



Nelson City Council Consultation Document

Review of the Regional Policy Statement

September 2007

Table of Contents

1. Review of the Regional Policy Statement.....	5
2. Vision.....	9
3. List of priority issues	10
4. Issues, objectives and explanations (draft).....	11
4.1 Priority one issues	11
Urban growth	11
Energy	12
Land Transport.....	13
Air Quality	14
Freshwater Quality.....	15
Freshwater Quantity.....	15
Waste.....	17
4.2 Priority two issues	18
The Coast	18
Greenhouse gas emissions	19
Climate Change.....	19
Biodiversity.....	20
Heritage.....	20
Landscapes and natural features	21
Hazardous substances and contaminated sites	21
4.3 Priority three issues	22
Nuclear issues	22
Protecting the health and productivity of Nelson’s soils	22
Managing risks from genetic engineering.....	23

1. Review of the Regional Policy Statement

Introduction

Nelson's Regional Policy Statement is due for review because the Resource Management Act requires a 10 yearly review of planning documents. This is an opportunity to look ahead at the upcoming environmental challenges that Nelson is likely to face over the next 10 years. The Council wants your input on:

- RPS vision
- What are the significant resource management issues for Nelson
- What are the priority issues.

What is a Regional Policy Statement?

A Regional Policy Statement (RPS) is required by the Resource Management Act (RMA) to

- provide an overview of the significant resource management issues of the region, and
- policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the region.

The RPS sets the direction for resource management plans and their methods including rules and/or non-regulatory strategies such as the biodiversity and heritage strategies completed this year. Please see Figure 1 on the following page which sets out the statutory context for the RPS.

Why is a vision included?

A vision is not required in a RPS under the Resource Management Act. It has been included to clearly state the long term outcome, expressed specifically in a Nelson context, that the Council wants to achieve through the RPS. It complements the generalised purpose and principles of section 5 of the Resource Management Act. This outcomes focus should also provide better linkage between the Community Outcomes in the Long Term Council Community Plan and the RPS.

How does the Regional Policy Statement fit in with all the other Council documents?

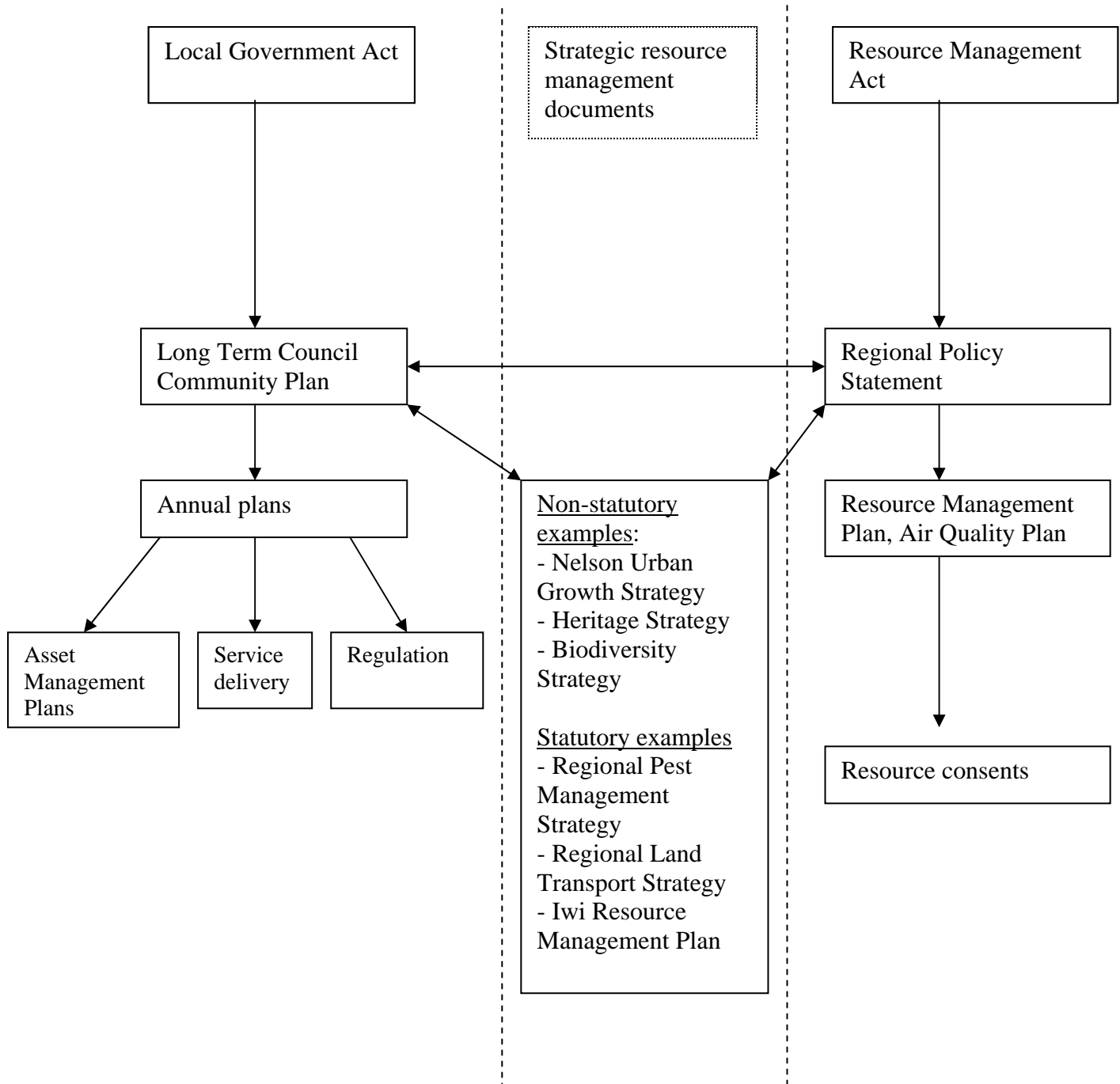
The RPS will directly influence the Resource Management Plan and Air Quality Plan because the Act now requires these resource management plans to give effect to the RPS (see Figure 1 on the following page). The RPS will help guide any future review of the Resource Management Plan and any changes to it.

The RPS will also identify gaps in our non-regulatory approaches. It should prioritise actions in the non-regulatory areas such as education, provision of works and services, and monitoring.

The RPS will influence the review of the Long Term Council Community Plan in 2009. There is an opportunity in the review of the RPS to provide more detail on how to achieve the Community Outcomes relating to resource management matters,

particularly Goal 1 (healthy land, sea, air and water) and Goal 2 (people friendly places).

Figure 1 - Statutory Context for the Regional Policy Statement



What is a resource management issue?

Resource management is a broad term relating to how natural and physical resources are managed. Examples of natural resources are the coast, freshwater, land, and air. Examples of physical resources are buildings, roads and the electricity network. Resource management issues are those problems or conflicts arising from how people and communities use, manage or protect these resources. The RPS needs to address:

- the effects of our activities on air, water, soil and ecosystems,
- allocation of resources especially when a resource is scarce,
- effects on others arising from resource use, and
- the long term needs of future communities and people.

The process so far

The review process started late last year. Councillors have met for three workshops, with the following outputs:

- a vision statement
- a list of significant resource management issues for Nelson
- grouping of those issues into priority one, two and three categories
- draft wording of the issues and objectives

The criteria used to establish whether issues are regionally significant were: scale of the problem, vulnerability/risk, scarcity or uniqueness, how big an issue is for the community, Council's ability to influence the outcome, cumulative effect, and low probability but high potential effect.

For example, urban air quality is a significant problem because it affects a large proportion of Nelson's population whereas the noise of logging trucks in Nile Street is a localised issue so is not a significant regional issue.

Once the regionally significant issues were identified, they were grouped as priority one, two or three. Please see the List of Priority Issues on page 10, for a summary of the priorities.

What difference will it make whether something is priority 1, 2 or 3?

The Council has chosen to prioritise the issues. This will help the Council to target resources and work programmes to the most pressing resource management issues facing Nelson. That does not mean the second and third priority issues are unimportant, simply that they are lower priority work for the 10 year life of this RPS.

What happens next?

There are a number of parties with whom the Council is required to consult during the review of the RPS. They are the Minister for the Environment, other Ministers of the Crown who may be affected by the policy statement, local authorities who may be affected, and tangata whenua of the area who may be affected.

In addition, the Council wants feedback from members of the community who have an interest in how Nelson will address resource management issues over the next ten years. Then the Council will prepare a draft RPS for further consultation.

Iwi consultation

The Council will meet with iwi over the next few months to discuss how best to integrate resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities within the revised RPS.

A regional policy statement must state resource management issues of significance to iwi authorities in the region. The Resource Management Act requires the Council to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with the Council, to the extent that its content has a bearing on resource management issues of the region. In Nelson, an important document is the Nga Taonga Tuku Iho Ki Whakatu Management Plan (2004) which outlines resource management issues of significance to iwi.

Why not prepare a combined RPS with Tasman?

The option of a combined Nelson-Tasman RPS was explored, but is not achievable at this stage due to the different timeframes for RPS review within which the two councils are currently working.

Why not combine the RPS with the Nelson Resource Management Plan?

Combining Nelson's RPS and Resource Management Plan was also considered. The Council has decided to keep the two documents separate at this stage because the Nelson Resource Management Plan has only recently been made operative. There is the option to combine them during the next review of the Nelson Resource Management Plan (before 2014).

There is considerable overlap between the existing RPS, the Nelson Resource Management Plan and Nelson Air Quality Plan, because these plans have implemented many of the policies and methods in the RPS. The Council does not intend to review recently developed provisions such as the Air Quality Plan, the Freshwater Plan Change, the Biodiversity Strategy and the Heritage Strategy. The revised RPS will primarily focus on other issues which still need addressing.

2. Vision

Nelson is committed to achieving a high quality of life and environment for present and future generations.

Nelson takes action to achieve:

- clean air, freshwater and coastal water
- a city with character and connectivity, that offers diverse housing, work, and lifestyle opportunities
- increased use of walking, cycling and public transport as means of travelling
- an efficient network of roads
- energy and water efficient buildings and activities
- increased use of renewable energy sources, particularly solar energy
- reduced waste disposed to landfill
- protection and enhancement of biodiversity, and recognition of the interdependence of all species
- a clear distinction between urban and rural areas
- economic activity that is sensitive to the environment
- protection of heritage and taonga
- wise use of both renewable and non-renewable resources, that respects the limits of the natural environment

3. List of priority issues

Priority 1

Urban growth

Energy

Land transport

Air quality

Freshwater quality

Freshwater quantity

Waste

Priority 2

The Coast

Greenhouse gas emissions

Climate change

Biodiversity

Heritage

Landscapes and natural features

Hazardous substances and contaminated sites

Priority 3

Nuclear issues

Protecting the health and productivity of Nelson's soils

Managing risks from genetic engineering

4. Issues, objectives and explanations (draft)

4.1 Priority one issues

Urban growth

Issue 1 - land shortage

Land suitable for residential, commercial and industrial development is expected to become severely limited by 2026. Currently most of Nelson's development is low density, which is not efficient use of the scarce land resource, or existing infrastructure.

Objective

More intensive and efficient use of land suitable for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Explanation

Land available for development is limited by Nelson's topography and by the cost of extending infrastructure outside the existing city's boundaries. These factors, combined with population growth, means land for residential, commercial and industrial development will be in short supply. More intensive use of land (eg more dwellings or office space per hectare) will be required. Intensification of land use is more efficient. It can also assist in providing affordable housing, and is in line with the trend to smaller households and quality urban design principles. Higher density development assists in reducing traffic generation by making alternatives to car use more viable. Alternatives include public transport, walking and cycling.

Issue 2– quality of development

Without the careful application of quality urban design and planning principles, more intensive development of land is likely to erode the amenity values that make Nelson a desirable place to live.

Objective

Residential, commercial and industrial development sustains and enhances the quality of Nelson's environment and lifestyle.

Explanation

Successful towns and cities provide a high quality of life where people choose to live and work. They provide attractive living environments, they offer good leisure and recreational opportunities, and they support a thriving cultural life. Liveable places provide choices in housing types, work, transport and lifestyle opportunities. This will become increasingly important in Nelson as the population is both growing and ageing. Successful cities are easy to move around, with accessible services and a variety of integrated transport options that include walking and cycling. Their public spaces are accessible, well used and safe. Liveable places are healthy places to live, and they have low levels of crime.

Creating liveable communities requires consideration of how neighbourhoods are structured, access to amenities, protection of natural features and provision of quality public and private space. There is more potential for amenity values to be degraded in higher density development areas if insufficient attention is given to detailed design. Applying quality urban design and planning principles will assist in delivering quality living environments.

Issue 3 – conflicts between strategic infrastructure and neighbouring land uses

The potential for conflict increases as growth in the use of, or demand for, strategic infrastructure such as the port and airport, transport corridors, electricity transmission network impacts on, or is impacted by, potentially incompatible land uses such as intensified residential development. This conflict between competing uses is caused by a shortage of suitable land for development, as well as population and economic growth.

Objective

Strategic infrastructure, such as the Port, Nelson Airport, transport corridors and utility networks, are enabled to function efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of a growing region while avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects on the community.

Explanation

Continuing growth, development and land use change in Nelson requires a co-ordinated and integrated strategic approach to land use change and the timing, location, quality and efficiency of new or upgraded infrastructure. A city that thrives socially and economically relies on infrastructure that is built at the right time with sufficient capacity but that fits within the existing environment, resulting in a high quality environment.

Energy

Issue – costs of energy use

Future access to energy is limited by increasing financial and environmental costs, and the natural limits of finite resources. Dependence on external sources of energy makes the region's economic and social well-being vulnerable to cost and supply uncertainties. Nelson is at the supply end for electricity and is vulnerable to more frequent or extended periods without electricity supply.

Objectives

1. Efficient use of energy.
2. Greater use of local renewable energy sources, including solar energy.
3. Greater security of energy supply.

Explanation

The financial costs of fossil fuels reflect their finite nature, transportation costs and taxes. The environmental costs of fossil fuels are air pollution, and their contribution to climate change. By using energy more efficiently and capitalising on local renewable energy sources, such as solar energy, Nelson can reduce the environmental costs of energy generation and dependence on external energy sources.

Land Transport

Issue 1 – increased vehicle movements

Population increases and economic growth will result in more vehicle movements and congestion unless Nelson reduces its reliance on private vehicles. Long term, business-as-usual transport solutions will have adverse effects on: convenience, cost, productivity, community dislocation, air quality, and the essential qualities and characteristics that make Nelson a desirable place to live. Ongoing reliance on private vehicles also contributes to climate change.

Objective

A transport network that broadens the existing range of transport options and reduces reliance on private vehicles, by providing multi-modal solutions¹ and travel demand management.²

Explanation

The congestion levels currently experienced on Nelson roads are likely to increase. Nelson is relatively compact but built around nodes of concentrated activity on a central transport spine supported by short feeder roads. There are limited options for increasing roading capacity and managing the effects of transport from: a growing and ageing population, an industrial base driven by raw material processing in central and port locations, and the growing influence of commuting communities. Maintaining a high quality of life and environment will increasingly rely on multi-modal solutions and travel demand management.

Issue 2 - freight

There is heavy reliance on road transport for freight movements.

Objective

A broader range of transport options for the movement of freight.

Explanation

As a coastal city without a railway, alternatives to the use of roads are shipping and air transportation.

¹ Multi-modal solutions include walking, cycling and public transport.

² Travel Demand Management seeks to reduce the need for people to travel or, if they have to travel, provide encouragement to use sustainable forms of travel.

Air Quality

Issue – winter air pollution

(From A4-5 of the Air Quality Plan)

There are regular exceedances of PM₁₀ guideline values during winter in the urban area of Nelson. Most of the particulates are discharged into the air from domestic heating, with further contributions from industry and transport. Poor air quality affects the health of the community. It can cause premature death and affects the day-to-day lives of people through lung and respiratory complaints and may restrict people's participation in some activities.

Objective

(From A5-1 of the Air Quality Plan)

The maintenance, and the enhancement where it is degraded, of Nelson's ambient air quality, and the avoidance, mitigation or remediation of any adverse effects on the environment of localised discharges into air.

Explanation

Nelson's topography and weather conditions are part of the reason why Nelson has high PM₁₀ concentrations. Cold air drainage brings air pollutants from the hills into valleys. During calm cool days and nights an inversion layer of warmer air covers the city and traps cold air containing PM₁₀ and other pollutants in the valleys and the flats.

During the worst case situation in winter (i.e. on the coldest days when most fires are being used) the sources of PM₁₀ are:

- Domestic 86.8%
- Industry 6%
- Vehicles 7.2%

This is the average across the urban area and varies in different parts e.g. 92% of wintertime PM₁₀ comes from domestic fires in Airshed A (hospital valley), and only 2% from industry. In Tahunanui domestic is 66% and industrial sources increase to 26%. Vehicles are mostly 7-9% in all airsheds.

The use of open fires will be prohibited from January 2008. The more polluting types of enclosed burners will be progressively phased out, in order to meet the requirements of both the Air Quality Plan and the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (2004). The national regulations were issued under sections 43 and 44 of the Resource Management Act and apply nationally. This means that each regional, city or district council must enforce the same standard. In some circumstances, councils can impose stricter standards. The 14 air quality standards include:

- seven standards banning activities that discharge significant quantities of dioxins and other toxics into the air
- five standards for ambient (outdoor) air quality
- a design standard for new wood burners installed in urban areas
- a requirement for landfills over 1 million tonnes of refuse to collect greenhouse gas emissions.

Freshwater Quality

Issue – water quality and stream health

Water quality and other characteristics of stream health are below acceptable standards in most of Nelson's urban streams and some rural streams. Improving water quality is difficult, because contamination is primarily occurring from diffuse water runoff from land. Adjacent land uses and direct modification of stream beds, have also impacted on the life-supporting capacity of streams. Adverse impacts include loss of riparian vegetation, changes to stream bed substrate and obstacles to fish passage.

Objective

(From Objective DO19.1 of the Nelson RM Plan.)

All surface water bodies contain the highest practicable water quality.

Explanation

Water quality is below an acceptable standard in almost all urban rivers and streams. Exceptions are the Maitai and the Brook (mid to upper reaches), and the upper reaches of both Poormans Stream and Todd Valley Stream. Generally, the more urbanised a catchment is, the worse the water quality of streams in the area. The causes are a combination of urban stormwater runoff and loss of natural character of stream environments.

Water quality is below an acceptable standard in the following rural streams: Hillwood, Waihi Creek and the Lud River. Bacterial contamination, low oxygen and elevated nitrate levels suggest stock access and general run off from pasture is influencing water quality. However, other factors could be fertiliser run off and malfunctioning septic tanks.

Freshwater Quantity

Issue 1 – conflicting uses and values of water

Increasing demand for water, as a result of population growth and variable climatic conditions, will create the potential for more conflict between competing in-stream and out-of-stream uses and values of the water.

Issue 2 - long term water supply for Nelson

In the long term, predicted population growth will result in demand for water exceeding the supply available from the Maitai dam and Roding sources by 2059. Additional sources of water are likely to be required at that time.

Issue 3 – access to potable water in Nelson North

Nelson North residents are reliant on private water supplies, and in some areas there is not enough water available from rainwater harvesting, surface water or groundwater sources to supply nearby households.

Objectives

1. Flow levels in Nelson streams that provide for natural, cultural and recreational values.
2. A reliable and secure long term water supply for the Nelson community.
3. Efficient use of water by the Nelson community.

Explanation

Water is a limited resource in Nelson due to relatively low rainfall, often characterised by summer to autumn droughts. Low flows can result in unacceptable stress in fish, and other aquatic animals and plants. Efficient use of water respects the natural limits of the environment and leaves as much water as possible in rivers for maintenance of instream values.

By far the greatest abstractive demand placed on Nelson's rivers is the urban water supply, and this demand is predicted to grow along with Nelson's population. The choices for increasing Nelson's water supply are expensive. Using water more efficiently has the economic benefit of delaying the need for new investment in expansion of water supply infrastructure.

Continuity of water supply is essential to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the community. The Council is investigating a number of issues relating to Nelson's long term use of water including demand management and future water sources.

The Climate Change Office predictions³ show that the most likely trend for Nelson is that winters will become wetter and other seasons will be drier than they have been in the past. By 2030 the projected (percentage) changes in rainfall (from 1990) are:

Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Annual
-16 to +1	-10 to +4	-3 to +15	-11 to +4	-7 to +2

³ From: Climate Change Effects and Impacts Assessment – A guidance manual for Local Government in New Zealand. Prepared for MfE/Climate Change Office, May 2004.

Waste

Issue – waste of resources

Since the opening of York Valley Landfill in 1987 the rate of waste to landfill has increased by approximately 5% per year. In the 2004/05 year 46,500 tonnes was disposed to York Valley Landfill. This represents inefficient use of resources and imposes financial and environmental costs to dispose of the waste. Reducing the amount of waste the Nelson community generates and discards is dependent on individuals' willingness to make different purchasing decisions, and separate more materials at source. It is also dependent on the community having access to sufficient facilities for reusing, recycling and composting materials.

Objectives

1. (From Solid Waste Asset Management Plan 2005-2008.)
By 2009, stabilisation of the amount of waste disposed to landfill per annum.
2. Reduction of commercial and industrial waste.

Explanation

Waste represents an inefficient use of limited natural and physical resources. The ability to use resources efficiently is central to the goal of being a sustainable community. The most bulky items disposed to landfill are construction and demolition waste (steel, rubble and timber), which make up 39% of the waste total.

Approximately 30% of waste disposed to York Valley Landfill is organic material. When food and garden waste is composted it decomposes aerobically, producing carbon dioxide. When organic waste is disposed to landfill it decomposes anaerobically because it is not exposed to air. This process produces methane.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas. Even with the use of technology to capture and reuse methane, a large proportion of the methane will escape into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming. One tonne of methane emissions is equivalent to 21 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

4.2 Priority two issues

The Coast

Issue 1 – public safety and amenity

The potential for public safety risks, and impacts on amenity, as a result of incompatible activities using the Coastal Marine Area including: Port operations, shipping, boat maintenance slipways, treated effluent discharges, recreational boats and swimmers, and, potentially, exclusive use of a coastal marine area for aquaculture purposes.

Objective

(From CM4 of the RM Plan)

Public safety and amenity values in the Coastal Marine Area are maintained or enhanced.

Issue 2 – natural character and life supporting capacity of the coastal environment

The natural character and life-supporting capacity of the Coastal Marine Area has been affected by the introduction of exotic species and by human activities such as adjacent land use, the placement of structures, as well as direct and diffuse discharges including stormwater.

Objective

(From CM1 of the RM Plan)

The natural character and life-supporting capacity of coastal ecosystems is maintained or enhanced.

Issue 3 – public access

The potential for public access to the coast to be compromised by private land use adjacent to the coast, traffic barriers, or from an exclusive occupation of part of the Coastal Marine Area as a result of activities such as aquaculture.

Objective

Public access to the coast is maintained or enhanced.

Explanation for the Coast section

Nelson has the largest fishing port in New Zealand, and a growing recreation fleet. Port Nelson attracts a number of international shipping lines. Forestry products, fruit, fish and fuels provide the base of the region's export/import cargo to global markets.

The Coastal Marine Area is defined in the Nelson Resource Management Plan as the foreshore, seabed, and coastal water, and the air space above the water. It encompasses many resources of significance to Nelson, including recreation areas, cultural sites, coastal fisheries, and estuarine and coastal habitats. Potential increases in coastal activities such as shipping, aquaculture and recreation may result in more conflict and adverse effects on the Coastal Marine Area.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Issue – greenhouse gas emissions

Nelson's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is likely to increase with population growth unless the community changes its current types and levels of energy use, as well as the amount of methane generation.

Objectives

1. Stabilisation of greenhouse gas emissions and reductions where practicable.
2. Offset of unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration projects.

Explanation

Energy sources that emit carbon dioxide include coal, gas, petrol and diesel. Anaerobic decomposition of organic waste produces methane. It will take a global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but small steps taken by individuals, supported by bigger steps of governments and businesses, will make a difference. Even relatively small communities such as Nelson can influence outcomes by taking a leadership role. This issue is closely linked to the urban growth, energy, land transport and waste issues.

Climate Change

Issue – effects of climate change

The effects of climate change, including sea level rise, higher temperatures, and changing rainfall patterns, are likely to increase risks from natural hazards.

Objective

A community that is adequately prepared for changing climatic conditions.

Explanation

Impacts experienced in Nelson as a result of climate change could include more frequent and widespread flooding of low lying infrastructure and buildings. Extended droughts could also affect water availability and the health of freshwater ecosystems. This issue is closely linked to the urban growth, land transport issues, freshwater and biodiversity issues.

Biodiversity

Issue - loss of biodiversity

The Nelson environment has been extensively modified by human occupation which has resulted in a loss of indigenous biodiversity. Further local extinctions of indigenous plants and animals are likely to occur due to the continuing spread of pests and weeds, and the fragmentation and degradation of habitats.

Objectives

1. (From Nelson Biodiversity Strategy 2007-2009)
Nelson's biodiversity is maintained or enhanced.
2. Management of established pests and weeds.
3. Eradication of new incursions of harmful pests and weeds before populations become established.

Explanation

Nelson has remnants of its pre-human native forests, wetlands and original marine ecosystems. Many species are gone forever, and the native plants and animals that remain in Nelson live in ecosystems where the consequences of human activity dominate.

Local extinctions of native plants and animals are continuing and the invasion of major native forest remnants by pests and weeds continues. If temperature increases occur in Nelson as a result of climate change, new pest and weed species are expected to arrive in the region. Rapid and coordinated action between Biosecurity New Zealand, Department of Conservation and local councils is required in order to control pest incursions as soon as they become apparent.

Heritage

Issue – loss of heritage features and sites

(From RI13.1.i of the RM Plan)

Loss of important heritage features and sites due to their destruction, or as a result of modification that is unsympathetic or incompatible with their heritage values. The cost of maintaining heritage resources also affects the extent to which they are retained.

Objective

(From DO4.1 of the RM Plan)

Retention and enhancement of heritage items that contribute to the character, heritage and cultural values, or visual amenity of Nelson, in a setting that enhances such items.

Explanation

Heritage items provide opportunities for a community to identify with its past, and the Resource Management Act deems the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development to be a matter of national importance. However, population growth in Nelson is likely to increase risks to heritage resources.

Landscapes and natural features

Issue – impacts on landscapes and natural features

Adverse impacts of land use change and structures on landscapes and natural features.

Objective

(From DO9.1 of the RM Plan)

A landscape that preserves and enhances the character and quality of Nelson's setting, and in which outstanding natural features and landscapes are protected.

Explanation

Lack of consideration about how a development or structure fits within its setting has potential to impact on the public's enjoyment of the visual appearance of Nelson's landscapes and natural features, including the coastal environment, hilly backdrop and inland valleys.

Hazardous substances and contaminated sites

Issue – residual contamination

Land previously used for farming, orchards or market gardening may have some residual contamination from use of agrichemicals. Service stations and some other industrial uses also have potential for contamination. These historic uses pose potential risks to the environment, or health risks if the land is converted to residential or recreational land use.

Objective

Identification of contaminated sites to determine the risks that exist, and rehabilitation of sites to a level where risk to the environment or health is remedied or mitigated.

Explanation

Nelson does not have a lot of heavy industry. Remediation work conducted in the past ten years has focused on hydrocarbon sites (petrol and oil storage tanks), timber treatment sites and industries involving metal contamination. In future, there may be some risk created by population growth and corresponding changes in land use that expose people to land with residual contamination.

4.3 Priority three issues

Nuclear issues

Issue – threat of radioactive contamination

(From DH3.1 of the RPS)

The threat of radioactive contamination of the environment posed by the presence of nuclear power facilities, nuclear propulsion, or the disposal of nuclear waste in the Nelson City area.

Objective

(From DH3.2.1 of the RPS)

Elimination of the potential for radioactive contamination.

Explanation

In 1983 the Council declared Nelson City to be a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. This resolution has been reconfirmed three times, in 1984, 1987 and 1993. The 1993 resolution expanded the policy to include chemical and biological weapons and to prohibit the establishment of nuclear power, disposal of nuclear waste and use of nuclear propulsion within the city area.

Protecting the health and productivity of Nelson's soils

Issue 1 – erosion and soil compaction

Adverse effects on soils and land as a result of land use and development techniques that cause erosion and soil compaction.

Objective

(From SO1.2.1 of the RPS)

Maintenance of the life supporting capacity of soils in Nelson.

Issue 2 – loss of productive land

Loss of productive land as a result of development.

Objective

The loss of productive land is considered when making decisions on the rezoning of land.

Explanation for soils section

Land of moderately high versatility within Nelson occurs in the Stoke and Wakapuaka areas. Population growth will put more pressure on expanding the urban area over land that was productive in the past. This is likely to reduce the potential for local food production.

Managing risks from genetic engineering

Issue – establishment of genetically engineered species

The risk of genetically engineered species establishing and impacting on Nelson's animal and plant species.

Objective

Minimise the risk of genetically engineered species establishing in Nelson.

Explanation

It is the role of the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) to ensure genetically modified seed is only distributed or planted in New Zealand under strict controls to stop the spread of genetically engineered species. So far the system set in place is working but the Council may wish to investigate the need for further controls if it is deemed necessary.