

17.9 Explosives Area

17.9.1 Introduction

A 188 hectare peninsula at Waitawa Bay, adjoining the Hauraki Gulf Coastline, about 750m north-west of Kawakawa Bay is used for the manufacture storage and distribution of explosives. The site is used for this purpose for many years.

The manufacture and storage of explosives in the quantities stored at Waitawa Bay is a hazardous activity. In terms of Section 3 of the Resource Management Act the potential effect on the environment is one of *'low probability which has a high potential impact'*.

The site at Waitawa Bay has a number of special features which include its coastal location and the opportunity that location affords for hazardous components to be barged to the wharf located on site. Non-hazardous materials are trucked to the site.

The site is surrounded by rural zoned land and is distant from densely populated areas. The site is large and the main manufacturing and storage facilities are centrally located so that an adequate buffer of farming land is provided between the hazardous parts of the site and adjoining properties. The undulating topography of the site provides for sheltered valleys where explosives facilities can be established using the surrounding ridge lines as protective buffers.

These special environmental features of the site are unlikely to be duplicated elsewhere in the City and may provide the means to mitigate or avoid potential adverse effects on safety and the environment.

17.9.2 Resource Management Issues

Issue

17.9.2.1 Activities involving large quantities of explosives create the role of a high potential impact on the environment.

The explosives facility at Waitawa Bay is situated on a large rural site and is surrounded by rural lands. The risks involved in the handling of large quantities of explosives are therefore avoided to a large extent by the separation of the activity from densely populated areas. The maintenance of this separation is paramount, therefore, for avoiding potential adverse health and safety effects control over the quantities and measures taken to ensure potential adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Issue

17.9.2.2 The rural character and natural coastal environment may be adversely affected by activities involving explosives at Waitawa Bay.

The explosives activity at Waitawa Bay is currently situated on a site large enough that, from the road and the coast there is little visible evidence of the activity.

The site has a long coastline on which a wharf is established for the transportation of materials used in the manufacture of explosives. Much of the natural character of the coast has been maintained. Further development of the site could compromise the natural character of the coast if sited inappropriately.

Other issues include protection of the rural character of the site. The site is used for forestry and pastoral farming, and the retention of these activities provide a visual buffer and ensure the maintenance of the rural character of the site when viewed from the public road.

17.9.3 Objectives

Objective

- 17.9.3.1** To ensure that public safety is maintained in areas neighbouring the explosives facility at Waitawa Bay.

This Objective seeks to achieve Issue 17.9.2.1

Objective

- 17.9.3.2** To ensure that the natural coastal environment and rural character of the Waitawa Bay area is protected.

This objective relates to Issue 17.9.2.2

17.9.4 Policies

Policy

- 17.9.4.1** Any changes to the manufacture or storage of explosives are subject to the Hazardous Facilities Screening Procedure.

Explanation/Reasons

This policy seeks to achieve Objective 17.9.3.1

The facility at Waitawa Bay is one of the major hazardous sites in the City. However it has operated in a safe and effective manner for many years without any incidents. The location and character of the site makes it suitable as a special hazardous materials site.

Methods

- Zoning
- Rules — Activity Table
- Assessment Criteria

Policy

- 17.9.4.2** Activities on the Waitawa Bay site should be compatible with the explosives facilities also on the site.

Explanation/Reasons

This policy seeks to achieve Objective 17.9.3.1

The site at Waitawa Bay should be utilised efficiently for the explosives activity. Activities which would potentially conflict with that activity, due to the risks, should not locate on the site.

Methods

- Zoning
- Rules — Activity Table

Policy

17.9.4.3 Potential detraction from the natural coastal environment should be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Explanation/Reasons

This policy seeks to achieve Objective 17.9.3.2.

The site adjoins the coast and there is the potential, particularly with an expansion of activity, for the coastal environment to be adversely affected. Potential adverse effects include degradation of water quality, coastal vegetation and visual amenity values.

Methods

- Rules — Activity Table
- Rules — Development and Performance Standards

Rule

17.9.4.4 Adverse effects on the rural character of the area should be avoided.

Explanation/Reasons

This policy seeks to achieve Objective 17.9.3.2.

The large explosives facility has the potential to detract from the rural character and amenity values. Such potential can be avoided by retention of the large site on which the facility is located.

Methods

- Zoning
- Rules — Development and Performance Standards

17.9.5 Strategy for Explosives Area

A special purpose zone for the site on which a major explosives facility is established will delineate the area in which particular resource management issues exist. A site-specific zone will enable specific methods for managing these issues to be implemented, in order to ensure safety, and to avoid potential adverse effects on the natural coastal environment and the rural character.

The provision of the zone clearly indicates Council's expectation and intention for the activity to continue to operate.

17.9.6 Implementation

17.9.6.1 Zone

The objectives and policies will be achieved by establishing a special site specific zone with controls primarily designed to ensure that any hazardous effect of explosives are minimised and the coastal and rural environment of the site is maintained.

17.9.6.2 Other Methods — National Safety Standards

Risk exposure issues are managed under annual national licensing requirements and incorporate safety separation distances from sensitive activities such as residential.

17.9.7 Anticipated Environmental Results

From the identification of the resource management issues and the objectives, policies and methods, the expected environmental outcomes may be identified:

- The continuation of the use of the site for the manufacture and storage of explosives in an unobtrusive and safe manner.
- Maintenance of the rural character.
- Maintenance of the natural coastal environment.

17.9.8 Procedures for Monitoring

In order to assess the suitability and effectiveness of the objectives, policies and methods in achieving the anticipated environmental results for the Explosives Zone, the Council will develop a monitoring programme (see Chapter 1, Section 1.7.3) which may include the following monitoring procedures:

- A periodic survey of the site.
- Monitoring of any complaints about the site.
- Co-operation with the Auckland Regional Council in monitoring of the coastal environment.
- Survey of the rural character of the area.

17.9.9 Description and Explanation of Zone

The Explosives zone is intended to ensure that the potential adverse effects of the major explosives facility at Waitawa Bay are avoided, remedied or mitigated. The explosives facility is required to comply with national licensing requirements (including safety separation distances from sensitive activities such as residential).

The methods applying within the zone seek to address the resource management issues of maintaining safety, the rural character, and the natural coastal environment.

In particular, any expansion of the activity will be subject to a discretionary activity resource consent to ensure that the potential environmental effects are addressed.

17.9.10 Rules — Activities

17.9.10.1 Activities in the Explosives zone

Activities in the Explosives Zone shall comply with the following:

- (a) All permitted activities in Rule 17.9.10.2 — Activity Table shall comply with Rule 17.9.11 — Development and Performance Standards.
- (b) All discretionary activities in Rule 17.9.10.2 — Activity Table — will be assessed against 17.9.12 Assessment Criteria — Discretionary Activities, together with any relevant matters set out in Section 104 of the Act.
- (c) Any activity not used in Rule 17.9.10.2 Activity Table is deemed to be a non-complying activity.
- (d) For notification procedures under the Resource Management Act 1991 see Rules 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4 and 5.3.3.1 of Chapter 5 General Procedures and Rules.

Note: Activities Sensitive to Aircraft Noise in the Explosive Zone

Any Activity Sensitive to Aircraft Noise (“ASAN”) and certain additions to an ASAN for which provision is made in this zone as a permitted, controlled, restricted discretionary or discretionary activity:

- are subject to Rule 5.21, and
- may also become a controlled, restricted discretionary, discretionary or non-complying activity by reason of Rule 5.21

if the subject site is located within the High Aircraft Noise Area or the Moderate Aircraft Noise Area. Therefore, in the case of an ASAN and certain additions to an ASAN in this zone, reference should be made to Rule 5.21.

(Refer to Chapter 18 for the definition of “Activity Sensitive to Aircraft Noise”)

17.9.10.2 Activity Table

In the table below, the terms have the following meaning:

P = Permitted Activity

C = Controlled Activity

R(D) = Restricted Discretionary Activity

D = Discretionary Activity

Farming including pig farming and factory farming complying with Rule 12.9.2.2.	P
Production forestry	P
Offices and dwelling houses used in association with any permitted or discretionary activity	P
Accessory buildings for any of the above purposes	P
Buildings associated with hazardous substances including buildings associated with the use, manufacture, handling, storage repacking, disposal and transportation of explosives and ammunition.	P
LPG installations having a capacity of 2 tonnes or more but not more than 12 tonnes.	D
Use, manufacture, handling, storage, disposal, repacking and transportation of hazardous facilities and substances	Refer Chapter 10.1 Hazardous Facilities and Substances
Land Modification and Development	Refer Chapter 9 Land Modification, Development and Subdivision
Parking, loading and access	Refer Chapter 8 Transportation
Signs	Refer Chapter 5 General Procedures and Rules
Any Permitted Activity that does not meet the development and performance standards in Rule 17.9.11	(R)D

17.9.11 Development and Performance Standards

17.9.11.1 Permitted activities shall comply with the provisions of the Rural 1 zone contained in Rule 12.11.1 (Chapter 12 Rural Areas).

17.9.11.2 Yards

Front	20m
Side and Rear	10m
Coastal Protection	70m

17.9.11.3 Subdivision

No subdivision is permitted in the zone.

17.9.12 Matters for Discretion: Restricted Discretionary Activities

Activities listed as Permitted in Activity Table 17.9.10.2 that do not comply with the development and performance standards of Rule 17.9.11 (excluding Rule 12.11.1.2 Yards).

Rule

17.9.12.1 Council restricts the exercise of its discretion to the following matters for a restricted discretionary activity resource consent for an activity listed as Permitted in Activity Table 17.9.10.2 that does not comply with the development and performance standards of 17.9.11 (excluding Rule 12.11.1.2 Yards) may impose conditions in respect of each:

- (a) Scale and intensity of development
- (b) Site layout, design and external appearance of development
- (c) Landscaping
- (d) Impact on the rural character and natural coastal environment.

17.9.12.2 When assessing an application for a resource consent for the above activity 17.9.12 Council shall have regard to the following assessment criteria and any relevant matters set out in Section 104 of the Act:

- (i) Whether the scale and intensity of the development is in keeping with the rural character of the area;
- (ii) Whether the site layout and design and external appearance of the development avoids adverse effects on landscape and amenity values;
- (iii) Whether the development will cause any adverse effects on the natural coastal environment, including adverse effects on ecological, cultural, spiritual, public access, recreational and visual values of the natural coastal environment.
- (iv) Whether the development has a functional need to locate in the Coastal Protection Yard by having to cross into the coastal marine area.
- (v) Whether any potential adverse effects of the amenity values can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

17.9.13 Assessment Criteria — Discretionary Activities

17.9.13.1 For any discretionary activity resource consent applications in the Explosives Zone Council will have regard to the following assessment criteria and relevant matters set out in Section 104 of the Act:

(a) Safety

The applicant will be required to undertake a safety assessment demonstrating that there will be no adverse safety effects on adjoining properties not zoned for explosive purposes.

(b) Rural and Coastal Character

New buildings and structures should be designed and located so that they are unobtrusive when viewed from public areas and do not adversely affect the ecology and amenity values of the coastal area.