

How to prepare an Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE)

STEP 1. Consider your site and the proposal.

Think about your proposal and how it will change the site you intend to use or develop. For example, will your proposal make visual changes, generate additional traffic, or make noise?

Even if you already own and perhaps live on the site, you will need to consider some basic things about the site and whether it is suited to your proposal.

For example:

- Natural features (plants & trees, shape, slope, areas of ponding)
- Physical features (buildings, vehicle access, water & sewerage services, fencing, use of buildings)
- Neighbouring features (distance, designs, types of activities)

Even a simple addition to a house can have different effects over time. For example, in the short term, there may be potential noise and traffic issues during construction; in the longer term, there may be concerns about how the final addition looks and whether it affects the neighbour's privacy.

STEP 2. Identify the effects.

If you require a resource consent it is because your activity is likely to have some type of environmental effect. Talking with planning staff at the Council can help you identify some of the effects and what rules are relevant.

To identify the effects of your proposal you could also:

- develop your own understanding of the proposal
- use the provisions of the district plan
- discuss the proposal with relevant specialist advisers, neighbours and any potentially affected parties.

As you think of effects, write them all down in a checklist.

For long-term projects, or those whose effects change over time, you may need to prepare a different checklist for the different phases eg, site preparation, construction, operation.

STEP 3. Rank and address the effects (*see example of effects checklist*)

Using the checklist of effects from step 2, think of how big the effects will be on the environment (i.e., no effect, a minor effect, or a major effect). Give reasons why the effect is big or not and discuss anything you propose for dealing with the effects.

Consultation:

Consultation is an important part of the AEE process. It is an opportunity to tell people what you are going to do and an invitation to contribute ideas to the project and how to address particular effects.

Once you have identified any effects of your proposal, it is useful to discuss these issues with people who may be interested in or affected by your proposal (e.g., neighbours, community groups, Ngai Tahu, Environment Canterbury, NZ Historic Places Trust, Transit New Zealand, Department of Conservation, etc).

Example of an 'effects checklist'

Straightforward application: Garden shed breach of side yard rule.			
Issue (environmental effect)	Ranking: significance of effects	Reasons for ranking of effects	Comments
Loss of daylight on adjoining site	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low height • High fence • Location of neighbour's house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss in AEE these reasons • Obtain consent from neighbour
Loss of someone's view	Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low height • High fence • Colour & design of shed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss in AEE these reasons and mention neighbours consent
Loss of privacy on neighbour's site	No effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No views/windows from shed • High fence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State why no effect in AEE
Out of character with the street	No effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same materials and colour as house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State why no effect in AEE
Not in keeping with design of the house	No effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same materials and colour as house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State why no effect in AEE

STEP 4. Finalise the AEE (*the important part*)

Check you have all the information necessary for your AEE. This means you have all the information to:

- accurately describe the activity
- accurately describe the site and location of the activity
- complete your effects checklist, including ranking and discussing how any effects may be managed
- identify any consultation undertaken and its results
- discuss any alternatives you considered and why they were rejected

These points above are useful headings for your AEE. But remember, there is no set format for AEEs. Your site and proposal will determine what issues are relevant and what you should discuss.

On the following page is an example of a basic AEE.

STEP 5. Lodge the application!

If you don't understand or are having difficulty identifying potential effects, you may need to involve specialist advisers to help you. This will enable any necessary changes to be made to your proposal before you have made a significant investment.

Application for Resource Consent:
Mr and Mrs J SMITH

Assessment of Effects

1.0 Introduction

This statement of effects provides an assessment of the actual and/or potential effects on the environment of the proposed development of a garden shed at 22 Peak Road, Jonesville. This statement of effects accompanies and forms part of the resource consent application.

1.1 Description of the Site

The 1012m² rectangular site is located on the northern side of Peak Road, Jonesville. The site rises gently from the front boundary, but towards the rear of the property falls steeply away to a gully below. There is an older style weatherboard cottage located near to the road boundary of the site and a wooden garage near the western site boundary. The remainder of the property is covered in reasonably mature native trees and bush with little undergrowth.

A site plan is attached to the application.

1.2 Description of the Proposal

It is proposed to build a small garden shed on the western side of the site. This activity is permitted by the plan.

However, the Plan states that the minimum yard requirement for side and rear yards is 1.0 metre. The garden shed would exceed this rule by 30cm at the worst point of infringement. This is shown on the attached plans.

1.3 Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with the western neighbour and they had no concerns regarding the proposed shed. Their written approval has been obtained as it is considered they are potentially adversely affected by the development.

2.0 Assessment of Effects

The Hurunui District Plan states the following matters are relevant to the rules for yard distances:

- **Loss of access to daylight on adjoining sites**
The shed proposed will be 2.2 metres in height. Given that the western fence is also 2.0 metres high, there will be no shading or loss of daylight resulting from the shed.

- **Adverse effects of building on outlook and privacy of adjoining sites**
As discussed in the previous point, the shed will be constructed to a height of 2.2 metres. This will mean the shed will be barely visible from the adjoining site to the west and there will be only minor adverse effects on outlook or privacy.
- **More efficient, practical or pleasant use of the site.**
It is proposed to locate the shed 70 cm from the western boundary in order to align it with the existing garage. This will help ensure a better visual appearance of the site.
- **Landscaping or screening**
Landscaping and screening was considered impractical given the low height of the shed and the small distance from the fenceline. The height of the existing fence will provide screening anyway.
- **Out of character with the street**
The shed will also be of wooden construction and will be painted to match the garage and cottage. This will ensure it is similar in appearance to the other buildings on the site and those in the neighbourhood.

3.0 Conclusion

Given the assessment of effects, the small size of the proposed shed, and the approval of the western neighbour, I believe the effects of this proposal will be minor and no other people will be affected.

