



## 21 Waikato River Corridor and Gully Systems

### 21.1 Purpose

- a) The Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010 establishes Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato – the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River – as the primary direction-setting document for the management of the river (refer to Volume 2, Appendix 10). The Vision and Strategy forms part of the Regional Policy Statement. This chapter provides a mechanism for giving effect to the Vision and Strategy.
- b) The Waikato River is an outstanding natural feature within the Waikato Region. Additionally, the Waikato River and gully systems form the most prominent landscape feature within Hamilton. These areas have economic, transport, recreational, ecological, amenity, landscape and cultural values. This chapter recognises that these values come together to contribute to the significance of the Waikato River corridor and gully systems. These values are collectively managed through a variety of approaches.
- c) Management approaches that apply within the Waikato River corridor and gully systems are: significant natural areas (Chapter 20: Natural Environments); scheduled archaeological and cultural sites (Chapter 19: Historic Heritage); and natural hazard areas (Chapter 22: Natural Hazards). Where land is in public ownership the underlying zone is Open Space, while for areas that are in private ownership the underlying zone varies. Together the various management approaches address the values associated with the Waikato River corridor and gully systems.
- d) The objectives and policies are achieved through various management approaches throughout the District Plan, so there are no rules contained within this chapter. The following objectives and policies must be read in conjunction with the relevant objectives and policies from other chapters. It should also be acknowledged that there are a number of non-District Plan methods that can be implemented with regard to the river corridor and gully areas (refer to Volume 2, Appendix 1, Section 1.5: Other Methods of Implementation).

### 21.2 Objectives and Policies: Waikato River Corridor and Gully Systems

Objective	Policies
<p><b>21.2.1</b> The ecological, amenity, landscape and cultural values of the river corridor and gully system are restored and protected.</p>	<p><b>21.2.1a</b> An integrated, holistic and co-ordinated approach to management shall be used to protect, enhance and restore the natural, physical, cultural and historical resources and character of the river corridor and gully system.</p>

	<p><b>21.2.1b</b> Development and activities that impact on landform shall be controlled, particularly the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Clearance of vegetation along the river and gullies.</li> <li>ii. Filling of gullies, including the cumulative effects of such incremental filling.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>21.2.1c</b> The ecological functions of waterways shall be restored and protected by minimising the modification of natural watercourses and riparian margins.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.1d</b> The relationship of Waikato-Tainui with the Waikato River shall be restored and protected.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.1e</b> The relationships of the Waikato Region's communities with the Waikato River shall be restored and protected.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.1f</b> The loss or disruption of corridors or connections provided by the Waikato River corridor and gully systems which link indigenous ecosystems and habitat fragments shall be avoided.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.1g</b> The connectivity and protective buffering of indigenous ecosystems provided by the Waikato River Corridor and gully system shall be maintained.</p>
<b>Explanation</b>	
<p><i>The Waikato River corridor and associated gully system is the City's key landscape and natural feature. It contains significant pockets of indigenous vegetation and provides an important ecological corridor and a wilderness experience within the City. The river has cultural significance for Waikato iwi and contains numerous sites of historical and cultural importance.</i></p> <p><i>The management approaches referred to in 21.2.1a include significant natural areas, scheduled cultural sites, the High, Medium and Low Flood Hazard Areas, Temple View Flood Hazard Area, Culvert Block Flood Hazard Areas, the Waikato Riverbank and Gully Hazard Area and Open Space Zone.</i></p>	

Objective	Policies
<p><b>21.2.2</b> The river corridor and gully system is used in a way that recognises and is sensitive to its social, cultural, spiritual and historical character.</p>	<p><b>21.2.2a</b> Multi-functional use of the river corridor and gully systems shall be encouraged.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.2b</b> The river corridor and gullies shall be used for sporting, recreation and cultural opportunities.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.2c</b> Building designs should suit the wider site context, and shall consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Surrounding natural characteristics.</li> <li>ii. The cultural significance of the surrounds.</li> <li>iii. Whether opportunities exist to create an iconic feature that enhances the character of the locality.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>21.2.2d</b> The river corridor and gully system shall be promoted to form part of the integrated transportation network, where appropriate.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.2e</b> Future crossings of the river corridor and gully systems shall be required to enhance connectivity of the transport network.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.2f</b> Public access to and along the river corridor and gully systems shall be promoted.</p>
	<p><b>21.2.2g</b> The drainage function of the gully systems shall not be compromised.</p>

### Explanation

*There is a potential for conflict between uses and the character of the Waikato River Corridor and gully systems, and not all activities will be appropriate within these areas; however, the Waikato River corridor and gully systems can accommodate sensitive uses that do not undermine the character of these areas. Opportunities should be sought to enhance public access and also use the river and gullies as part of the wider integrated transport network – which may include cyclists, pedestrians and in the future water taxis and ferries.*

*Policy 21.2.2c is intended to recognise that the design of buildings and structures will vary depending on their location. For example, in some locations iconic buildings may be desirable while in other, more natural, environments buildings should be sympathetic to their surroundings.*

*As Policy 21.2.2e recognises, the river corridor and gully systems can inhibit the connectivity of the transport network and create a barrier. In the future additional crossing points shall be required to enhance connectivity, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.*

Objective	Policies
<b>21.2.3</b> The river corridor is a key focus for tourism and events.	<b>21.2.3a</b> The use of the river corridor for events and tourism shall be promoted, particularly in the Central City.
	<b>21.2.3b</b> Strong visual and physical connections shall be provided between the Central City and the river.
<b>Explanation</b> <i>The Waikato River and its margins provide an opportunity for events and tourism. In particular, improving connections between the Central City and the river will increase the attractiveness of the river as an events' venue and tourism destination.</i>	
Objective	Policies
<b>21.2.4</b> The health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and gully systems shall be restored and protected.	<b>21.2.4a</b> Significant sites, fisheries, flora and fauna within the Waikato River and gully systems shall be protected and enhanced.
	<b>21.2.4b</b> Recognition and avoidance of adverse cumulative effects on the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and gully systems.
	<b>21.2.4c</b> Restoration of water quality within the Waikato River and gully systems.
<b>Explanation</b> <i>The Waikato River Settlement "Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato" – The Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River is the primary direction-setting document for the Waikato River and its catchments, which includes all the lakes within the City. The above objective and policies relate to the objectives of the Vision and Strategy.</i>	

## 21.3 Other Relevant Chapters

Refer to the following chapters for further objectives, policies and rules that apply to the Waikato River corridor and gully systems.

- Chapter 2: Strategic Framework
- Chapter 15: Open Space Zones
- Chapter 19: Historic Heritage
- Chapter 20: Natural Environments
- Chapter 22: Natural Hazards
- Chapter 23: Subdivision
- Chapter 25.2: City-wide – Earthworks and Vegetation Removal
- Chapter 25.3: City-wide – Events and Temporary Activities
- Chapter 25.13: City-wide – Three Waters