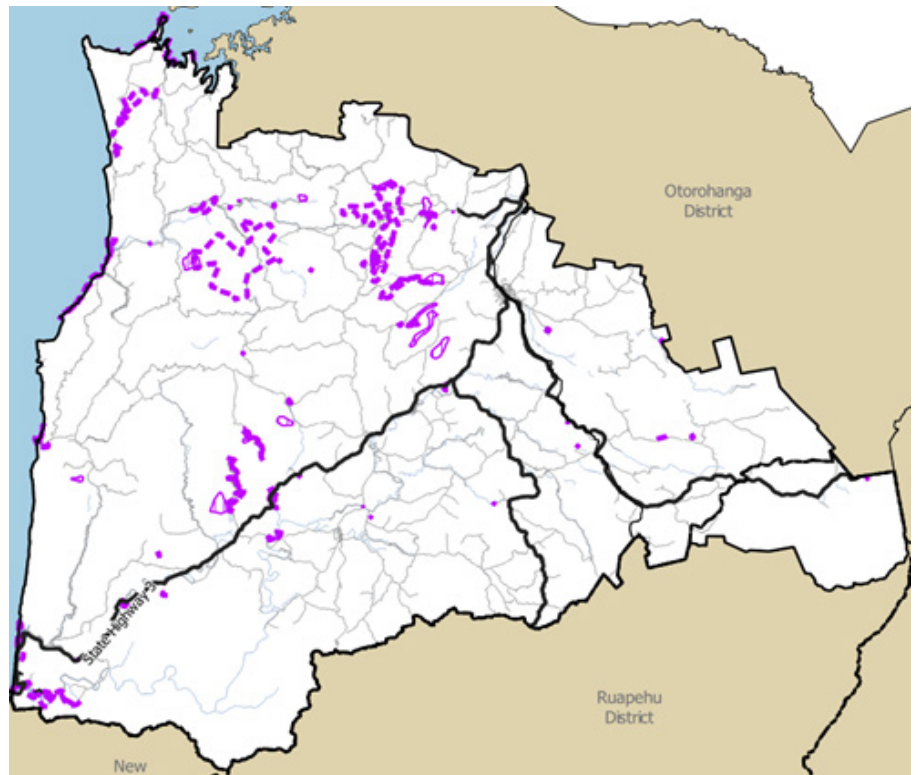


OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURES

This pattern and border identifies the Areas of Outstanding Natural Character on the Planning Maps

Our beautiful district contains some truly unique natural features. Some of these meet the criteria as outstanding natural features (ONFs) and where they do, the Resource Management Act requires that Council protects these sites as a matter of national importance. ONFs have very high values and they are particularly sensitive to change.



How have ONFs been identified?

We have had the assistance of leading New Zealand geological experts. These experts identified an initial list of 144 sites, which was refined to 76 sites by applying 11 criteria. The 76 proposed ONFs comprise around 2% of the land area of our district. They include caves, waterfalls, natural bridges, bluffs, tors, gorges, lakes, sand spits and areas of national and even international geological importance.

The proposed ONFs are shown in purple on the map below. You can use the [Draft DP Snapshot tool](#) to find out if there is an ONF located on your property.

What are the differences proposed between the current and the new district plans?

- Only karst features are mapped in the current district plan. The draft plan groups the 76 sites into 6 categories based on size and robustness. The more fragile the ONF is, the more rules that apply to protect it
- **SCHED 8** identifies each of the features and their location, provides a description of them and assigns a category to the site

The draft rules we are looking at are:

- Most of the proposed ONFs are located in the General Rural Zone. Generally, the rules of the underlying zone apply, so activities like pastoral farming are not restricted by the rules if they are an established, existing activity
- Buildings generally need a resource consent. The exception is in Category F where buildings no more than 5m tall and 100m² in area are permitted. A building within any other category will need resource consent and is not really encouraged
- Water tanks 3.2m in height or less with a capacity of no more than 30,000 litres are permitted in the less fragile ONFs
- Limited earthworks are permitted in the more robust ONFs but any earthworks in the very fragile Category B and E sites require a resource consent
- All forms of quarrying and planting new plantation forestry is prohibited
- Plantation forestry harvesting will need a resource consent and is not encouraged
- Clearance of native vegetation is also restricted
- Structures within a cave, modifications to cave features or activities on the surface of water underground (eg: blackwater rafting) will need a resource consent

Please note this factsheet is a summary and does not include the full set of rules. You can read the full set of rules [here](#)