



LANDSCAPES AND NATURAL FEATURES - *Feedback*

Issues

- General recognition that there are significant landscapes and natural features within the Southland region that should be protected from inappropriate subdivision, development and use.

Some people felt these significant areas should be identified, listed and protected. Other groups were concerned about the impact landscape controls could have on their ability to undertake specific landuses and the effect on private property rights.

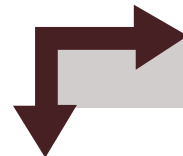
- There was a significant amount of comment on the potential impact of commercial windfarm development on Southland landscapes and natural features.

- A wide range of landscapes and natural features were identified in comments, with a clear focus on coastal areas, hill country and mountain areas.

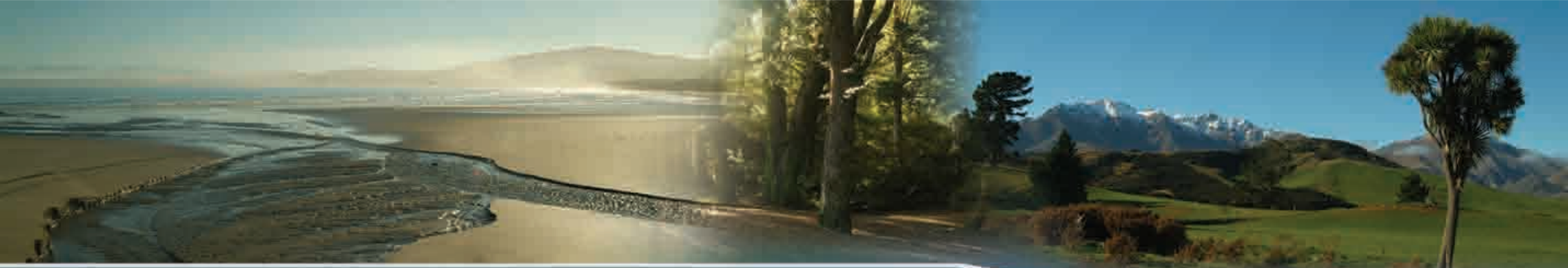
A number of comments wished to see greater protection for prominent natural features and the Castlerock limestone formation was referred to a number of times.

- Other issues included concern about the impact of large farm buildings, unpainted buildings and buildings finished in bright colours on rural landscapes.

Another common concern was the impact buildings and structures located on prominent ridgelines and hills can have on prominent landscapes and natural features.



Please see the reverse side of this card for Landscapes and Natural Features options and Councils' commentaries.



LANDSCAPES AND NATURAL FEATURES - *Feedback*

Options

- A number of comments requested greater regional direction on issues relating to landscapes and natural features through the Regional Policy Statement for Southland.
- Support for non-regulatory approaches including:
 - Commissioning of landscape assessments and studies.
 - Development of non-regulatory guidelines and education.
 - Engaging with and supporting community groups with an interest in landscape issues and protection.
- Support for regulatory approaches including:
 - The identification and mapping of significant landscapes and natural features and regulatory approaches controlling development within these specified areas.

Councils' Commentary

Environment Southland and the Southland District Council both recognise that issues relating to landscapes and natural features require more adequate treatment in the reviews of both the Regional Policy Statement for Southland and the Southland District Plan.

It is recommended the revised Regional Policy Statement identifies a limited number of outstanding landscapes and natural features of regional significance, drawing on previous studies and augmenting these as necessary.

Clearer regional policy and direction around these outstanding landscapes and natural features could then be formulated.

Identification and defining of outstanding landscapes would also enable District Plan objectives, policies and rules to be formulated that set the levels of development permitted in these outstanding areas as of right and also set out which types of activities require resource consent. This would allow for closer scrutiny of certain types of development on key landscapes and natural features.

As well as outstanding natural features and landscapes, other natural areas, features and landscapes of value to the region may also need to be appropriately managed (ie areas with amenity, heritage/cultural and other values).

In terms of identifying outstanding natural landscapes and natural features, it is recommended councils work collaboratively to undertake landscape assessments and studies.

There are a number of existing Southland landscape assessments and studies that could be used as a starting point, including the Southland Coastal Landscape Study 2006 and the Te Anau Basin Landscape Capacity Study 2006. Given the large land area of the Southland region, it is considered important that landscape areas and natural features identified as outstanding are limited in number and size wherever possible.

The identification of outstanding natural landscapes and natural features would enable councils to recognise and provide for the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use which is a matter of national importance under Section 6 of the RMA.

The identification of outstanding natural landscapes and natural features would also allow councils to consider the impacts of any new development proposals on these outstanding areas.

New developments could continue to be assessed on a case by case basis through the resource consent process with a greater level of scrutiny occurring where development is proposed in identified outstanding areas.

