.1, 7.1.2

6.2.2 Public Works and Network Utilities

The development and continued operation and maintenance of public works and network utilities is a vital component in providing for the social, economic and cultural wellbeing and health and safety of the people of the District. However, the construction and operation of such works can have significant adverse environmental effects particularly in terms of visual impact.

Cross Reference
Objectives
6.3.1, 6.3.2,
6.3.3 & 6.3.4
Section 13 -
Infrastructure,
Energy and
Utilities

6.2.3 Heritage Resources

The Central Otago District contains a significant number of heritage buildings and some towns contain precincts that have a distinct historical character. The District also contains a large number of archaeological and historic sites, particularly sites associated with early Maori and goldmining activities. These buildings, precincts and sites contribute to community wellbeing through their historical and cultural values, and also economically in terms of their worth to the tourism industry. However, modification and loss of significant historic buildings, sites, structures, precincts and streetscapes can occur due to a general lack of awareness and appreciation of historic values or the financial inability to maintain such resources.

Cross Reference
Objectives: 6.3.5
11.2.1, 11.2.2
14.3.1

6.2.4 Residential Character

The amenity values of areas that are predominantly residential in character can be adversely affected by activities that:

- Generate a significant increase in traffic movements particularly heavy vehicles and demand for parking.
- Generate excessive noise, glare or lightspill.
- Generate air pollution including odour.
- Use, store or generate hazardous substances or wastes.
- Introduce excessive security provisions including lighting and fencing.
- Introduce buildings and facades and structures at the road frontage that are not in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood.
- Involve the display of obtrusive signs.
- Cause a loss of a sense of amenity, security and companionship particularly at those times when an activity is dormant and neighbours are present.

Cross Reference
Objectives 6.3.1,
7.1.1, 7.1.2

The provisions of this Plan will ensure that the above effects within residential areas are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Explanation

Large parts of the urban area are predominantly residential in character with an amenity standard which is generally quiet, free from high traffic generating activities and has, on the whole, a pleasant visual appearance with buildings set back from road frontages and neighbouring properties. Buildings are generally not more than two stories high and are set on landscaped sites.

Activities currently located in these areas do not generally generate high levels of traffic, smoke, odour or other noxious effects. Allowing activities that generate these effects into areas that are predominantly residential in character would have significant adverse effects on the environment.

6.2.5 Density of Development

The density of development within the District's urban areas is generally low in residential areas and higher in business areas. Density of development can have a significant effect on the amenity values of individual neighbourhoods.

*Cross Reference
Objective 6.3.1*

Explanation

The density of development within the business areas of the District's towns is an essential element for convenience and in conveying the character and image of a town. Buildings are generally built right to the street and form a continuous frontage. Verandahs often extend over the footpath, while signs are displayed to attract people to premises and advertise goods.

Conversely, some settlements and residential areas of towns are valued because of their low density of development, which often affords greater privacy and access to sunlight and views for residents, with less noise and traffic.

6.2.6 Bulk and Location of Buildings

Buildings and development within the District's urban areas can adversely impact on adjoining properties by restricting their access to sunlight and reducing their privacy. The orientation of allotments in subdivisions and of buildings can also affect access to sunlight.

*Cross Reference
Objective 7.1.2*

Explanation

Because these areas are intensely developed compared to the Rural Resource Area, people value good access to sunlight and a reasonable level of privacy. The bulk and location of structures on adjoining sites can adversely affect these values. Access to these resources must be balanced against the reasonable use of the adjoining property.

By the same token the orientation of allotments on a plan of subdivision and the positioning of a building on an allotment, can also affect the ability of people to fully utilise the benefits of sunlight for passive heating purposes.

6.2.7 **Business Areas**

The business areas of the District's main towns are a significant resource which contain substantial public and private investment in buildings and physical services. These areas are generally the community focal points of the district and convey the town's image to residents and visitors alike. The character and sustainable management of these areas can be compromised by sporadic growth.

*Cross Reference
Objective 6.3.1*

Explanation

The business areas of the District's towns are not a natural system and therefore they cannot adapt to changing circumstances without human intervention. To maintain these areas as the focal points of the District's towns and as vibrant attractive places to work and shop, some management through the provisions of this plan is necessary. Sporadic growth of business areas can have the following adverse effects:

- Detraction from visual amenity values through the erection of buildings and signs of a scale or design that are not in keeping with the existing built environment.
- Traffic congestion through poorly designed and located developments that generate high traffic levels.
- A reduction in amenity values in quiet, peaceful neighbourhoods through the development of activities which generate significant traffic levels, noise or other adverse effects.

6.2.8 **Industrial Activities**

Industrial activities often generate significant adverse environmental effects that would adversely affect residential or commercial activities. These effects include:

- **The generation of high levels of heavy traffic.**
- **The generation of waste.**
- **The generation of odour, dust, noise, lightspill and electrical interference.**
- **Detraction from visual amenity due to large buildings of stark appearance, the storage or stockpiling of materials and a general absence of plantings and landscaping.**

*Cross Reference
Objective 6.3.1*

Explanation

Industrial activities tend to be located within large purpose built buildings with little visual appeal. The activities themselves may create noise, odour and use or store hazardous substances or generate wastes. Heavy vehicles are normally used to transport materials and products to and from these activities. Consequently, more sensitive activities such as residential or commercial activities can be adversely affected by these activities.

6.2.9 **Community and Emergency Service Activities**

Community facilities including emergency service activities play a significant role in providing for the health and safety of people and communities. However, these activities often have unique qualities and/or characteristics that do not sit comfortably with the environment within which they need to locate.

*Cross Reference
Objective 6.3.6*

Explanation

Activities such as churches, halls, police stations, fire stations and ambulance stations are critical components within communities providing for social wellbeing, health and safety. These activities generally need to locate in urban areas but are not always compatible with the surrounding environment.

6.2.10 The Effects of Land Use on Adjoining Rural Areas

The adverse effects of land use activities within urban areas on adjoining rural areas need to be avoided, remedied or mitigated. Urban land use activities may:

- a) compromise amenity values of the rural environment;
- b) adversely affect the sustainable management of natural and physical resources (in particular water quality and infrastructure);
- c) create situations where effects of existing primary production and residential activities come into conflict.

Such effects are to be addressed when determining the future extent of the districts urban areas.

Explanation

The adverse effects of land use activities within urban areas on adjoining rural areas need to be addressed. This is consistent with the approach to residential development in the Rural Resource Area – see Issue 4.2.15 page 4:5. This issue is of particular relevance when determining the extent of urban areas within the District, as shown on the Planning Maps.

Cross Reference
Issue: 4.2.15
Objectives: 6.3.1,
6.3.3, 6.3.4

6.3 OBJECTIVES

- 6.3.1 Objective - Needs of People and Communities**
To promote the sustainable management of the urban areas in order to:
- (a) Enable the people and communities of the district to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety; and
 - (b) Meet the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of these people and communities
- Cross Reference*
Issues 6.2.1 to 6.2.9
Policy 6.4.1
See Sections 7-9
- 6.3.2 Objective - Amenity Values**
To manage urban growth and development so as to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the environmental quality and amenity values of the particular environments found within the District's urban areas.
- Cross Reference*
Issues 6.2.1, 6.2.5, 6.2.7, 6.2.8
Policy 6.4.1
See Sections 7 to 9
- 6.3.3 Objective - Adverse Effects on Natural and Physical Resources**
To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of urban areas on the natural and physical resources of the District.
- Cross Reference*
Issue 6.2.1
Policy 6.4.2
- 6.3.4 Objective - Urban Infrastructure**
To promote the sustainable management of the District's urban infrastructure to meet the present and reasonably foreseeable needs of the District's communities.
- Cross Reference*
Issues 6.2.1, 6.2.2
Policy 6.4.2
- 6.3.5 Objective – Heritage Values**
To recognise and protect the heritage values of the District's urban areas.
- Cross Reference*
Issue 6.2.3
Policy 6.4.3
Sections 11 and 14
- 6.3.6 Objective - Community and Emergency Service Activities**
To enable and promote the provision of accessible community facilities and emergency service activities, to meet the social, economic, cultural, health and safety needs of the community.
- Cross Reference*
Issue 6.2.9
Policy 6.4.4

6.4 POLICIES

6.4.1 Policy - Maintenance of Quality of Life within Urban Areas
To maintain and, where practicable, enhance the quality of life for people and communities within the District's urban areas through:

- (a) **Identifying and providing for a level of amenity which is acceptable to the community; and**
- (b) **Avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects on the community's social, economic and cultural wellbeing and health and safety which may result from the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources, and**
- (c) **Recognising that change is inevitable in the use of land to enable the community to provide for its wellbeing.**

Cross Reference

Objectives:

6.3.1, 6.3.2

Methods:

6.5.1 to 6.5.4

Explanation

The urban areas of the District contain a number of distinct environments within which the acceptability of effects is quite different. There are important features, qualities and values within each of these environments which contribute to the community's quality of life.

While each of these environments provides for the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of the District's population they also have a distinct purpose. Council's consultation with the public has indicated that it is desirable that a number of these distinct environments be maintained and enhanced.

6.4.2 Policy - Expansion of Urban Areas
To enable the expansion of urban areas or urban infrastructure in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on:

- (a) **Adjoining rural areas.**
- (b) **Outstanding landscape values.**
- (c) **The natural character of water bodies and their margins.**
- (d) **Heritage values.**
- (e) **Sites of cultural importance to Kai Tahu ki Otago.**
- (f) **The integrity of existing network utilities and infrastructure, including their safe and efficient operation.**
- (g) **The life supporting capacity of land resources.**
- (h) **The intrinsic values of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats of significant indigenous fauna.**

Cross Reference

Issues: 4.2.15, 6.2.10

*Objectives: 6.3.3,
6.3.4*

Methods: 6.5.1, 6.5.2

*Section 15 Financial
Contributions*

*Regional Plan : Air
Policies 11.1.1, 12.1.1*

Explanation

The expansion of existing urban areas or the development of new urban areas has the potential to create significant adverse effects. The cost to the general public of extending infrastructure to service new urban areas must not outweigh the public benefits to be gained. Furthermore, the safe and efficient operation of existing infrastructure must not be compromised. The values associated with the area to be developed must also be assessed to ensure landscape, soil, water, and heritage resources are not adversely affected by the expansion.

6.4.3 Policy - Heritage Resources

To ensure heritage values are recognised and provided for in the use and development of the natural and physical resources found within the District's urban areas.

Cross Reference
Objective: 6.3.5
Methods: 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 6.5.3, 6.5.4
Section 11 Heritage Precincts
Section 14 Buildings, Sites and Trees of Heritage Value

Explanation

The District's towns have many heritage buildings which serve to reinforce the district's identity and past. These buildings have both intrinsic and economic value and are considered a valuable resource of the District.

6.4.4 Policy - Community and Emergency Service Activities

To recognise the special characteristics and needs of community and emergency service activities and to ensure that they are accessible and convenient for the community they serve, while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects on:

- (a) Amenity values,
- (b) Environmental qualities of neighbouring properties, and
- (c) The safe and efficient operation of the roading network and other community infrastructure.

Cross Reference
Objective 6.3.6
Method 6.5.2

Explanation

Community facilities are important to the District as they enable the community to meet social, cultural, health and safety needs. Provision needs to be made for such activities while ensuring adverse effects on adjoining properties and services are not significant.

6.5 METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

6.5.1 **The Creation of Resource Areas and Heritage Precincts**

The District Planning maps identify the following “Resource Areas” for urban areas;

- Residential
- Business
- Industrial
- Rural Settlements

Heritage precincts are also identified.

Reason

These areas have been identified on the basis of the particular environmental characteristics of each area. It is considered that this identification and the management of effects on the basis of distinct resource areas and heritage precincts will best promote the sustainable management of the natural and physical resources of the urban areas of the district. The creation of the Resource Areas has also allowed for the expansion of the urban area in circumstances where Policy 6.4.2 is not compromised.

6.5.2 **Rules**

Each Resource Area will have a particular set of rules with the purpose of avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of land use and subdivision, and maintaining and enhancing the amenity values of that area. Heritage precinct rules complement Resource Area rules.

Reason

In some instances the only means of ensuring that adverse effects will be avoided, remedied or mitigated is by using rules. Rules are the only methods that can be readily enforced.

6.5.3 **Promotion of Community Projects**

The Council proposes to undertake initiatives from time to time to enhance the amenities of urban areas. These initiatives will be promoted through the Strategic Plan and Annual Plan Process.

Reason

Projects undertaken by the community to upgrade facilities and streetscapes can have a positive impact on the sustainable management of the District’s urban areas. However, these can only be promoted and carried out through the Strategic Plan and Annual Plan process.

6.5.4 **Education, Information and Incentives**

Council shall encourage individuals and local communities to maintain and enhance buildings and streetscapes of heritage and/or amenity value by, where appropriate, assisting building owners and communities with the provision of design information and advice. Council may also give consideration to incentives for restoration work and community projects.

*Cross References
Sections 7 to 11*

*Cross Reference
Sections 7.3, 8.3,
9.3, 10.3, 11.3*

*Cross Reference
Policy 6.4.1, 6.4.3*

*Cross Reference
Policy 6.4.1, 6.4.3*

Reason

In conjunction with Method 6.5.3, the provision of information in various forms on matters such as the management of heritage buildings, sympathetic design for buildings and signs, coupled with incentives can have significant positive impacts on the amenity values of the District's urban areas.

6.5.5 Parking Development in the Business Resource Area

To provide for parking demand in the Business Resource Area through the provision of public carparking development except for on-site requirements associated with large traffic generating activities. On-site requirements for parking may be relaxed where this will result in retention of a heritage item that would otherwise be lost.

*Cross Reference
Policy 6.4.1
Rule 12.7.2 (pg
12:16)*

Reason

Most sites within the District's Business Resource Areas are fully developed and cannot provide on-site parking. Parking facilities that are integrated with existing infrastructure and serve the needs of all people who use these areas are best provided by the Council rather than making small, isolated provision for parking associated with individual businesses. Large traffic generators will continue to be required to provide for their own parking needs.

6.6 PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR ADOPTING OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND METHODS

The promotion of sustainable management requires Council to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse effects on the environment, which includes communities, amenity values and infrastructure. Section 7 of the Act requires Council to have particular regard to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and environmental qualities when preparing District Plans.

Council's consultation process when preparing this plan identified that a reasonable standard of environmental quality and maintenance of current amenity values within the District's urban areas is a significant resource management issue in the Central Otago District. Identifying different environments within the urban area on the basis of their current amenity values and environmental quality, and maintaining these levels through specific objectives, policies and rules, is considered the most appropriate option to address this issue and promote the sustainable management of the District's urban areas.

The approach adopted is also consistent with the Otago Regional Council's Regional Policy Statement.

Cross Reference
Sections 6.4 and 6.5
Section 7
Residential
Resource Area
Section 8 Business
Resource Area
Section 9 Industrial
Resource Area
Section 10 Rural
Settlements
Section 11 Heritage
Precincts

6.7 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED

- 6.7.1** Retention of urban areas which are pleasant and peaceful places to live in.
- 6.7.2** Providing for areas within which business and industrial activities can operate without compromising the environmental quality and amenity values of neighbouring areas.
- 6.7.3** The sustainable management of network utility services, including roading.
- 6.7.4** A reduction in conflict between land uses and the operation of the roading network.
- 6.7.5** Safe, compact and vibrant town centres providing a wide range of opportunities for the community's business needs.
- 6.7.6** Rural settlements comprising a mixture of land uses and with a low density of development that creates a pleasant living and working atmosphere.
- 6.7.7** Adverse effects on adjoining rural areas will be avoided, remedied or mitigated through the integrated management of such effects.