

National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025

December 2025



Ministry for the
Environment
Manatū Mō Te Taiao



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Authority

This National Policy Statement was approved by the Governor-General under section 52(2) of the Resource Management Act 1991 on 15 December 2025, and is published by the Minister for the Environment under section 52(3) of that Act.

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Part 1: Preliminary provisions

1.1 Title

- (1) This is the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025.

1.2 Commencement

- (1) This National Policy Statement comes into force on 15 January 2026.
- (2) See [Part 3](#) for timeframes for giving effect to this National Policy Statement.

1.3 Application

- (1) This National Policy Statement applies to all infrastructure activities and infrastructure supporting activities except:
 - (a) renewable electricity generation activities and assets managed under the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011; and
 - (b) the electricity transmission network and electricity distribution network activities and assets managed under the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and its amendments.

1.4 Interpretation

- (1) In this National Policy Statement:

Act means the Resource Management Act 1991

additional infrastructure includes:

- (a) a relevant school or institution as defined in the Education and Training Act 2020;
- (b) a health facility operated by Health New Zealand to meet its obligations under the Pae Ora (Healthy Futures) Act 2022;
- (c) fire and emergency services facilities;
- (d) defence facilities operated by the New Zealand Defence Force to meet its obligations under the Defence Act 1990;
- (e) correction facilities operated by the Department of Corrections to meet its obligations under the Corrections Act 2004;
- (f) a stormwater network;
- (g) resource recovery or waste disposal facilities; and
- (h) flood control and protection works carried out by, or on behalf, of a local authority.

ancillary infrastructure activities mean an activity that supports and is subsidiary to an infrastructure activity, including but not limited to:

- (a) vegetation clearance and tree trimming;
- (b) earthworks and land disturbance;

- (c) construction, maintenance, repair and upgrading of access tracks, bridges and culverts; and
- (d) power supply and telecommunications

buffer means an overlay, a specific control layer, or rules in a district plan used to manage the effects of activities that may be sensitive or incompatible with, or adversely affect, infrastructure activities, and may include restrictions on those activities or measures to manage the effects of infrastructure on those activities

decision-maker means any persons exercising functions or powers under the Act

existing infrastructure means infrastructure that is lawfully established and constructed

infrastructure includes all infrastructure as defined by the Act and additional infrastructure as defined in this National Policy Statement

infrastructure activities mean the construction, operation, maintenance, upgrade and removal of infrastructure and all ancillary infrastructure activities, unless otherwise specified, and include all physical components and assets associated with the infrastructure activity

infrastructure supporting activities mean activities that are not ancillary infrastructure activities but that are needed to directly support infrastructure activities, and may include quarrying activities

maintenance and minor upgrade includes work undertaken to ensure the effective and efficient operation and performance of existing infrastructure, and includes:

- (a) activities associated with the maintenance, renewal or repair of existing infrastructure, including all relevant ancillary activities; or
- (b) replacement, or renewal of, existing infrastructure with the modern equivalent equipment or asset, which may not be 'like for like'; or
- (c) works necessary to continue to deliver the same or similar level of infrastructure services or to improve resilience; or
- (d) other upgrades of existing infrastructure where the adverse effects are relative to those associated with the existing infrastructure

major upgrade means all upgrades of existing infrastructure that are not maintenance and minor upgrade

planned infrastructure means infrastructure that is identified in a strategic planning document as defined in this National Policy Statement

resilience means the capacity of infrastructure to absorb and recover from a shock or disruption, or adapt to changing conditions, while retaining an appropriate level of service as determined by the infrastructure provider

sensitive activities include residential activities (including papakāinga, visitor accommodation and retirement accommodation), care facilities, childcare facilities, schools, hospitals, custodial or supervised accommodation where residents are detained on site, marae or place of worship

stormwater network means the infrastructure and processes that are used to collect, treat, drain, store, reuse or discharge stormwater in an urban area; and includes:

- (a) an overland flow path;
- (b) green infrastructure that delivers stormwater services; and
- (c) watercourses that are part of, or related to, the infrastructure described in paragraph (a)

strategic planning document includes:

- (a) future development strategies prepared under the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020;
- (b) any non-statutory growth plan or growth strategy adopted by local authority resolution;
- (c) long-term plans and infrastructure strategies adopted under the Local Government Act 2002;
- (d) regional or national land transport plans approved under the Land Transport Management Act 2003; and
- (e) water service delivery plans adopted under the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025

upgrading infrastructure means increasing the capacity, level of service, efficiency, safety, security, resilience, effectiveness or longevity of existing infrastructure and includes the replacement, renewal, addition, expansion and intensification of existing infrastructure.

- (2) Terms defined in the Act and used in the National Policy Statement have the meaning in the Act, unless otherwise specified.
- (3) Terms defined in the National Planning Standards issued under section 58E of the Act and used in this National Policy Statement have the meanings in that Standard, unless otherwise specified.

1.5 Incorporation by reference

- (1) Clause 2(1) of Schedule 1AA of the Act does not apply to any material incorporated by reference in this National Policy Statement.

Part 2: Objective and policies

2.1 Objective

- (1) The objective of this National Policy Statement is to:
 - (a) ensure the national, regional and local benefits of infrastructure are provided for;
 - (b) enable infrastructure to support the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities and their health and safety;

- (c) enable infrastructure to support the development and change of urban and rural environments to meet the diverse and changing needs of present and future generations;
- (d) ensure infrastructure is well-functioning, resilient and compatible, as far as practicable, with other activities; and
- (e) ensure infrastructure is delivered in a timely and efficient manner while managing adverse effects from or on infrastructure.

2.2 Policies

Policy 1: Providing for the benefits of infrastructure

- (1) Decision-makers must ensure that the national, regional or local benefits of infrastructure, relative to any localised adverse effects on the environment, are recognised and provided for.
- (2) Decision-makers must recognise that the benefits of infrastructure include:
 - (a) providing for the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of present and future generations;
 - (b) creating, supporting and enhancing well-functioning urban and rural environments;
 - (c) supporting sufficient development capacity to meet demand for housing and business land;
 - (d) providing services that are essential to support human life and the development, growth and functioning of districts, regions, New Zealand and the economy;
 - (e) helping to protect and restore the natural environment;
 - (f) supporting New Zealand's emissions reduction targets and mitigating the effects of climate change; and
 - (g) reducing the risks from, and improving resilience to, natural hazards and climate change.
- (3) Decision-makers must recognise:
 - (a) the significant risks to, and impacts on, public safety, the wellbeing of people and communities, and the environment that may occur when infrastructure services are compromised; and
 - (b) that infrastructure networks can be both independent and interconnected.

Policy 2: Operational need or functional need of infrastructure to be in particular locations and environments

- (1) Decision-makers must recognise that infrastructure may have an operational need or functional need to operate in, be located in, or traverse particular locations and environments.
- (2) Decision-makers must recognise that the operational need or functional need of infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, the need to:

- (a) provide services to people and communities in a timely, effective and efficient manner;
- (b) operate effectively and efficiently as linear and/or interconnected infrastructure networks within and across district and regional boundaries;
- (c) access or connect to particular natural or physical resources, including other infrastructure;
- (d) be accessible so infrastructure activities can be undertaken effectively and efficiently;
- (e) locate where the services are required, including in areas at risk to natural hazards, whether the infrastructure has been spatially identified in advance; and
- (f) manage risks from natural hazards.

Policy 3: Considering spatial planning

- (1) Decision-makers must:
 - (a) have regard to the extent to which the infrastructure has been identified within a strategic planning document, while recognising that not all infrastructure can be spatially identified in advance; and
 - (b) consider relevant spatial plans and master plans prepared by the infrastructure provider and provided to the decision-maker.

Policy 4: Enabling the efficient and timely operation and delivery of infrastructure activities

- (1) Decision-makers must:
 - (a) enable the efficient and timely delivery of infrastructure activities;
 - (b) enable cross-boundary infrastructure networks;
 - (c) provide flexibility for infrastructure providers to use new or innovative technologies and methods to improve the delivery of infrastructure services and/or improve environmental outcomes;
 - (d) enable opportunities to make more effective use of existing infrastructure;
 - (e) consider opportunities for continuous improvement in service delivery and environmental outcomes when renewing or replacing resource consents; and
 - (f) enable the upgrading of infrastructure where this will:
 - (i) improve the resilience of infrastructure to the risks from natural hazards and effects of climate change;
 - (ii) maintain or improve its level of infrastructure service, including to meet increasing demand; or
 - (iii) improve environmental outcomes.
- (2) Decision-makers must:
 - (a) recognise it is the role of the infrastructure provider to identify the preferred location for the infrastructure activity; and

- (b) have regard to existing information and assessments undertaken by the infrastructure provider, including, but not limited to, information prepared using the Better Business Cases methodology developed by The Treasury New Zealand, infrastructure strategies prepared under the Local Government Act 2002, or the Infrastructure Priorities Programme developed by New Zealand Infrastructure Commission Te Waihanga.

Policy 5: Recognising and providing for infrastructure supporting activities

- (1) Decision-makers must recognise and provide for the role of infrastructure supporting activities, including by:
 - (a) recognising the importance of infrastructure supporting activities to enable the benefits of infrastructure activities to be realised;
 - (b) recognising the operational need or functional need of some infrastructure supporting activities, including supporting quarrying activities to operate in, be located in, or traverse particular environments and locations; and
 - (c) enabling the timely delivery of infrastructure supporting activities.

Policy 6: Recognising and providing for Māori interests

- (1) Decision-makers must recognise and provide for Māori interests in relation to infrastructure activities and infrastructure supporting activities, including by:
 - (a) taking into account the outcome of any engagement with tangata whenua on any relevant resource consent, notice of requirement, or request for a private plan change;
 - (b) recognising the opportunities tangata whenua may have in developing and operating their own infrastructure at any scale or in partnership; and
 - (c) local authorities:
 - (i) providing opportunities for tangata whenua involvement where infrastructure and infrastructure supporting activities may affect a site of significance or issue of cultural significance to Māori; and
 - (ii) operating in a way that is consistent with any relevant iwi participation legislation or Mana Whakahono ā Rohe.

Policy 7: Assessing and managing the effects of proposed infrastructure activities

- (1) When assessing and managing the effects of infrastructure activities, decision-makers must:
 - (a) have regard to the extent to which adverse effects have been avoided, remedied or mitigated through the selection of the route, site or method of undertaking the work;
 - (b) consider the technical and operational requirements and constraints of infrastructure activities;

- (c) take into account the extent to which the effects of the infrastructure activities are different in scale, intensity, duration and frequency from the effects of existing infrastructure;
- (d) take into account relevant international standards (that are recognised or used in New Zealand), national standards and recognised best practice standards and methodologies to assess and manage adverse effects; and
- (e) ensure that the mitigation measures and consent conditions are proportionate to the scale of adverse effects generated by the activity.

Policy 8: Operation, maintenance and minor upgrade of existing infrastructure

- (1) Decision-makers must enable the efficient operation and maintenance and minor upgrade of existing infrastructure, provided that, where practicable, adverse effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Policy 9: Managing the effects of new infrastructure and major upgrades

- (1) Decision-makers must enable new infrastructure or major upgrades of existing infrastructure activities in all environments.
- (2) Where infrastructure activities are proposed to locate in or are likely to have adverse effects on environments and values provided for in section 6 of the Act, the provisions of this policy must be read alongside other relevant national direction, regional policy statements and regional and district plans.
- (3) Where (2) does not apply, the adverse effects of new infrastructure and major upgrades must be, where practicable, avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Policy 10: Planning for and managing the interface and compatibility of infrastructure with other activities

- (1) Decision-makers on planning instruments must manage the interface between existing and planned infrastructure and other activities to ensure:
 - (a) infrastructure and other activities are as compatible as practicable;
 - (b) the safe, efficient and effective operation, maintenance and minor upgrades, and major upgrades of existing or planned infrastructure are not compromised by the adverse effects of other activities; and
 - (c) infrastructure activities that are compatible with each other are co-located, while recognising that some types of infrastructure are not compatible.
- (2) Decision-makers on planning instruments must:
 - (a) engage with infrastructure providers to:
 - (i) understand their existing and planned infrastructure activities and medium to long-term plans;
 - (ii) identify appropriate buffers and other methods to protect existing and planned infrastructure from the adverse effects of new or intensified sensitive and incompatible activities, including direct effects, reverse sensitivity effects, and risks to health and safety;

- (iii) support the strategic integration of infrastructure with land use activities;
- (b) identify:
 - (i) activities that are particularly sensitive to the effects of infrastructure;
 - (ii) activities that are compatible with infrastructure, or potentially compatible with appropriate buffers, design standards or mitigation measures;
 - (iii) infrastructure activities that are sensitive to the effects of other infrastructure;
- (c) apply a range of methods, including, where appropriate:
 - (i) the use of buffers in plans to manage sensitive activities, including new or intensified sensitive activities, and incompatible activities near infrastructure;
 - (ii) design standards to manage the effects of infrastructure on other activities;
 - (iii) special purpose zoning and other spatial-planning layers; and
- (d) ensure that measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate the effects of other activities on infrastructure are consistent with relevant international standards (that are recognised or used in New Zealand), national standards and recognised best practice standards and methodologies.

Policy 11: Assessing and managing the interface between infrastructure and other activities

- (1) When assessing and managing the interface between existing and planned infrastructure with other activities, including new or intensified sensitive activities, through planning instruments, decision-makers must:
 - (a) recognise that noise, vibration, dust and visual effects are all typical effects associated with infrastructure activities that can be managed where practicable but not completely avoided;
 - (b) recognise that:
 - (i) amenity values change due to a range of factors;
 - (ii) changes in amenity values from infrastructure activities can be necessary to achieve well-functioning urban and rural environments; and
 - (c) apply the general principle that the primary responsibility for managing adverse effects is on the new activity (including infrastructure) while allowing flexibility for site- and project-specific circumstances.

Part 3: Timing

3.1 Timing

- (1) Decision-makers must give effect to this National Policy Statement on and from the commencement date.

Hon Chris Bishop
For the Minister for the Environment

Explanatory note

This note is not part of the National Policy Statement for Infrastructure but is intended to indicate its general effect.

This National Policy Statement recognises infrastructure as a matter of national significance under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act). It provides national direction to support the development, maintenance and upgrade of infrastructure across New Zealand.

New Zealand needs to invest in more infrastructure to grow the economy, support new housing development, increase energy efficiency, improve resilience and achieve better environmental outcomes.

This National Policy Statement applies to all decisions made under the Act affecting the operation, maintenance, renewal and upgrade of existing infrastructure, and to the development of new infrastructure.

This National Policy Statement does not apply to:

- renewable electricity generation activities and assets managed under the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011
- the electricity transmission network and electricity distribution network activities and assets managed under the National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 and its amendments
- the allocation and prioritisation of freshwater because these are matters for regional councils to address in a catchment or regional context.

No national policy statement overrides another. Each national policy statement must be applied to the relevant decision-making process.

In relation to new infrastructure and major upgrades, the enabling policy applies to all environments. However, it must be read alongside other national direction and local authority planning documents that govern section 6 environments and values of the Act. Where section 6 environments and values are not affected, the adverse effects of new infrastructure and major upgrades must be, where practicable, avoided, remedied or mitigated.

This National Policy Statement is to be applied by all persons exercising powers and functions under the Act. The objective and policies are intended to guide decision-makers in making decisions on the determination of resource consent applications, in considering a requirement for a designation or a heritage order, in considering an application for a water conservation order and when exercising other relevant powers as required by the Act. The objective and policies will also provide guidance for local authorities in relation to plan making.

In applying this National Policy Statement, local authorities should be aware of their obligations with regard to other legislation, including Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993, the Local Government Act 2002, Treaty settlement legislation, iwi participation legislation and the Treaty of Waitangi. Local authorities should also be aware of their obligations in any Mana Whakahono ā Rohe agreement they may have with relevant hapū and iwi.

In August 2025, the Government passed an amendment to the Act that introduced a requirement to stop most plan making under the Act, unless it was subject to an exemption. This 'plan stop' amendment suspends the requirement to review plans and policy statements and prevents notification of new plan or policy statement changes or variations until the end of 2027, when the new resource management system will be in effect.

Due to the plan stop amendment, plans and policy statements will not be updated to give effect to this National Policy Statement (unless a relevant exemption applies).

This is secondary legislation issued under the authority of the [Legislation Act 2019](#).

Title	National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025
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Consolidated version	No
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