

# Noise and Light

Te Hoihoi Oro, Rama hoki



## What are the Noise and Light chapters about?

These chapters address the management of noise and artificial lighting effects across the district's rural and urban environments. They recognise that both noise and lighting are integral to the functioning of activities and communities, while also having the potential to adversely affect amenity values, human health and wellbeing, and indigenous biodiversity.

These chapters give effect to higher-level statutory direction, including the Resource Management Act 1991 and align with the National Planning Standards.

## What does the Proposed District Plan – Decisions Version (PDP-DV) do?

These two chapters manage noise and artificial lighting effects arising from land use and development across the district. They ensure that noise and lighting are:

- Designed and managed to support activity, safety, and functionality, including enabling use of space beyond daylight hours.
- Appropriate to the character, context, and amenity of each zone, with limits tailored to different environments.
- Balanced to enable both noise-generating and noise-sensitive activities to operate effectively.
- Sensitive to the health and wellbeing of people, communities, and indigenous fauna.
- Managed to minimise adverse effects such as noise disturbance, glare, and light spill on neighbours, the transport network, the night sky, wildlife, and cultural values.
- Implemented in a manner consistent with national and regional standards and guidance.

## What's changed from the Operative District Plan (ODP)?

The PDP-DV replaces the ODP's more limited provisions with dedicated Light and Noise chapters, providing a clearer and more consistent framework for managing environmental effects across the district.

Key changes include:

- Updated light standards based on the Australian and New Zealand standard for obtrusive lighting (AS/NZS 4282:2019), with zone-based limits that reflect the sensitivity of receiving environments.
- Retention of a permitted activity framework, with breaches generally requiring resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity.
- A more comprehensive and structured Noise chapter, including updated standards and provisions tailored to specific activities such as temporary

activities, construction, military training, and rural activities (e.g. frost fans and bird scarers).

- Stronger management of noise-sensitive activities, including requirements for acoustic insulation in higher noise environments (such as near airports, state highways, and in certain zones).

## When do I need a Resource Consent?

A resource consent is required if your lighting does not meet the permitted standards in the PDP-DV.

Permitted lighting:

- Must comply with AS/NZS 4282:2019 – Control of Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting.
- Must stay below maximum light spill limits, which vary depending on the sensitivity of the area:
  - Sensitive zones (residential, rural, and other similar zones where people live or spend time outdoors) have stricter limits, generally 10 lux.
  - Less sensitive zones (industrial, mixed-use, and other similar zones) allow higher limits, generally 20 lux.

There are a number of exemptions to the noise provisions which do not require a resource consent, including:

- Everyday, transport, and rural production activities, such as normal residential noise, vehicles and aircraft, and seasonal or intermittent farming and forestry activities.
- Emergency, recreational, and other specified activities, including emergency services, helicopter operations, sporting and school activities, hunting, and other activities managed under separate legislation or standards.

A resource consent is required if your activity does not meet the permitted noise standards in the PDP-DV. Consent is required when these standards are breached, this includes:

- Exceeding zone-based noise limits (e.g. decibel limits at site boundaries or notional boundaries).
- Temporary activities that exceed permitted noise levels, duration, or number of events.
- Construction activities that do not comply with New Zealand Standards for Noise and Vibration (NZS 6803:1999).
- New or altered noise sensitive activities that do not achieve required internal noise levels.
- Helicopter operations that exceed permitted noise limits.
- Rural activities (e.g. frost fans, bird scarers) that exceed limits on noise, timing, or frequency.
- Military training activities that do not meet specified noise or timing standards.
- Mineral extraction or blasting activities that exceed permitted noise limits or are not otherwise permitted.

## What do I need to know?

- The PDP-DV introduces a dedicated Light chapter with updated, nationally recognised standards for managing light spill and glare.
- Lighting is managed through clear, measurable limits (lux levels) based on how sensitive the surrounding environment is.
- Compliance with AS/NZS 4282:2019 and zone-based light spill limits will generally enable activities as permitted.
- The focus is on controlling light spill beyond site boundaries, rather than restricting lighting within a site.
- If lighting cannot meet these standards, a restricted discretionary consent is required, with assessment focused on effects such as amenity, safety, and environmental impacts.
- The PDP-DV includes a dedicated Noise chapter with updated standards to manage noise effects across all zones.
- Noise is managed through clear, measurable limits (decibel levels) that vary depending on the sensitivity of the receiving environment.
- Compliance with zone-based noise limits and relevant New Zealand Standards (e.g. construction and temporary activities) will generally enable activities as permitted.
- The focus is on managing noise received at site boundaries or within the notional boundary of neighbouring noise sensitive activities.
- Specific standards apply to different activities (e.g. temporary events, construction, helicopter operations, and noise-sensitive buildings).