

Issues and Options

Whanganui District Plan Review

Industrial Environment Chapter I Manufacturing Zone

How should the District Plan manage industrial areas?

This consultation document focuses on how we manage industrial and manufacturing areas in Whanganui District. In particular, it sets out:

- How industrial and manufacturing areas are currently managed in the Operative District Plan.
- Key issues facing the District in relation to existing industrial areas/zoning and associated land use patterns.
- Some of the ways that industrial and manufacturing areas could be managed in the future.

The document also invites you to provide feedback on how these activities might best be managed. Management of the use and/or storage of any hazardous substances associated with activities such as industrial processing and manufacturing is the subject of a specific Issues and Options discussion document that is being consulted on separately.

The Current District Plan

The current District Plan contains a framework for managing the use of land across the district. Under this framework there is a single zone – the Manufacturing Zone – that is employed to manage industrial and manufacturing areas in the district.

This zone sets aside land that has generally been determined by Council to be appropriately located for a range of industrial and manufacturing activities. Areas covered by the zone are typically located close to transport routes, including the Port and main State Highways, and in places where effects on the environment such as noise, offensive odours, and visual amenity can generally be contained and managed. Activities currently permitted in the zone include:

- Manufacturing activities, for example the processing or storage of materials, meat and meat product manufacturing, work with textiles, vehicle servicing, food outlets and service stations.
- Recreation facilities
- Commercial activities, but only where they are ancillary to manufacturing activities, primarily provide food or fuel to people in the Manufacturing zone; or primarily provide materials or components to activities in the manufacturing zone.
- Reserves and open spaces

- Network utilities such as power lines and transformers, pipelines and gas facilities, the Whanganui airport, sewage, and telecommunications and radio communication facilities.
- Relocated buildings and temporary relocatable buildings.
- Temporary military training activities.

Key issues facing the District

Issue 1 – Potential for incompatibility issues between different land uses within and adjacent to industrial areas, including potential for reverse sensitivity effects

As the district currently has only a single industrial zone – the Manufacturing Zone - there is potential for a wide range of land uses to establish in this zone that may not always be compatible with one another. This, in turn, can increase the prospect of reverse sensitivity effects arising where, for example, an activity produces high noise levels next door to a café or fuel station.

Aside from the potential for incompatible activities to be located within the zone there is the potential for incompatibility between zones (e.g. where industrial activities are located adjacent to residential properties).

Issue 2 – Suitability of existing Manufacturing zoned land for industrial purposes

Industrial and manufacturing activities within Whanganui District generally need to be located in areas that will enable them to function efficiently and remain viable. This means that they are typically located in places that are easily accessible by road, water, or air; and in locations that provide the necessary infrastructure capacity to service them.

However, the appropriateness/viability of some of the areas currently zoned for industrial activities is questionable due to the topography or land conditions (e.g. Aramoho). Other industrial areas are situated on low lying land and are vulnerable to flooding. These areas may also be prone to sea level rise as a result of climate change. Additionally, infrastructure services such as roading and three waters (water, stormwater, wastewater) are either unavailable/unscheduled or difficult to deliver in some of the current industrially zoned areas (e.g. Aramoho, Marangai).

Reviewing the plan is an opportunity to reconsider where development is most appropriate. It is an opportunity to consider whether land should be removed from the industrial zoning, whether an alternative zoning might be more appropriate, and whether other land needs to be available to cater for the anticipated growth and future demand.

What are the options?

Option 1 – Business as usual

This option would see the retention of a single Industrial Zone along with no changes made to the extent of the zoning.

The rules currently provide for a wide range of manufacturing and ancillary activities, including food outlets, utilities and recreation facilities as permitted activities, with a limited range of other activities including community activities, network utilities and residential activities requiring resource consent. No changes would be made to these provisions.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industrial activities would continue operating where and how they are now.• Small businesses that support industrial activities can operate in the zone, including food outlets, fuel stations, utilities and recreation activities.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The District Plan objectives and policies do not specifically relate to industrial and manufacturing activities.• There is no distinction between, or rules to manage the effects of, different types of industrial activities, for example light industrial activities such as warehousing, storage, or the sale of goods required for industrial activities; and heavy industrial activities such as factories, the use of fuel burning equipment or animal processing.

Option 2 – Removal of areas that aren't viable and reshape plan provisions

There are areas within the district that are zoned for industrial purposes but are poorly located or unable to be serviced by the required infrastructure (e.g. water supply, sewage facilities, or roading). This option would look to remove these areas from the zone, if appropriate.

Additionally, as the current objectives and policies in the Industrial Environment (Manufacturing Zone) chapter are non-specific to industrial activities and key issues facing the district this option would set out new objectives and policies that are more clearly tailored to enable the ongoing operation and development of industrial activities while ensuring that any adverse impacts are appropriately managed. These objectives and policies would be supported by rules and standards focussed on managing reverse sensitivity effects within the zone and on adjacent residential properties.

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectives and policies that provide greater policy direction for people making decisions under the plan.• The plan would clearly set out how to manage the effects of industrial activities and where these activities are to be located.• Provides certainty that land zoned for industrial purposes is capable of being developed for this purpose, particularly in terms of supporting infrastructure.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure needed to service the previously zoned industrial land can be diverted to other greenfield areas for development.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could result in land with future development aspirations being removed from industrial zoning.

Option 3 – Establish distinct ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ industrial zoning

Like Option 2, this option would see the removal of land from the current Manufacturing Zone that is not viable for development.

It also proposes to establish two distinct zones to accommodate industrial and manufacturing activities in the district - ‘light’ and ‘heavy’ industrial. New objectives and policies would be developed to support these distinct zones, setting out what activities would be suitable in each location and how the effects of the activities within these zones and the interface between the industrial and non-industrial zones (e.g. residential and open space zones) would be managed.

Areas zoned for light industrial would be suitable for the use and development of such activities as trade suppliers and service industries (e.g. vehicle servicing or repairs, warehousing and distribution activities, ancillary retail, food shops or fuel stations).

Other areas would be set aside for heavy industrial activities, generally these are activities that generate objectionable effects such as discharging smoke or odours to the air, or high noise levels due to the use of machinery. These activities could involve, for example, large scale manufacturing or processing, the storage and disposal of sewage or activities that are likely to discharge odour or dust beyond a site.

By having two distinct industrial zones, plan provisions can be more tailored for each group of activities. Specific plan provisions can be developed for each zone and may include specific noise standards for heavy industrial activities, low noise limits for activities located near residential or commercial areas or require new buildings to be located further away from boundaries where the property adjoins a different zone (e.g. residential or reserves and open space zones).

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan rules are better tailored to specific categories of industrial activity, providing for the development of strengthened rules where effects could be significant (e.g. meat processing). Provides clarity for those wishing to develop new activities by indicating where distinct industrial activities are most appropriate.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could add an unnecessary level of regulation, particularly given the limited range of existing heavy industrial activities in the district and no evidence to suggest that there are any specific compatibility/suitability issues with the current zoning approach.

Where to from here?

Feedback is sought on the above options, in particular, which option you prefer and why. In addition, we are seeking to better understand the scale and significance of the issues described above. We are interested in any examples of where the above issues have arisen, and how well (or not) the current provisions for hazardous substances and contaminated land are working.

Your feedback will assist us to develop the Industrial zone provisions and determine whether more land might be needed in other areas, or if there are industrial activities that the Plan currently doesn't provide for. We will use your feedback to develop the draft Industrial Chapter provisions which will be publicly notified at a later date for you to provide further comments on.

Please let us know if you have any questions on this process or the review of the Industrial Environment Chapter.