

# Coastal Environment and Natural Character Areas

We are reviewing and updating our current District Plan – looking ahead to the next 10 to 15 years. The Kaipara District Plan is essentially the ‘rule book’, which is applied to manage development, activities and the environment within the district.

The District Plan influences the future shape and feel of our district, which is why it’s important for Kaipara communities to be informed and get involved. Its purpose is to protect our environment, historic locations and cultural tāonga for future generations, through sustainable management of our resources, while supporting our communities to develop and grow.

We’re seeking input on our initial draft ahead of the statutory process, scheduled to commence in mid-2023. This Draft District Plan does not have any ‘legal weight’ and the Operative District Plan must continue to be relied upon.

**Kaipara has large areas of coastal environment, ranging from the Kaipara and Mangawhai Harbours, and the Ripiro Beach coastline. They are all highly valued by our communities for their natural beauty, cultural and recreational values, and scenic landscapes.**



The Council is responsible for preserving and protecting the natural character of the coastal environment from inappropriate land use and subdivision, under the Resource Management Act 1991, New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, and the Northland Regional Policy Statement.

## What are we proposing?

The Draft District Plan identifies the coastal environment, and areas of high and outstanding natural character. These areas were originally identified in the Northland Regional Policy Statement 2016. The coastal environment is determined by the closeness of the coast to the adjoining land, while the coastal character areas demonstrate the naturalness of the coastal area less affected by human activities.

The Coastal Environment and Natural Character Areas Chapter seeks to preserve and protect the qualities and characteristics that contribute to the natural character of the coastal environment by managing land use and subdivision.

The new maps highlight properties that fall within the coastal environment, the high and outstanding natural character areas that align with the characteristics

and qualities of a place. The Draft District Plan maps differentiate these areas, making it clearer which area applies where. The provisions and rules are aimed at protecting and preserving these sensitive environments from inappropriate subdivision and development.

The Draft District Plan maps shows approximately 11.9% less land as being affected by the coastal environment than currently shown in the Operative District Plan. However this area now also includes identified natural coastal character areas, which are called “high coastal character areas” or “outstanding coastal character areas” and form the coastal environment.

Currently, the Operative Kaipara District Plan includes maps and provisions about some coastal areas and were based on catchment areas rather than the function of the coast. These maps do not cover the full extent of Kaipara’s coastal margin.

## How much is changing?



NOT MUCH

A LOT

### How much is changing?

**Overall, the level of change is a 7/10.**

The Operative District Plan already identifies and manages land use and subdivision in coastal areas, the Draft Plan refines the coastal mapping and targets provisions for managing areas of natural character.

## How will I know if my property is within the coastal environment and a natural character area?

The coastal environment and natural character areas are all mapped in the Draft Plan. This means that when you search for your property in the e-plan, it will show up in the online maps.

## Will I be able to build on my property in the Coastal Environment?

Yes, new buildings will need to comply with the maximum height standards and be finished in colour palettes that complement the surrounding environment.



## Can I extend or alter an existing building?

Yes, but the extensions and alterations will need to meet the height and colour palette requirements.

## What can I do to maintain a building?

Generally, you will be able to carry out maintenance and minor upgrading of a building on your property without a resource consent.

However, if you want to extend the building you will need to check the building heights and that you are using building materials that are natural and recessive.

## Summary

- Development in the mapped coastal environment may compromise the natural character and quality of the coastal environment. Development can place additional pressures on coastal environments and affect the amenity values, and the preservation and protection of these resources. Inappropriate development adjacent to the coastline may restrict public access to and along the coastal environment.
- The Operative District Plan does not align with the direction or mapping set out in the Northland Regional Policy Statement and New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement. The new maps are more targeted and follow the criteria set out by these higher level documents.
- Currently, the District Plan does not recognise the differences in natural character of the coastal environment and applies the same provisions and rules across the whole environment. It does not consider the level of existing development or naturalness of a place. The new objectives, policies and rules are more refined to target specific values, activities, and effects.