

St Arnaud

Guidelines for subdivisions, buildings & plantings

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tasman
district council

Te Kaunihera o

te tai o Aorere

1. Introduction

St Arnaud is located at the northern end of Lake Rotoiti. It has a very strong relationship with the Nelson Lakes National Park, being almost surrounded by it. Portions of the town's western and eastern boundaries and all of its southern boundaries abut the Park. To the north of the town is Big Bush State Forest.

It is the gateway to the National Park and it is visible from many parts of the Park. Its unique character has resulted in St Arnaud being identified in the Tasman Resource Management Plan (TRMP) as a "Landscape Priority Area".

To protect these characteristics, new buildings or major extensions to existing buildings within the "Landscape Priority Area" require resource consent. See chapter 18.2 of the TRMP.

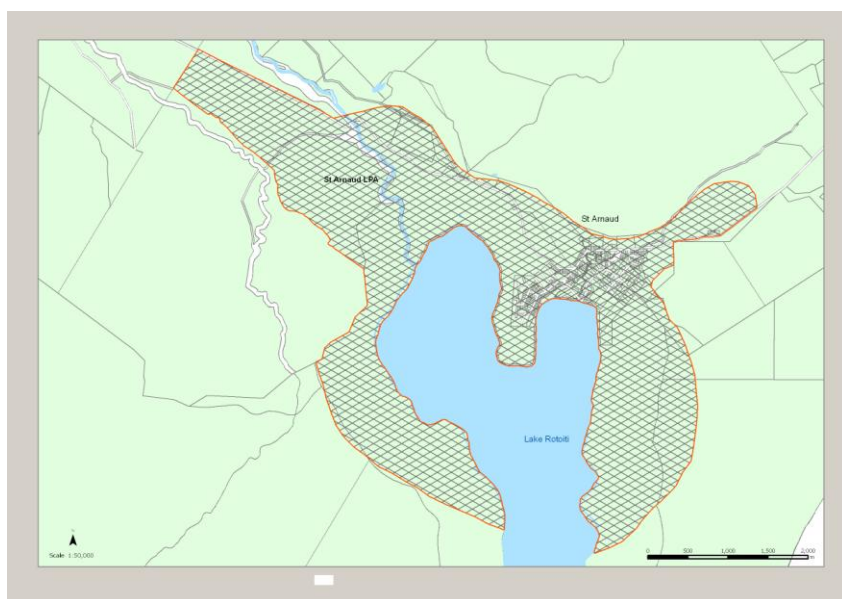
In a resource consent application for a building the Council will consider matters including:

- The effects of the location, design and appearance of the building, including scale, materials, colour and landscaping.
- The effects on natural features and the indigenous vegetation.

2. Aim

The aim of this booklet is to provide guidelines and advice to ensure any new developments in the St Arnaud area (buildings, roads, subdivisions) are designed to blend in with the unique natural qualities and landscape values of the area.

3. St Arnaud Landscape Priority Area (Map)



4. Visual Character of St Arnaud

The landscape character of an area is the visual expression of the main elements that make up the picture - the line, form, colour, texture and pattern. It is determined by those elements that, through repetition, combine to give a place its distinctive identity. For St Arnaud this includes:

The landforms. St Arnaud is located at the base of a valley on the shores of Lake Rotoiti and is dominated by the surrounding landforms of the St Arnaud Range, Big Bush Forest and Black Hill. State Highway 63 and the commercial centre are visually separated from the lake and some of the residential development by a vegetated moraine ridge. This means that the views from St Arnaud are generally outward and upward towards the mountains.

The vegetation in the area is dominated by the dark green colour of the beech forests and the olive green of the regenerating kanuka/manuka forest which are in stark contrast to the lighter grazed grass of the valley floor. Deciduous trees can be found within the commercial area along State Highway 63, and following the Black Valley stream.

Ecological Areas. The Landscape Priority Area can be divided up into five distinct zones each with its own pattern of vegetation. Broadly, these are:

- *Mature beech forest* found generally on the slopes above St Arnaud and within the national park.
- *Manuka/kanuka bush and regenerating beech forest* found within the older parts of the village adjacent to the park, the lake and increasingly along the Black Valley Stream.
- *Wetland vegetation* found within the village as well as to the northwest and east of the village centre.
- *The flat areas around the village* comprising some communities of indigenous bush intermingled with exotic trees around the commercial centre and along the lower sections of the Black Valley stream.
- *Areas of modified pasture*, which mostly occupy the valley as one travels east along SH63 to Tophouse.

Roading has a significant impact on the character of the area. While the houses in St Arnaud are generally screened from view and set within planted sections, the roads form the visible element. The informality of the roading, often without footpaths and formal kerb and channel, establishes a character that is valued by residents. While there are instances where, in the interests of safety, lighting is a requirement, generally the lack of streetlights is a quality that is valued because it enhances the visibility of the night sky.

An extensive walkway system exists independent of the roading network, and where walkways do coincide with roads, a degree of separation and independence is maintained between the footpath and the road.

Drainage systems are required to manage stormwater run-off, which runs into the Black Valley Stream and the lake. To avoid the use of kerb and channel, stabilised swales have been successfully used as a “soft” engineering solution. The St Arnaud Landscape Priority Area falls within the immediate water catchment area of Lake Rotoiti. The cleanliness of the lake is dependent on the preservation and maintenance of the natural filtration systems. Extreme care needs to be taken to retain the existing vegetation near the watercourses in the area.

Buildings. Older established housing around the lake is generally set in amongst vegetation and is well screened from the road. The majority are simple baches, with timber the predominant wall cladding. They have a low impact on the area because of their scale and the abundant planting.

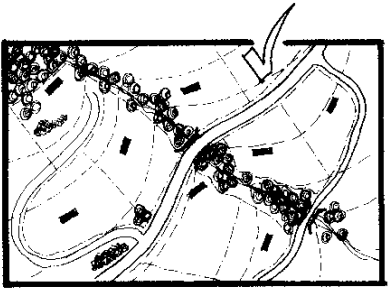
Housing along the main road and in new subdivisions has a greater impact. The new subdivisions are particularly exposed as planting is only just being established.

Commercial buildings such as the Alpine Lodge and National Park Headquarters reflect a New Zealand architectural style, which fits well into the natural landscape. They are set back from the road and are well landscaped.

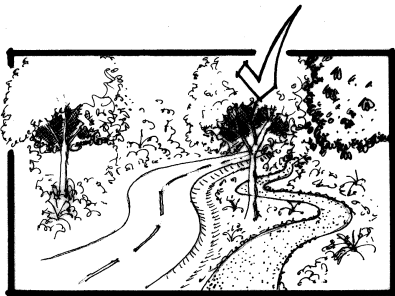
At first glance, many boundaries of properties are invisible because houses are separated by vegetation.



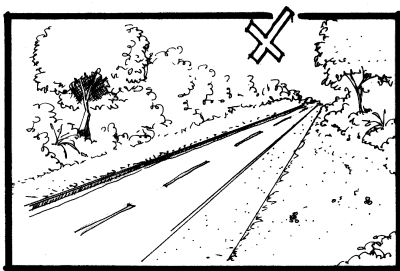
Avoid creating an arbitrary grid with new subdivisions



Property boundaries should follow existing landscape patterns and contours, and preserve natural features



Pedestrian paths should be separated from the road and respond to local vegetation, rock features and landforms



The existing informality should be retained. Where possible, kerb and channel should be avoided.

5. Guidelines

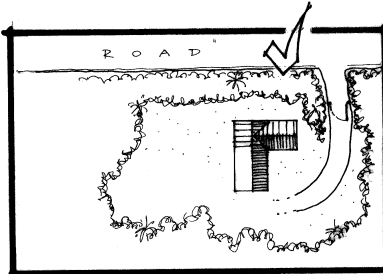
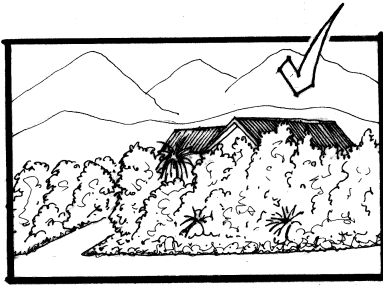
The distinctive character of the area is extremely sensitive to change. Buildings should be carefully located and designed to ensure they harmonise and are sympathetic with the landscape, rather than intruding into it.

5.1 Subdivisions

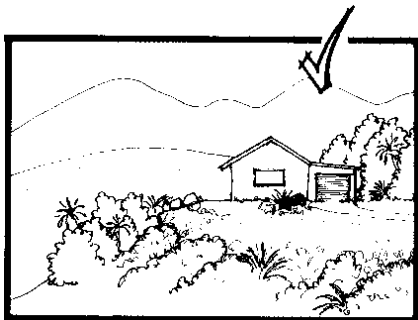
- Property boundaries should be located in response to existing natural features of the landscape, such as vegetation patterns, valleys, contours and streams, rather than form an arbitrary grid.
- Landscape features such as wetlands, prominent trees, or rock outcrops should be recognised, protected, and integrated into the subdivision layout.
- Indigenous vegetation cover, including established and regenerating forest, should be retained and protected.
- Opportunities to extend existing walkways and incorporate natural features into the subdivision design as reserves or covenants should be considered.
- Preference should be given to retaining and enhancing existing streams and drainage lines as landscape features rather than piping them.

5.2 Roads, Accessways and Driveways

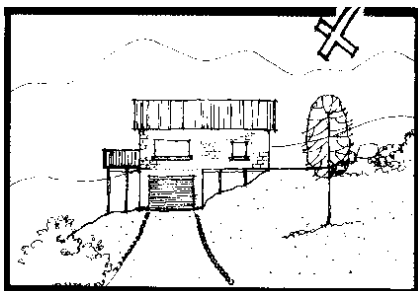
- Roads, accessways and driveways should recognise and acknowledge natural features and reflect the dominant lines in the landscape context. Footpaths need to tie into and develop the existing pedestrian network.
- Where space permits, pedestrian paths should be located independent of roads to retain the informality of the existing road network. When adjacent to roads, the footpath can still incorporate localised vegetation, rock features and landforms.
- Kerb and channel edging to roads should be avoided if at all possible. Stabilised swales, small wetlands and ponds, should be used to accommodate and filter stormwater runoff from the roads.
- Street lighting should be low key and sensitively positioned. Upward light spill should be minimised. Aim to develop a standard style of lighting throughout St Arnaud.



Set buildings back from the road and use appropriate planting to screen buildings from the road



Rooflines should reflect background landforms



Avoid pole houses and excessively elevated structures. Buildings should blend with the contours

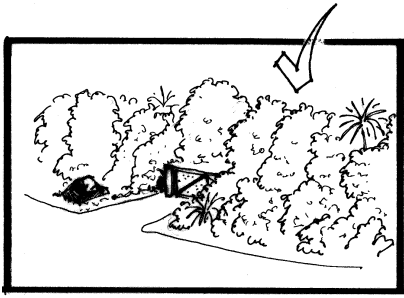
5.3 Siting of Buildings

The location and siting of buildings can have a major visual impact.

- Set buildings back from the road and use planting to screen buildings from the road.
- A resource consent is needed for the clearance of indigenous forest other than to form a building site and access. Every effort should be made to retain and protect all native plants growing naturally around the building site.
- Buildings should be nestled on the edges of landforms and vegetation patterns to take advantage of shelter and help them to blend into the landscape.
- Earthworks for building sites and accessways should be finished to a natural contour, blended to adjacent slopes and revegetated with woody or herbaceous plants as appropriate for the context.

5.4 Building Form, Design and Colour

- Generally, build to the contours. The building form should reflect the contours of the site, avoiding the need for substantial pole supports or large basements.
- Building design should incorporate typical New Zealand architectural styles and avoid those styles typically associated with other cultures. The Alpine Lodge and Park Headquarters are good examples.
- Rooflines should reflect background landforms. On elevated sites, roof slopes should follow the natural slope of the land. Satellite dishes and antennae should be sited and mounted so they are visually unobtrusive.
- Materials should respond to and link with the surrounding landscape. Materials such as stone, timber and corrugated iron are appropriate.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that rooflines do not project above the crest of the ridge or backdrop vegetation.
- In general, roofs should be darker than walls. Colours should be based on background colours and be low in reflectivity (less than 30%). Small areas of brighter accent colours can be used to contrast positively with the dominant background colour.



Formal gateways onto individual properties are discouraged. Gates should be set back from the road to reduce visibility.

5.5 Fences, Gates and Signage

The boundaries of properties are generally defined and privacy provided through the use of vegetation.

- Formal fencing styles should be avoided. Where fencing is deemed necessary, keep it low and consider using materials such as post and wire or natural materials such as stone suited to the location.
- Formal gateways onto individual properties are discouraged.
- Signs identifying ownership of residential properties should be subtle and low key.

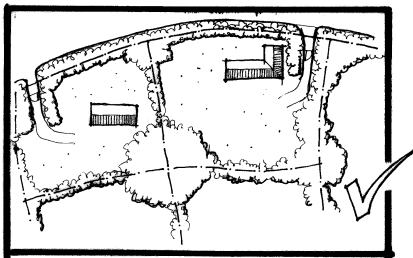
5.6 Wildlife Corridors

The village occupies the site where the Nelson Lakes National Park and Big Bush State Forest Park are geographically at their closest. Vegetation communities play a vital role in allowing movement of fauna between these two larger vegetation communities.

- Preserve all existing indigenous communities, including young regenerating bush.
- Enhance and expand these communities through supplementary planting of appropriate indigenous species (*See “Native Plantings Guide for Buildings and Gardens in St Arnaud”*)

5.7 Amenity Planting

- Use native species that are characteristic of your particular site. The use of locally sourced plant material is encouraged to protect the genetic integrity of the local vegetation. (*The aim is to preserve the natural character of the St Arnaud area. It is encouraged that only species suited to the various conditions around the village be used. To assist with this, “Native Plantings Guide for Buildings and Gardens in St Arnaud”, which is available from the TDC, identifies specific plants that are suited to the specific area within the village.*)
- Collaborate with neighbours to create larger vegetated areas that could accommodate taller tree species such as manuka/kanuka and beech.
- Protect existing stands of young and mature indigenous vegetation.
- Use vegetation to screen and separate buildings in preference to fences and walls.
- Screen the buildings from the road using indigenous vegetation that is compatible with other indigenous planting along the road in order to create a cohesive vegetated streetscape.
- Use species that will attract local indigenous wildlife.
- Use an informal design for the landscape and avoid planting in straight lines.



The boundaries of properties are generally defined using vegetation

5.8 Weed Control

A number of weeds are threatening the natural forest and wetland vegetation of St Arnaud, and other weeds are likely to reach the settlement in due course. It is easier to prevent weeds establishing when there are only a few of them than try to remove them once they are widespread. The co-operation of all residents is needed to remove all known and potential weeds wherever they are found, and to make sure that none are deliberately introduced.

Tasman District Council's "Regional Pest Management Strategy" identifies plants and pests problematical to this area. This booklet and further information prepared by DOC outlines those species that have the potential to be a problem in this area. These include:

Douglas Fir
Rowan or Mountain Ash,
Cotoneaster
Buddleia
Blackberry
Russell Lupin
Broom and Gorse
Darwin's Barberry
Japanese Honeysuckle
Mexican Daisy
Holly
Hieracium Daisy



Russell Lupin



Gorse



Rowan

Reference Books

- *Native Planting Guide for Buildings & Gardens in St Arnaud*, available from TDC offices.
- *Tasman Nelson Regional Pest Management Strategy 2012-2017*, available from TDC offices.
- Cartman J (1985), *Growing New Zealand Alpine Plants*, Reed Methuen Publishers Ltd, Auckland.
- Mark A.F & Adams N.M. (1986), *New Zealand Alpine Plants*, Reed Methuen Publishers Ltd, Auckland.
- Porteous T. (1993), *Native Forest Restoration: A Practical Guide for Landowners*”, Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust.
- Weedbusters (2007), *Plant Me Instead*, Nelson/Marlborough Edition

Further Assistance

- Specific advice for your site can be obtained by contacting Architects or Landscape Architects, listed in the Yellow Pages.
- Information regarding the Tasman Resource Management Plan can be obtained from the Tasman District Council.
- For advice on weeds, contact Department of Conservation, Nelson Lakes Area Office

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