

Do require a Resource Consent?

Information Sheet - Planning



What is a Resource Consent?

A Resource Consent is permission to do something that is not provided for in the District Plan as a permitted activity, or is not consistent with the provisions of the Plan.

This permission is provided by the Council once it has received all the information about an activity and has concluded that any potential effects of the activity will be minor, or mitigated.

The Resource Consent process is governed by provisions contained in the Resource Management Act 1991.

The District Plan

The Council administers a document called the District Plan. This Plan contains policies and rules regarding what type of activities can be carried out and where. The Plan also contains lists of permitted activities that can be undertaken without the need to obtain the Council's permission (a Resource Consent).

The District Plan does not contain rules regarding every activity imaginable, instead it focuses on the effects an activity may have. The District Plan is designed to ensure those activities that have potential to adversely affect the environment are looked at before they proceed. This offers protection to a wide variety of environments (industrial, residential, rural for example) from inappropriate development.

How Do I Know If I Need a Resource Consent?

To find out whether an activity you wish to undertake requires a Resource Consent or not you will need to consult the District Plan. Copies are available at the Hawera Administration Building and all Library Plus Centres throughout the district.

The District Plan contains maps of the entire district and these maps show different planning zones (eg, Residential Zone, Commercial Zone). The first step is to locate the property on which the activity will take place and see which zone it is in.

The Plan is divided up into sections based on the different zones. Once you have discovered what zone your property is in, you will need to look up the appropriate section in the Plan. For example, if your property is in the Residential Zone on the maps, then you will need to turn to the Residential Zone section in the Plan.

The zone sections in the Plan contain rules which relate to activities which can be carried out in the zone. Activities are divided into different categories ranging from permitted to prohibited. The categories you will see in the Plan mean the following:

- **Permitted Activities**

If the activity you wish to carry out is listed here and the activity meets the performance standards outlined, then a Resource Consent is not required.

- **Controlled Activities**

You will need a Resource Consent. If the activity meets the specific performance standards, then the Council cannot decline your application but may grant consent subject to conditions which need to be met.

- **Limited Discretionary Activities**

You will need a Resource Consent. The Council has discretion over specific aspects of the activity which are listed.

- **Discretionary Activities**

You will need a Resource Consent. The Council has discretion over any aspect of the activity.

- **Non-Complying Activities**

You will need a Resource Consent. The Council must decline the application if it has more than a minor effect on the environment and contravenes the objectives and policies of the District Plan.

- **Prohibited Activities**

These activities are expressly prohibited by the District Plan and you cannot get a Resource Consent for them.

You will see that these activity categories have a cascading or scale effect. The greater the potential for adverse effects an activity may have, the further down the activity scale it moves and the more discretion the Council may have over the activity.

The Plan contains a definition section towards the front so you can see exactly how the activities are defined.

How Do I Lodge a Resource Consent Application?

The Council can provide you with an Application Form which you will need to complete. You will also need to provide as much information as is necessary for the Council to make an informed decision on your application.

The information you need to provide is called an Assessment of Environmental Effects. The information this assessment needs to contain can vary greatly depending on the scale and complexity of the application. You will need to discuss the information needs with the Council's Planning staff. If all necessary information is not provided, then time delays will occur until the information is received by the Council.

Assistance

The Council understands that District Plans are not always the easiest documents to read or understand. If you have any difficulties or are unclear on any matters, please contact one of the Council's Planning staff who will be happy to assist you. Staff will also be able to provide you with an estimate of potential costs of your application and how long the process may take.