

Planning for Southland

DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW

During the past year Southland District Council has continued to progress the Southland District Plan review project and is due to complete the third of four key stages by July 2011.

Council and Environment Southland have developed and implemented a collaborative review project for the second generation Regional Policy Statement for Southland (Environment Southland) and Southland District Plan (Southland District Council). Both of these planning documents were due for review at the same time and the Councils saw a number of advantages in progressing the projects collaboratively.

Stage 1 of the review process the Issues and Options stage took place throughout 2009. This stage was focussed on 13 key topic areas and involved the release of Issues and Options discussion papers, public consultation meetings throughout the province followed by feedback from the community and key stakeholders. A "Summary of Community Feedback" document was then released in October 2009, ending this stage of the review project.

Stage 2 of the review process involved the drafting of combined issues, objectives and policies for the Regional Policy Statement and Southland District Plan. Joint Councillor Workshops on the draft objectives and policies were then held during July to September 2010. Following the completion of the workshops and feedback from Councillors the initial policy drafting stage was completed in November 2010 with a final draft version of the Issues, objectives and policies prepared.



Stage 3 of the review process the methods drafting stage is currently underway with the draft objectives and policies from stage 2 being used as a basis for the methods drafting. In terms of the Southland District Plan the methods will also include the drafting of rules. The District Plan methods drafting stage will progress through the first half of 2011.

Stage 4 of the review process will involve the First Schedule Resource Management Act 1991 process, including the public notification of the proposed Southland District Plan, submissions, hearings and appeals. Council is aiming to have the draft second generation Southland District Plan ready for notification by the end of 2011.

TE ANAU DEVELOPMENT GETS CONSENT

A proposed visitor centre on the outskirts of Te Anau has been granted resource consent by the Southland District Council.

Fiordland Lifestyle Properties Limited applied for consent to establish, construct, operate and maintain a visitor centre at 2 Alpine Drive, Te Anau, and the consent was issued following a hearing in Te Anau on Thursday 10 February.

Council resource management planner Matt Hunter said the consent has been issued, subject to a set of 16 detailed conditions. The application was publicly notified and 25 submissions, both in support and opposing the proposal, were received.

One of the key concerns was the potential for the proposed development to fragment the existing retail centre of Te Anau. However, Council's resource management committee, in its

decision approving the development, said the land which was the subject of the application had recently been rezoned from rural to urban via a District Plan change, and the proposed development was largely compliant with the urban provisions of the District Plan.

Also, a previous proposal to establish a commercial zone based around the existing town centre to minimise the potential for retail fragmentation had not proceeded following community feedback at the time.

The committee put extensive conditions on visual effects, landscaping, noise management and access and parking arrangements.