

11 NATURAL HAZARDS

11.1 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a policy framework to address natural hazards throughout the District. The District is recognised as being subject to multiple hazards and as such, a key issue is ensuring that when development is proposed on land potentially subject to natural hazards, the risk is managed or mitigated to tolerable levels. In instances where the risk is intolerable, natural hazards will be required to be avoided. Council has a responsibility to address the developed parts of the District that are subject to natural hazard risk through a combination of mitigation measures and education, to lessen the impacts of natural hazards.

11.2 Natural Hazard Identification

Natural Hazards that exist in the District include:

- Flooding and inundation
- Erosion and deposition (including landslip and rockfall)
- Land instability
- Earthquakes and liquefaction
- Avalanche
- Alluvion¹, avulsion² or subsidence
- Tsunami / seiche³
- Fire

The District is located in an inland mountainous environment and as such can also be exposed to climatic extremes in terms of temperature and heavy snowfall.

Council holds information in a natural hazards database which has been accumulated over a long period of time by both the Council and the Otago Regional Council. The database is continually being updated and refined as new information is gathered. Given the ongoing updates occurring, With the exception of flooding information, which has historically been mapped, Council has decided not to map natural hazards as part of the District Plan. This decision has been made due to the fact the maps may quickly become out of date as new information becomes available. Council will rely upon the hazards database in the consideration of resource consents and building consents.

The database is readily available to the public. [\[insert hyperlink\]](#)

11.3 Information Requirements

Development proposals affected by, or potentially affected by, natural hazards as identified in Council's natural hazards database will require an accompanying assessment of natural hazards effects commensurate to the level of risk posed by the natural hazard. Council holds natural hazard information that has been developed at different scales and this should be taken into account when

¹ Increase in the size of a piece of land due to deposits by a river.

² Abandonment of a river channel and the formation of a new channel.

³ Oscillation of water due to earthquake shaking

assessing potential natural hazard risk. It is highly likely that for those hazards that have been identified at a 'district wide' level, further detailed analysis of the subject site will be required.

11.4 Other Relevant Provisions

11.4.1 District Wide Rules and Zone Provisions

Attention is drawn to the following District Wide Rules and Zone Provisions that may apply in addition to the Natural Hazards chapter. Activities requiring consent in the District may trigger the need for a natural hazard risk assessment. The following chapters should be considered:

- Earthworks
- Subdivision
- Zone provisions
- ETC

11.5 Objectives and Policies

11.5.1 **The effects of natural hazards on the community and the built environment are minimised to tolerable levels.**

- 11.5.1.1 Ensure assets or infrastructure are constructed and located so as to avoid or mitigate the potential risk of damage to human life, property or other parts of the environment.
- 11.5.1.2 Restrict the establishment of activities which have the potential to increase natural hazard risk, or may have, an impact upon the community and built environment.
- 11.5.1.3 Recognise that some areas that are already developed are now known to be at risk from natural hazards and minimise such risk as far as possible while acknowledging that landowners may be prepared to accept a level of risk.
- 11.5.1.4 Allow Public Bodies exercising their statutory powers to carry out natural hazard mitigation activities.
- 11.5.1.5 Where practicable, reduce the risk posed by natural hazards to the existing built environment and the community.

11.5.2 **Development on land subject to natural hazards only occurs where the risks to the community and the built environment are avoided or appropriately managed or mitigated.**

- 11.5.2.1 Seek to avoid intolerable natural hazard risk, acknowledging that this will not always be practicable in developed urban areas.
- 11.5.2.2 Allow subdivision and development of land subject to natural hazards where the proposed activity does not:
 - (a) Accelerate or worsen the natural hazard and/or its potential impacts.
 - (b) Expose vulnerable activities to intolerable natural hazard risk.
 - (c) Create an unacceptable risk to human life.
 - (d) Increase the natural hazard risk to other properties.
 - (e) Does not require additional works and costs that would be borne by the community.

- 11.5.2.3 Ensure all proposals to subdivide or develop land that is subject to natural hazards provide an assessment covering:
- (a) The type, frequency and scale of the natural hazard.
 - (b) The type of activity being undertaken and its vulnerability to natural hazards.
 - (c) The effects of a natural hazard event on the subject land.
 - (d) The potential for the activity to exacerbate natural hazard risk both in and off the subject land.
 - (e) The potential for any structures on the subject land to be relocated.
 - (f) The design and construction of buildings and structures to mitigate the effects of natural hazards, such as the raising of floor levels.
 - (g) Site layout and management to avoid the adverse effects of natural hazards, including access and egress during a hazard event.
- 11.5.2.4 Promote the use of natural features, buffers and appropriate risk management approaches in preference to hard engineering solutions in mitigating natural hazard risk.
- 11.5.2.5 Recognise that some infrastructure will need to be located on land subject to natural hazard risk.

11.5.3 The community's awareness and understanding of the natural hazard risk in the District is continually enhanced.

Policies

- 11.5.3.1 Continually develop and refine a natural hazards database in conjunction with the Otago Regional Council, (as a basis for Council decisions on resource consent applications or plan changes and for the assessment of building consents).
- 11.5.3.2 Ensure the community has access to the most up-to-date hazard information available.
- 11.5.3.3 Increase the community awareness of the potential risk of natural hazards, and the necessary emergency responses to natural hazard events.
- 11.5.3.4 Monitor hazard trends and changes in risk and consider action should risks become unacceptable.

Other Methods

- 11.5.3.5 Additional to the Resource Management Act, Council has obligations to address hazards under other legislation such as the Building Act 2004, the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002 and the Local Government Act 2002. In particular the provisions of the Building Act provide Council with the ability to refuse to issue a building consent in certain circumstances where a property is subject to natural hazards. As such, Council uses the provisions in the District Plan as just one tool to address natural hazard risk.