



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – THE DISTRICT PLAN

August 2020

## ABOUT THE DISTRICT PLAN

### What is the District Plan?

The District Plan shapes our future both as a community and individually. It regulates what we can and can't do on our properties and also influences how our district will look in coming years – for instance, where to expect more housing, business and industry development and how we'll protect and manage special places like our coastline and heritage items. It ensures well planned and organised growth and gives the community, business and property owners a greater level of certainty about what they can do, and where.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) every local authority in New Zealand must have a District Plan.

### How is the District Plan relevant to me?

There are a variety of ways the District Plan affects you. If you own land, the District Plan controls what type of activities you can do on that land. For example, what you can build and how high, and certain aspects of design. It also controls things like whether you can subdivide that land and how much noise you can make. District Plan zoning determines what can happen next door and in your neighbourhood.

Release of the Proposed District Plan gives you the opportunity to have your say and potentially influence how the new District Plan might manage these things in the future.

### Why are you changing the planning rules?

The Operative District Plan was adopted in 2005. Our district has changed a lot since then and our current plan is out of date. We are also required by law to review our District Plan every ten years.

### What is involved in the District Plan review?

The development of the Proposed District Plan has been a rigorous process. Since our review work started in 2014, we have done a huge amount of consultation with Iwi, key stakeholders, landowners and the wider community to identify the issues with our current planning approach and get feedback on how we would like our district to look in the future.

What we found is that Operative Plan is not delivering on the outcomes our community expects.

In 2018, we released a draft plan, with objectives, policies, rules and planning maps for you to consider. We then made changes based on your feedback. The Proposed District Plan reflects these changes.

More information on the review process, background research and reasons for change can be found in the Section 32 analysis reports on our website [www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan](http://www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan).

## What is the Proposed District Plan notification?

The release of the Proposed District Plan is a formal process guided by the RMA. It involves formal public notification, a submissions and further submissions process, a hearing process, the release of decisions, and appeal rights to the Environment Court.

This process will take several years. After all the amendments are complete, the Proposed Plan will be adopted as the new Operative District Plan.

The process for reviewing the Proposed District Plan looks like this



## Where are we in the Proposed Plan process?

The Proposed Plan was notified on 23 September 2019 and submissions were received between 23 September and 22 November 2019. The community had their say on what was proposed. 589 submissions were received, totalling close to 8,000 individual submission points across various aspects of the Plan.

All submissions have now been summarised by Council officers and published in “Summary of Submissions” reports. The reports summarise all of the decisions requested by submitters. Publicly notified on Wednesday 12 August 2020, these can be viewed along with all original submissions on our website: [www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan](http://www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan).

## What happens now that the summary of submissions reports are released?

We are now calling for further submissions, which provides members of the public the opportunity to comment on submissions made on the Proposed Plan. The summary of submissions reports have been prepared in four different formats to assist people in deciding whether a submission may be of interest to them, and whether they wish to make a further submission to support or oppose that submission. These formats are:

- **Summary of Submissions – By Provision**  
(to see summarised submissions made on each Proposed Plan chapter)
- **Summary of Submissions – By Submitter**  
(to see summarised submission points made by each individual submitter)
- **Summary of Submissions – By Residential Visitor Accommodation**  
(see submission points made across the Proposed Plan that related to the residential visitor accommodation proposed rules)
- **Summary of Submission – Excel Spreadsheet**  
(enables you to undertake your own analysis of all summarised submissions in excel spreadsheet, filterable by submitter and provision).

**PLEASE NOTE:** the further submissions stage is not a call for new submission points and topics. A further submission can only be made on an original submission or submission point, and cannot introduce entirely new matters.

The further submission period is a shorter round of submissions, open for 10 working days. Further submissions will need to be received by Council before 5pm Tuesday 25 August 2020.

## Who can make a further submission?

You can make a further submission if you can demonstrate a special interest in the Proposed Plan, either that your interest is greater than that of the public in general, or that you represent a relevant aspect of the public interest.

For example, if someone has submitted to rezone a block of land that includes your private property, you have the opportunity to make comment on that submission (either in support or opposition, including your reasons why).

If you **did not** make a submission when the Proposed Plan was notified, you will still be able to make a further submission, provided you meet one of the above mentioned criteria.

If you **did** make a submission on the Proposed Plan, you do not have to make a further submission and your original submission stands. However if someone has made a submission that impacts on you or your relief sought, then you have an opportunity to comment.

### How can I make a further submission?

A further submission form is available on the Proposed Plan page of our website and will help guide your further submission. When writing your further submission you will need to clearly identify the relevant parts of original submissions that you are submitting on. This includes stating where you oppose/support the submission point, the reasons for your support/opposition, and the decision you would like Council to make in relation to the submission.

In line with the RMA, the further submission period is open for 10 working days, so you will need to you're your submission with us by 5pm Tuesday 25 August 2020.

You can submit your further submission by:

- Using the submission form template or filling in an online submission on Proposed Plan page of our website.
- Emailing your further submission to [districtplan@npdc.govt.nz](mailto:districtplan@npdc.govt.nz),
- Dropping it into Civic Centre/Service Centres/Libraries, or
- Posting it to NPDC's Reply Paid DX, DX Box NX10026, New Plymouth.

*For large further submissions, or if you wish to attach a supporting document, please use the submission form template rather than the online submission form.*

Once your further submission is lodged with Council, you must also send a copy to the person(s) who made the original submission on which you are commenting on, within 5 working days of lodging your submission with Council. A full list of submitter contact addresses/emails is available on our Proposed Plan page.

NOTE: All submissions and further submissions will be available to the public as required by the Resource Management Act, including contact details.

### When does the new Proposed District Plan take effect?

The Proposed District Plan will not become the new Operative District Plan until the formal plan making process has been followed in accordance with the RMA legal requirements. This is expected to take around two years.

### What does 'Immediate legal effect' mean?

Most of the rules in the Proposed Plan will not come into effect until the final decision has been made on all of the submissions received.

However, some rules in the Proposed District Plan came into effect when the Proposed Plan was notified. Generally, these are rules that protect water, significant indigenous vegetation, and significant habitats of indigenous fauna and historic heritage. Historic heritage includes archaeological sites and sites and areas of significance to Māori.

Any rule with immediate legal effect is indicated in the Proposed District ePlan by an orange gavel icon 

A pop up box will also appear at the beginning of any chapter that contains provisions with immediate legal effect.

It is important you check to see if your property is subject to any of these rules before undertaking any changes. Feel free to contact us if you are unsure.

## USING THE EPLAN

### How do I access the Proposed District Plan?

The Proposed District Plan is a leading edge ePlan, available online at <https://districtplan.npdc.govt.nz/eplan/>. This makes it easier than ever to find out what District Plan provisions apply your property.

### How do I know which rules apply to me?

You can find out the rules that will apply to your property by searching for your property online <https://districtplan.npdc.govt.nz/eplan/>. (Handy Tip: the plan works best in Google Chrome).

- Type in your property address to view all of the planning information, rules and policies that apply your land.
- You can also download and print relevant chapters or the whole plan.

For help using the ePlan download our user guide 'How to navigate the Proposed District ePlan' on our website [www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan](http://www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan)

### Is there help available if I have any questions about using the ePlan?

There is an online help function to assist you with using the ePlan. If you'd like a demonstration on how to navigate the plan, our staff at the Civic Centre or any NPDC library will be available to assist.

For any questions, contact the staff at the Civic Centre on 06-759 6060 or lodge an enquiry at [enquiries@npdc.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@npdc.govt.nz).

### What do I do if I have a question about something affecting my property?

You can contact the Civic Centre on 06-7596060 or lodge an enquiry via email [enquiries@npdc.govt.nz](mailto:enquiries@npdc.govt.nz)

You can also book a time to speak to a Planner at the Civic Centre, Liardet Street.

## FIND OUT MORE

### Where can I go to get more information?

- You can read the full Proposed District Plan online at [www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan](http://www.newplymouthnz.com/eplan). The full plan also includes an overview of the strategic direction of the Proposed Plan and our intended outcomes.
- For help using the plan, you can also drop in to the Civic Centre and our staff can show you how to navigate the online ePlan to find your property.

## TROUBLE-SHOOTING THE ePLAN

### The ePlan isn't loading

If you experience problems loading the website link, you can try the following:

**NOTE: The Plan works best in Google Chrome.**

1. Check you have the correct link <https://districtplan.npdc.govt.nz/eplan/>. Also, check your browser.
2. Try clearing your browser cache before trying the link again. To clear the cache:
  - Go to the top right of the browser screen

- Select 'internet options'
- Select: General Tab > Settings > Caches and databases
- Select file > Delete
- Close your browser, then reopen and navigate to the ePlan page again

### The ePlan is frozen

If the ePlan is frozen you will see a loading circle spinning on your screen. To unfreeze, refresh the URL (i.e. the www address) in the browser and you will be taken back to the ePlan home page.

### I can't download a Property Report?

Sometimes your browser is set to disallow pop ups. Pop ups may be blocked by your browser. Check the right corner of the top URL box in Chrome. If your settings are blocking pop ups, you will see an icon like this



1. Click on the icon and select 'Always allow pop ups and redirects from districtplan.npdc.govt.nz/eplan'.
2. Click 'Done and' try view property report (PDF) again

### How do I report a technical issue?

Something else not working?

If you're experiencing a technical issue with using the ePlan or submission tool, please let us know on 06-769 6060, or speak to staff at reception so we can help follow up and resolve your issue.