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## **27.0 HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ZONE**

### **27.1 Zone Statement**

The Hydro-electric Power Generation Zone has been developed in consultation with ECNZ to ensure that adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied, or mitigated while enabling the continued operation of the hydroelectric power stations and associated facilities within the District. The Arapuni and Waipapa Power Stations are included within the South Waikato District as well as hydro-electric power generation infrastructure associated with the Atiamuri, Maraetai and Whakamaru Power Stations.

The Zone covers the "core land" owned by the Electricity Corporation of New Zealand Ltd (ECNZ) or its successor. The Zone also includes land owned by Transpower or its successor for facilities such as switching stations. It is intended that the Zone will provide operational certainty for the production of electricity in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates any adverse effects on the environment and public safety.

The District boundary runs through the middle of several ECNZ facilities and this is, a significant cross boundary issue. Therefore, the Zone rules have been developed in consultation with the Taupo, Otorohanga and Waipa District Councils to ensure as much as possible a high level of consistency.

Major issues facing the management of the resources within the Hydro-Electric Power Generation Zone include the provision of operational certainty, control of any actual or potential adverse effects of activities in relation to the surface of water in rivers and lakes, visual amenity, noise, and public safety.

In addition to the Planning Objectives stated in Section 3 of the District Plan, and the objectives and policies stated in Part B of the District Plan, all activities in the Hydro-Electric Power Generation Zone are subject to the following provisions.

### **27.2 Objectives**

- 27.2.1 Provision made for the generation of hydro-electricity in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates any adverse effects on the environment and public safety.
- 27.2.2 Conflicts with other uses and users of water resources avoided, remedied or mitigated.



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### 27.3 Policies

- 27.3.1 To allow for the generation and transmission of electricity within the zone.
- 27.3.2 To provide for the maintenance, upgrading and limited expansion of existing electricity generating facilities.
- 27.3.3 To ensure adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated through the use of rules and Performance Standards.
- 27.3.4 To ensure that the safety of the public is not adversely affected by activities within the Zone.

### 27.4 Methods to Achieve Objectives and Policies

Activities have been classified as Permitted, Controlled or Discretionary based on the actual or potential adverse effects on the environment that could result from each activity.

### 27.5 Permitted Activities

The following activities are Permitted in the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone provided they conform to the Performance Standards specified in Section 27.9.

- (i) Existing hydro-electric power generation infrastructure as defined in Definitions Section.
- (ii) Maintenance and replacement of existing hydro-electric power generation infrastructure.
- (iii) Activities associated with the monitoring and maintenance of existing hydro-electric power generation infrastructure.
- (iv) Ancillary buildings and plant associated with hydro-electric power generation infrastructure.
- (v) Offices and staff residences associated with the use of the site.

### 27.6 Controlled Activities

There are no Controlled Activities in the Hydro-Electric Power Generation Zone.



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## 27.7 Discretionary Activities

The following Activities are Discretionary in the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone

- (i) Any activity listed as a Permitted Activity in Section 27.5 that does not conform to the Performance Standards in Section 27.9 for the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone.
- (ii) New hydro-electric power generation infrastructure.
- (iii) Subdivision of land.

Resource consent applications for Discretionary Activities in the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone will be assessed according to the Performance Standards in Section 27.9 and the criteria contained in Section 5 (Administration) of the District Plan.

## 27.8 Non-complying Activities

Activities that are not Permitted, Controlled, or Discretionary will be Non-complying and assessed according to the Performance Standards in Section 27.9 and the criteria contained in Section 5 (Administration) of the District Plan.

## 27.9 Performance Standards for all Activities

To avoid, remedy or mitigate any actual or potential adverse effect on the environment, the following Performance Standards are required to be met for Permitted and Controlled Activities, and used as a guide for assessing Discretionary and Non-complying Activities.

### 27.9.1 Landscape and Amenity Values

All buildings shall conform to the following bulk and location requirements to minimise any adverse effects on the landscape or visual amenity of the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone or any adjacent zone.

#### 27.9.1.1 Yard Requirements for Site Development

A 15 metre yard is required for all structures at the boundary with any adjacent zone except for the upstream log booms and associated ancillary structures.



27.9.1.2 **Height**

Maximum height - 20 metres (for new structures)

**Note: All existing structures (including the maintenance and upgrading of those structures) have existing use rights.**

27.9.2 **Part B : District Wide Planning Provisions**

Every activity undertaken in the Hydro Electric Power Generation Zone is required as a Performance Standard to comply with the rules detailed in Part B of the District Plan.

The following table provides a guide to the sections in Part B of the District Plan and reference should be made to the particular sections of Part B that are relevant to the activity.

Section	Resource Management Issue/Potential Effect
5	Administration
6	Tangata Whenua
7	Water
8	Air Quality
9	Transportation
10	Public Works and Network Utilities
11	Natural Hazards
12	Landscape and Amenity Values
13	Solid Waste Management
14	Noise
15	Heritage and Ecological Protection
16	Signs
17	Hazardous Substances
18	Subdivision and Development



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**27.10 Subdivision**

The subdivision of land within the zone is classified as a Discretionary Activity. The criteria to be used to assess an application for subdivision consent are included in Section 5 (Administration) of the District Plan. Any subdivision of land within the Hydro-Electric Power Generation Zone granted by Council shall not require the provision of an esplanade reserve, esplanade strip or access strip, as one of the principal reasons for the establishment of this zone is the exclusion on safety grounds of public access to water ways and recreation activities.

**27.11 Principal Reasons**

The hydro-electric power generation infrastructure contained within the District is a physical resource representing a large capital investment, and electricity generated has significant economic and social benefits for both the South Waikato District, and other parts of the country. The lakes created by the hydro dams provide a significant recreational resource for the District. Therefore, it is important to provide operational certainty for hydro-electric power generation while avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects on the environment and public safety.

One of the District Council's functions under the Resource Management Act 1991 is to control the actual and potential effects of activities in relation to the surface of rivers and lakes. The Reserve Zone provides for recreation activities on hydro lakes, but surface water within the Hydro-Electric Power Generation Zone does not provide for these activities for reasons of public safety. These areas generally extend from the log booms on the upstream side to the end of the "white water" on the downstream side.

**27.12 Anticipated Environmental Results**

It is anticipated that the objectives, policies and methods outlined in this section will achieve the following environmental results:

- (i) Adverse environmental effects associated with the operation of hydro-electric power stations will be avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (ii) There will be a minimum of conflict with other uses and users of the hydro-electric power generation resource.
- (iii) Public safety will be assured.