



PROTECTED AREAS ZONE - POLICY

PA2.1 Introduction

The Protected Areas Zone applies to the land depicted on the Ruapehu District Plan Maps as:

- (a) Amenity Policy Area.
- (b) Protected Areas - Conservation.
- (c) Protected Areas -Reserve.

These areas form subsets of the Protected Areas Zone and cumulatively make up the entire Protected Areas Zone in this Plan.

Amenity Policy Areas are areas set aside by DOC to provide for the development and operation of recreation and public amenities and related services at a scale and intensity which is not generally appropriate elsewhere in the National Parks. These include part of the Turoa and Whakapapa ski areas.

The Protected Areas Zone includes:

- (a) National Parks managed in accordance with the National Parks Act 1980.
- (b) Conservation Areas and other land managed in accordance with the Conservation Act 1987.
- (c) Reserves managed in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977 (but excludes land within the Active Reserve Zone).
- (d) Land subject to the Wildlife Act 1953.
- (e) Land zoned as Protected Areas in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991 (open space either owned or leased by an individual, Trust, Company, Council, Crown or the like).
- (f) Reserves: being a Reserve solely because they are identified under the powers vested in Ruapehu District Council in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991.

However, the Protected Areas Zone does not include Reserves that are specifically identified as 'Active Reserve' on the Planning Maps (see Active Reserve – Policy Chapter).

The Issues, Objectives, Policies apply to all areas within the Protected Areas Zone.

The Rules apply to different parts of the Protected Areas Zone. With the exception of the Amenity Policy Areas as depicted on the Planning Maps, to decide which Rules of the Protected Areas Zone apply to a specific site, the statutory status of the land on 15 December 2011 must be determined (the District Planning Maps provide some guidance). If the statutory status of the land was:

- (a) National Park, or other land, in accordance with the National Parks Act 1980 (excluding the Amenity Policy Areas as depicted on the Planning Maps) then Rule PA3.5 applies.
- (b) Conservation Area, or other land, in accordance with the Conservation Act 1987 then Rule PA3.5 applies.
- (c) Reserve, or other land, in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977 then Rule PA3.4 applies; and subject to the Wildlife Act 1953 then Rule PA3.7 applies.

In the event the land is not depicted as Amenity Policy Area on the Planning Maps, and did not have any statutory status in accordance with the National Parks Act 1980, Conservation Act 1987, Reserves Act 1977 or Wildlife Act 1953, the land is a Protected Area because it is zoned in this Plan "Protected Areas" (ie, open space either owned or leased by an individual, Trust, Company, Council, Crown or the like) in accordance with the Council's powers under the Resource Management Act 1991. As such Rule PA3.11 applies.



If the land is depicted on the Planning Maps as being within the Amenity Policy Area, then Rule PA3.2 applies.

PA2.1.1 The Crown

Section 4 of the Act provides an exemption for any activity or work of the Crown within the boundaries of an area of land held or managed under the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act specified in the First Schedule to that Act (other than land held for administrative purposes), that is consistent with a conservation management strategy, conservation management plan, or management plan established under the Conservation Act 1987 or any other Act specified in the First Schedule to that Act, and does not have significant adverse effects beyond the boundary of the area of land.

The implication of this is that Ruapehu District Council has the function to control any actual or potential effect of the use, development, or protection of land with respect to activities that are not carried out by the Crown consistent with the requirements of Section 4 of the Act.

It should, however, be noted that new land uses or extensions to or alterations to existing land uses on areas administered by the Department of Conservation, must also obtain its approval. Applicants should consider the relevant planning documentation prepared and administered by the Department of Conservation which includes, but is not limited to, management plans for national parks and relevant Conservation Management Strategies.

PA2.1.2 The Ruapehu District

PA2.1.2.1 National Park and Conservation Areas

Both the Tongariro National Park and the Whanganui National Park fall partially within the District, along with a relatively large number of Conservation Areas, including the Tongariro, Erua and Southern Pureora Conservation Areas.

Tongariro National Park was the first National Park within New Zealand and has been accorded dual World Heritage status by UNESCO'S world heritage committee recognising the natural landscaping features, as well as its association with cultural and spiritual values.

Whanganui National Park, situated in the western part of the District, is mainly focused on the Whanganui River. The total area of the park is 74,231 hectares, of which approximately 30% is in Ruapehu District.

The Park, established in 1986, protects one of the largest remaining tracts of lowland forest in the North Island and provides a habitat for a wide variety of native wildlife. As it is almost entirely a lowland park, it is in sharp contrast to the Tongariro National Park, which is largely alpine in character.

The District also includes a number of large protected areas adjacent to Whanganui National Park between the Retaruke and Manganui o te Ao Rivers (eg, Murumuru and Morinui Conservation areas, Manatiti Valley, Rotokahu Scenic Reserve).

PA2.1.2.2 Iwikau Village, Whakapapa and Turoa Skifields

Located within the Tongariro National Park are the Iwikau Village, Whakapapa Skifield and Turoa Skifield. Iwikau Village and Whakapapa Skifield are closely linked. These areas are subject to the Tongariro National Park Management Plan (2006-2016) which is administered by the Department of Conservation and are recognised as Amenity Areas within this Management Plan as defined in the National Parks Act 1980.



Whakapapa and Turoa Skifields are presently managed by Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Limited which, combined, operate facilities that can cater for up to 12,000 skiers per day. There are approximately 50 club lodges located within Iwikau Village and the Whakapapa Skifield.

PA2.1.2.3 *Whakapapa Village*

Whakapapa Village is located within the Tongariro National Park and has been gazetted as an amenities areas under the terms of the National Parks Act 1980. As a result, this area is subject to the Tongariro National Park Management Plan (2006-2016), administered by the Department of Conservation.

Within Whakapapa Village there is substantial development. Little of this development is undertaken by the Crown. The majority is undertaken by lessees or people holding licences to occupy specific parts of Tongariro National Park.

With minor exceptions, a majority of the existing development is designed to cater for people visiting the area. The facilities provided include overnight accommodation, restaurants, bars and recreation facilities.

PA2.1.2.4 *Other Areas*

Other areas of the Protected Areas Zone include Reserves under the Reserves Act 1977, land subject to the Wildlife Act 1953 and Reserves vested in Ruapehu District Council in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991, as well as land containing the Turoa Village Protected Areas Zone in Ohakune.

All these areas contribute to the promotion of the sustainable management of the natural and physical resources and the quality of the environment of the Ruapehu District, including by:

- (a) Providing open space.
- (b) Providing both passive and active recreation opportunities.
- (c) Protecting and enhancing natural values.

These areas are located in both the urban and rural environment. While a majority of the areas are publicly owned, there are also many areas that are privately owned. The Plan recognises the individual and cumulative value of these areas to the Ruapehu District, regardless of tenure.

PA2.2 Issue

- (a) Degradation of Natural, Amenity, Historic, Recreational and Cultural Values in the Protected Areas Zone Caused by Human Interference.

PA2.2.1 Objective

- (a) Protection of the natural, amenity, historic, recreational and cultural values in the Protected Areas Zone.

PA2.2.2 Policies

- (a) To protect significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.
- (b) To recognise and provide for the protection of Māori cultural values within the Protected Areas Zone, including to manage development within the area gifted by Horonuku Te Heuheu in 1887 within the Tongariro National Park so that adverse environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (c) To protect the intrinsic values of ecosystems.



- (d) To maintain and enhance amenity values by ensuring that the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, land use and development are avoided, remedied or mitigated so as not to compromise the characteristics and features that create amenity value in the Protected Area Zone.
- (e) To protect the finite characteristics of the Protected Areas Zone.
- (f) To recognise Tongariro National Park and, in particular, the volcanoes as an outstanding natural feature, and to require protection of the Park and the volcanoes from the adverse effects, if any, associated with land use and development.
- (g) To recognise, maintain and enhance the qualities and characteristics of the Protected Areas Zone that contribute to people's appreciation of the pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational values of the area.
- (h) To ensure that the use and development of resources avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on historic heritage in the Protected Areas Zone.
- (i) To protect outstanding landscape values from inappropriate use and development.

PA2.2.2.1 Explanation of Policies

Section 6, matters of national importance, including culture, heritage, lands and biodiversity, are relevant.

The policies seek to ensure that the natural, amenity, recreation, historic and cultural values associated with the Protected Areas Zones are preserved. They recognise that the values of the protected areas enhance people's wider appreciation of the environment, including offsetting the effects of the intensification of development associated with urban areas.

Particular consideration is given to the original gift area within Tongariro National Park which has significant cultural and historic value. Further, the Tongariro National Park and, in particular the volcanoes, has been identified as an outstanding natural landscape feature in Horizons 'One Plan'. The Tongariro National Park is also classified as a dual World Heritage Site by UNESCO for its natural landscape and associated cultural values.

PA2.3 Issue

- (a) Development adversely affecting the character of the Protected Areas Zone.

PA 2.3.1 Objective

- (a) Use and development of the Protected Areas Zone by individuals and groups as a natural and as a recreational resource, while ensuring that any adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

PA2.3.2 Policies

- (a) To require all use and development be designed and sited so as to ensure that any adverse effects on the natural character and landscape values of an area are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (b) To ensure that sewage is disposed of in a manner such that any adverse effects on the environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- (c) To require all use and development to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse noise effects.
- (d) To require that the use and development of land within Tongariro National Park does not significantly detract from the amenity or intrinsic values of Tongariro National Park and, in particular, the volcanoes.
- (e) To require all development within Whakapapa Village to maintain the visual quality of views both into, and at, the village.



- (f) To promote the upgrading of existing or new facilities which replace existing facilities and that improve environmental outcomes, including energy efficiency and amenity values.
- (g) To restrict the area of site disturbance required for any development.
- (h) To recognise the positive effects of some development and use of the Tongariro National Park and including the Ruapehu ski fields on the District's economic and social wellbeing and recreational values.

PA2.3.3 Explanation of Policies

These policies seek to provide a framework whereby only development which is appropriate is established in the Protected Areas Zone. The policies take into account the sensitive nature of many of the protected areas included within this zone.

PA2.4 Issue

- (a) Threats to human life and property from natural hazards in the Protected Areas Zone.

PA2.4.1 Objective

- (a) To limit or avoid risks to people and property in areas subject to natural hazards.

PA2.4.2 Policies

- (a) To control the location of development to minimise the risks of them being affected by natural hazards.
- (b) To work with other agencies to ensure that risks to people and property in Protected Areas are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

PA2.4.3 Explanation of Policies

These policies aim to reduce the risks to people using these areas. These provisions complement the Natural Hazards Section of the Plan.