

# Protecting our historic heritage and natural environments

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July 2022



**Hamilton  
City Council**  
Te kaunihera o Kirikiriroa

# Protecting our historic heritage and natural environments

We play a critical role in identifying and protecting Hamilton Kirikiriroa’s historic heritage and natural environment, in all its forms. The most powerful tool we have to do this is our District Plan - the 'rule book' for how our city develops.

As the demand for land and housing increases, it’s crucial we strike the right balance between supporting development and protecting and enhancing those things that have helped shape our city.

This is exactly what Plan Change 9 is all about. It’s about making sure our District Plan, and the rules in it, enable growth while protecting our unique historic heritage and natural environment.

It’s building a city that reflects our identity where future generations of Hamiltonians can grow within the types of communities they want.

## Why are we doing this?

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), all councils are required to have policies and rules in their District Plans that help protect their heritage and natural environment.

Our current District Plan lists 121 built structures, five special character areas, approximately 500 notable trees,

59 Significant Natural Areas and 52 archaeological sites, but it’s been over a decade since we last reviewed these. Through Plan Change 9 we’re reassessing them all against the most up-to-date criteria, and looking for any new examples that may need to be added to our District Plan.

## What does this Plan Change cover?



**Built heritage**



**Notable trees**



**Significant Natural Areas**



**Historic heritage areas**



**Archaeological sites**

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# Built heritage

**Built heritage refers to individual or groups of buildings, monuments or structures that have a connection to our history.**

Built heritage includes both publicly and privately owned structures across Hamilton Kirikiriroa such as churches, bridges, schools, monuments, houses and commercial buildings. They help tell our story and give us a sense of community and history.

Through Plan Change 9 we completed a citywide assessment of more than 560 structures and from this work we're proposing an additional 182 structures be added to the District Plan.



## What does it mean if a property is listed as having built heritage structure/s on it?

If a property is listed in the District Plan as having a built heritage structure on it, there will be restrictions on the types of modifications you can do to the exterior of the structure and your property. So, if you're looking to do work that involves additions, alterations, removal, relocation or demolition you will need to get resource consent from Council before you begin.

However, minor works such as maintenance and repairs, or changes to the inside of the structure are allowed.



# Historic heritage areas

A historic heritage area is a defined area that has heritage values worthy of protection. They represent a period of our city's development and give people a glimpse into our past.

Hamilton Kirikiriroa currently has five special character areas identified in our District Plan; Frankton Railway Village, parts of Hamilton East, Hayes Paddock, Claudelands West and Temple View Heritage Area.

Through Plan Change 9 we've completed a city-wide assessment to identify areas that meet the necessary criteria for inclusion in the District Plan as a historic heritage area. From this work, we're proposing a total of 32 areas be identified in our District Plan.



## What does it mean if a property is listed as being in a historic heritage area?

If a property is listed in the District Plan as being within a historic heritage area, there will be rules in place that protect the area's heritage value and prevent significant intensification, inappropriate design and certain housing types from being built. However, alterations, additions or demolition of existing buildings on a rear site won't require consent.

No changes to the underlying zone (e.g special character area) are proposed in this Plan Change and the existing rules will continue to apply.



# Significant Natural Areas

A Significant Natural Area (SNA) is an area that's home to native plants and/or animals. SNA is a way to protect important areas of indigenous biodiversity for current and future generations.

As our city has grown, our natural environment has been impacted, and we want to make sure all ecologically significant areas are protected, especially those which are home to native animals including birds and the long-tailed bat.

We've currently got 59 SNAs identified in our District Plan, totalling approximately 160ha. Following a city-wide assessment, we're proposing an additional 540ha of SNAs be added to the District Plan, with these mostly, although not exclusively, found around our extensive gully network and near the banks of the Waikato River.



## What does it mean if a property is identified as having a SNA on it?

If a property is listed in the District Plan as having a SNA on it, there are rules that outline what can and cannot happen (without first getting resource consent) within those parts of the property. For example, activities such as tree removal or earthworks within the SNA may require resource consent, as will the planting of any pest species or exotic vegetation. However, pruning, maintenance or the removal of plants or trees due to disease, age, unacceptable public risk to health, safety or property would not require consent.

We're also proposing to protect the trees within SNAs by controlling earthworks within the dripline, the area that's directly under the tree branches, and vegetation trimming, and these rules will apply to landowners next to a SNA where the tree canopy reaches over the property boundary.



# Notable trees

**Notable trees are individual or groups of trees located on either public or private land and are 'notable' because of their link to the community, scientific importance, species type, age or the contribution they make to the city.**

We currently have approximately 500 notable trees listed in the District Plan. In 2021 we reassessed these trees to see if they still met the criteria for protection. We also took this opportunity to assess trees on public property and we've identified an additional 1031 trees we're proposing be listed in the District Plan. We're not proposing to add any new trees on private property.

## What does it mean if a property is listed as having a notable tree(s) on it?

If a property is listed in the District Plan as having notable tree/s on it, there will be rules in place to protect the tree(s). A resource consent will not be required for emergency works and maintenance, however, if you wish to carry out any pruning work that will change the size or shape of the tree and result in a loss of height or canopy, a resource consent will be needed. Additionally, any work that impacts the tree's health, including removal, or works within the tree's protected root zone will also require resource consent.



# Archaeological sites

Archaeological sites are defined by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 as any place associated with human activity that occurred before 1900, and through the use of archaeological methods provide evidence relating to New Zealand's heritage.

All archaeological sites are identified by New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA), not Council. All archaeological sites, whether recorded or unrecorded, are protected, however our current District Plan only lists some of these. We're proposing a further 57 NZAA recorded sites be added to our District Plan so landowners are aware of them and what it means when looking to develop them. We're also proposing some new rules around how that part of the property can be developed.



## What does it mean if a property is listed as being an archaeological site?

If a property is listed in the District Plan as containing an archaeological site, there are rules that outline what can and cannot happen within those parts of the property. For example, any earthworks, subdivision or installation of signage within the area will require a resource consent, however, minor works such as putting in a vegetable garden will not.



# What does it all mean?

Plan Change 9 is about protecting those things that have helped shape Hamilton Kirikiriroa and make it the awesome place it is today. We want to make sure these elements are protected for future generations of Hamiltonians and visitors alike.

We've completed our assessment work and we now want to hear from you.

- **22 July to 19 August** - Public notification of Plan Change 9. This is your chance to tell us what you think.
- **Late October** - Further Submissions period opens for 10 working days. Here those interested can tell us what you think about any of the original submissions.
- **Late-February 2023** - Hearings. A chance to speak to your feedback.
- **Mid-2023** - Announcement of decisions.

## When do these changes come into effect?

Proposed rules for built heritage, historic heritage areas, archaeological sites and SNAs will apply as soon as the Plan Change is notified. This ensures that the identified structures/items, sites and areas are protected throughout the formal process. Proposed changes to notable trees will come into effect at the end of the formal process.

## I want to know more, who can I talk to?

We're here to help so if you got any questions, please visit us online at [hamilton.govt.nz/planchange9](https://hamilton.govt.nz/planchange9) or drop the team an email at [planchange@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:planchange@hcc.govt.nz)



## What is a resource consent and how do they relate to the District Plan?

Resource consents are issued by Council and allow property owners to carry out an activity that will use natural or physical resources or have an effect on the environment.

The District Plan sets out rules and related information that guide whether a resource consent is needed.

If you are ever unsure whether your work requires a resource consent you can contact our Duty Planner for general enquiries at [planning.guidance@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:planning.guidance@hcc.govt.nz)



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