

Submission on Proposed Auckland Combined Plan

Section 123 of the Local Government (Auckland Transitional Provisions) Act 2010 and Clause 6 of Schedule 1 to the Resource Management Act 1991

To: Auckland Council
By: Council Webform

Name of submitter: **WAITAKERE RANGES PROTECTION SOCIETY INCORPORATED.**
("the Society")

Submission No. 2: RPS Provisions

Introduction

1. This is a submission on the proposed Auckland combined plan ("the **Unitary Plan**").
2. The Society could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission. In any event, The Society is directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:
 - (a) adversely affects the environment; and
 - (b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.
3. The specific provisions of the Unitary Plan that this submission relates to are the following parts of PART ONE Chapter B: REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT:
 - (c) B:1 Issues of regional significance.
 - (d) B:2 Enabling quality urban growth.
 - (e) B:4.3 Natural heritage.
 - (f) B:12 Environmental Results Anticipated.
2. This submission (*Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated – Submission No. 2: RPS Provisions*) is one of a series of submissions made by the Society in relation to various parts of the Unitary Plan affecting the Waitakere Ranges.

The Society

4. The Society is a community based organisation with a membership of over 600 individuals and families. The society has been in existence for over 40 years since 1973.
5. Its aims include to protect and conserve the natural environment in the Waitakere Ranges; to raise awareness of the importance and value of the Waitakere Ranges to

New Zealand's environmental heritage, preservation and wellbeing, to promote any scheme or activity that may benefit or help protect or preserve the Waitakere Ranges, and to oppose any scheme or activity which might significantly adversely affect the natural ecosystems and landscape of the Waitakere Ranges.

6. The Society has spent thousands of hours of mostly voluntary work preparing and presenting submissions in national, regional and district planning processes and resource consent applications pursuant to the RMA along with other decision making processes relating to the Waitakere Ranges.
7. Over the past 20 years, the Society has worked with the former Waitakere City Council to ensure that subdivision rules adequately recognise the finite capacity of the Waitakere Ranges to accommodate subdivision by providing for prohibited activity status for subdivision beyond that capacity.
8. The Society actively promoted the passage of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 ("**WRHAA 2008**"). The WRHAA 2008 which establishes the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, (which includes the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, the residential areas around Titirangi, the foothills of the Ranges, coastal villages such as Piha, Karekare, Huia and parts of former south-west Rodney district) and recognises that the Heritage Area is of national significance and identifies the heritage features that contribute to its national significance.
9. The Society's view is that it is essential that the Unitary Plan affords the Waitakere Ranges with at least the same level of protection as is currently provided in the operative regional and district planning instruments, in particular the Auckland Regional Policy Statement ("**ARPS**") and the Auckland District Plan (Waitakere Section) ("**the District Plan**").
10. This submission and Society's other submissions seek to retain those provisions of the Unitary Plan that provide such protection to the Waitakere Ranges and amend Unitary Plan Provisions where this is required to ensure the same level of protection as is currently provided in the operative regional and district planning instruments.

Regional Policy Statement Provisions

11. The Society's submission is as follows:
 - (a) Provided the relief sought in this submission is granted, the Unitary Plan:
 - (i) Will be consistent with the purpose and principles of the RMA and will otherwise be consistent with Part 2 of the RMA;
 - (ii) Will be appropriate in terms of section 32 of the RMA; and
 - (iii) Will warrant being implemented in terms of both the RMA and sound resource management principles and practice.
 - (b) In the absence of such amendments, the Unitary Plan will fail to meet the purpose and principles of the RMA and the requirements for planning

instruments in Part 5 of the RMA and will allow the generation of significant adverse effects on the environment in particular on the Waitakere Ranges.

In particular, without limiting the generality of the above:

B:1 Issues of regional significance

- (c) The Society is aware of the need to accommodate growth in the Auckland region but is concerned that this may place pressure on the Waitakere Ranges and foothills to accommodate some of this growth. Such an outcome could be an inadvertent consequence of the Plan if the planning controls are not sufficiently robust and tailored to address the specific resource management issues applying to the Waitakere Ranges. In that regard, the Society:
 - (i) Supports the recognition that the significant park areas of the Waitakere Ranges constrain urban development but considers that it is the wider WRHA (including the foothills of the ranges) not just the parkland areas that constrain the westwards expansion of the existing metropolitan area.
 - (ii) Considers that greater recognition needs to be given to the intrinsic value and iconic status of the Waitakere Ranges in.
 - (iii) Considers that the RPS should recognise the contribution of the Waitakere Ranges to the region's natural heritage including by specifically incorporating the principles of the WRHAA 2008 into the RPS.
 - (iv) Considers that the RPS should specifically recognise the pressures on the rural areas of the Waitakere Ranges to accommodate growth and seek to avoid or limit further subdivision of these areas.

B:2 Enabling quality urban growth.

- (d) The Society supports the approach in B:2.1 Providing For Growth In A Compact Quality Urban Form Objective 1 and supporting Policy 2 of achieving a quality compact urban form with a clear defensible limit with a concentration of urban activities within the Rural Urban Boundary ("**RUB**"), coastal towns and serviced villages.
- (e) The Society supports B:2.3 Development Capacity And Supply Of Land For Urban Development Policy 3(a) of avoiding urban development in areas with significant environmental, heritage and natural character or landscape values including land governed by the WRHAA 2008.
- (f) The Society considers that the policies in B:2.5 Rural and Coastal Towns and Villages need to be qualified to recognise that rural and coastal towns within the Waitakere Ranges are not considered appropriate for expansion or new towns or villages outside the RUB.

- (g) The Society considers that the special nature of regional parks needs to be recognised and distinguished from local parks and reserves in B:2.6 Public open space and recreation facilities.

B:4.3 Natural Heritage.

- (h) The Society generally supports the objectives and policies B:4.3.1 Natural Character of the Coastal Environment as these appropriately recognise the Waitakere Ranges as an area of high and natural character in the coastal environment and seek to avoid significant adverse effects (including cumulative adverse effects) of subdivision use and development on such areas. However, the Society considers that minor amendments to the wording could be made to strengthen the protection given to natural character in the coastal environment.
- (i) The Society generally supports the objectives and policies B:4.3.2 Landscape and Natural Features. In particular, the Society considers that Policy 2 assessment criteria adequately describe landscape and natural features of the Waitakere Ranges that will ensure that the Ranges are correctly categorised as ONFs and ONLs.
- (j) The Society generally supports the objectives and policies in B:4.3.3 Trees and Vegetation which recognise that trees are a significant contribution to natural character, biodiversity and ecosystems. However, the use of the term “*ecosystem services*” is potentially unclear and used to mean different things in this section. The Society considers that the meaning of “*ecosystem services*” should be clarified so that in this context it refers to services provided by trees and vegetation in supporting the healthy functioning of ecosystems as opposed to benefits to humankind such as ecotourism.
- (k) The Society supports generally B:4.3.4 Biodiversity, in particular, Objective 3 that promotes the protection and restoration of natural heritage features of the WRHA.
- (l) The Society generally supports the provisions in B:4.3.5 The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area but considers amendments are required to ensure that the protections afforded to natural heritage in the Ranges is sufficiently robust.
 - (i) Clarify that the objectives and policies of B:4.3.5 The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area are in addition to any other relevant objectives and policies in Chapter B:4.3 Natural Heritage.
 - (ii) In order to ensure consistency with the WRHAA 2008 and the relief sought by the Society in relation to B:1 Issues of regional significance the objectives of the WRHAA 2008 should be included as part of the Unitary Plan.

B:12 Environmental Results Anticipated

- (m) The Society considers that the provisions in B:12 Environmental Results Anticipated need to reflect relevant environmental indicators and clearly set out

the standards that are to be achieved through the implementation of the Unitary Plan.

Relief Sought

12. The Society seeks the following decision from Auckland Council:
 - (a) Retain those provisions of the PART ONE Chapter B: RPS that recognise the importance, intrinsic value and of the Waitakere Ranges and provide protection to the Waitakere Ranges from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
 - (n) Amend PART ONE Chapter B: RPS to ensure that the Waitakere Ranges have at least the same level of protection as is currently afforded to the Ranges under the operative planning instruments, including by way of example the amendments shown in the indicative form of relief in **Attachment One**.
 - (o) Amend PART ONE Chapter B:12 Environmental Results Anticipated, Table 3, Historic heritage, special character and natural heritage objectives to provide clear, objective and measurable standards that require an improved environmental outcomes in relation to Natural Heritage objectives.
 - (p) Such other relief or other consequential amendments as are considered appropriate or necessary to address the concerns set out in this submission.
13. The Attachment to this submission identifies indicative examples of relief that would address appropriately certain of the matters raised in this submission. Other forms of wording and relief may also be appropriate and within the scope of the matters raised in this submission. The Attachment is by way of example but not to the exclusion of other appropriate and effective methods of upholding this submission.
14. The Society wishes to be heard in support of its submission.
15. If others make a similar submission, the Society will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.

DATED 27 February 2014



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ANNEXURE ONE: RPS PROVISIONS INDICATIVE FORM OF RELIEF

1.1 Enabling quality urban growth

...

Supply of land in appropriate locations

Opportunities for growth around all edges of the urban area are limited. Auckland's geography limits our supply of suitable greenfield land. The coastline, significant park areas in the Hunua ranges and the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area constrain the expansion of the existing metropolitan area in a number of areas. Development must also optimise the investment of infrastructure and utilities, and not cause the need for ineffective or less cost effective forms of development.

Urban development in the Region threatens environmental qualities and thresholds

The Auckland region is reaching several critical thresholds in terms of the quality of the environment and the suitability of land for urban development. The long term cumulative effect of development continues to place pressures on natural and physical resource which, if not managed in an integrated manner can eventually lead to the gradual diminishing of environmental quality [Refer 2.4.2 ARPS]

...

1.3 Protecting our historic heritage, historic character and natural heritage

...

Explanation

Auckland has a unique and distinctive natural and cultural heritage which is central to the identity of communities, groups and individuals in the region. Protecting our historic and natural heritage contributes to our aspiration to be a worldclass city. Integrating our heritage with growth and development positively and authentically will contribute to attracting the visitors and investors on which our economic success depends.

In addition, the intrinsic values of Auckland's ecosystems and natural areas and their biodiversity are important and in need of protection. At a strategic level, the Waitemata, Manukau and Kaipara harbours, Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area, Hauraki Gulf Islands, important bush clad escarpments and volcanic features are major features of natural heritage that contribute to Auckland's identity. [Refer 2.4.8 ARPS]

...

Natural character, landscape and features

Natural character, landscapes and natural features can be commonplace while others are iconic. For example, Rangitoto, Piha, the Waitakere Ranges and the urban volcanic cones are considered iconic.

...

Protecting outstanding natural features and natural landscapes requires consideration of a number of matters:

- many outstanding natural landscapes and features are working rural areas, or used for private residential, commercial, and industrial purpose and landowners want to continue using their land for these purposes
- there is pressure to accommodate increasing levels of subdivision, use, and development. The cumulative effects these activities have on the naturalness, quality and values of outstanding natural features and landscapes need to be considered
- Respect for the vital contribution heritage makes to the identity of Auckland and recognition of the importance of the life supporting capacity of ecosystems and natural features are constraints which mould the form and direction of development in the region. In certain cases there is a need for a greater level of protection from adverse effects than has been provided in the past. One method of achieving this is to ensure that there is no significant increase in the intensity of development such as on or around the volcanic cones and in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. [Refer 2.4.8 ARPS]

...

The Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008

This Act recognises the national, regional and local significance of the area and promotes its protection and enhancement for present and future generations. Under This regional policy statement is required to give effect to this purpose.

This Act aims to preserve the unique character and natural and cultural heritage of the local areas and communities that make up the Waitākere Ranges from Whatipu, along the coast of the Manukau Harbour to Titirangi, from Orātia and Waitatarua over the eastern foothills to Swanson and Anzac Valley, from Bethells Beach/Te Henga south along the west coast to Piha and Karekare.

The Act also recognises the importance of the regional park area, which comprise approximately 60 per cent of the ranges, as a public place with significant natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources. It also recognises that people live and work within this area and that many have contributed to shaping the landscapes that we see today and have helped protect its natural environment and cultural heritage. It seeks to set a benchmark for the ranges' residents' goals and hopes for their communities and environment in 10, 50 and 100 years. It aims to protect and enhance the area's significant historic heritage features and the special character of each community in the ranges, and to provide a rural transition from the city's urban areas to bush and coastal areas further west in the ranges. The extent of the Wāitakere Ranges Heritage Area is shown on the Unitary Plan GIS viewer.

The Waitakere Ranges including the foothills and coastal villages are a dominant and highly valued iconic landform of the Auckland region. The bushclad rainforest area of the landform is considered to be of international importance and significance. The foothills have landscape value in their own right as a conglomerate of natural, rural and cultural and landscapes. The foothills also play a significant role as a buffer and transition to the outstanding natural landscape and features of the upper ranges.

The area is under unique pressure for subdivision, use and development due to its close proximity to Auckland and is susceptible to cumulative adverse effects on its heritage features in the constituent urban, rural and forested parts and on the area as a whole. [Refer 2.2 ARPS]

This regional policy statement is required to give effect to the objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act. Specific planning guidance is necessary to respond to the varied issues which face the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area, particularly in relation to achieving the following objectives:

- avoiding accommodating further development in the Waitākere ranges and their foothills
- managing the cumulative and precedent effects of development on the landscape, the desired future character and amenity of the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area, and its natural environment
- providing for the social and economic wellbeing of the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area local communities.
- to protect, restore, and enhance the area and its heritage features:
- to ensure that impacts on the area as a whole are considered when decisions are made affecting any part of it:
- to adopt the following approach when considering decisions that threaten serious or irreversible damage to a heritage feature:
 - carefully consider the risks and uncertainties associated with any particular course of action; and
 - take into account the best information available; and
 - endeavour to protect the heritage feature:
- to recognise and avoid adverse potential, or adverse cumulative, effects of activities on the area's environment (including its amenity) or its heritage features:

- to recognise that, in protecting the heritage features, the area has little capacity to absorb further subdivision:
- to ensure that any subdivision or development in the area, of itself or in respect of its cumulative effect,—
 - o is of an appropriate character, scale, and intensity; and
 - o does not adversely affect the heritage features; and
 - o does not contribute to urban sprawl:
- to maintain the quality and diversity of landscapes in the area by—
 - o protecting landscapes of local, regional, or national significance; and
 - o restoring and enhancing degraded landscapes; and
 - o managing change within a landscape in an integrated way, including managing change in a rural landscape to retain a rural character:
- to manage aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in the area to protect and enhance indigenous habitat values, landscape values, and amenity values:
- to recognise that people live and work in the area in distinct communities, and to enable those people to provide for their social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being:
- to provide for future uses of rural land in order to retain a rural character in the area:
- to protect those features of the area that relate to its water catchment and supply functions:
- to protect in perpetuity the natural and historic resources of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the people and communities of the Auckland region and New Zealand.

1.7 Sustainably managing our rural environment

...

Rural subdivision

The pressure to accommodate our future population growth affects the use of both existing lots and the demand for new lots. The expansion of urban activities onto rural land may, individually or cumulatively over time reduce the visual distinction between urban and rural areas. This lack of clear visual distinction may then generate further pressure for urban expansion.

Further, the intrusion of urban structures and activities into rural areas may also impact on both rural landscape character and amenity and increased demand for new or upgraded physical and social infrastructure services such as stormwater, wastewater or public transport. This may lead to adhoc and unintended growth of new rural settlements. However, rural land owned by Mana Whenua provides important locations for papakainga, marae, and related activities. In some cases, rural land has been returned through Treaty settlement as cultural or commercial redress.

In appropriate development can cause significant degradation of high natural heritage, landscape and amenity values. We need to direct the type of activities that occur in rural areas to manage the cumulative effects of subdivision in rural areas. This includes identifying rural environments, such as the rural areas of the Waitakere Ranges where further subdivision is considered inappropriate. [Refer 2.4.2 ARPS]

...

2.5 Rural and coastal towns and villages

...

Policies

1. Require proposals for expanding existing rural and coastal towns and serviced villages, that have efficient and wellperforming wastewater facilities with additional or planned and funded capacity, to be developed in a manner that:

...

k. avoids identified sites, places and areas

- (i) of significant ecological or heritage values
- (ii) of significance to Mana Whenua
- (iii) of outstanding natural features and landscapes
- (iv) of outstanding or high natural character
- (v) with significant mineral resources
- (vi) within an electricity transmission corridor
- (vii) within the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

2.6 Public open space and recreation facilities

...

Examples of public open space include:

- parks and reserves, which include local and regional parks, bush and wilderness areas e.g. Long Bay, Murphy's Bush, Otuataua Stonefields, Western Springs and the Waitākere Ranges. The regional parks represent many of the special natural and cultural qualities of the Auckland region. The parks are purchased, and are managed, to protect their intrinsic, natural, cultural and landscape values and to provide outdoor recreational opportunities for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of the region and are held in perpetuity for that purpose.

4 Protecting our historic heritage, special character and natural heritage Te tiaki taonga tuku iho

...

4.3 Natural heritage

...

Auckland's heritage involves those aspects of both the natural and cultural environment that have been inherited from the past, define the present and will be handed on to future generations. Auckland has a unique and distinctive physical setting and natural environment. While particular aspects of the natural environment have values as heritage resources, the maintenance of intrinsic values and quality of ecosystems is generally fundamental to the continued survival of those more valued components [Refer 6.1 ARPS].

The Auckland Regions natural environment has been extensively modified. The consequences of that modification now appear in extensive loss of particular biological features and habitats and the reduction in ecological viability [Refer 6.2.3 ARPS].

4.3.1 Natural character of the coastal environment

...

Objectives

[rps/rp/rcp/dp]

1. Subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment is designed and located to avoid adverse effects on natural character, and to retain the particular elements or features that significantly contribute to the natural character of an area.

...

3. Areas with degraded natural character are restored or rehabilitated, and areas of high and outstanding natural character in the coastal environment, including in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area and the Hauraki Gulf/To Moana Nui o Toi/Tikapa Moana, are enhanced.

Policies

Natural character values of the coastal environment

1 Subdivision, use and development must avoid adverse effects on the natural character of the coastal environment, , taking into account...

...

High natural character of the coastal environment

10. Require subdivision, use and development to be undertaken outside of a HNC area where there is an alternative.

11. Avoid adverse effects on HNC areas
by:

4.3.2 Landscape and natural features

Introduction

Auckland has a diversity of landscapes and landforms. Its urban, rural, coastal, and island landscapes provide an important reference point and sense of identity for Aucklanders. They contribute to our quality of life and provide the context in which we use and enjoy our environment.

The Auckland Region's natural environment has been extensively modified and the consequences include loss of biological features and habitats, and the reduction of ecological viability. The quality and diversity of Auckland's landscapes is being reduced by adverse individual and cumulative effects of subdivision, use and development.

Inadequate consideration of and response to adverse cumulative effects can result in a reduction or loss of naturalness in Outstanding Natural Landscapes as fewer, or areas remain free from the presence of significant built structures. They can also give rise to a homogenisation of the landscape and a loss of the key characteristics which make a landscape distinct to our Region. Cumulative loss of landscape quality and diversity can occur within a local area, or within the district or across the whole of the Region.

[Refer 6.2.3 and 6.2.7.3 of ARPS]

The key indicator of an Outstanding Natural Landscape is the absence of significant built development, or where it is present it is subservient to the dominance of natural elements and does not reduce the overall naturalness and visual coherence of the landscape. Activities such as urban development, land clearance, mining and quarrying, or the development of significant built structures, including houses, coastal protection works, roads, transmission lines, power generation structures and other infrastructure may result in an

increase in the level of modification in the landscape and an associated reduction in naturalness. Of particular significance in the Auckland Region is the expansion and intensification of rural residential subdivision (countryside living) in rural, island and coastal areas. This results in increasing numbers and sizes of houses, the presence of associated structures such as garages, driveways and hard landscaping areas, infrastructure to service the houses and land modification for building platforms or to obtain vehicular access in Outstanding Natural Landscapes. [Refer 6.2.7.1 of ARPS]

...

Objectives

1. Auckland's ONL's and ONF's are protected from inappropriate subdivision use the development.
2. Maintain and enhance the overall quality of the environment of the Auckland region, within and outside the urban area, including its unique maritime setting, volcanic features, significant landscapes and natural heritage values [Refer 2.6.1 of ARPS].

...

4.3.3 Trees and vegetation

Introduction

Individually and collectively, trees represent a significant element of Auckland's natural character and biodiversity. Those located in streets and public open space, are publicly owned. Others are located on private land. Measures are required to identify and protect particular notable specimens as well as those which collectively contribute significantly to ecosystem services. In this section ecosystem services refers to services provided by trees and vegetation in supporting the healthy functioning of ecosystems and the natural environment including soil conservation, water quality, stormwater control and natural hazard avoidance and mitigation services.

...

Objectives

2 The contribution of trees and vegetation to the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity, and the provision of ecosystem services is recognised and enhanced.

Policies

...

3. Identify and protect areas where vegetation contributes significantly to the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity and to ecosystem.

4.3.5 The Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area

Introduction

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area are in addition to any other relevant objectives and policies in Chapter B:4.3 Natural Heritage.

This regional policy statement is required to give effect to the objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act.

The Waitākere Ranges are locally, regionally and nationally significant and, together with their foothills and coasts, cover some 27,720ha of public and private land. They form an important rural backdrop between metropolitan Auckland and the west coast and are outstanding for their terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. The ranges include large and continuous primary and regenerating lowland and coastal rainforest, wetland and dune systems and are part of a remnant volcanic landform. They also act as a major water catchment, contributing to Auckland's water supply.

They have a long human history and lie within the rohe of Te Kawerau ā Maki and Ngāti Whātua. European colonisation began in mid1800s and much of the ranges' resources were depleted over the course of a century. Areas historically farmed or logged have since regenerated, providing a diverse and significant range of habitats.

The ranges landscape typically comprises forested hills, coastal areas, valleys and stream environments containing distinctive, and in some case, regionally threatened species. They are characterised by their scenic beauty, diversity and wildlife. They have significance to Mana Whenua and have highly regarded inspirational, artistic and spiritual values.

Settlements within the ranges offer an attractive living environment. Development is generally sparse and doesn't dominated the natural environment. The eastern foothills are more intensively settled, and comprise a rural working landscape interspersed with remnant bush and riparian areas. The Unitary Plan provides zones and precincts that recognise the unique ways in which settlement has occurred. Titirangi and Laingholm are within the RUB. Therefore the settlement pattern should continue to reflect the heritage features of the ranges. Development will be managed to avoid compromising the values.

Objectives

JLB-003908-100-13-V1

1. The natural and historic resources, including the significant environmental values and heritage features of the Waitākere Ranges are protected, restored and enhanced
2. to ensure that impacts on the area as a whole are considered when decisions are made affecting any part of it:
3. to adopt the following approach when considering decisions that threaten serious or irreversible damage to a heritage feature:
 - a. carefully consider the risks and uncertainties associated with any particular course of action; and
 - b. take into account the best information available; and
 - c. endeavour to protect the heritage feature:
4. to recognise and avoid adverse potential, or adverse cumulative, effects of activities on the area's environment (including its amenity) or its heritage features:
5. to recognise that, in protecting the heritage features, the area has little capacity to absorb further subdivision:
6. to ensure that any subdivision or development in the area, of itself or in respect of its cumulative effect,—
 - a. is of an appropriate character, scale, and intensity; and
 - b. does not adversely affect the heritage features; and
 - c. does not contribute to urban sprawl:
7. to maintain the quality and diversity of landscapes in the area by—
 - a. protecting landscapes of local, regional, or national significance; and
 - b. restoring and enhancing degraded landscapes; and
 - c. managing change within a landscape in an integrated way, including managing change in a rural landscape to retain a rural character:
8. to manage aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in the area to protect and enhance indigenous habitat values, landscape values, and amenity values:
9. Those aspects that are of significance to Mana Whenua, are protected and maintained including:
 - a. the spiritual dimension and the mauri of natural and physical resources and of people
 - b. the kaitiaki of these resources and significant sites and wāhi tapu
 - c. providing for those institutions that are integral to the relationship of Mana Whenua with their environment in a way that promotes the expression and practice of kaitiakitanga.
10. Development in settlements recognises and is sympathetic to the qualities, character and natural features of the ranges and the complex mixed landscapes of the foothills.
- 11.
12. The character, scale and intensity of subdivision, use or development does not adversely affect the heritage features or contribute to urban growth outside the RUB.
13. The quality and diversity of landscapes are maintained by:
 - d. protecting landscapes of local, regional, or national significance
 - e. restoring and enhancing degraded landscapes
 - f. managing change within a landscape in an integrated way, including retaining a rural character.
14. to recognise that people live and work in the area in distinct communities, and to enable those people to provide for their social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being:
- 15.
16. The water supply catchments and their related supply functions are protected.
17. The natural and historic resources of the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park are protected in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the people and communities of Auckland and New Zealand.
18. to provide for future uses of rural land in order to retain a rural character in the area:

Policies

1. Design and locate structures and impermeable surfaces, and undertake activities in a way that does not impede or adversely affect the potential for the regeneration of native vegetation, or reduce the extent, range and linkage between areas of native vegetation.
2. Prevent activities from releasing plants or pests likely to harm to plants and animals and their habitats.
3. Where clearing for infrastructure is necessary, it should be undertaken only where the vegetation is of lower value and there is no alternative option.

4. Manage activities to minimise their adverse effects on water quality, soil, native vegetation and fauna habitats, mauri of the waterway, taiāpure or mahinga mātaītai.
5. Require the type and density of settlements to avoid degrading the wilderness character of natural landscape features.
6. Avoid nonresidential activities:
 - g. unrelated to the productive use of rural land
 - h. that require substantial earthworks or vegetation removal
 - i. that are industrial and unrelated to rural activities.
7. Enable the expansion of appropriate existing commercial activities.
8. Adopt a precautionary approach when considering proposals that threaten serious or irreversible damage to a heritage feature.

Methods

Regulatory

Unitary Plan

- Aucklandwide objectives, policies and rules for vegetation management
- Objectives, policies and rules for the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area precinct.

NonRegulatory

- Monitoring and information gathering
- Monitor and report on matters relating to the Heritage Area
- Advocacy and education including Auckland Council advocacy and support for initiatives that promote the objectives, including weed and pest eradication, Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Covenants, visitor management rural activities in the foothills, design guidelines, and provisions of local area plans [Refer 2.6.9.11 ARPS].

Explanation and reasons

The iconic indigenous rainforest and landforms of the Waitakere Ranges and the associated eastern foothills that provide ecological linkages with the Ranges and contribute a sense of contrast and a buffer between metropolitan Auckland and the Ranges. The water catchment lakes, dams and related water supply infrastructure that provide essential services to the region. All these components, comprise the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area in recognition of its national significance and its contribution to the natural and cultural heritage of the region. [Refer 6.2.7(iii) of the ARPS]

The policies above recognise the significance of the heritage area and its features, which are:

- terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of prominent indigenous character
- the different classes of natural landforms and landscapes within the area
- the coastal areas
- naturally functioning streams
- quietness and darkness of the Waitakere Ranges
- opportunities that the area provides for wilderness experiences, recreation, and relaxation
- the historical, traditional, and cultural relationships of people, communities, and Mana Whenua with the area
- evidence of past human activities in the area, including those in relation to timber extraction, gumdigging,
- flax milling, mineral extraction, quarrying, extensive farming, and water impoundment and supply
- its distinctive local communities
- Waitakere Ranges Regional Park
- public water catchment and supply system, the operation, maintenance, and development of which serves the people of Auckland.
- The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act describes the local, regional and national significance of the ranges and directs council to prevent cumulative adverse effects from degrading their features and finite resources.