



Proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land

Submission Template

We would like to hear your views on the proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL).

Please feel free to use this template to prepare your submission. Once complete please email to soils@mpi.govt.nz.

You can also make a submission using the online submission tool. A link to the online submission tool is available at www.mpi.govt.nz/HighlyProductiveLand.

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Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation? Yes [x] No []

If yes, which organisation are you submitting on behalf of?

Hauraki District Council

Submissions are public information

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Under the Privacy Act 1993, people have access to information held by agencies about them. Any personal information you send with your submission will only be used in relation to matters covered by this document. In your submission, indicate if you prefer that we do not include your name in the published summary of submissions.

Questions for submitters

The questions for submitters that are included throughout the discussion document are provided below. We encourage you to provide comments to support your answers to the questions below. You do not have to answer all questions for your submission to be considered.

The page numbers mentioned below indicate where further information about the question is located in the discussion document.

Section 2.3: Defining highly productive land [page 19]

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

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



Section 3.1: Problem statement [page 23]

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

No, land is still being lost to rural productive uses.

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

No, as above.

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

Not consistently across the country.

Section 3.2: Urban expansion on to highly productive land [page 24]

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

Generally more valued for urban, rather than rural productive uses.

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

As part of a balanced weighing up of all relevant factors.



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Section 3.3: Fragmentation of highly productive land [page 25]

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

Varies from District to District. In Hauraki District the subdivision rules are based on land type, with lifestyle subdivision provided for only on the less versatile/productive land.

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

Should not be available for lifestyle type development.

Section 3.4: Reverse sensitivity [page 26]

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

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



Section 3.5: These issues are being seen throughout New Zealand [page 26]

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

Yes, significant areas of land continue to be lost to non rural productive activities.

Are you aware of other problems facing highly productive land?

Section 4.5 Preferred option – a National Policy Statement [page 31]

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

A NPS including appropriately directive provisions.

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

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



Section 5.2 Purpose of the proposed National Policy Statement [page 34]

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

On highly productive land more broadly. Some less versatile soils are highly productive for specific types of farming.

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

On primary production generally. Allows for continued availability of the land for a range of farming types that can come and go as other factors change, example due to climate change.

Section 5.3 The scope of the proposal [page 35]

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

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

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?



Recognition should be given to identified growth areas included in formal Growth Strategies (ie not just to those included in District Plans as future urban zones), particularly for small, low growth towns where minimal areas have been identified for future growth.

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

Should apply nationally.

Section 5.4 The proposed National Policy Statement [page 37]

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

That, except where necessary for expansion of towns and cities, highly productive land remain available for rural productive purposes.

Policy 1: Identification of highly productive land [page 41]

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

To save time and cost Regional Councils should be required to adopt the mapping of highly productive land where this is already included in District Plans.

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

The basis should always be the intrinsic characteristics of the land itself. If too many variable criteria are equally applied, or too much weight is placed on variable criteria, the land could still be lost to rural production activities, as over time it may be identified as highly



productive, but changes in the variable criteria mean it falls outside of the definition later, but it may later again fall within the definition.

Policy 2: Maintaining highly productive land for primary production [page 42]

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

Alignment with the Urban Growth Agenda [page 43]

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)?

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?

Policy 3: New urban development on highly productive land [page 45]

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

As available for urban expansion if there are no alternatives, or no viable alternatives. I.e town is surrounded entirely by highly productive land, or adjoining land of lesser productivity is too steep for urban development.



Policy 4: Rural subdivision and fragmentation [page 46]

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

By including a high level of direction that highly productive land should only be fragmented for lifestyle lot type subdivision in exceptional circumstances. Example small (less than 1 hectare) areas physically separated (by a significant legal or physical feature) from the balance of a title.



Policy 5: Reverse sensitivity [page 47]

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

Policies 6 and 7: Consideration of private plan changes and resource consent applications on highly productive land [page 49]

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

Yes. Given that identification and mapping of highly productive land and amendment to Regional Policy Statements and District Plans will take time (3 and 5 years provided for respectively) it is appropriate that there is a default definition of “highly productive land” and that this is taken into account immediately during the consideration of private plan change and resource consent applications.

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

Yes, as above.

Section 5.6 Implementation [page 52]

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



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Specific / technical questions

The questions below are included in the outline of the proposed NPS-HPL (Chapter Five of the discussion document) and may assist technical experts when providing a submission.

Specific questions

Section 5.3: The scope of the proposal [page 35]

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

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?

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

Specific questions

Section 5.4: The proposed National Policy Statement [page 37]

What level of direction versus flexibility should the objectives provide to maintain the availability of highly productive land for primary production?



Should the objectives provide more or less guidance on what is “inappropriate subdivision, use and development” on highly productive land? Why/why not?

A high level of direction should be included on what constitutes “inappropriate subdivision, use and development” as this would provide certainty for both Councils and landowners/developers.

Specific questions

Policy 1: Identification of highly productive land [page 41]

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

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

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

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



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Specific questions

Appendix A: Criteria to identify highly productive land [page 41]

Should there be a default definition of highly productive land based on the LUC until councils identify this? Why/why not?

Yes, to ensure highly productive land is not lost in the meantime. Allows the purpose of the NPS to be achieved immediately and provides for national consistency.

What are the key considerations to consider when identifying highly productive land? What factors should be mandatory or optional to consider?

What are the benefits and risks associated with allowing councils to consider the current and future availability of water when identifying highly productive land? How should this be aligned with Essential Freshwater Programme?

Should there be a tiered approach to identify and protect highly productive land based on the LUC class (e.g. higher levels of protection to LUC 1 and 2 land compared to LUC 3 land)? Why/why not?

No, as a whole land classes 1-3 make up a very small percentage of the land in New Zealand. All should be equally valued for rural productive activities.



Specific questions

Policy 3: New urban development on highly productive land [page 45]

How can this policy best encourage proactive and transparent consideration of highly productive land when identifying areas for new urban development and growth?

How can the proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land best align and complement the requirements of the proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development?

Specific questions

Policy 4: Rural subdivision and fragmentation [page 46]

Should the National Policy Statement provide greater direction on how to manage subdivision on highly productive land (e.g. setting minimum lot size standards for subdivisions)? If so, how can this best be done?

Greater direction is more appropriate to ensure the purpose of the NPS is achieved. However a standard minimum lot size is not necessarily appropriate across all class 1-3 land. Within those classes land will be more suitable for some forms of farming than for others. Land more suited for livestock based farming generally needs to be of larger areas, while horticultural based farming needs smaller areas. Either a standard lot size would need to be set at a high figure to cover the full range of productive uses, or it would need to be accepted that land would still be fragmented for non rural productive uses – if a low figure was set.

Should the proposed National Policy Statement encourage incentives and mechanisms to increase the productive capacity of highly productive land (e.g. amalgamation of small titles)? Why/why not?



Specific questions

Policy 5: Reverse sensitivity [page 47]

How can the National Policy Statement best manage reverse sensitivity effects within and adjacent to highly productive land?

Specific questions

Policy 6 and Policy 7: Consideration of private plan changes and resource consent applications on highly productive land [page 49]

Should these policies be directly inserted into plans without going through the Schedule 1 process (i.e. as a transitional policy until each council gives effect to the National Policy Statement)? What are the potential benefits and risks?

How can these policies best assist decision-makers consider trade-offs, benefits, costs and alternatives when urban development and subdivision is proposed on highly productive land?

Should the policies extend beyond rural lifestyle subdivision and urban development to large scale rural industries operations on highly productive land? Why/why not?





Specific questions

Section 5.5: Interpretation

Do any of the draft definitions in the National Policy Statement need further clarification? If so, how?

Are there other key terms in the National Policy Statement that should be defined and, if so, how?

Should there be minimum threshold for highly productive land (i.e. as a percentage of site or minimum hectares)? Why/why not?

Specific questions

Section 5.6: Implementation [page 52]

Do you think a planning standard is needed to support the consistent implementation of some proposals in this document?

If yes, what specific provisions do you consider are effectively delivered via a planning standard tool?



Specific questions

Section 5.7: Timeframes [page 52]

What is the most appropriate and workable approach for highly productive land to be identified by council? Should this be sequenced as proposed?

What is an appropriate and workable timeframe to allow councils to identify highly productive land and amend their policy statements and plans to identify that land?

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