



Impermeable Surfaces In The Natural Areas

Introduction

Waitakere City's Operative District Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991, and uses a two-layered zoning system.

Natural Areas

Every part of Waitakere City fits into one of six Natural Areas (See Natural Areas Maps). These Natural Areas are governed by rules managing the effect of people's activities on natural resources. For example, bush and tree removal and earthworks.

Human Environments

Waitakere is also divided into 11 Human Environments which reflect the human character of the City. (See Human Environments Maps). These Environments are governed by rules managing the effect of people's activities on other people. For example, the effect of building a house, of noise or night time lighting.

Every property in Waitakere City has at least one Natural Area and one Human Environment zoning. When you create an impermeable surface in Waitakere City, you will need to consult the Natural Area Rules. These activities may also be subject to Rules in the Human Environment in which they are located. (See Rules Section of the Operative District Plan).

Impermeable Surfaces And Their Effects

Impermeable surfaces create a physical barrier to the penetration of water. Rain that falls on impermeable surfaces immediately flows overland in the direction of the slope. Where the surface is permeable (e.g. soil, grass, gobi blocks or planted in trees) a proportion of the rain is absorbed by these surfaces and does not enter the storm water system, or its entry into the storm water system is delayed.

In the urban areas of Waitakere City, the storm water system drains the water that passes over impermeable surfaces. However, flooding may occur in urban areas, if the storm water drainage network cannot cope with increased water flowing from new impermeable surfaces.

Contaminants in the storm water may also reduce the quality of nearby streams, wetlands and harbours. Where there is no reticulated drainage system, the ability of the natural drainage system to cope with an increase in storm water is also limited. The adverse environmental effects of storm water overflow include soil erosion, the creation of potholes and gullies, and flooding.

The Natural Area Rules in the Council's Operative District Plan aim to avoid, remedy or mitigate effects of establishing new impermeable surfaces. The assessment of the effects of impermeable surfaces is also closely related to vegetation clearance and building coverage, so these matters may also need to be addressed in your resource consent application.

Definition of Impermeable Surface(s)

The Operative District Plan defines impermeable surface(s) as "any building or surface on the land which effectively creates a physical barrier to water penetration on the surface of any part of the land, but shall not include paths less than 1.0 metres in width".

Natural Areas Rules

General Rule That Applies To All Natural Areas

Where development involves land that has more than one natural area identification on it, each part of the development shall comply with the Natural Area Rules applying to the Natural Area in which that particular part of the development is located.

The General Natural Area

Where the General Natural Area overlaps with the Working and Community Environments, impermeable surfaces can cover 100% of the site. Where the General Natural Area overlaps with the Transport Environment, impermeable surfaces can cover 90% of the legal width of the road – this includes footpaths and berms.

In all other General Natural Areas, impermeable surfaces can cover 60% of the site, where there is a connection to a reticulated storm water system; and 15% where no connection is available. If these requirements cannot be met, a limited discretionary, or discretionary resource consent is required.

The Restoration Natural Area

Impermeable surfaces can cover 90% of the legal width of the road including footpaths and berms. Elsewhere, impermeable surfaces can cover 50% of the site where there is a connection to a reticulated storm water system; and 15% where no connection is available. If these requirements cannot be met, a limited discretionary resource consent is required.

The Managed Natural Area

Impermeable surfaces can cover 90% of the legal width of the road including footpaths and berms. Elsewhere, impermeable surfaces can cover 20% of the site where there is a connection to a reticulated storm water system; and 10% where no connection is available. If these requirements cannot be met, a limited discretionary resource consent is required.

The Coastal Natural Area

Impermeable surfaces can cover 90% of the legal width of the road including footpaths and berms. Elsewhere, impermeable surfaces can cover 10% of the site, or 250m², whichever is the greater. If these requirements cannot be met, a limited discretionary resource consent is required.

The Protected Natural Area

Impermeable surfaces can cover 90% of the legal width of the road including footpaths and berms. Elsewhere, impermeable surfaces can cover 10% of the site. If these requirements cannot be met, a non-complying resource consent is required.

The Riparian Margins/Coastal Edges Natural Area

Impermeable surfaces can cover up to 10% of the part of the site within the Riparian Margins/Coastal Edges Natural Area. If these requirements cannot be met, a non-complying resource consent is required.

Special Soils

No more than 10% of an area defined as "special soils" can be covered by impermeable surfaces. (See Special Soils shown on Natural Areas Maps).

What Is A Limited Discretionary Activity?

The Council may approve or decline your application for this type of activity. When this consent is granted, the Council may only place conditions on the consent according to specific matters that have been listed in the Operative District Plan.

What Is A Discretionary Activity?

The Council may approve or decline your application for this type of activity. When this consent is granted, the Council may place conditions on the consent that it deems appropriate.

What Is A Non-Complying Activity?

This is the most stringent type of resource consent. The Council cannot grant this consent unless it is satisfied that the adverse effect on the environment will be minor, or that granting the consent will not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the Operative District Plan.

Applying For Resource Consent For An Activity In A Natural Area

When applying for a resource consent for an activity in a Natural Area, you will need to provide all the details requested on the application form(s) and pay the appropriate fees.

Resource consent application forms, fee schedules and other information is available from the Council. To avoid delays in processing your application, discuss what information is required with the resource consent staff. This discussion will clarify what information you will need to supply, and whether your proposal needs a resource consent for other matters besides the effects of your activity on the Natural Area.

If you submit an application that has insufficient information, the Council will request you supply the missing information. Once this is supplied, the processing of the application will begin.

This brochure is only a guide to the Impermeable Surfaces Rules. The complete Rules are found in Volume One of the Rules Section of the Operative District Plan. If you have any queries, or require further information please ask the Civic Centre Counter Staff or telephone the Council Call Centre on (09) 839 0400.