

Your submission to Proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land



Reference no: 37

Clause

What are the values and benefits associated with existing food growing hubs and how can these be maximised?

Notes

Existing food growing hubs should, of course, be retained and supported. They can be maximised firstly by protecting the land from development, and secondly by ensuring that rates on arable land do not creep up to levels by which food becomes more expensive. Having said that, it is not only existing food growing hubs that are important and need protection. Food can be grown in a wide variety of climates, terrains, and soil types. It is likely that future challenges and pressures faced by New Zealand will result in need for increased food production in close proximity to towns and cities. This will trigger innovation in the types of food that can be grown and how they are grown. As such, ALL greenfield development (not just that into existing 'production areas') needs to be very carefully considered in regards to future needs.

Clause

What are the values and benefits associated with highly productive land?

Notes

It is obvious isn't it? It grows the food that we eat to survive.

Clause

Does the RMA framework provide sufficient clarity and direction on how highly productive land should be managed? Why/why not?

Notes

I believe it does, however the triple bottom line approach of the RMA is all too often compromised for the sake of immediate economic gain (development) and various loopholes (e.g. rates rises on 'potentially developable' land which push farmers out of production) are exploited in order to achieve economic and short sighted development objectives.

Clause

Does the RMA framework provide sufficient clarity on how highly productive land should be considered alongside competing uses? Why/why not?

Notes

Again... it does, if it was followed to the tee. But it often is not. Developers manage to get in the back door by having connections with certain high up people, councillors etc and pull strings to get what they want in the end. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the RMA... its intentions are great... it is how it is interpreted and enacted by people and often those with vested interests or private connections which is troublesome.

Clause

How are values and wider benefits of highly productive land being considered in planning and consenting processes?

Notes

Productive land has been under valued in terms of consent process in recent years. There are many developers out to make a quick buck by shunting through a plan change and getting rural rezoned to residential. These private individuals are making huge profits and in the mean time we are losing our arable soils in close proximity to cities and not only that but also losing biodiversity value along with it.

Clause

How is highly productive land currently considered when providing urban expansion? Can you provide examples?

Notes

It seems to be highly under valued. Two examples I can think of off the top of my head is housing development on rich alluvial soils of the Taieri Plains in Dunedin, as well as massive urban sprawl occurring in Richmond (Tasman District) onto former market garden, orchard or farm land. I am sure there are many more examples occurring around the country. This is not acceptable. We should be considering densification of existing built up space as a high priority far before any further greenfield development in New Zealand's major cities.

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How should highly productive land be considered when planning for future urban expansion?

Notes

It should be very well protected and with any potential development VERY carefully considered and highly scrutinised in regards to potential future scenarios. Our planning process should not be a free for all for people with the right connections or capital to get even richer than they already are. New Zealand already has a worsening problem with inequality and wealth disparity. Greenfield development exacerbates that and at the same time, loses one of our most critical resources, the ability to grow food close to our cities. Once its gone its gone. We need to take this seriously now before we mess everything up for future generations.

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How is highly productive land currently considered when providing for rural-lifestyle development? Can you provide examples?

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Clause

How should highly productive land be considered when providing for rural-lifestyle development?

Notes

Ideally it should be developed in a way which facilitates continued productivity values of the land rather than being turned into a ride-on-mower paradise with token pet alpacas. In regards to minimum lot sizes for rural / lifestyle development I think that there should be the option of, say it was a 10 hectare site, the ability for people to build on say, one hectare and sell the remaining 9 hectares for the purposes of food production, on the condition that the remaining 9 hectares is barred from further building and development. Many people want to live in the country but do not want to be farmers. Many people want to be farmers but do not have access to land close to cities because it is all tied up as lifestyle blocks. This could help the situation without over densifying the rural / urban fringe landscape.

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How should the tensions between primary production activities and potentially incompatible activities best be managed?

Notes

Give food production priority in most cases. Reverse sensitivity can not be allowed in the rural and urban fringe context. Having said that certain restrictions may need to be in place e.g. spray drift

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How can reverse sensitivity issues at the rural-urban interface best be managed?

Notes

Jelly wrestling between conflicting parties

Clause

Do you agree that there is a problem? Has it been accurately reflected in this document?

Notes

Yes there is a problem. It has mostly been reflected in the document. Although we can not focus purely on existing food production areas for protection. All current AND potential future food production areas need to be carefully considered. We are going to have a growing population, increased pressures and challenges, changing climate, and resource scarcity moving into the future. Protecting any potential areas to grow food (and retain biodiversity) is of utmost importance

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Are you aware of other problems facing highly productive land?

Notes

Irresponsible soil management and over-use of synthetic inputs. 'High class soils' do not stay high class soils if you till the crap out of them, drench them in chems and ferts and crop them year in year out. Soil needs maintenance and stewardship.

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Which option do you think would be the most effective to address the problems identified in Chapter Three? Why?

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Are there other pros and cons of a National Policy Statement that should be considered?

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Clause

Are there other options not identified in this chapter that could be more effective?

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Clause

Should the focus of the National Policy Statement be on versatile soils or highly productive land more broadly? Why/why not?

Notes

It should be focused on ANY greenfield development and any potential productive land whether that is a current need or a future need. Look at other countries not as blessed with land or soil resource as we are. They grow abundant amounts of food on hilly or so-called 'infertile' areas via correct management and methodology. We may well find ourselves in the not too distant future needing to draw on these kinds of methods and land resource to provide food for the populous. This is more important than rampant development and urban sprawl getting developers rich for short-term gain and putting further pressure on our infrastructure and resources.

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Should the focus of the National Policy Statement be on primary production generally or on certain types of food production activities? Why/why not?

Notes

Primary production generally. However we certainly need to watch out for forestry taking over arable land too. This needs to be kept in check.

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Do you support the scope of the proposal to focus on land use planning issues affecting highly productive land? Why/why not?

Notes

The scope should be broadened to encompass land which is not 'highly productive' but still has capacity to produce food in one way or another.

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What matters, if any, should be added to or excluded from the scope of the National Policy Statement? Why?

Notes

Adding the potential food production values of areas we currently do not perceive as 'highly productive' but could end up being critical productive areas in the face of future challenges that we face as a nation.

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Should future urban zones and future urban areas be excluded from the scope of the National Policy Statement? What are the potential benefits and costs?

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Should the National Policy Statement apply nationally or target areas where the pressures on highly productive land are greater?

Notes

Nationally

Clause

What would an ideal outcome be for the management of highly productive land for current and future generations?

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Complete protection of highly productive land and very selective highly scrutinised consents for development even on moderately or potentially productive land in the urban fringe

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If highly productive land is to be identified, how should this be done and by whom?

Notes

It should be by qualified experts. A range of people from agricultural scientists to urban planners, but whoever it is, they need to know what they are talking about. It should be done starting from the assumption that ALL greenfield sites are potentially valuable productive areas either now or in the future and go through a process of elimination to demonstrate precisely why they are not useful and why they should be used for development rather than retained for current or future production.

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Are the proposed criteria all relevant and important considerations for identifying highly productive land? Why/why not?

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What are the pros and cons associated with prioritising highly productive land for primary production?

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Pro's - we grow food which we need to sustain ourselves, and retain biodiversity value too. Con's - rich developers don't get to get even richer than they already are and they will have to go home and cry themselves to sleep

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Do you think there are potential areas of tension or confusion between this proposed National Policy Statement and other national direction (either proposed or existing)?

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Yes. Some people want development. Some people want food production. Of course thats a tension. And needs to be carefully managed and very carefully considered.

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How can the proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land and the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development best work alongside each other to achieve housing objectives and better management of the highly productive land resource?

Notes

Priority on densification (building 'up') of already built up areas as an absolute priority. There is so much capacity for many many more bed units by knocking down old houses and building medium to high density housing in close proximity to urban centres, versus sprawling greenfield development. Greenfield development puts further strain on infrastructure to a much greater degree than maximising the value of infrastructure that is already in place. And yes... obviously... minimising greenfield development also retains productive land for current and future needs.

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How should highly productive land be considered when identifying areas for urban expansion?

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Urban development should be completely excluded on highly productive land, full stop.

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How should the National Policy Statement direct the management of rural subdivision and fragmentation on highly productive land?

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How should the National Policy Statement direct the management of reverse sensitivity effects on and adjacent to highly productive land?

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How should the National Policy Statement guide decision-making on private plan changes to rezone highly productive land for urban or rural lifestyle use?

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Private plan changes of productive land should not be allowed at all. At a minimum it should have to be publically notified and HIGHLY scrutinised before any zoning changes are allowed to occur on any rural greenfield sites. It is all too easy in our current framework for developers to sneak plan changes through, get rich off of it and permanently deplete a citys productive resource which could be highly valuable in the future.

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How should the National Policy Statement guide decision-making on resource consent applications for subdivision and urban expansion on highly productive land?

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It should guide it by prohibiting urban expansion onto highly productive land

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What guidance would be useful to support the implementation of the National Policy Statement?

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How should the National Policy Statement best influence plan preparation and decision-making on resource consents and private plan changes?

Notes

It should place a priority on densification of existing built up areas and discourage greenfield expansion into the urban fringe unless it is an absolute last resort

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Should the National Policy Statement include policies that must be inserted into policy statements and plans without going through the Schedule 1 process? What are the potential benefits and risks?

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Clause

What areas of land, if any, should be excluded from the scope of the proposed National Policy Statement? Why?

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Clause

What are the pros and cons of requiring highly productive land to be spatially identified?

Notes

The pros are that the land that is identified as such can be protected. The cons are that other patches of land which could hold immense value for future food production may be missed simply because they have not been acknowledged or recognised as being valuable through our current lens or way of thinking.

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Is the identification of highly productive land best done at the regional or district level? Why?

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Both.

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What are the likely costs and effort involved in identifying highly productive land in your region?

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What guidance and technical assistance do you think will be beneficial to help councils identify highly productive land?

Notes

Collaboration with experts

You have elected to withhold your personal details from publication.