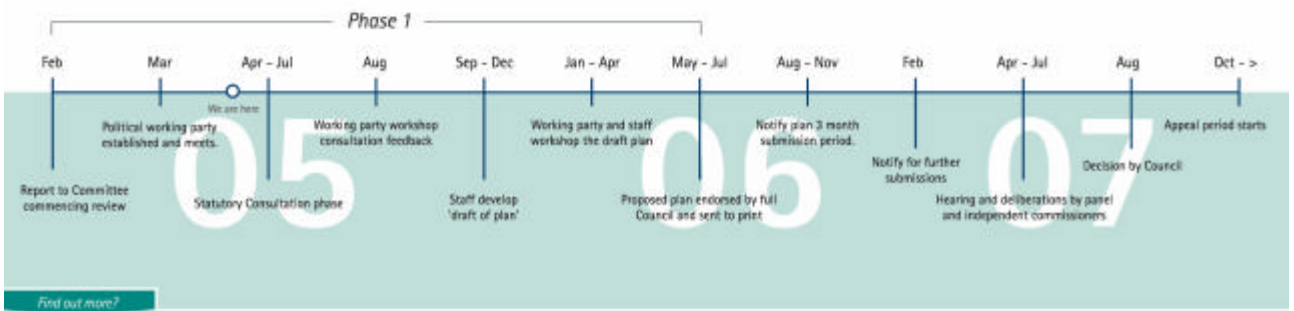


Hauraki Gulf District Plan Review

Great Barrier Island Issues and Options Papers

ALL THAT
LOW LAND
+ HIGH SKY +
WIDE WATER



www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/hgidistrictplan



Auckland City

Background

WHAT IS A DISTRICT PLAN?

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) requires the Council to have a district plan for Auckland City. A district plan is a legal document, which sets out the council's policies and strategies for managing the natural and physical resources of the City.

The Auckland City District Plan is comprised of three sections: the Central Area section, the Isthmus section and the Hauraki Gulf Islands section (HGI District Plan).

WHY REVIEW THE DISTRICT PLAN?

Once a district plan is operative, the RMA requires it to be reviewed every ten years. As the current HGI District Plan became operative in July 1996, the council is aiming to publicly notify the proposed (reviewed) HGI District Plan in August 2006. Another key driver for reviewing the HGI District Plan is to ensure it meets the foreseeable needs of the environment and communities for the ensuing 10 years.

THE HGI DISTRICT PLAN

The current HGI District Plan is a single document and brings together all the resource management issues facing the islands of the Hauraki Gulf: Waiheke, Great Barrier, Rakino, Pakatoa, Ponui, Motuhie, Motutapu, Rotoroa, Brown's and Rangitoto and a larger number of other small islands (the current HGI District Plan applies to more than 65 islands overall).

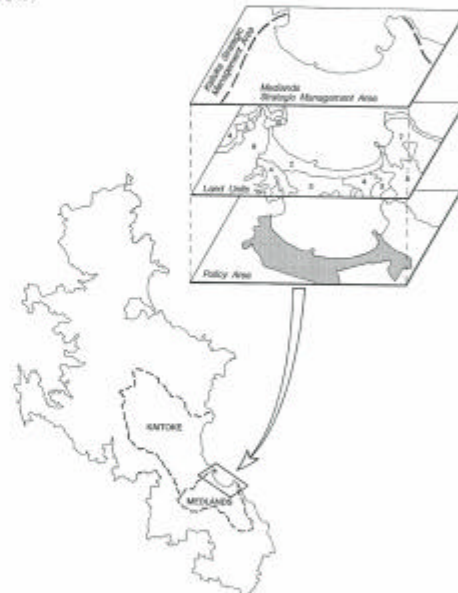
The resource management method adopted for the current HGI District Plan has three primary elements:

- Strategic Management Areas (SMA's) – there are 20 separate SMA's in the HGI Plan. These are generally based on natural drainage catchments. Common objectives and policies have been developed for each SMA.
- Land Units – within each SMA, all land is given a land unit classification. The land unit classification relates to the natural characteristics of the particular land or the activities to be undertaken on that land. Each land unit has a set of objectives, policies and rules which determine the nature and extent of development that can occur in each land unit.

- Policy Areas – are an additional layer of district plan provisions which contain objectives, policies and rules which have been put in place where a more developed and targeted planning approach is required e.g. wharf areas, commercial areas and beach areas subject to relatively heavy development pressure.

THE HGI DISTRICT PLAN AND GREAT BARRIER ISLAND

The resource management method explained above is applied to Great Barrier Island as shown in the diagram below:



This diagram shows the relationship between the Resource Management Units used in this document.

The current HGI District Plan contains 26 land units, however only land units 1-10 are applied to Great Barrier Island, the other outer islands and eastern Waiheke. Land units 1-10 are as follows:

- Land Unit 1 – Coastal Cliffs
- Land Unit 2 – Dune Systems and Sand Flats
- Land Unit 3 – Alluvial Flats
- Land Unit 4 – Wetland Systems
- Land Unit 5 – Foothills and Lower Slopes
- Land Unit 6 – Steep Pastured Slopes
- Land Unit 7 – Steep Infertile Coastal Slopes
- Land Unit 8 – Regenerating Slopes
- Land Unit 9 – Low Fertility Hills
- Land Unit 10 – Forest and Bush Areas

Introduction

This collection of documents discusses the issues identified with the current district plan to date that are exclusive to Great Barrier Island.

Other issue papers that relate to the Gulf as a whole (ie are not specific to Great Barrier Island) will be made available at a later date.

In addition to identifying issues, the documents also discuss various approaches that could be taken in dealing with each issue.

These issues and approaches are not an exhaustive list. You may have other issues and approaches that have not been identified through these documents. If you do, please let us know by contacting us at:

Auckland City Council
Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan Review
Private Bay 92516
Wellesley Street
Auckland 1036

Phone 379 2020 and ask for the Isthmus and Islands duty planner.

www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/hgidistrictplan

Contents

Claris.....	5
Earthworks – Farm Tracks	7
Noise of Generators – Great Barrier Island.....	9
Residential Land Unit – Great Barrier Island.....	10
Separate Section for Great Barrier Island	12
Tryphena Wharf.....	14
Glossary of Terms	15

Claris

Issue

The planning structure adopted as a basis for resource management in the Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan divides the district into Strategic Management Areas (SMAs). Strategic Management Areas are divided into land units and policy areas. Land units are based on common features of the physical and natural landscape. Policy areas apply to a number of locations that show a need for a more robust strategic approach to resource management in addition to the controls to be had from SMAs and land units.

Only rural Land Units 1 to 10 apply on Great Barrier Island. These land units are based on common features of the physical and natural landscape. Delineation of land units used in other parts of the Hauraki Gulf Islands is based not only on the physical and natural landscape but also on settlement patterns, infrastructure, existing land uses, subdivision patterns, and activities. For example, Land Units 13 - Retailing, 14 - Visitor Facilities and 15 - Industrial were defined not so much by the underlying natural environment as by activities and existing and likely future land use.

Concerns have been raised that no residential, commercial or industrial land units exist on Great Barrier Island. Should consideration be given to providing for these activities in Claris – since they already exist?

Claris is a growing settlement area with residential, commercial and industrial activities, along with sports facilities, the landfill (which has regional consents until 2027), community facilities (Auckland City Council service centre, library and information centre), the airport, and medical centre. It is located within SMA 6 – Kaitoke. The wider Claris area is subject to numerous land units (Land Units 2,3,4,5,6,8 and 9) and the Claris policy area also applies to a defined area. Claris airport is the principle airport for the island and is located within the sand flats.

There are a number of issues that require consideration.

- The need to include a commercial and/or industrial zone to provide for existing commercial and industrial activities close to Claris.
- The inconsistencies that exist between the planning map and the policy area. Clarification is required on which is the correct boundary for the Claris policy area.
- Is there a need for a policy area for Claris?
- Should the existing controls be simplified, giving more certainty on what can and can't be done as of right, and stating the information required for assessment?
- Should there be provision for residential use in the general Claris area?
- Is there a need for a long-term development strategy for Claris?
- The airport protection fans extend beyond the policy area. How are activities within the protection fans assessed?
- How would these issues be affected by the airport and potential noise problems?

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Retain the status quo with the SMA, various land units and policy areas.
- Correct the inconsistencies between the planning map and policy area, but retain the same principal approach.

- Review the existing SMAs, land units and policy area that apply to Claris. Replace them with a structure plan for the wider Claris area that addresses all potential development needs.
- Introduce residential, commercial or industrial land units for the Claris area.

Earthworks – Farm Tracks

Issue

Farm tracks on Great Barrier Island come under Clause 6B.1.3.6 – Earthworks, in the Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan, which contains the following additional provisions for farm tracks:

"C. Earthworks to construct farm tracks in Land Units 3 and 5 on Great Barrier Island which do not comply with (A) above are a permitted activity where:

- i) the tracks are required for farming activities; and
- ii) the earthworks comply in all respects with the standards set out in (F) below."

(A) contains the standard earthworks limits that in Land Units 3 and 5 would permit up to 50m² of earthworks on land with a slope greater than 1 in 6, and up to 400m² on land with a slope of less than 1 in 6. (F) requires the use of sediment control measures, no depositing of material on public roads, no more than 200m³ of cleanfill to be transported by public road to or from the site, and any surplus material to be disposed of in a legally authorised manner.

The additional provisions for farm tracks were inserted into the District Plan by the Council's decision of 18 December 2004 on submissions received to plan change 24, which amended the earthworks' controls. Several of the farmers on Great Barrier Island were concerned about the need to obtain resource consents for earthworks involved in the construction of farm tracks. Taking a pragmatic approach, the hearing panel decided to go some way towards meeting this concern.

It is likely that some Great Barrier farmers consider that the farm track provisions are still too restrictive because they apply only in Land Units 3 (alluvial flats) and 5 (foothills and lower slopes).

On the other hand, some staff consider that the farm track provisions are too imprecise. Possibly there should be a definition of "farm track". It is also unclear what standard of access is proposed and the extent of earthworks that is envisaged.

It can also be argued that it is difficult to justify having special exemptions for earthworks for farm tracks on Great Barrier Island. In terms of effects, it is the nature of the earthworks, rather than their purpose, which is of relevance.

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Status quo. Retain the existing provisions or provisions of a similar nature.
- Retain the existing provisions, but clarify them by including a definition of "farm track".
- Extend the existing provisions to other land units where farming occurs.
- Remove the existing provisions. Make no extra provision for farm tracks – the standard earthworks controls apply.

Great Barrier Island Airfields

Issue

Transportation and accessibility are extremely important issues for Great Barrier Island. The island is accessed by air and ferry services. The regular car ferry takes approximately four hours and brings over the majority of supplies, including fuel. There are two airfields on Great Barrier, at Okiwi and Claris. Claris is the principal airfield and is currently being widened and lengthened. Night flights are not permitted from either airfield.

Under the Auckland City District Plan, Okiwi Airfield is within Strategic Management Area 12 – Whangapoua and is zoned Land Unit 3 – Alluvial Flats. Under Land Unit 3, commercial airstrips are a listed discretionary activity. Claris Airfield is within SMA 6 – Kaitoke, Land Unit 2 – Dune Systems and Sand Flats and the Claris policy area. Under Land Unit 2, commercial airstrips are a listed discretionary activity. Neither airfield is designated under the District Plan.

The 'Gulf Island Transport Strategy', published by the Auckland City Council, sets out strategic directions for transport on Great Barrier Island. The strategy states that Claris Airfield is and will continue to be the main airfield for the island. However, the document recognises that Okiwi Airfield is a vital link to the northern part of the island and has some potential for growth, particularly from tourism. The Okiwi airstrip upgrade in 2001 has improved the serviceability of the airfield and will allow its greater use, especially over the winter months, although the airfield is often closed during wet weather.

Currently there is no provision for Okiwi Airfield in the District Plan, although some initial work and consultation was undertaken on a plan change to provide for it. The Claris Airfield is provided for by the Claris policy area. However, commercial airfields are still listed discretionary activities within Land Unit 2.

Given the increasing importance of air travel to Great Barrier Island, consideration needs to be given to ensuring that both Claris and Okiwi airfields can operate effectively within the structure of the District Plan.

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Retain the status quo.
- Introduce a policy area to Okiwi Airfield and maintain the existing policy area at Claris.
- Designate both sites as airfields so that there is no requirement to comply with District Plan rules.
- Upgrade the infrastructure so that night landings are provided for at Claris Airfield.
- Create an "Airfield" Land Unit, with each airfield having individual planning provisions.

Noise of Generators – Great Barrier Island

Issue

Noise from generators, particularly diesel and petrol generators, is a common reason for complaint on Great Barrier Island. The District Plan has noise levels for generators – a L_{10} level of 55dBA during the day and 45dBA during the night. These are values that New Zealand Standard NZS6802: 1991 (Assessment of Environmental Sound) states are "the desirable upper limit of exposure to environmental noise for the reasonable protection of community health and amenity". The later 1999 standard (NZS6802: 1999) also suggests that daytime levels of 45-55dBA Leq and 35-45dBA Leq at night "should not be exceeded during any measurement sample time at any point within the boundary of a zone, site, or area required to be protected, for example, the notional boundary of a rural dwelling." (Note that the new Plan should replace L_{10} with Leq (the time average level) to be consistent with NZS 6802:1999.)

Most problems with generator noise are related to the age of the generators used on Great Barrier Island and the fact that most are housed in structures that are insufficiently insulated to reduce the noise to the standards of the District Plan. The problem is greater in areas such as Tryphena where houses are relatively close together, especially if the generator is used after 10pm, when night levels apply. Arguably, in situations where the generator will be used after 11pm the present night level of 45dBA should be even lower, because of the low background noise levels on Great Barrier Island.

Information pamphlets on reducing generator noise have been available at the service centre for a number of years.

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Retain the status quo.
- Instigate proactive measurement of generator noise and provide information to those who exceed the noise limits.
- Insert location and insulation controls into the District Plan.
- Review the noise level controls for generators.
- Require that the location of generators be shown as part of any resource consent application.
- Insert discretionary activity controls for generators into the District Plan.
- Undertake more enforcement of lower noise levels.

Residential Land Unit – Great Barrier Island

Issue

The primary areas of existing residential development on Great Barrier Island are located at Tryphena, Medlands and Claris-Kaitoke. The Tryphena and Medlands residential areas each have Strategic Management Areas (SMAs) and policy areas overlaying the land unit classifications. Land Units 3, 5 and 8 are applied to the majority of sites within these areas.

There is other residential development at Okupu, Whangaparapara, Port Fitzroy and Okiwi. Land units 5 and 8 are applied to most sites in these areas. There is also a policy area overlaying the land unit classifications at Port Fitzroy.

The issues around the need for a residential land unit can be assessed in two parts; the need to provide more land for residential development and the need to provide better District Plan provisions for existing residential development.

More land for residential development

Great Barrier is not a 'growth area' and has a declining population. Therefore, it would seem that there is no pressing demand for more land for residential development. The exception to this may be the increasing number of "off islanders" purchasing land for holiday homes, which may mean that there is a demand for more land for residential development around holiday home areas such as Medlands.

Better District Plan provisions for existing residential development

Since residential land use is a permitted activity the issue is around the development controls associated with residential development and not the provision for residential activity per se.

The development controls in some land units are not well suited to the form and density of much residential development. For example, the lot coverage control of 500m² in Land Unit 8 – Regenerating Slopes does not seem to be the most appropriate given that the average lot size is around 800m² (that is, 62 per cent coverage).

The requirement for controlled activity consents in the policy area for all earthworks and vegetation clearance would seem to add little value, particularly if the permitted standards for earthworks and vegetation clearance have already been met.

There are a number of layers of control on some residential areas – land unit rules, policy areas, SMAs and sites of ecological significance/sensitive areas. Are all layers necessary?

The requirement for controlled activity consents for buildings in the policy areas may be of some value, but consideration should be given as to whether a restricted discretionary consent could be required instead; and to providing better assessment criteria.

While there are different areas defined within policy areas, the same general controlled activity rules and criteria apply equally within all of the areas. It may be appropriate to incorporate some more specific controls in some areas or to exclude some areas to achieve a more targeted set of controls.

If a 'residential land unit' were introduced into the existing residential areas it would be introduced on a 'cadastral' basis rather than a 'landform' basis. Therefore, there would be issues as to how the land unit would integrate with surrounding land units.

A 'residential land unit' is an activity-based land unit. There may be issues with introducing one activity-based land unit without others, for example commercial or industrial land units. Would there be implications for rates if land was classified residential?

Policy areas do not apply to all residential development areas, so policy areas may or may not be appropriate.

If Land Unit 12 – Bush Residential was introduced to Great Barrier Island, consideration would need to be given to whether the development controls in Land Unit 12 are appropriate for the form and density of development on Great Barrier.

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

More land for residential development

An assessment of the areas where more residential development may be appropriate from a visual perspective has previously been undertaken. It identified some limited areas around Okiwi, Claris and Tryphena.

Better District Plan provisions for existing residential development

- Retain status quo with land units, policy areas and SMAs.
- Introduce a residential land unit. This could be Land Unit 12 (as applied to Waiheke Island) or a land unit specifically prepared for the form and density of residential development on Great Barrier Island. It may or may not be overlaid by a policy area.
- Provide for a range of residential activities within the residential land unit, such as pensioner housing or retirement villages.
- Modify policy area provisions so they are more specific and targeted. They could also be modified so that they no longer overlie the land unit provisions but rather become a land unit themselves, with specific development controls for residential (and possibly commercial) development within the policy area.
- Modify land unit provisions to better reflect the form and density of residential development on Great Barrier Island.
- Modify both land unit and policy area provisions – a combination of the above.

Separate Section for Great Barrier Island

Issue

In reviewing the Hauraki Gulf Islands (HGI) District Plan, consideration needs to be given as to whether or not the current structure of the Plan is sufficient to address the specific issues faced by each of the Islands.

In particular, the issues facing Great Barrier Island are significantly different from those facing Waiheke Island, so it may be necessary to create a separate section in the Plan for Great Barrier, to allow the specific issues to be addressed.

The key differences between Great Barrier and Waiheke are:

- The population on Great Barrier is small and declining while that on Waiheke is large and increasing.
- Employment is not as readily available on Great Barrier as on Waiheke and there is no opportunity for commuting.
- Substantial areas of land on Great Barrier are in Department of Conservation ownership.
- While disposal of wastewater is an issue on both islands, Great Barrier also has no reticulated power supply, so generators are required.
- Great Barrier is less accessible because of irregular ferry sailings and the length of the trip.
- Tourism on Great Barrier focuses on adventure whereas tourism on Waiheke centres around wine, weddings and events.
- Development on Waiheke is of a greater intensity and density than that on Great Barrier.
- There are significantly larger areas of outstanding natural landscape on Great Barrier than on Waiheke.
- Some Great Barrier residents feel more positively about development than do some Waiheke residents.

Further work could be undertaken in order to establish exactly what the implications of these differences are in terms of planning controls for Great Barrier as compared to Waiheke. If the differences require a significantly different planning approach for Great Barrier from that used on Waiheke (perhaps excluding land units, policy areas and Strategic Management Areas) then a separate section may be necessary. Alternatively, if the differences do not require a significantly different approach (just different permitted standards for Great Barrier) then this may be accommodated within one section in the Plan.

Further to the above, a separate section may not be the answer to all concerns associated with the provisions of the Plan as they relate to Great Barrier. For example, it may be the provisions in the land units and policy areas that are not appropriate rather than the structure of the Plan itself.

Despite the differences that exist between Great Barrier and Waiheke Islands, there are also a number of landforms and activities that are similar between the two islands (regenerating slopes, residential activity, community activities).

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Status quo – retain existing provisions within the District Plan (i.e. Land Units 1-10 on Great Barrier Island).
- Create a separate section within the HGI Plan that specifically relates to Great Barrier Island.

- Provide separate development controls for Great Barrier – adjust the development controls in the land units as they relate to Great Barrier.
- Retain the existing Plan with a wider range of land units.

Tryphena Wharf

Issue

Tryphena wharf is the main passenger and freight terminal for Great Barrier Island and is therefore of high importance to both residents and visitors to the Island.

The land area behind Tryphena wharf and Shoal Bay Road is included in the Tryphena policy area as "Tryphena Wharf and Access Area". These provisions state that additions and alterations to buildings, earthworks, and the removal of vegetation require consent as a controlled activity. The overall intent of the provisions is to ensure that the wharf area is managed effectively and efficiently while ensuring that buildings are of an appropriate scale and location.

In addition to the provisions of the policy area, the provisions of Land Unit 1 – Coastal Cliffs apply. These provisions state that a controlled activity consent must be sought where an activity is in the Tryphena policy area; and application must be made for a resource consent as a discretionary activity where it is proposed to vary any of the standards in Part 6B.

It is important to note that the provisions of Land Unit 1 and the Tryphena policy area apply only to the land behind Tryphena wharf (1280m²) and not to the wharf itself (which is in the jurisdiction of the Auckland Regional Council). The land area is vested as road reserve.

The primary issues associated with the functioning of the land area behind the wharf relate to the limited space that is available for parking and storage and for dropping off and picking up both passengers and freight. The winding, narrow road is also of concern.

Because this area is the main ferry terminal for freight and passengers, it is important that planning provisions do not unnecessarily constrain its future development.

While the provisions of the policy area seek to ensure that the wharf operates effectively and efficiently, they are offset by the provisions of Land Unit 1 - Coastal Cliffs, which has permitted activity standards such as a zero-metre height limit and the coastal protection yard. The need for a controlled activity consent under Land Unit 1 is questioned, because the issues to do with the Tryphena policy area are more appropriately assessed under the policy area provisions – not the Land Unit 1 provisions.

It would also seem logical that planning provisions reflect future development plans for the wharf by Traffic and Rounding Services (TARS).

Possible approaches

You may have a better or alternative approach to those outlined below. If so, we would like to hear from you.

- Status quo - retain wharf in Tryphena policy area and Land Unit 1 - Coastal Cliffs.
- Retain existing Land Unit 1 - Coastal Cliffs and remove policy area.
- Create a new land unit only i.e. no policy area. Re-classify the wharf to a new land unit that could be either 'landform based' or 'activity based'. An example of an activity-based land unit would be Land Unit 25 – Wharf, which is applied at Rakino and Kennedy Point (it is noted that the Tryphena wharf area is not dissimilar to Kennedy Point). If Land Unit 25 – Wharf was considered appropriate it might also be necessary to update the provisions of that land unit.
- Create a new land unit and retain the policy area. Re-classify the area with a new land unit which is either "landform based" or "activity based" and retain the Tryphena policy area.
- Designate the land. Prepare a designation on behalf of TARS and designate the site for wharf purposes/car parking /storage.

Glossary of Terms

Controlled activities

These are activities that require a resource consent which the Council must approve, but can put conditions on the consent.

Delineation

“Marking out” or drawing a line, this term is used to describe the boundary of a particular land unit.

Discretionary activities

These are activities that require a resource consent which Council can approve or decline, and if they approve the activity, they can put conditions on the consent.

Land units (LU)

Great Barrier is separated into smaller units for the purpose of forming rules which control development. Land units are based on common features of the physical and natural landscape. Each land unit has a combination of physical and environmental characteristics by which it is clearly distinguished. Land units determine the rules and standards which apply together with the criteria for assessment of resource consent and subdivision consent applications.

Non-complying activities

These are activities that are not provided for or are activities that contravene the district plan that are not otherwise permitted, controlled or discretionary activities. Council can approve or decline a resource consent for a non-complying activity, and if they approve it, can place conditions on the consent.

Objective

Describes the intended outcomes as a result of the rules and policies.

Outstanding natural landscape

An outstanding natural landscape is one that is considered as being of national or regional significance, and contains features that make it special when compared other landscapes. The reference to natural does not require it to be unmodified by humans.

The Resource Management Act requires outstanding natural landscapes and features to be protected from inappropriate development.

Permitted activities

These are activities which can be undertaken without a resource consent.

Policy

Describes the way in which Council will consider various aspects of a proposal.

Policy areas	<p>Policy areas apply to a number of locations which exhibit a need for a more pronounced strategic approach to resource management in addition to the use of strategic management areas and land units. Policy areas provide additional objectives, policies and rules to be considered during the consent process.</p> <p>These are sometimes called structure plans by other Councils.</p>
Prohibited activities	<p>This is an activity for which no-one is allowed to apply for a resource or subdivision consent.</p>
Resource consent	<p>A resource consent allows a person to carry out an activity on land where the use of land is controlled by the District Plan.</p>
Resource Management Act (1991)	<p>The legislation that sets out the way resources are to be managed nationally, regionally and locally. The purpose of the act is to provide for sustainable management.</p>
Rule	<p>A rule sets out the controls or standards that should be complied with for land-use or subdivision activities.</p>
Sensitive area (SA)	<p>These areas are similar to sites of ecological significance, but with slightly less emphasis.</p>
Site of ecological significance (SES)	<p>These are areas that have been identified as having significant plant, wildlife or ecological values.</p>
Strategic management areas (SMA's)	<p>The District Plan divides the district into Strategic Management Areas (SMA's). These identify critical physical, social and development characteristics for each area. Common objectives and policies have been developed for each to provide a basis for management of these areas. The objectives and policies are considered as part of a resource consent, but do not strictly control it.</p> <p>There are 15 SMAs on Great Barrier including Rakitu (Arid) Island.</p>
Structure plan	<p>A structure plan is a method of controlling and identifying areas that are to be developed in a particular manner. It generally specifies planned locations for activities and may show areas for public use. Refer to Policy Areas.</p>

Subdivision

This term is used to describe the division of an allotment of land into separate titles, but does not include joining together titles. Other forms of subdivision include cross-leases and unit titles.

Sustainable management

This term is used in the Resource Management Act, and it means managing resources in such a way that we provide for social, cultural and economic wellbeing, whilst:

- sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;
- safeguarding life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and
- avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects on the environment.