

#### Appendix 4: Indigenous vegetation clearance thresholds – review of selected district plan controls

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
Far North (Operative) <sup>1</sup>	No	Rural Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2ha; or</li> <li>• 500m<sup>2</sup> (remnant forest)</li> </ul>	Any 10-year period while this rule is in force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permitted threshold relates to indigenous vegetation which is more than 10 years old (so clearance of younger vegetation permitted).</li> <li>• Coastal zone thresholds are similar but clearance limited to 1,000m<sup>2</sup> to 1ha based on existing coverage of vegetation on the site.</li> <li>• In all zones, up to 500m<sup>2</sup> is permitted without any specified time period.</li> </ul>
Whangarei (Operative) <sup>2</sup>	No	Rural Production	500m <sup>2</sup> per site except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 2000m<sup>2</sup> can be cleared if directly associated with rural production activities and does not meet</li> </ul>	10-year period from 12 December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is unclear when the RPS criteria are used to determine whether 500m<sup>2</sup> or 2,000m<sup>2</sup> is permitted over a 10-year period.</li> <li>• There are additional exemptions for clearance associated with certain activities.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Far North (Operative): Chapter 12.2.6. Refer: [12-natural-and-physical-resources-full-chapter-for-oc.pdf \(fndc.govt.nz\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Whangarei (Operative) Rural Production Zone: RPROZ-R6. Refer: [Rural Production Zone Chapter - Operative District Plan \(wdc.govt.nz\)](#)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
			significance criteria in RPS or has grown since 2018 on land previously cleared.		
Auckland (Operative in Part) <sup>3</sup>	Yes (described as Significant Ecological Areas or SEA)	All zones	<p>Outside of SEA and outside the Rural Urban Boundary (contiguous and existing on 30 September 2013): Up to 250m<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Outside of SEA and inside the Rural Urban Boundary: None</p> <p>Inside SEA: No permitted threshold except for exempt activities.</p>	10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearance permitted within the Rural Urban Boundary where more specific rules do not apply (significant ecological areas, riparian margins etc.).</li> <li>• Permitted activity status for activities such as routine maintenance around a dwelling within a SEA or controlled activity status for activities such as a building platform or access, papakainga or marae, otherwise all vegetation clearance in a SEA is discretionary.</li> </ul>
Waikato (Proposed –	Yes	All zones	<p>Outside SNA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500m<sup>2</sup> for building platform, access,</li> </ul>	12-month period per certificate of title for Aggregate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other conditions such as there is no practicable alternative development area</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Auckland: Rule A(10) Table E15.4.1, refer: [E15 Vegetation management and biodiversity.pdf \(aucklandcouncil.govt.nz\)](#)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
Appeals Version) <sup>4</sup>			<p>parking and manoeuvring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,000m<sup>2</sup> in an Aggregate Extraction Area</li> <li>• Other listed exempt activities with no thresholds.</li> </ul> <p>Inside SNA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5m<sup>3</sup> manuka and/or kanuka outside of a wetland</li> <li>• 500m<sup>2</sup> for a dwelling or papakainga building and 1,500m<sup>2</sup> for a marae on Maaori Freehold Land and Maaori Customary Land</li> <li>• 250m<sup>2</sup> as a controlled activity.</li> </ul>	Extraction Areas outside SNA and clearance of manuka/kanuka inside SNA.	<p>on the site outside the SNA and other setbacks like 10m from natural waterbody.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-compliance with permitted or controlled conditions defaults to discretionary.</li> <li>• There are additional exemptions for clearance associated with certain activities such as emergency works, conservation, customary activities etc.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> Waikato (Proposed-Appeals version): refer to ECO-R4 to R11: [Part 2 - Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity \(waikatodistrict.govt.nz\)](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/part-2-ecosystems-and-indigenous-biodiversity)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
Thames-Coromandel (Operative in part) <sup>5</sup>	No	Rural Zone  Rural Lifestyle Zone  Conservation Zone	In Coastal Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>250m<sup>2</sup> for indigenous coastal edge escarpment forest, wetland, duneland or floodplain forest/scrub vegetation; or</li> <li>500m<sup>2</sup> for manuka/kanuka (for non-commercial domestic use within 18 months of felling) and all other types of indigenous vegetation.</li> </ul> Outside Coastal Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500m<sup>2</sup> for indigenous coastal edge</li> </ul>	Per annum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearance using the permitted thresholds also has to be for a listed purpose and these are very narrow in scope – the intent is that most indigenous vegetation clearance associated with development (including building platforms) will require either restricted discretionary or discretionary consent.</li> <li>Thresholds do not apply to removal of regenerating manuka/kanuka on a farm established prior to 13 December 2013, and the vegetation to be cleared is less than 15 years old and 6 m in height.</li> <li>Other activities are exempted from thresholds and are permitted e.g. work undertaken by Waikato Regional Council, clearance for traditional cultural practices, rehabilitation works, maintenance of existing fence lines or existing tracks etc.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> TCDP Operative in Part 2024: 29.3 Rule 2. Refer: [TCDC Appeals2016 External](#)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
			escarpment forest, wetland, duneland or floodplain forest/scrub vegetation; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,500m<sup>2</sup> manuka/kanuka (for non-commercial domestic use within 18 months of felling) and all other types of indigenous vegetation.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also an exemption for clearance within 10m of an existing dwelling or proposed dwelling with resource consent.</li> <li>• Burden for proving indigenous vegetation is not one of the listed types of vegetation is on the applicant.</li> </ul>
Taupo (Operative) <sup>6</sup>	Yes	All zones	Inside SNA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 700m<sup>2</sup> per allotment or 1% of total SNA on that allotment, whichever is lesser.</li> </ul> Outside SNA: None	Inside SNA: One off clearance from Dec 2008 onwards  Outside SNA: None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No controls on indigenous vegetation clearance outside of SNA.</li> <li>• Additional conditions for clearance inside SNA such as the amount to be cleared must be mapped and provided to council prior to clearance and setback 20m from any waterbody.</li> <li>• There are additional exemptions for clearance in SNA associated with</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Taupo (Operative – subject to a rolling review process) – Chapter 4e.6 – Natural Values. Refer: [Taupo e-plan \(taupodc.govt.nz\)](http://taupodc.govt.nz)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
					<p>certain activities such as for a building or structure, emergency works, conservation, customary use etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearance not meeting SNA conditions is restricted discretionary.</li> </ul>
New Plymouth (Proposed – Appeals Version) <sup>7</sup>	Yes	All zones	<p>Outside of the Coastal Environment in SNA: no volume, but very limited range of activities provided for as permitted.</p> <p>Inside the coastal environment in SNA: 100m<sup>2</sup> and very limited range of activities provided for as permitted.</p> <p>Outside SNA: None<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>Outside of the Coastal Environment in SNA: – none.</p> <p>Inside the coastal environment in SNA – 5 years</p> <p>Outside SNAs: None.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very restrictive within SNAs – list of permitted activities outside coastal environment limited to activities such as operation, maintenance and repair of existing tracks, fences, drains, structures, infrastructure and renewable energy generation activities, emergency works, customary activities and minor branch trimming. Coastal environment permitted list is even more limited.</li> <li>• 500m<sup>2</sup> threshold as a restricted discretionary activity for a building platform and access on a lot created prior to the plan notification date.</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> New Plymouth (Proposed – Appeals): Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity, ECO-R1 and ECO-R2. Refer: [Proposed District Plan - Appeals Version - Proposed District Plan - Appeals Version \(npdc.govt.nz\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> The ECO chapter has a note on relevant appeals, stating “A new ECO permitted activity rule for vegetation disturbance outside identified SNAs is being sought by an appeal.”

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All other clearance within SNA is discretionary.</li> </ul>
Porirua (Proposed – Decision Version) <sup>9</sup>	Yes	All zones	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan only controls indigenous vegetation clearance within a SNA – no restrictions on indigenous vegetation clearance outside of a SNA</li> <li>Limited range of circumstances where indigenous vegetation clearance in a SNA is a permitted activity e.g. emergency works, some clearance within setbacks for the maintenance of buildings and outdoor space, flood protection or natural hazard control, removal within formed roads, rail corridors or access etc</li> <li>Indigenous vegetation clearance in a SNA that does not comply with permitted conditions is restricted discretionary.</li> </ul>
Waimakariri (Proposed) <sup>10</sup>	Yes – both mapped SNA and unmapped	All zones	Inside SNA: No generic thresholds, only a 50m <sup>2</sup> or 1% of total SNA on a site for the	Inside SNA: none Outside SNA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very stringent clearance rules within SNA, narrow circumstances for allowing clearance and non-complying if these are not complied with.</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Porirua (Proposed): Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity (ECO – R1). Refer: [Proposed Porirua District Plan \(porirua.govt.nz\)](https://www.porirua.govt.nz/propose/)

<sup>10</sup> Waimakariri (Proposed): Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity (ECO-R1 and R2). Refer: [Proposed Waimakariri District Plan \(waimakariri.govt.nz\)](https://www.waimakariri.govt.nz/propose/)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
	SNA <sup>11</sup> that meet significance criteria		<p>purpose of forming a walking or cycling access track.</p> <p>Outside SNA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thresholds vary between no threshold for the two least sensitive ecological districts and 100m<sup>2</sup> or 10% of the total area of the site (whichever is lesser) for the three most sensitive ecological districts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None in two least sensitive ecological districts.</li> <li>Thresholds apply over any continuous 5 year period in three most sensitive ecological districts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearance outside of SNA must also comply with other conditions such as setbacks, and be for a specific purpose e.g. for repair or maintenance within certain distances of existing buildings or structures, customary harvesting, conservation etc.</li> <li>Entire district is divided into five mapped ecological districts, with two districts having less stringent clearance rules (Lower Plains and High Plains) and the other three districts having more stringent clearance rules (Oxford, Torlesse and Ashley).</li> </ul>
Selwyn (Partially Operative) <sup>12</sup>	Yes (both scheduled and via criteria)	All zones	None – needs to be for specific purposes (see notes).	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All indigenous vegetation clearance in urban zones outside SNA is permitted (e.g. all residential, commercial, industrial and urban type special purpose zones).</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> There is an advice note for ECO-R1 that states “Upon request, the Council Ecologist may be able to formally confirm whether an area comprises, or does not comprise, an unmapped SNA as described in ECO-SCHED2 within the area of proposed indigenous vegetation clearance.”

<sup>12</sup> Selwyn (Partially Operative 2023): Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity (ECO-RC and ECO-RD rules): [Partially Operative Selwyn District Plan 2023](#)



Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In rural zones outside of SNA, the clearance has to be for a listed purpose, otherwise restricted discretionary with a Biodiversity Management Plan or discretionary without one.</li> <li>• Can only clear indigenous vegetation in a SNA in an urban zone if clearing infected material, otherwise non-complying.</li> <li>• More options for clearing indigenous vegetation in a SNA in a rural zone but must still be for a listed purpose, otherwise non-complying e.g. emergency works, some maintenance and repair, mahinga kai.</li> </ul>
Waitaki (Draft) <sup>13</sup>	Yes	All zones	Outside SNA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of vegetation older than 15 years or in areas of narrow leaved snow tussock.</li> <li>• 500m<sup>2</sup> in areas with less than 20%</li> </ul>	Outside SNA: Once every 5 years.  Inside SNA: No time period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited circumstances for clearing within SNA e.g. only for repair and maintenance within 2m of existing and lawfully established activities e.g. roads, farm tracks, fences or for Mahika kai purposes, otherwise non-complying.</li> </ul>

<sup>13</sup> Waikati (Draft), released for comment in 2022. Refer ECO-R1 and ECO-R2: [Draft Waitaki District Plan June 2022 version](#)

Plan	SNAs identified	Zone	Threshold (m <sup>2</sup> )	Time period	Notes
			<p>remaining indigenous vegetation cover.<sup>14</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50m<sup>2</sup> in defined sensitive ecological environments that are not currently identified as SNA.</li> </ul> <p>Inside SNA: None.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also, stringent 50m<sup>2</sup> clearance rule for non-SNA areas still considered to be ecologically sensitive.</li> </ul>

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<sup>14</sup> As defined by Threatened Environment Classification (TEC) version 2012. Refer ECO-APP1 – Threatened Environment Classification.