



RURAL/LAND - Summary of Community Feedback

Issues

- Some people and groups questioned the extent to which the Issues and Options papers indicated that land use change and intensification was placing pressure on soil and water resources in Southland.

Some argued more detailed scientific analysis needed to be conducted and certain landuses were being targeted without justification.

Other people and groups argued intensification of landuse and landuse change were clearly having an impact on soil and water resources in Southland.

- The economic importance of agriculture and primary sector activities to the Southland region was emphasised in many comments.

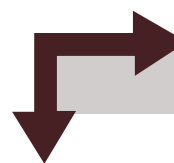
Groups involved in the forestry, mining and energy generation sectors also emphasised the economic importance of each of these respective industries.

All these groups were concerned about the implications of additional landuse controls. However, a number of comments from other groups and individuals expressed concern about the environmental effects some of these landuses and industries were having and/or could potentially have in the future.


- Concern about lifestyle block development in rural areas was another key issue.

Those involved in the agricultural, energy generation and mining sectors all noted the potential for reverse sensitivity issues to arise from these types of development i.e. situations where residents of new developments raise concerns about existing activities.

- Another concern related to rural subdivision was the potential loss of high value productive soils from residential and rural-residential development in some areas.
- Other concerns were about lightspill from wintering sheds in rural areas, rural signage provisions being overly restrictive, loss of remaining areas of indigenous vegetation, support for refinement of rules relating to gravel extraction and the importance of the provision of residential accommodation in rural areas for the viability of rural communities.



Please see the reverse side of this card for Land/Rural options and Councils' commentaries.



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Options

- Strong support for non-regulatory approaches including:
 - Education, advocacy and promotion of good practice examples.
 - Development of partnerships between councils, government agencies and landowners.
 - Continued use of programmes such as the Living Streams Project.
 - Economic incentives such as rates relief and financial support for private property owners undertaking riparian fencing and planting, ecological restoration and protection.
 - Use of industry-led initiatives and guidelines.
 - Use of community expertise and knowledge.
- Support for regulatory approaches including:
 - Rule-based approaches with comments noting the importance of rules and minimum environmental standards. Rules were also seen by some as advantageous as they provided clarity.
 - A number noted that non-regulatory controls may work well for the majority there was still a need for regulation of those whose activities cause significant adverse environmental effects.
 - Support for enforcement action where appropriate particularly in relation to very poor examples of environmental practice.
 - Support for existing regulatory approaches to rural density along with support for alternative density controls including those that provided for clustered developments in rural areas.

Councils' Commentary

Both Councils recognise there is a broad range of views on rural and land issues within the Southland community.

It is recommended councils set some clearer regional policy around rural and land issues in the revised Regional Policy Statement for Southland. District and City Plan provisions are required to 'give effect to' the Regional Policy Statement and clear direction in the Regional Policy Statement would provide greater certainty for all parties.

This would include clearer direction on regional issues associated with mineral extraction, forestry, agriculture, energy development, and containment of urban form versus urban sprawl.

It is recommended that a combination of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches is developed to address rural and land issues. It is suggested this involves the refinement of several key existing plan rules, such as those relating to rural density, gravel extraction, significant indigenous vegetation removal and signage provisions.

It is recommended that analysis of how certain landuse activities can lead to reverse sensitivity is undertaken.

Councils could then set environmental bottom lines for all rural activities so a variety of land uses are able to coexist without generating significant adverse environmental effects. Environmental bottom lines relating to noise controls and bulk and location requirements for new

buildings are examples.

To deal with the issue of loss of high value productive soils, it is recommended that councils look to minimise unnecessary urban sprawl and identify appropriate locations for future rural-residential development to occur.

Councils should also proactively encourage design approaches which minimise the extent of land taken out of production. This issue is most relevant to certain growth areas of the Southland region (e.g the Te Anau and Winton areas) and is not currently a region-wide issue.

It is recommended existing regulatory approaches to rural density are reassessed and refined. As an example, new density controls that allowed for clustered rural residential development could be adopted.

This approach provides for rural subdivision in which dwellings are grouped together and enables larger areas of rural land to be retained in rural landuse.

This could potentially address some of the concerns related to loss of productive soils.

