

ISSUES

The landscapes provisions in the Plan seek to protect or manage special landscapes. There are two key issues in the current Plan:

1. Outstanding natural landscapes and features (ONLs and ONFs) are required to be protected by the RMA but Tasman’s ONLs and ONFs have not been identified or mapped yet, which leaves a significant gap in the Plan and means that legislative requirements to protect these areas have not been achieved.
2. The Plan aims to manage a number of other valued landscapes (‘amenity landscapes’), including the Coastal Environment Area (CEA), St Arnaud and Takaka Hill Landscape Priority Areas (LPAs), identified ridgelines and rural landscapes. However, because there has not been a district wide landscape assessment undertaken in Tasman we are not sure:
 - a. if the boundaries of the existing amenity landscapes are correct, or accurately reflect current community aspirations,
 - b. whether there are other landscapes we should be managing, or
 - c. if Plan provisions adequately address the specific characteristics and attributes of each of the different landscape types.

There are two more minor issues. Firstly, the current plan protects views from eight public viewpoints, but in practice these provisions have not been used during the life of the Plan. This is because most of the public viewpoints are on road reserve and controlling authorities have powers that override the RMA. Secondly, Rural Residential zone minimum lot sizes were largely set to accommodate onsite wastewater systems rather than rural character or amenity reasons. In places these may not align with plan objectives for rural landscapes.

MANDATORY STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Section 6(a) of the RMA requires the protection of ONLs and ONFs from inappropriate subdivision, use and development as a matter of national importance. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS) requires various levels of protection for all natural features and landscapes in the coastal environment. There is provision for the protection of other valued landscapes (‘amenity landscapes’) in Section 7 of the RMA and the National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission and National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry also contain provisions in relation to landscapes. Recent case law is of key importance for landscapes and how the TEP is drafted. The RMA also requires us to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority. The TEP will need to be updated to reflect these statutory documents and incorporate the requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify and map outstanding natural landscapes and features through a district-wide landscape assessment.
2. Retain the intent of the Coastal Environment Area (CEA) overlay and rules, but reassess the extent of the CEA boundary and identify its particular attributes through a district-wide landscape assessment.
3. Retain the intent of the St Arnaud and Takaka Hill LPAs but reassess the extent of these areas and identify their particular attributes through a district-wide landscape assessment.
4. Retain the intent of protecting landscape values for key ridgelines but reassess which ridgelines to protect through a district-wide landscape assessment.
5. Remove the provisions for public view points. They have not been implemented during the life of the plan because the gazettal of these areas as road reserves overrides RMA requirements.
6. Review Rural Residential lot sizes to align with identified rural and rural residential character and amenity values.
7. Identify, through a district wide landscape assessment and community consultation, any other valued landscapes that warrant protection.
8. Ensure integration with other plan provisions that impact on landscape outcomes – for example land disturbance, changes in vegetation cover (plantation forestry and/or removal of indigenous vegetation), subdivisions, buildings and structures, signs, etc.