



Assessment Of Environmental Effects



**DUNEDIN CITY
COUNCIL**
Kaunihera-a-rohe o Otepoti

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All applications for resource consent must include an 'Assessment of Environmental Effects', commonly referred to as the 'AEE'.

This is a description of all the effects that your proposal could or will have on the environment. An environmental effect is any change to the environment created by an activity. The AEE will allow us to understand your proposal as well as the costs and benefits of allowing it to take place.

If you have any difficulty, please contact us and we can give you guidance.

The effects could be:

- » Temporary or permanent
- » Positive or adverse (negative)
- » Experienced in the past, present or future
- » Cumulative (occurring over time, or in combination with other effects)
- » Of high probability
- » Of low probability but high impact.

'The environment' includes:

- » Ecosystems, including people, animals and plant-life
- » All natural and man-made things (resources)
- » Amenity values
- » Social, economic, aesthetic and cultural conditions.

In order to prepare an AEE you will need to think about how your proposal could change the site and the surrounding environment. Think about the scale, intensity, duration and frequency of the effects.

For example, building an addition onto your dwelling may result in the following effects:

- » Temporary effects (while the addition is being built) – dust, noise and fewer parking spaces
- » Permanent effects – loss of privacy for a neighbour, shading, visual effects and the loss of significant trees
- » Cumulative effects – change in street character and loss of urban vegetation.

What should your AEE include?

The following aspects should be covered in your AEE:

- » An accurate description of the activity
- » An accurate description of the site and locality
- » An effects checklist that ranks the effects and discusses how any adverse effects may be avoided, remedied or mitigated
- » An outline of any consultation you have undertaken and its results
- » Identification of any restrictions on your proposed activity where these

have been agreed to resolve affected parties' concerns

- » Where significant effects are likely to occur, identification of alternatives you have considered and why they were rejected
- » Identification of any proposals for monitoring potential and actual effects.

The detail contained in the AEE should match the scale and significance of the effects of the proposed development. Building a carport is likely to have fewer effects and therefore a much less detailed AEE than the establishment of a timber mill, for example.

If a resource consent is required for your activity, it is because some effects are expected and need to be managed – there will not be “no effects”.

How to Prepare an AEE

Think about what you are proposing to do

Fully understanding your activity is central to preparing an AEE. Consider how it will change your site. Think about the site's physical limitations and the locality. Think about how your proposal may affect people and properties around you.

Inspect the site

Check that the site is suitable for your activity. Also check how your activity may affect people and properties around you.

Talk to us

Talking to one of the City Planning staff may help guide you to the relevant provisions in the District Plan. They can also help you determine which rule type applies to your proposal. Staff cannot prepare the AEE for you but can guide you to what the key areas of concern might be and the type of information to include in your AEE.

Consult

Consultation is not required by law, but it is a good idea to talk to people who may be interested in, or affected by, your proposal early on in the process. This includes neighbours and official organisations. Early and full consultation can:

- » Identify and resolve issues
- » Reduce affected parties' concerns and opposition to your proposal
- » Enable you to obtain written approvals from affected parties.

Identify the environmental effects

For controlled activities and restricted discretionary activities, your AEE only needs to focus on the matters identified in the District Plan.

For discretionary activities and non-complying activities, your AEE will need to consider all of the environmental effects arising from your proposal.

Make a list of all of the potential effects of your proposal. Think about effects on:

- » People/neighbours (including shading effects, loss of outlook, building dominance, loss of privacy, noise/vibration/odour/dust generation)

- » The neighbourhood (including streetscape, locality characteristics)
- » The built environment (including impacts on heritage buildings, townscape and heritage precincts, quality of architecture)
- » The transportation network (including traffic generation, access, on-site parking, manoeuvring, vehicle and pedestrian safety)
- » The natural environment (including effects on scheduled trees, significant indigenous vegetation, significant habitats of indigenous fauna)
- » The landscape (including effects on outstanding natural features and landscapes, natural character, visual quality, natural landform)
- » Cultural effects (including effects on archaeological sites, resources of importance to iwi)
- » Hazards (including natural hazards, hazardous substances and hazardous facilities, site contamination)
- » Servicing (including potable water supply, disposal of stormwater, disposal of wastewater).

Also remember cumulative effects (effects from the activity that arise over time or effects from the activity in combination with other effects both on and off-site).

At this point you may need to obtain specialist advice on a few aspects of your proposal. Alternatively, you may need to hire a professional to complete and lodge the application (including the AEE) for you. For proposals that are complex and may have significant effects on the environment, it is strongly recommended that you seek the advice of a planning professional (eg, consultant planner, surveyor, resource management lawyer etc).

Rank and address the effects

Once you have identified the effects of your proposal (including any short-term or temporary effects), you need to make an assessment of the scale of each effect. A simple scale might be: no effect, minimal (less than minor) effect, minor effect, more than minor effect, significant effect, unacceptable effect. You should consider:

- » Can the effect can be avoided?
- » Can the effect can be remedied?
- » Can the effect can be mitigated?

You should also consider the extent of the effects: are the effects confined to the site and adjacent land or do they extend to the wider environment?

Pre-application meeting

If you have a potentially complex application, you may also wish to have a pre-application meeting with the Council. The meeting can be used to agree on what information needs to be provided, how that information needs to be obtained and whether experts need to be involved.

Re-evaluate your proposal

If you find that some of the effects are significant, you may need to consider changing your proposal or including new features to ensure that these effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Finalise the AEE

Check that you have all the information and then write your AEE. The final outcome should be an accurate and objective statement about the effects of your proposal on the environment. This statement needs to take into account whether the proposal has avoided, mitigated or remedied any adverse effects on the environment and people.

Lodging your AEE

Once your AEE is completed, you can make your formal application for resource consent. You will need to include with your AEE:

- » A completed and signed application form
- » A copy of your certificate of title (less than three months old)
- » A copy of your plans
- » Written approvals (where relevant) with forms and plans signed by affected persons
- » The appropriate application fee/deposit.

You may also need to include with your application an assessment of how the proposal complies with, or fails to comply with, the objectives, policies and rules for that activity in the District Plan, particularly for non-complying activities. You may also need to demonstrate that the proposal will not set an undesirable precedent.

Please note that we may reject an incomplete application within five working days of receiving it. When an application is lodged for processing, we may still ask for further information to help gain a better understanding of the proposal, its effects on the environment and how those effects might be mitigated.

For further guidance

Also see the Ministry for the Environment's publication "A Guide to Preparing a Basic Assessment of Environmental Effects" available on www.mfe.govt.nz.

Further Information

This pamphlet is one of a series about the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Dunedin City Council's District Plan.

If you have any questions please contact City Planning staff:

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