

ADDENDUM TO SECTION 42A REPORT TO ADDRESS POTENTIAL DIRECT EFFECTS OF THE POULTRY FARM ON THE FUTURE RESIDENTS OF LOTS 1, 2 AND 4.

To	The Independent Commissioner
From	Nicola Laurenson – Consultant Planner
Reviewed by	Richard Watkins – Principal Planner
Date	18 June 2026
Application Number:	SUB21/47978 LUC26/48992
Proposal:	Subdivision: Four Lot Rural Subdivision Land Use: To allow residential units to be constructed within proposed Lots 1 and 2 where they are within the setback of an established intensive indoor primary production structure.
Site Address:	24 Te Arei Road West, Sentry Hill
Legal Description:	Lot 4 DP 5842 held in RT TNB1/586 issued on 7 June 1967
Relevant Title Interests:	Subject to a right to convey Gas in Gross Land Covenants (No complaints relating to poultry operation)
Zone:	Part Operative New Plymouth District Plan (2025): Rural Production Zone New Plymouth District Plan (2005): Rural Environment Area

1.0 ADDENDUM PURPOSE

- 1.1. This addendum has been prepared to provide clarification to paragraphs 9.29, 9.30 and 9.44 of the s42A report and outline my opinion on the potential direct effects from the use of intensive indoor primary production structures on the future residents of Lots 1, 2, and 4.
- 1.2. Specifically, the Addendum is provided to address the following questions of the Commissioner:

7. Specifically, I direct that Ms Laurenson provide:

- a. An overview of any information held by NPDC and relevant to this application, on:
 - i. The rationale for the 400m setback between dwellings and intensive indoor primary production structures in rule SUB-S2 of the Partly Operative District Plan. For example, any information documented during the proposed district plan process identifying the likely nature of adverse effects anticipated on residents within 400m, or lesser distances, from a poultry farm.



- ii. Specific instances of odour or noise complaints from nearby residents relating to a poultry farm of similar scale, and where the proximity of the residents to the poultry farm is similar to that which may result from this application.
 - iii. If there is no specific information on the potential effects of poultry farms provided as part of the proposed district plan process, or no record of complaints from similar situations, simply record that is the case.
- b. Further comment relevant to the specific circumstances of the site as to the likely nature of adverse effects from the proximity of the poultry farm structures on future residents.

2.0 QUESTION A(I)

An overview of any information held by NPDC and relevant to this application, on the rationale for the 400m setback between dwellings and intensive indoor primary production structures in rule SUB-S2 of the Partly Operative District Plan. For example, any information documented during the proposed district plan process identifying the likely nature of adverse effects anticipated on residents within 400m, or lesser distances, from a poultry farm.

- 2.1. In the Proposed District Plan Section 32 analysis for the Rural Production Zone, the author identifies that intensive indoor primary production activities (including poultry farms) generate adverse effects that can extend beyond site boundaries. These effects, such as odour, noise, and increased traffic, have the potential to impact nearby sensitive activities, particularly rural residential units, resulting in amenity loss, land-use conflict and reverse sensitivity.
- 2.2. This recognition underpins the need for planning controls (such as separation distances between activities and activity rules for new intensive indoor primary production activities) to both manage off-site effects on residents and avoid reverse sensitivity, while enabling the continued operation and viability of rural production activities.
- 2.3. The issue arises in multiple strands of s32 policy analysis:
 - The Taranaki Regional Policy Statement directs that reverse sensitivity effects must be avoided, particularly where sensitive activities locate near rural production or activities that discharge contaminants to air.¹
 - The Regional Air Quality Plan 2011 (RAQP) reinforces this by focusing on the management of air-related effects (including odour) from activities such as intensive farming.²
 - The State of the Environment³ analysis identifies that rural land-use conflict has increased due to:

¹ Proposed New Plymouth District Plan s32 Analysis (section 3.3)

<https://proposeddistrictplan.npdc.govt.nz/media/Opkllw3u/25-rural-production-zone.pdf>

² Proposed New Plymouth District Plan s32 Analysis (section 3.4.1)

<https://proposeddistrictplan.npdc.govt.nz/media/Opkllw3u/25-rural-production-zone.pdf>

³ Proposed New Plymouth District Plan s32 Analysis (section 4.3.6)

<https://proposeddistrictplan.npdc.govt.nz/media/Opkllw3u/25-rural-production-zone.pdf>



- a wider mix of activities, and
 - closer proximity between sensitive uses and rural operations.
- 2.4. It was concluded that the Operative District Plan 2005 (ODP) did not adequately address reverse sensitivity or land-use conflict. This gap resulted in unmanaged tensions between rural production activities and residential development, highlighting the need for a more robust framework to manage these effects while enabling rural activities to continue to operate effectively.
- 2.5. The Part Operative District Plan (PODP) responds by:
- Introducing activity-based rules for the establishment and expansion of intensive indoor primary production activities within the Rural Production Zone (where previously no rules existed); and
 - Retaining (with amendments) setback provisions from the ODP relating to the establishment of buildings containing sensitive activities near intensive indoor primary production activities (on separate sites).
- 2.6. These rules are intended to:
- Encourage applicants to give greater consideration to the siting and layout of intensive indoor primary production activities (such as poultry operations).
 - Require careful design and location of building platforms at the subdivision stage, including where standard SUB-S2 applies.
 - For existing records of title, provide a restricted discretionary activity pathway for residential units proposed within 400 metres of an intensive indoor primary production activity.
- 2.7. The minimum setback distance standards have been carried over from the ODP, rather than being newly derived through detailed Section 32 analysis⁴.
- 2.8. Given the limited explanation in the Section 32 report regarding the origin of the 400m setback, further investigation was undertaken by reviewing ODP and consulting with NPDC Policy Planner Denise Young. Both sources indicated that the rationale is grounded in regional policy, particularly the RAQP (and its predecessor, the Regional Air Plan for Taranaki (1997)).
- 2.9. The RAQP establishes rules for new and expanded intensive poultry farming processes (Rules 51–54) and is supported by:
- Appendix V of the RAQP: Good Management Practices for Intensive Poultry Farming.
- 2.10. Appendix V provides guidance for the establishment of intensive poultry farming processes, including recommended setback (buffer) distances between poultry sheds and existing off-

⁴ Proposed New Plymouth District Plan s32 Analysis (section 7.5.2)

<https://proposeddistrictplan.npdc.govt.nz/media/Opkllw3u/25-rural-production-zone.pdf>



site dwellinghouses. However, it does not specifically address separation distances for new residential units locating near existing intensive indoor primary production structure, which is the scenario addressed by Rule SUB-S2.

2.11. Importantly, Appendix V makes clear that:

- The recommended buffer distances are guidelines only, not fixed standards; and
- Compliance with these distances does not guarantee that adverse effects (e.g., odour, noise, dust) will be avoided.

2.12. Instead, a range of site-specific factors must also be considered, including:

- Prevailing wind direction;
- The placement and orientation of shed doors; and
- The location of discharge points, including ventilation outlets and waste.

2.13. Notwithstanding the guidance-based nature of Appendix V, the maximum recommended buffer distance of 400 metres has been adopted within the PODP as a fixed standard under Rule SUB-S2.

3.0 QUESTION A(II)

An overview of any information held by NPDC and relevant to this application, specific instances of odour or noise complaints from nearby residents relating to a poultry farm of similar scale, and where the proximity of the residents to the poultry farm is similar to that which may result from this application.

3.1. With the assistance of Council staff, I have reviewed all complaints recorded within Council systems relating to poultry farm activities between 1 January 2005 and 9 June 2026. This review identified a total of 50 complaints. No complaints have been received about the application site.

3.2. The complaints were categorised as follows:

Odour – 16

Noise from poultry farm activities – 7

Noise from traffic related to poultry farm activities – 7

Road safety and efficiency – 11

Nuisance – 2

Other – 7

3.3. The complaints most relevant to the question are those concerning odour, noise, and general nuisance, as these relate directly to amenity effects experienced by nearby residents. While road safety and traffic efficiency issues have also been recorded, these matters fall outside the scope of amenity effects and are not considered further in this overview.

- 3.4. Odour is the most frequently reported issue, accounting for approximately one-third of all complaints. This indicates that odour is the primary concern for residents living near poultry farming activities and represents a significant potential adverse effect on amenity. Noise-related complaints (including both operational and traffic noise) also form a notable proportion, demonstrating that acoustic effects can also contribute to amenity impacts. Complaints regarding general nuisance are relatively infrequent.

Odour

- 3.5. Odour complaints received by the New Plymouth District Council are typically referred to the Taranaki Regional Council (TRC), as odour management falls within its regulatory responsibilities.
- 3.6. Notwithstanding, a review of comparable odour complaints relating to poultry operations on record indicate that separation distances between affected dwellings and poultry sheds range from approximately 30 metres to 1.1 kilometres. Notably:
- Five complaints were lodged by residents located within 400 metres of farms of a similar scale to that in the proposal; and
 - Four complaints were from residents located more than 400 metres away, generally associated with larger operations.
- 3.7. This indicates that odour effects can be perceived across a wide range of distances, although closer proximity increases the likelihood of complaint.

Noise

- 3.8. Noise complaints associated with comparable intensive indoor poultry operations show that distances between residential dwellings and poultry sheds range from approximately 100 metres to 1.7 kilometres. Of these:
- Six complaints were from residents within 400 metres of farms of a similar scale to the proposal; and
 - Seven complaints were from residents located more than 400 metres away from similar or larger operations.
- 3.9. These findings indicate that noise effects can extend over varying distances depending on the size of the operation.

Conclusion

- 3.10. Overall, the complaint history demonstrates that setbacks of less than 400 metres are sensitive to adverse amenity effects, particularly from odour, while increased separation distances progressively reduce both the frequency and intensity of effects. This supports the s32 Analysis conclusion that maintaining adequate setbacks is a key factor in protecting residential amenity.

4.0 QUESTION B

Further comment relevant to the specific circumstances of the site as to the likely nature of adverse effects from the proximity of the poultry farm structures on future residents.

Parameters of the intensive primary production activity

- 4.1. The original subdivision application indicated that the intensive indoor primary production activity comprised grower sheds housing between approximately 75,000 and 100,000 chickens. However, the more recent land use application describes the activity as involving the rearing of breeder hens to point-of-lay, prior to their transfer off-site for egg production.
- 4.2. The District Council holds limited information on the poultry operation beyond building consent information showing the location and layout of the sheds and that included in the resource consent applications. No operational information is held on file demonstrating farm management practices.
- 4.3. Upon request, the TRC provided me with a copy of the Discharge Permit for the site which was granted on 30 April 2008 and lapsed on 1 June 2026. I further requested information about the current status of the consent and was advised an application for review had been received by TRC. The TRC website indicates that the consent lapses on 31 December 2027. The TRC did not provide any information about current farm management practices.
- 4.4. In any case, the information I have suggests that changes have occurred in the nature and potentially the scale or operational characteristics of the activity since the original subdivision application was lodged. Such changes may be relevant when assessing potential adverse effects on sensitive receivers, as different poultry operations (e.g. broiler/grower versus breeder rearing) can generate varying levels and types of effects, including differences in odour profiles, noise levels, duration of occupancy, and management practices. It is also possible, depending on the changes to the operation, that a Land Use Consent may be required to continue to operate.
- 4.5. It is important that any evidence-based assessment of effects on nearby sensitive activities, including future residents, is based on the current and consented nature of the activity.

Building characteristics

- 4.6. The site contains a total of 4 sheds. According to the Property File for the site, three 'relocatable' sheds were granted permits to be erected in 1989 and 1991. These are located at the rear of the site and behind the 4th shed which was granted building consent to be constructed in December 1999 (CCC was issued on 4/8/2000). All sheds appear to have large doors that face the proposed building locations for Lots 1 – 3 though the roading layout suggests that the majority of activity occurs between the newest shed and the three rear sheds.

Location of new sensitive receivers

- 4.7. The existing dwelling on proposed Lot 4 is located approximately 125 metres from the nearest shed. The identified building platforms on proposed Lots 1 and 2 are situated approximately 175 metres and 100 metres, respectively, from the nearest shed.



Effects Assessment

- 4.8. The proximity of the proposed residential building platforms to the intensive poultry operation is such that adverse amenity effects are likely to be experienced by future residents. These effects are not limited to occasional rural nuisance but are likely to be experienced on a frequent, and at times continuous basis, reflecting the operational requirements of intensive indoor poultry production, including mechanical ventilation and regular servicing. Adverse effects include odour emissions, operational noise (including ventilation systems, machinery, and stock movements), and traffic-related effects. Such effects are more pronounced at shorter separation distances and represent a risk to residential amenity. Odour, in particular, has been identified as the dominant source of complaint in comparable scenarios outlined in Section 3.
- 4.9. In the context of this site, the extent of adverse effects will be influenced by several factors, including separation distances, the orientation of shed openings and ventilation systems, and prevailing wind patterns. Where prevailing winds carry emissions toward the proposed building platforms, there is an increased likelihood that odour and dust will be experienced by future occupants. Similarly, where ventilation fans or shed openings are oriented toward these locations, noise and discharge effects may be more pronounced. Given the relatively short separation distances, particularly in the case of Lot 2 (approximately 100 metres), there is a high likelihood that these effects will be readily perceptible and intrusive at times.
- 4.10. Traffic-related amenity effects are also likely to arise, particularly for residents on Lots 2 and 4, which are located within approximately 100 metres of the proposed crossing and access driveway serving Lot 3. In this regard, documented evidence indicates that traffic noise associated with poultry operations—particularly heavy vehicle movements—can contribute to diminished amenity, including sleep disturbance. In some operations, these movements often occur during early morning or late evening periods, increasing the potential for sleep disturbance and reduced residential amenity.
- 4.11. The application does not include site-specific technical assessments (such as odour dispersion modelling or acoustic assessments) demonstrating that adverse amenity effects arising from the poultry operation can be appropriately avoided, remedied, or mitigated for future occupants of Lots 1, 2, and 4. Instead, reliance is placed on a reverse sensitivity covenant to restrict future complaints. However, such a covenant does not reduce or mitigate the actual effects experienced, and therefore does not address the underlying amenity concerns.
- 4.12. In the absence of supporting technical evidence, I remain of the opinion that adverse effects associated with land-use conflict—particularly those affecting residential amenity—are likely to be unacceptable leading to a situation where the proposal is not consistent with relevant objectives and policies (as set out in Paragraph 9.30 of the s42A report).
- 4.13. This conclusion is based on the relatively close separation distances, the nature of the activity, and the established planning challenges associated with reverse sensitivity in the Rural Production Zone. It is further supported by the complaints referenced earlier in this addendum, which indicate that amenity values are typically reduced for residents located in close proximity to intensive indoor primary production activities. Overall, the proximity of the proposed residential sites to the poultry operation is such that future occupants are likely to experience a level of amenity that is inconsistent with reasonable expectations for residential living, even within a rural environment.

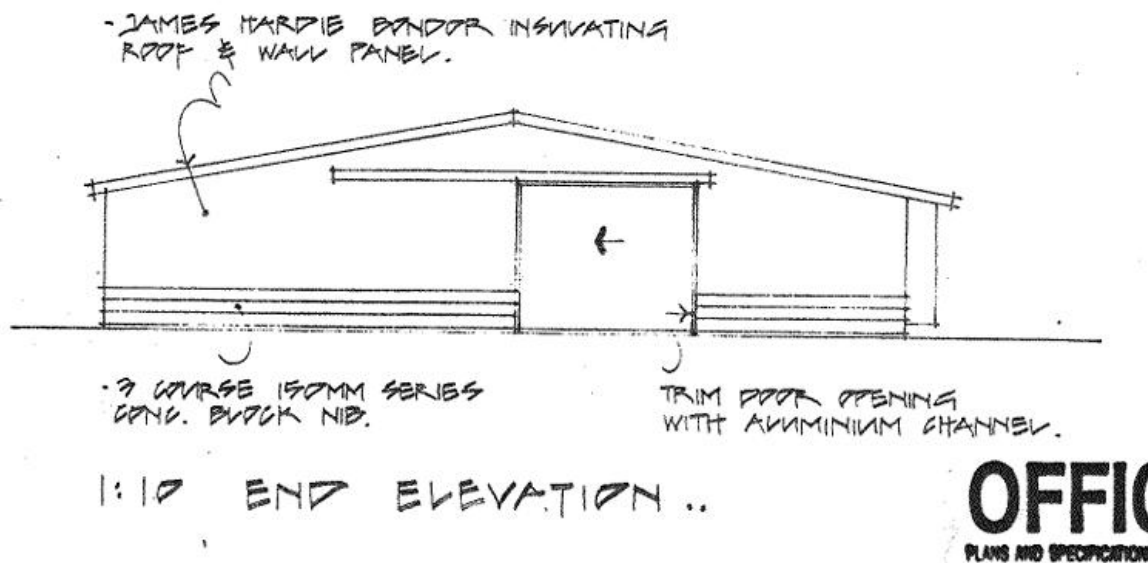


RPROZ-S2	Minimum structure setbacks
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> From any road boundary (including state highways): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> residential unit: 30m; artificial crop protection structures and crop support structures: 5m; all other structures: 20m. From a side boundary: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activity structures (excluding rural industry activities): 10m; artificial crop protection structures and crop support structures: 3m; all other structures (including rural industry activities): 15m. From established intensive indoor primary production structures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> sensitive activities on any other site: 400m. From the boundary of a site zoned as Future Urban: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> artificial crop protection structures and crop support structures: 5m; all other structures: 100m. From a mineral extraction activity (either legally operating or consented for future use): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> sensitive activities on any other site: 500m. <p>This standard does not apply to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stock loading races or stock loading yards associated with an agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activity on site. Stock fences (excluding solid or close boarded fences). 	<p>Matters of discretion if compliance not achieved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which structure design, siting and external appearance adversely impacts on rural character and amenity. Site topography and orientation and whether the structure can be more appropriately located to minimise adverse visual amenity effects or maintain, enhance or restore indigenous biodiversity values. Effect on nearby properties, including outlook, privacy, shading and sense of enclosure. The extent to which the reduction in the setback is necessary due to the shape or natural and physical features of the site. The ability to mitigate adverse effects through the use of screening, planting, landscaping and alternative design. The extent to which the reduction in setback would impact on the future ability for road widening requirements.

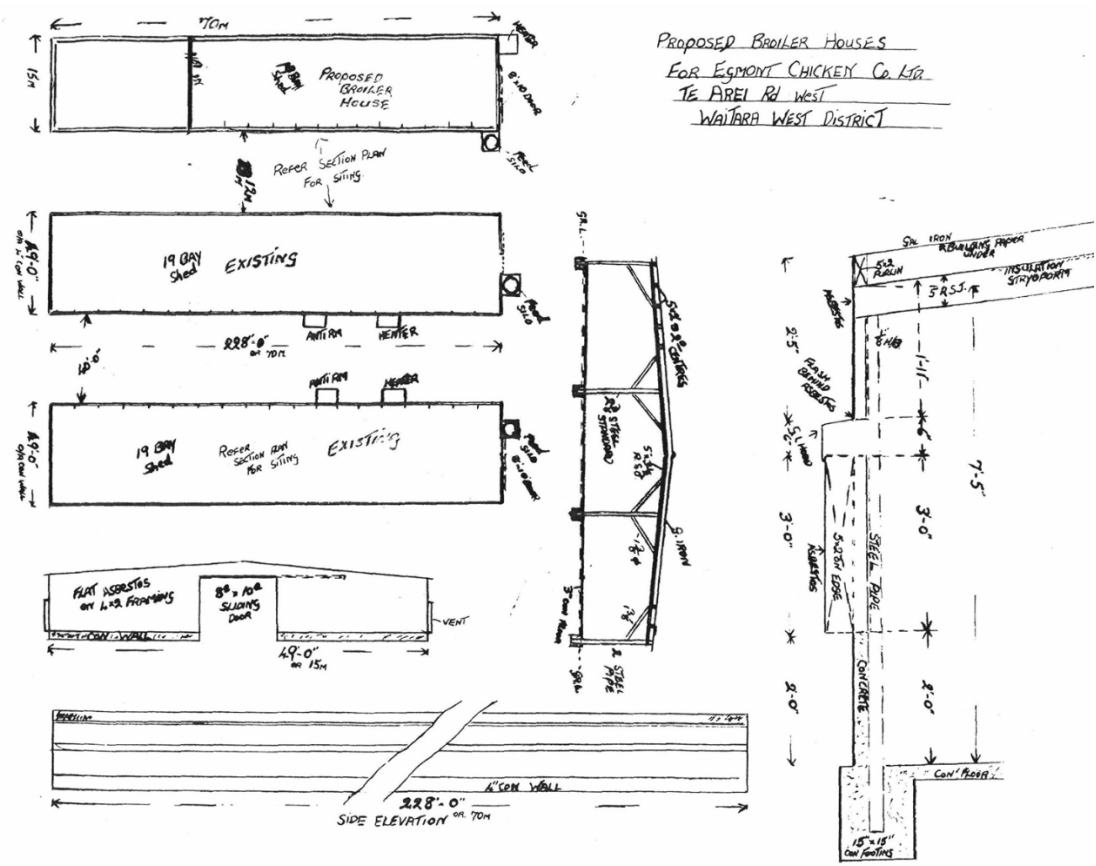
Part Operative District Plan Standard RPROZ- S2 – Minimum Structure Setbacks

RPROZ-S2	Minimum building setbacks
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> From a state highway road boundary: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> residential unit: 80m; all other buildings and structures: 30 metres. From any road boundary (excluding state highways): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> residential unit: 30m; all other buildings and structures: 20 metres. From a side boundary: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activity buildings and structures (excluding rural industry activities): 10m all other buildings and structures (including rural industry activities): 15m From established intensive indoor primary production buildings and structures: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> sensitive activities on any other site: 400m From the boundary of a site zoned as Future Urban: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> all buildings and structures: 100m. <p>This standard does not apply to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Stock loading races associated with an agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activity on site. 	<p>Matters of discretion if compliance not achieved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which building design, siting and external appearance adversely impacts on rural character and amenity. Site topography and orientation and whether the building can be more appropriately located to minimise adverse visual amenity effects or maintain, enhance or restore indigenous biodiversity values. Effect on nearby properties, including outlook, privacy, shading and sense of enclosure. The extent to which the reduction in the setback is necessary due to the shape or natural and physical features of the site. The ability to mitigate adverse effects through the use of screening, planting, landscaping and alternative design. The extent to which the reduction in setback would impact on the future ability for road widening requirements.

Proposed District Plan Standard RPROZ- S2 – Minimum Structure Setbacks



Building Elevation for Shed granted consent in 1999



Building site plan and elevation for three relocated sheds



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Appendix A – Section 32 Analysis Report – Rural Production Zone



SECTION 32 REPORT Rural Production Zone

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1 Executive Summary

Taranaki's rural environment supports much of the dairy production, intensive horticulture and rural industry. The District's built environment, such as the City and towns, are dominated by the character and scale of the rural landscape backdrop.

Rural areas are important as they form an important part of the character of the District and provide opportunities for primary production as well as offering a peri-urban lifestyle choice. This land is coming under pressure from other uses such as urban or rural residential development, or even competing rural uses such as forestry or infrastructure projects.

The issues faced by the rural area of the District have not been able to be addressed adequately through the Operative District Plan's objectives and policies or using an 'effects-based' approach to standards to control the activity status. Similarly, rural land use standards are struggling to achieve the overall Operative District objective of ensuring activities do not adversely affect existing activities or the values of the rural area, both in an environmental and amenity sense.

The key resource management issues of the Rural Production zone are:

- Evolution of land use activities in terms of scale and nature of activities, including dairy and poultry farming.
- Degradation of rural amenity and character.
- Increased potential for reverse sensitivity between rural based activities and residential or other more sensitive rural based activities.
- Loss of rural land suitable for production, including land between existing settlements, for urbanisation and the continued demand for lifestyle blocks and rural residential development.
- Increasing demand for urban type services in the rural environment such as refuse collection, stormwater, wastewater and water supply.
- Rural landscapes being visually altered by structures such as dwellings, and associated buildings in close proximity - sometimes resulting in an urban type environment.

The key changes from the Operative District Plan include:

- Objectives and policies that achieve the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 and provide a clear statement of intent that defines the expectations for the District's rural area and provides certainty for all Proposed District Plan users.
- Listing of activities that are permitted, controlled, restricted discretionary, discretionary and non-complying within the proposed Rural Production Zone as opposed to relying totally on effects-based standards to control all activities.
- Permitted, controlled, restricted discretionary and discretionary activities are subject to both effects standards and the relevant Overlay and District-wide rules which reflect the nature of the activity.

The proposed Rural Production Zone (RPROZ) provisions aim to protect the character and amenity of the rural area of the District, in conjunction with specific provisions relating to such environments that apply District-wide, while allowing for a variety of rural activities and industries subject to specific standards being met.

2 Introduction and Purpose

This report contains an evaluation under section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) in regard to the Rural Production Zone (RPROZ) objectives, policies and methods in the Proposed New Plymouth District Plan (Proposed District Plan). It should be read in conjunction with the section 32 Overview Report which contains further information and evaluation about the overall approach and direction of the Operative District Plan's review and the Proposed District Plan itself.

Taranaki's rural environment encompasses four distinct types of land (volcanic, ring plain, marine terraces and coastal) with a wide range of topography, land uses and activities. The ring plain, of which a significant area encompasses New Plymouth District, contains rich and fertile soil supporting much of the dairy production, but also intensive horticulture and rural industry. The District's built environment, such as the City and towns, are dominated by the character and scale of the rural landscape backdrop.

Rural areas are important to the District, not only do they form an important part of the character of the District, but they provide opportunities for primary production as well as offering a peri-urban lifestyle choice. This land is coming under pressure from other uses such as urban or rural residential development, or even competing rural uses such as forestry or infrastructure projects (transport, water, energy).

The report sets out the trends and issues for RPROZ, provides an overview of the statutory and policy context, and specific consultation on this topic. The report also includes a review of the existing Plan provisions and evaluation of alternatives to determine the most appropriate way(s) to achieve the purpose of the Act in relation to RPROZ.

Given the integrated nature of the Proposed District Plan all of the Part 2: District Wide Matters are applicable to the RPROZ. However the Energy, Subdivision and Transport chapters are especially relevant, together with the Future Urban Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zones which also manage development or subdivision of a property in the rural environment. The evaluation for these sections are set out in the section 32 evaluation report specific to each topic.

3 Statutory and Policy Context

3.1 Resource Management Act

The RMA sets out in section 31 the functions of territorial authorities. The key function for the Council is the integrated management of the use, development, or protection of land and associated natural and physical resources of the District. "*Natural and physical resources*" includes natural landforms and the existing facilities, buildings and structures, in the rural area.

In carrying out a section 32 analysis, an evaluation is required of how the proposal achieves the purpose and principles contained in Part 2 of the RMA. Section 5 sets out the purpose of the RMA, which is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

Sustainable management means managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources to enable people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety, while:

- a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations.
- b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems.
- c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

In achieving this purpose, councils also need to recognise and provide for the matters of national importance identified in section 6, have particular regard to other matters referred to in section 7 and take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi referred to in section 8.

Section 6 of the RMA specifically requires that the New Plymouth District Council (Council) recognise and provide for matters of national importance. In carrying out its RMA duties, the Council is required to recognise and provide for:

- The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. (section 6a of the RMA).
- The relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga (section 6e of the RMA).

Section 7 of the RMA requires the Council to have particular regard to the following matters:

- (a) *Kaitiakitanga.*
- (b) *the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources.*
- (c) *the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.*
- (d) *intrinsic values of ecosystems.*
- (f) *maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.*
- (g) *any finite characteristics of natural and physical resources.*

The rural land of the District generally provides an open, rural backdrop to Mount Taranaki and the Pouakai Range, the regional coastline and the settlements within the District, including New Plymouth City. Parts of the rural landscape have been recognised as being important to the District's overall amenity. Maintenance of this resource is in accordance with the Council's duties, in carrying out its policy making function, to have regard to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values (section 7c) and the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment (section 7f).

The District's productive soils form part of a valuable resource for primary production and the wider economy of Taranaki. The management of this resource is in accordance with the Council's duties under the RMA for achieving the sustainable management purpose of the Act. As part of this policy approach particular regard also needs to be had to the finite nature of the rural land resource (section 7g).

Section 8 of the RMA requires the Council to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi). Consistent with the practice followed in the

development of the Proposed District Plan, the section 8 principle of most relevance to this topic is the duty to make informed decisions through consultation. Tangata whenua, through iwi authorities have been consulted as part of the review process and the obligation to make informed decisions based on that consultation is noted. All of the above matters are relevant when considering the rural issues and ensuring the ongoing operation and development of activities and facilities in this zone is achieved.

3.2 Statutory Planning Documents

The RMA requires that the Proposed District Plan give effect to any National Policy Statement (NPS).

3.2.1 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010

The purpose of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS) is to state policies in order to achieve the purpose of the RMA in relation to the coastal environment of New Zealand. Local authorities must give effect to the NZCPS through their plans and policy statements.

Most of the relevant NZCPS's objectives and policies are unique to coastal environments; however, some of the District's rural areas lie within the coastal environment. The NZCPS requires that the Council consider what form of subdivision, use and development would be appropriate in the coastal environment.

Within the Proposed District Plan these matters are primarily addressed within the Coastal Environment Chapter which applies additional provisions to some parts of the District covered by the RPROZ (refer to the section 32 for Coastal Environment). However, key relevant objectives and policies to the management of rural land within the coastal environment include:

Objective 2 which relates to preserving the natural character of the coastal environment and protect natural features and landscape values.

Objective 5 which relates to coastal hazard risks and managing existing and new development.

Objective 6 which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and their health and safety, through subdivision, use, and development, recognising that:

- *the protection of the values of the coastal environment does not preclude use and development in appropriate places and forms, and within appropriate limits; ...*
- *functionally some uses and developments can only be located on the coast or in the coastal marine area; ...*

Policy 4: Integration - Provide for the integrated management of natural and physical resources in the coastal environment, and activities that affect the coastal environment. This requires: ...

- c. *particular consideration of situations where: ...*
- iv. *land use activities affect, or are likely to affect, water quality in the coastal environment and marine ecosystems through increasing sedimentation; ...*

Policy 6: Activities in the coastal environment:

1. In relation to the coastal environment: ...

- f. consider where development that maintains the character of the existing built environment should be encouraged, and where development resulting in a change in character would be acceptable; ...*
- h. consider how adverse visual impacts of development can be avoided in areas sensitive to such effects, such as headlands and prominent ridgelines, and as far as practicable and reasonable apply controls or conditions to avoid those effects;*
- i. set back development from the coastal marine area and other water bodies, where practicable and reasonable, to protect the natural character, open space, public access and amenity values of the coastal environment; ...*

Policy 13: Preservation of natural character

1. To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and to protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:
 - a. avoid adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal environment with outstanding natural character; and*
 - b. avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment; ...*

Policy 15: Natural features and natural landscapes - To protect the natural features and natural landscapes (including seascapes) of the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:

- a. avoid adverse effects of activities on outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes in the coastal environment; and*
- b. avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy, or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on other natural features and natural landscapes in the coastal environment; ...*

Policy 25: Subdivision, use, and development in areas of coastal hazard risk - In areas potentially affected by coastal hazards over at least the next 100 years: ...

- b. avoid redevelopment, or change in land use, that would increase the risk of adverse effects from coastal hazards;*
- c. encourage redevelopment, or change in land use, where that would reduce the risk of adverse effects from coastal hazards, including managed retreat by relocation or removal of existing structures or their abandonment in extreme circumstances, and designing for relocatability or recoverability from hazard events; ...*

As noted above, the NZCPS objectives and policies are given effect to in the Coastal Environment, Natural Hazards, and Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes chapters of the Proposed District Plan.

3.2.2 National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008

The National Policy Statement for Electricity Transmission 2008 (NPSET) was developed to recognise the national significance of the electricity transmission network, while managing the network's environmental effects and the adverse effects of other activities on the network.

The NPSET includes one objective:

To recognise the national significance of the electricity transmission network by facilitating the operation, maintenance and upgrade of the existing transmission network and the establishment of new transmission resources to meet the needs of present and future generations, while:

- *managing the adverse environmental effects of the network; and*
- *managing the adverse effects of other activities on the network.*

To implement the objective, the NPSET contains 14 policies:

- Policy 1 directs decision-makers to recognise and provide for the benefits of electricity transmission at national, regional and local levels.
- Policies 2 - 9 guide the management of the environmental effects of transmission.
- Policies 10 and 11 seek that decision-makers and local authorities manage adverse effects on the transmission network which may result from third parties. Policy 10 of the NPSET sets out:

In achieving the purpose of the Act [RMA], decision-makers must to the extent reasonably possible manage activities to avoid reverse sensitivity effects on the electricity transmission network and to ensure that operation, maintenance, upgrading, and development of the electricity transmission network is not compromised.

Policy 11 is as follows:

Local authorities must consult with the operator of the national grid, to identify an appropriate buffer corridor within which it can be expected that sensitive activities will generally not be provided for in plans and/or given resource consent. To assist local authorities to identify these corridors, they may request the operator of the national grid to provide local authorities with its medium to long-term plans for the alteration or upgrading of each affected section of the national grid (so as to facilitate the long-term strategic planning of the grid).

- Policy 12 requires district councils to identify the electricity network on their planning maps.
- Policy 13 requires decision makers to recognise the designation process as facilitating long-term planning of the infrastructure.
- Policy 14 is directed towards regional councils.

3.2.3 National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011

The National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation 2011 (NPSREG) contains one objective and 13 policies to enable the sustainable management of renewable electricity generation under RMA.

Broadly, the NPSREG directs decision-makers to recognise the benefits of renewable electricity generation and provide for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing infrastructure through the integration of provisions in regional policy statements and any regional or district plan.

There are two matters of national significance to which the NPSREG applies, being:

- the need to develop, operate, maintain and upgrade renewable electricity generation activities throughout New Zealand; and
- the benefits of renewable electricity generation.

The NPSREG's sole objective is:

"To recognise the national significance of renewable electricity generation activities by providing for the development, operation, maintenance and upgrading of new and existing renewable electricity generation activities, such that the proportion of New Zealand's electricity generated from renewable energy sources increases to a level that meets or exceeds the New Zealand Government's national target for renewable electricity generation."

3.2.4 National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2017

The NPS for Freshwater Management directs regional councils to set objectives for the state of fresh water bodies in their regions and to set limits on resource use to meet these objectives. Within the Proposed District Plan these matters are primarily addressed within the Waterbodies Chapter which applies additional provisions to some parts of the District covered by the RPROZ (refer to the section 32 for Waterbodies).

3.2.5 National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity 2016

The NPS for Urban Development Capacity recognises that urban environments develop and change and therefore so to do the needs of the people and communities. To meet these future needs, the NPS for Urban Development Capacity requires Council's to have more robust and specific information on supply and demand of land in their areas to ensure there is sufficient land. Within the Proposed District Plan these matters are primarily addressed within the Future Urban Zone Chapter and the Residential Zone chapters (refer to the relevant section 32)

3.2.6 National Planning Standards.

Released in April 2019, the purpose of the National Planning Standards (planning standards) is to improve consistency in plan and policy statement structure, format and content.

The standards were introduced as part of the 2017 amendments to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). Their development is enabled by sections 58B–58J of the RMA. They support implementation of other national direction such as national policy statements and help people to comply with the procedural principles of the RMA.

As discussed in the Overview Report, the Proposed District Plan will give effect to the planning standards. Of particular relevance is the application of the planning template 'Rural Production Zone'. This zone also uses the standardised definitions commonly associated for rural focused provisions such as Primary production, Rural industry, Intensive indoor primary production, Quarry, Quarry activities etc. See Section 7.6 of this report for further details.

3.2.7 National Environmental Standards (NES)

NESs are regulations that prescribe technical standards, methods or requirements for environmental matters so as to ensure a consistent standard for an activity or resource use. While the NES' are relevant to the RPROZ most are primarily addressed within other specific chapters of the Proposed District Plan; and consequently other section 32 reports.

3.3 Regional Policy Statement

Under Section 75(3)(c) of the RMA, the District Plan must give effect to the Regional Policy Statement. The Taranaki Regional Policy Statement 2010 (RPS) promotes the sustainable management of the Region's natural and physical resources and identifies the resource management issues facing the Region. It sets out objectives and policies to address those issues and to achieve the integrated management of resources across the Region.

The contents of the TRPS are very broad in scope and contain no specific provisions for the rural environment or activities, but there are related elements in policy direction, such as the use and development of resources, air quality and the appropriate use of minerals; all of which are applicable to the RPROZ. The key directions from the RPS for the Proposed District Plan are as follows:

- a) Resource use and development is important for the economy, and for social and cultural wellbeing.
- b) Managing adverse effects on the natural character of the coast of subdivision, use, development and occupation.
- c) Sustainable land use to address accelerated erosion on erosion-prone land with a particular focus on the hill and the coastal sand country.
- d) Enable appropriate use and development of mineral resources (including aggregate) while avoiding, remedying and mitigating adverse effects.
- e) Maintaining healthy soils and managing the potential effects of intensive land use on soil compaction, nutrient depletion and residual soil contamination.
- f) Avoid adverse reverse sensitivity effects of incompatible activities establishing close to mineral extraction or other legitimate rural land use activities which may discharge contaminants into the air.
- g) A District Plan may include methods such as rules and standards to manage the effects of mineral extraction, and potential reverse sensitivity effects on legitimate rural land use activities.

The RPROZ has been prepared to give effect to the RPS. While some of the rules sit within the RPROZ itself, there are also rules contained within other chapters of the Proposed District Plan which are relevant to the implementation of the RPS in the District's rural areas.

3.4 Regional Plans

Section 75(4)(b) of the RMA states that any District Plan must "*not be inconsistent with*" a regional plan for any matter stated in s30(1) (functions of regional councils, including the avoidance or mitigation of natural hazards).

The following matters within each of the four Regional Plans has been considered when developing the RPROZ, given this the RPROZ is considered to be consistent with all four Regional Plans. As with the TRPS, while some of these rules sit within the RPROZ itself, there are also rules contained within other chapters of the Proposed District Plan.

3.4.1 Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki 2011 (RAQP)

The RAQP contains provisions that address the discharge of contaminants to air, including discharges to air of agrichemicals and of contaminants arising from the burning of vegetation on production land and forested land. It also contains

management practice guidelines for intensive pig or poultry farming, agrichemical spraying and the burning of vegetation.

3.4.2 Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki 1997 (RCP)

The RCP identifies four management areas for the coastal marine area in Taranaki:

- Areas of outstanding coastal value.
- Estuaries.
- Open coast.
- Port Taranaki.

The RCP contains rules that address the adverse effects of structures, discharges, the disturbance of or deposits to the foreshore and seabed and reclamations, along with general rules applying to all areas.

It is noted that the Proposed RCP was notified on 24th February 2018 with submissions closing on 27th April and further submissions on 4th August 2018. Submissions have been evaluated and TRC and a hearing held to further clarify issues and concerns of submitters. It is acknowledged that this document has legal weight under the RMA, and has been taken into account in the consideration of the Rural Production Zone provisions.

3.4.3 Regional Fresh Water Plan for Taranaki 2001 (RFPW)

The RFPW contains provisions that address activities involving the use of water, including point and diffuse source discharges to land and water, the construction of bores and wells, land drainage and the protection of wetlands. Guidelines on the treatment and disposal of agriculture effluent, the spraying of agrichemicals and the construction of groundwater bores and wells are contained within the RFPW.

3.4.4 Regional Soil Plan for Taranaki 2001 (RSP)

The RSP addresses accelerated erosion and soil health, in particular vegetation clearance on erosion prone land is permitted, subject to conditions that aim to minimise adverse environmental effects associated with the clearance of vegetation.

3.5 Iwi Environmental Management Plans

For the purposes of the District Plan Review, Iwi Environmental Management Plans must be taken into account under section 74(2A) of the RMA.

3.5.1 Taiao, Taiora: An Iwi Environmental Management Plan for the Taranaki Rohe (2018).

In July 2018 Te Kāhui o Taranaki Iwi launched Taiao, Taiora – the Taranaki Iwi rohe Management Plan (Taiao, Taiora). Endorsed by Te Kāhui o Taranaki (iwi authority), Taiao, Taiora is based on the values and principles of Taranaki Iwi and provides guidance to Taranaki's regional and local authorities for changes, reviews and development of district and regional plans and statements. Sections within Taiao, Taiora are structured with reference to atua Māori along with specific objectives and policies for each of the Take Matua that interconnect and, in places, overlap with each other.

Taiao, Taiora is a living document and describes and details some of Taranaki Iwi whakaaro and approaches to caring for their environment.

The 'Take Matua' section of Taiao, Taiora contains the Objectives, Issues and Policies associated with each atua (the mouna, whenua, plants, air, freshwater, and coastal water) in the rohe, which are interconnected by natural processes and should be considered together.

The section on Papatuanuku (the land) includes the following relevant issue and objective:

Issue 9.

Poorly designed subdivision and development can lead to unsustainable and inefficient land use, destruction of wāhi tapu and other important sites ...

Objective 5.

The whenua will be cared for by Taranaki Iwi and others for mutual, reciprocal benefit for the whole community. Taranaki Iwi are seen as leaders in sustainable living and sustainable land management on our whenua;

Taiao, Taiora clearly states that the Taranaki Iwi will not support any subdivision and development that adversely impacts the important cultural values associated with landscapes of importance to Taranaki Iwi (hapū, marae/pā). Taiao, Taiora has been taken into account in the review of the rural environment for the district and incorporated into the provisions for the RPROZ.

The following Iwi Management Plans are in various stages of preparation and have been considered in the preparation of this report:

3.5.2 Ko Tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao, the Maniapoto Iwi Environmental Management Plan (2016).

Ko Tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao (Draft) outlines the iwi's vision for environmental sustainability. The Plan describes issues, objectives, policies and actions, to protect, restore and enhance the relationship of Maniapoto with the environment; and also the social, cultural, spiritual and economic relationships. The Plan includes:

- Avoidance of activities and uses that adversely affect significant cultural, spiritual, natural and ecological landscapes, features or locations in the Maniapoto rohe, and Maniapoto relationships with those landscapes, features or locations are maintained or restored (policy 19.3.2.1).
- Maniapoto Cultural Heritage (Part 10) which outlines the protection and management of Maniapoto cultural heritage, including taonga (something treasured, including but not limited to waterways, native flora and fauna, plants, trees and animals, wetlands, natural resources, places and landscapes).

3.5.3 Ngati Mutunga Iwi Environmental Management Plan (2016 update). Final draft provided; still under revision.

Ngati Mutunga Iwi Environmental Management Plan has a goal to provide for sustainable management of the environment for the social, cultural, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the iwi. The Plan includes a section on Whenua Mania which relates to the protection of cultural values, as follows:

Issues:

3. *Impact of development on or near wāhi tapu and sites of significance and remaining indigenous vegetation*

4. Cumulative effects of subdivision and changing land use

Objective: To encourage well planned development that avoids adverse effects on our cultural values, protects the environment and provides a great quality of life for everyone – now and in the future.

3.5.4 Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa, 2019, Tai Whenua, Tai Tangata, Tai Ao: Te Atiawa Iwi Environmental Management Plan. Council has provided comments on the Draft.

Tai Whenua, Tai Tangata, Tai Ao – Te Atiawa is a document for Te Atiawa Iwi reaffirming the iwi's role as kaitiaki. Its secondary role is to guide and assist councils and other agencies in understanding issues of significance to Te Atiawa. It sets out the iwi's framework for engagement, guiding principles and issues and objectives relating to eight domains; guardianship; inland and coastal whenua; freshwater; coastal and marine environment; air and atmosphere; flora and fauna; wahi taonga, urupa and sites of significance to maori; Taranaki maunga. The section on inland and coastal whenua includes the following Issue, Objectives and Policy:

Issue TTAN4: Inappropriate subdivision and development can generate adverse effects on Te Atiawa values.

Objective TTAN4.2: Acknowledge and provide for Te Atiawa values and the expressions of our narrative in the built form and landscaping.

Objective TTAN4.4: Acknowledge and provide for Te Atiawa cultural landscapes in the built design to connect and deepen our 'sense of place'.

Policy TTAN4.2 Require regional council and district councils to consider cumulative effects and future land uses when assessing applications to subdivide.

Policy TTAN4.3 Require regional council and district councils to engage at Plan Change stage, where plan changes are required to enable subdivision, to identify potential effects on wāhi tapu/wāhi taonga, urupā and sites of significance to Māori and Te Atiawa cultural values.

Policy TTAN4.15 Encourage retaining the natural landform and topography within the subdivision.

Policy TTAN4.16 Encourage and support Te Atiawa, as a property developer, to set the highest possible standard of best practice for residential land developments in the rohe.

Tai Whenua Tai Tangata, Tai Ao Te Atiawa iwi Environmental Management Plan 2019 clearly states that the Te Kotahitanga O Te Atiawa Taranaki Iwi will not support any subdivision and development that adversely impacts the important cultural values associated with landscapes of importance to Te Atiawa (hapū, marae/pā). Tai Ao Te Atiawa has been taken into account in the review of the rural environment and incorporated into the provisions for RPROZ.

Council's Ngā Kaitiaki group have also provided input into the development of the Proposed District Plan.

3.6 Other Legislation and Policy Documents

Other pieces of legislation and regulations that are relevant to the RPROZ and have been considered in preparing this Proposed District Plan, include the:

- Council's Bylaws under the Local Government Act 2002 (and the Local Government Act 1974 where it remains in force).
- Forests Act 1949

Part 8 of the Local Government Act 2002 provides Councils with a number of powers, including bylaw making, enforcement and development contribution powers. The option of a bylaw is considered in the evaluation below for some issues.

The Forests Act 1949 covers the promotion of sustainable forest management of indigenous forest land and controls the harvesting of indigenous forests for timber production and the export of indigenous forest produce.

3.7 Local Policies, Plans and Strategies

3.7.1 New Plymouth District Strategic Framework

The vision for the New Plymouth Strategic Framework is Building a Lifestyle capital (He Whakatutu Haupū Rawa Hei Ahua Noho). The community outcomes this will achieve are: Putting people first (Aroha kit e Tangata), Caring for our place (Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua) and Supporting a prosperous community (Awhi mai, Wahi atu, tatou katoa).

3.7.2 New Plymouth District Council Blueprint (Blueprint)

The Blueprint is a 30-year spatial plan for the district first adopted in June 2015. Some of the key directions and associated high-level initiatives in the Blueprint are relevant to the RPROZ and were considered during the review of the provisions. These are:

- Nature – enhance the natural environment with biodiversity links and clean waterways.
- Citizens – enable engaged and resilient citizens.
- Economy – secure and strengthen the rural economy, industry, the port and airport.
- Destination – become a world class destination.

3.7.3 Regional Economic Development – Tapuae Roa

Tapuae Roa–Make Way for Taranaki: *Taranaki Regional Economic Development Strategy*, August 2017 (Tapuae Roa) is a culmination of work undertaken by the district councils and regional council of Taranaki in partnership with Ngā Iwi o Taranaki. It is designed to feed into the Long-Term Plans of all the councils in the region, and influence public and private sector investment decision-making on future activities.

Tapuae Roa recognises that the foundation of the region's economy is commodity-based with a strong agricultural and energy sector presence and anticipates incremental growth in these areas.

3.7.4 The Egmont National Park Management Plan 2002-2012

The Egmont National Park Management Plan (ENPMP) is a statutory document providing direction for the preservation of the Egmont National Park (National Park) through a framework of policy, objectives and a series of actions.

Land adjacent to the National Park is managed to protect and enhance the natural, historic and landscape values of the National Park. Goal 2.2.4 of the ENPMP relating to the environment surrounding the National Park seeks to recognise the park's importance for sustaining natural systems for the people of Taranaki. While recognising that the surrounding landscape is not part of the National Park, the sympathetic management of this is seen as a means to help protect and enhance many of the National Park's values.

Policy 3.2.1.4 of the ENPMP identifies that the Department of Conservation will seek enforcement of existing legislation on all land containing goats within close proximity of the National Park to prevent reinvasion. The legislation to be enforced includes the Fencing Act 1978, Animal Identification Act 1993, Wild Animal Control Act 1977, Conservation Act 1987, Biosecurity Act 1993, Impounding Act 1955 and Wildlife Act 1953. In addition, it is noted that the Department of Conservation will investigate other avenues for protection, including provisions in District Plans.

3.7.5 Proposed Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan for Taranaki 2018-2023 (Proposed CDEMP)

Submissions on the Proposed CDEMP closed on February 12th, 2018. The Proposed CDEMP, among other matters, provides information on the hazards and risks in Taranaki. The significance of dairy farms, poultry, forestry, Manuka honey, and hemp production within the rural environment is recognised along with the impact economically, physically, and long-term of events, such as floods, on these industries.

3.7.6 The New Plymouth Coastal Strategy 2006 (Coastal Strategy)

The Coastal Strategy is a vision of "New Plymouth District's coast ... A prosperous, growing coastal community, balancing the needs of people and environment within our high energy untamed coast." Of key relevance to the RPROZ in relation to the Coastal Strategy are three of the eight key strategic directions in the Coastal Strategy for the coastal environment, being:

- Economic Development: Encourage sustainable economic growth that is based on dominant productive factors such as high-quality arable land, a conducive growing climate, natural resources and high-quality living environment.
- Coastal Hazards: Avoid hazard areas, protect natural buffers and take a sustainable approach to hazards and risk to create more informed, resilient and secure coastal communities.
- Environment: Protect and enhance the natural environment and outstanding landscape values whilst providing for appropriate growth and development.

4 Context, Research and Trends

4.1 Operative District Plan Approach

4.1.1 Context

Some parts of the rural environment have experienced greater change or challenges compared with other environments in the District.

The District's rural-urban fringe has been subject to change in more recent times through urban growth (Plan Changes have addressed this through implementation of 'future urban growth areas') and its role in contributing towards the urban area. Urban expansion has changed the character of the rural areas near to the urban boundaries

and has also increased land values, diminished access to productive soils for rural land use activities and elevated the potential for reverse sensitivity conflicts.

Alongside urban growth has been the demand and general desire to enjoy the amenity of a rural area in close proximity to the City and towns/settlements of the District. This demand is likely to continue even if at a slower rate. Continued lifestyle development in the rural environment will lead to further fragmentation of rural land, increased potential for reverse sensitivity limiting the ability for rural production activities to occur and changing character to be more urban.

There has also been growth in the range of productive land use activities in the rural areas of the District which have challenged integration within the areas of 'traditional' dairy and dry-stock farming activities. Examples include extractive industry (quarries), petroleum exploration, poultry farming and forestry.

4.1.2 Operative Plan Provisions

To determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the current provisions in the Operative District Plan, a review of the objectives, policies, rules and standards was undertaken. A summary of the key findings from this review is set out below.

The Operative District Plan contains a chapter of provisions (objectives, policies, rules) specific to the Rural Zone (Rural Environment Area). The objectives and policies for the Rural Zone are principally identified in two key sections under *Amenity, Health and Safety* topics. In addition, the objectives and policies for *Natural Hazards* and *Traffic and Transport* are considered and applied to land use and subdivision in the Rural Zone. The key objectives can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure activities do not adversely affect the environmental and amenity values of areas within the district or adversely affect existing activities (Objective 1).
- To ensure the subdivision, use and development of land maintains the elements of rural character (Objective 4).
- To preserve and enhance the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins (Objective 14).
- To protect and enhance outstanding landscapes and regionally significant landscapes within the district (Objective 15).

Presently these objectives are achieved through an effects-based policy and regulatory regime, meaning that activities are permitted under the Operative District Plan provided that they meet the appropriate standards in the Operative District Plan. In summary, applicable rules and standards in the Rural Zone provide for:

- Erection of building and structures, subject to height, daylighting and setback etc requirements
- Signage, subject to height, size and locational requirements
- Earthworks subject to excavation, fill and locational requirements
- Hazardous Substances subject to setbacks, locational and effects ratio requirements
- Outdoor storage subject to bulk and locational requirements
- Lighting subject to locational and emission requirements
- Noise subject to specific environment area, constrictions, wind turbine, helicopter, emergency services, temporary event noise requirements

- Traffic and transport subject to locational thresholds/vehicle equivalent movements and landscaping/requirements.
- Temporary events subject to durational, environment area, noise emission and other requirements

4.1.3 Plan Change 27

Plan Change 27 to the Operative District Plan was made operative on 18 January 2012.

This Plan Change involved a complete review of the provisions relating to subdivision and land use within the Rural Environment Area so as to maintain rural character by strengthening the policy context in respect of Issue 4, *'Loss or reduction of rural amenity and character'*, and related objective, policies and associated rules to control scale, location, density and design. The inability to maintain the District's rural character was realised through an increase in the more intensive rural-residential development, commercial or industrial use and activities that had not always located in the rural environment. The loss of spaciousness, an altered building environment and a reduced pleasantness, together with the additional infrastructure and servicing demands, were being experienced within the District's rural environment.

The main changes from Plan Change 27 to the Operative District Plan related to both subdivision and land-use provisions. The following reflects the main changes to the Operative District Plan as a result of Plan Change 27 in respect of the land use provisions:

- The ability to provide two habitable buildings (dwellings) per allotment, whilst retained, applied more restrictive standards to both the size and location of such habitable buildings in relation to each other, except on larger rural allotments, where a 20-hectare site per habitable building was available.
- Road setback standards applied to all lots in the Rural Environment Area and the minimum side boundary setback increased.
- Provisions relating to maintaining rural character critically reviewed.
- Controls included or modified to limit the development of non-rural based activities that have effects on rural character, including a review of traffic generation.

Amongst other things, the Plan Change also introduced a non-regulatory Rural Design Guide as a reference document to help guide subdivision and development in rural areas.

4.2 Other Methods

In addition to the Operative District Plan regulatory approach, the Council uses the following other methods in relation to managing the effects of land use.

4.2.1 New Plymouth Rural Subdivision and Development Design Guidelines (May 2012)

A non-regulatory Rural Design Guide is also available on the Council's website to help guide subdivision and other development in the rural areas.

The Rural Design Guidelines encourage people to consider the wider environmental impacts of their projects. The design guidelines cover matters such as land types, sensitive landscapes, rural character, rural design considerations, design and layout, building location, landscaping and vegetation, and servicing. These guidelines do not have statutory weight under the Operative District Plan but instead provide guidance on subdivision design and layout in the Rural Environment.

4.2.2 New Zealand Technical Standards

NZS4404 Land Development and Subdivision Infrastructure (and NPDC Local Amendments) provides local authorities and developers with criteria for design and construction of land development and subdivision infrastructure, including earthworks and geotechnical requirements and incorporates up-to-date design principles such as low impact design principles.

4.3 State of the Environment

4.3.1 Key Characteristics of the Rural Environment of the District

The rural environment of the District is reflective of several land use types, with the dominant land use in terms of land area being dairy farming. Other types of farming within the District are horticulture and pig and sheep farming.

In the last 5-6 years, the growth of poultry farms within the western area of the District has occurred rapidly and of a scale 2-3 times that experienced in the District historically. Poultry farms tend to locate in areas that are relatively flat due to the scale of buildings and structures associated with the activity. Discharges to air are the main effect associated with chicken farms, which are controlled by the TRC.

The oil and gas industry operate throughout the rural area and, in many cases, cluster in particular areas. The larger, established, sites in the rural area (e.g. Motonui and Pohokura) are strategically located to service existing on and off shore operations. In terms of smaller scale exploration and production activities there are a number of existing sites in the District that are currently active and operating at different levels of intensity. This industry is specifically addressed in the Energy Chapter of the Proposed District Plan.

The quarry industry continues to operate throughout the District with a heavy presence in rural areas. There are a number of quarry activities that also occur as part of traditional farming activities, while other established standalone quarries that operate in specific locations throughout the District.

There are some non-rural land uses locating in the rural areas including, commercial and industrial activities. Some of these land uses directly service the surrounding rural community, while others have located in the rural area due to the large sites that are available, more economically viable and attractive, and other strategic location reasons (e.g. close to transport networks).

In the late 1990s the District saw a shift in subdivision trends resulting in a high demand for more lifestyle properties in the Rural Environment. This subsequently led to a demand for increased housing in these areas that was not typically associated with traditional rural practices, resulting in a reduction in rural character and amenity.

While Plan Change 27 had some effect in 'slowing down' the rate of change, some parts of the rural area have subsequently undergone change, including areas where development is now predominantly residential or lifestyle in nature. Together with this, there remains a concern, both within the rural community and for infrastructure providers that the cumulative effects, land use conflict, and reverse sensitivity of land use and development are still not able to be adequately considered and are continuing to impact on rural character.

4.3.2 Land use management

A key observation under the Operative District Plan has been the evolution of land use activities in terms of scale and nature of non-rural and non-productive activities and some rural activities, including dairy and poultry farming, that have led to the inability to manage diversity and subsequently the effects on the rural environment, including reverse sensitivity and conflicts between land uses or out of zone activities.

The result has been a varying range of non-rural activities located in rural environment as the Operative District Plan 'enables' activities and development to occur as the 'effects based' objectives and policies often rely on the 'character' of the receiving environment, as opposed to a list of activities or description of environmental outcomes as a baseline against which to measure whether adverse effects are appropriate or not. As varying activities have established within the environment, including those not anticipated at the time the Operative District Plan was developed, the environment has changed in places causing, in some cases, conflicts between activities.

For example, some industrial type activities (truck depots and storage units) have located in the rural environment where roading links are accessible, land is reasonably priced and the effects-based nature of the District Plan has enabled this to occur. The establishment of these types of activities creates unanticipated adverse effects on the character and amenity of the rural landscape through heavy traffic movements, noise, increase in built form, loss of productive rural land and often reduced rural amenity.

4.3.3 Amenity and Character

The role of providing for a range of uses, the development of natural and physical resources, and the preservation of rural character and amenity values in the Operative District Plan, has led to imbalance in some rural areas. Since the 1990s traditional rural activities have increased in scale and whilst located in the right zone for the type of activities, sometimes they have been inadequately guided and/or managed on scale/location through performance standards to maintain amenity.

The District Plan rural environment is managed through Issue 4 and the relevant objectives and policies. This issue is all around maintaining rural character. Rural character is defined in the district plan as

"The elements that make an area 'rural' rather than 'urban'. Rural areas are typically distinguished by a dominance of openness and rural practices over manmade structures not related to the primary use. Rural character includes the key elements of spaciousness, low density, vegetated, production orientated, working environment, rural based industry and rural infrastructure. The elements of rural character are further defined under these categories in the reasons to issue 4".

The rural environment as a result of increased lifestyle intensification has seen the reduction in rural character which has resulted in the loss of the key elements that are identified above that define rural character. Where subdivision and or land use development is proposed to occur in locations where those elements identified above are degraded, it has been successfully argued that the rural environment in question is no longer 'rural' in character and therefore further intensification is appropriate. This has resulted in cumulative degradation of the rural environment.

4.3.4 Traffic safety issues

Implications for traffic safety effects is evident with lifestyle development intensification on rural narrow single lane roads. Single lane roads with narrow winding corners were once not a safety issue when traffic numbers were low. However, rural intensification through lifestyle development has seen traffic numbers on these rural roads compound and this has led to traffic safety and efficiency issues. These traffic safety issues are commonly identified by public to Council Officers and pressure is placed on Council to widen and improve the safety and visibility for traffic users.

In comparison to lifestyle development intensification on rural roads, activities like oil and gas activities can see a large increase in traffic volumes, particularly heavy vehicles for sometimes only a short period of time while a company is drilling for example in a particular location. The increased scale of activities resulting in larger, more frequent, truck movements on smaller rural roads have been challenging to manage, particularly where narrow, low traffic volume roads are a key element of rural amenity. Indeed, this has been reflected in the research into the resource consents trends and data. Overall, larger scale activities operating within the rural environment do not in many situations breach standards relating to bulk and location of buildings, rather the trigger related more to traffic generation associated with the vehicles servicing the activity on the site.

Where activities like oil and gas activities have triggered the need for a resource consent, Council has, in some instances, been able to impose conditions of resource consent on road widening, route selection and time of truck deliveries. The resource consent process, in this instance, has been successful in avoiding traffic and safety conflicts on these narrow low volume rural roads. However, the effects-based nature of the District Plan has meant that more often than not large scale rural or rural industry activities have been able to establish without resource consent and or a restricted discretionary activity status that has limited the ability for the Council processing planner to impose appropriate conditions on traffic safety matters.

4.3.5 Permitted baseline analysis

The permitted baseline assessment, where activities that are permitted by the District Plan are used as a baseline of potential effects against effects of a proposed activity, is used successfully frequently to obtain further subdivision and land use development within the rural environment.

The Operative District Plan permits more than one dwelling on a property for every 20ha of land area. In addition to this provision the District Plan also permits a second habitable dwelling on a site under 20ha in size if the second dwelling is within 25m of the primary dwelling and secondary dwelling is less than 75% of the gross floor area of the primary dwelling. These two provisions are intended to provide for rural activities e.g. workers cottages on rural farming properties and granny flat situations. However, these second habitable building provisions have frequently been used to allow further intensification of the rural environment. For example, an Independent Commissioner stated the following in a 2017 rural discretionary subdivision decision:

"In considering the permitted baseline factors outlined by the Environment Court I am of the view that the plan provides for a permitted activity from which a reasonable comparison of adverse effects can be undertaken, being habitable buildings. I am also satisfied that there are reasons supported by evidence and legal submissions indicating that the permitted baseline in respect of habitable buildings, should be applied.

The application of the permitted baseline in respect of the habitable building component of the proposal is not considered fanciful as two dwellings (one per 20 hectares) are permitted as of right."

This permitted baseline analysis was a key determining factor in approving this subdivision application and numerous other subdivision applications in the rural environment.

The District Plan also controls maximum area of non-habitable buildings on sites less than 4ha in area, with the permitted standard being 400m². There is no maximum area for non-habitable buildings on sites over 4ha in size. The size and scale of permitted rural buildings like large hay sheds and dairy sheds has been used in numerous occasions to argue commercial or residential buildings locating in certain places through the resource consent process using the permitted baseline argument. While, the activities end use may be quite different to the rural activities that were anticipated by the District Plan, it has been argued that a building the same scale as a permitted rural building, will have the same effects on rural character and amenity. This argument has not been used as frequently or successfully as the second dwelling permitted baseline scenario provided above, but it still on occasion has been used and been successful in obtaining resource consent for non-rural activities locating in the rural environment.

This permitted baseline assessment argument has resulted in further fragmentation of the rural landscape for primarily lifestyle development. It has also seen the establishment of incompatible activities locating in the rural environment.

4.3.6 Reverse Sensitivity and Viability of Future Industry

Incompatibility between different land uses within the rural areas has increased during the life of the Operative District Plan as a greater range of land uses, or a relative proximity between sensitive activities and uses, has given rise to nuisance effects.

A key finding of the review of the existing rural provisions, is that the Operative District Plan does not consider, with the exception of a limited number of activities, such as poultry farming, the effects resulting from reverse sensitivity prior to an activity establishing in the rural area.

Depending on the type of activity, associated building size and location, and the proximity and sensitivity of adjacent land uses, adverse effects can be experienced beyond the boundaries of the site.

The review has identified that there is a need to provide for and enable the efficient and effective functioning of 'traditional' rural activities as they contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of the District. However, there are 'traditional' rural activities that due to their nature, scale and/or intensity, are also generating adverse effects on the environment, particularly on adjacent rural dwellings and the transport network, resulting in reduced quality of the environment and incompatibility between different land uses.

Complaints give a useful indication of the issues of concern to the rural community. Complaints in rural areas of the District are predominantly related to high/intense volume of vehicles on roads, in particular large trucks and to odour effects (the latter

of which is not a matter directly monitored by the Council). Noise effects from nearby industry (petroleum and quarry) are at times also a matter of complaint.

4.3.7 Urban Growth

As highlighted in the Overview, Subdivision, Future Urban Growth and Residential Section 32 reports, demand to accommodate additional growth is placing pressure on rural land in close proximity to existing urban areas and development. In some instances, there is pressure on rural land close to the urban centres to accommodate additional growth through creation of lifestyle properties, expanding urban boundaries, and providing for other commercial (i.e. dementia home) and industrial activities.

Demand is often generated from activities which seek to complement the agricultural activities in the area, take advantage of space, utilise the rural ambience, or increase marketing profile by locating on selected high traffic routes through the rural area.

While rural subdivision can provide for economic and lifestyle opportunities, it can also negatively impact on the functioning of productive and other rural land use activities, rural character and amenity values, and create demand for services in an ad hoc manner, particularly as activities establish on these allotments. It also takes growth outside of the urban environment and creates sprawling blurred urban boundaries.

The subdivision creep and lifestyle development beyond the urban boundary leads to unsustainable long-term growth. In order to achieve a consolidated urban boundary, specific growth areas for both lifestyle and urban development need to be identified and protected to ensure the long-term protection of the rural environment for rural activities.

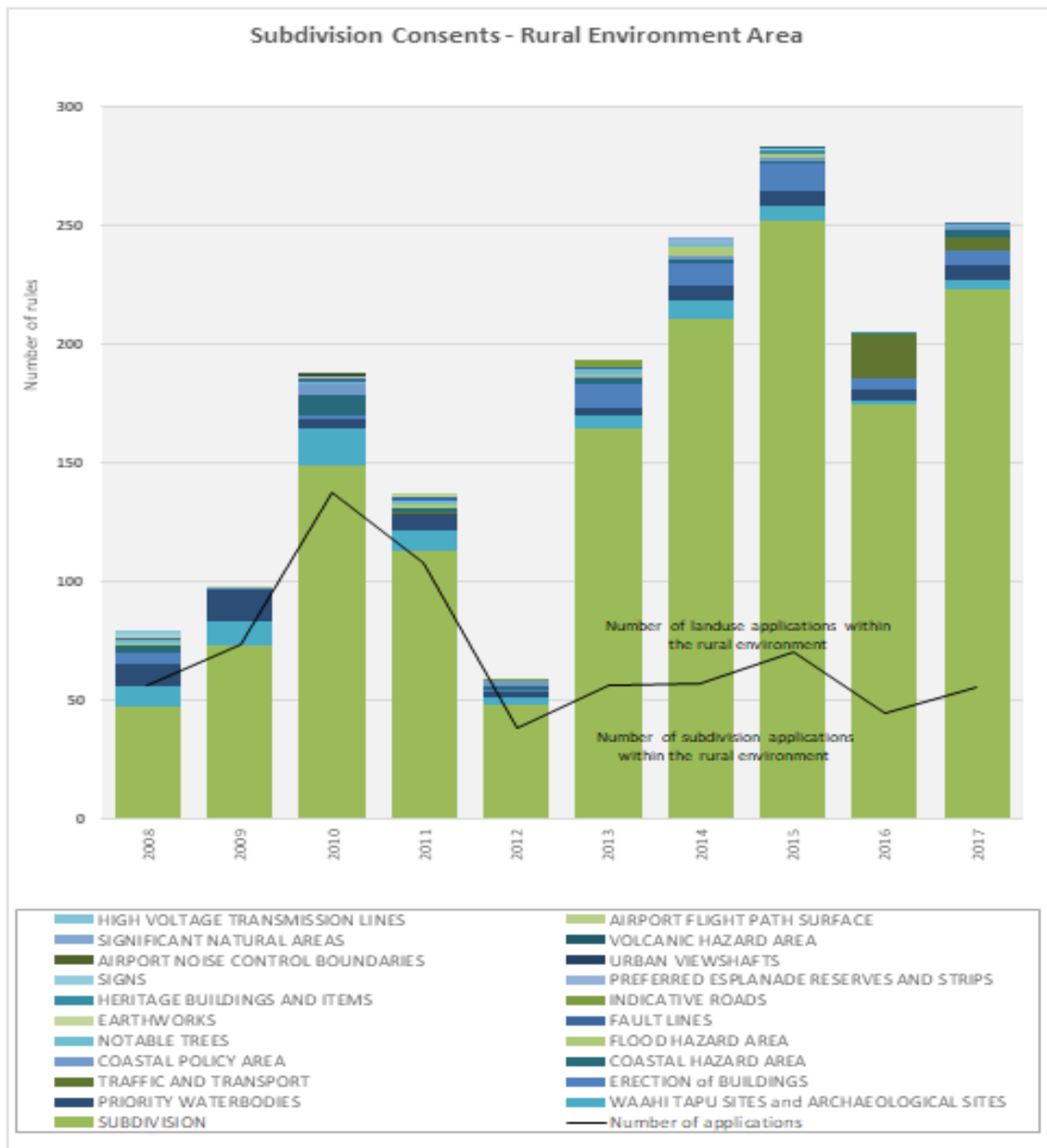
4.3.8 Landscaping and planting

Shelter belts, landscaping and hedge rows have a common place in the rural environment as they shelter prevailing winds, provide some amenity and screen activities. 'Vegetated' is an element that helps to define rural character as stated under issue 4 of the management strategy of the District Plan. However, the use of vegetation, particularly hedges and shelter belts are being used increasingly to mitigate and screen activities that are not consistent with rural character and amenity.

Assessment of effects and landscape assessments made on resource consent subdivision and land use applications frequently place a significance reliance on the ability to mitigate rural character and amenity effects of proposed activities through the use of landscaping and planting. Whilst it is accepted that planting may mitigate to a certain extent, the continued establishment of non-rural activities within the rural environment further degrades the character and amenity.

4.3.9 Resource consent trends and data

In the 10 years from 2008, applications for subdivision within the rural area have been relatively steady, with a major peak around 2010 and 2011, which can be seen in the graph below.



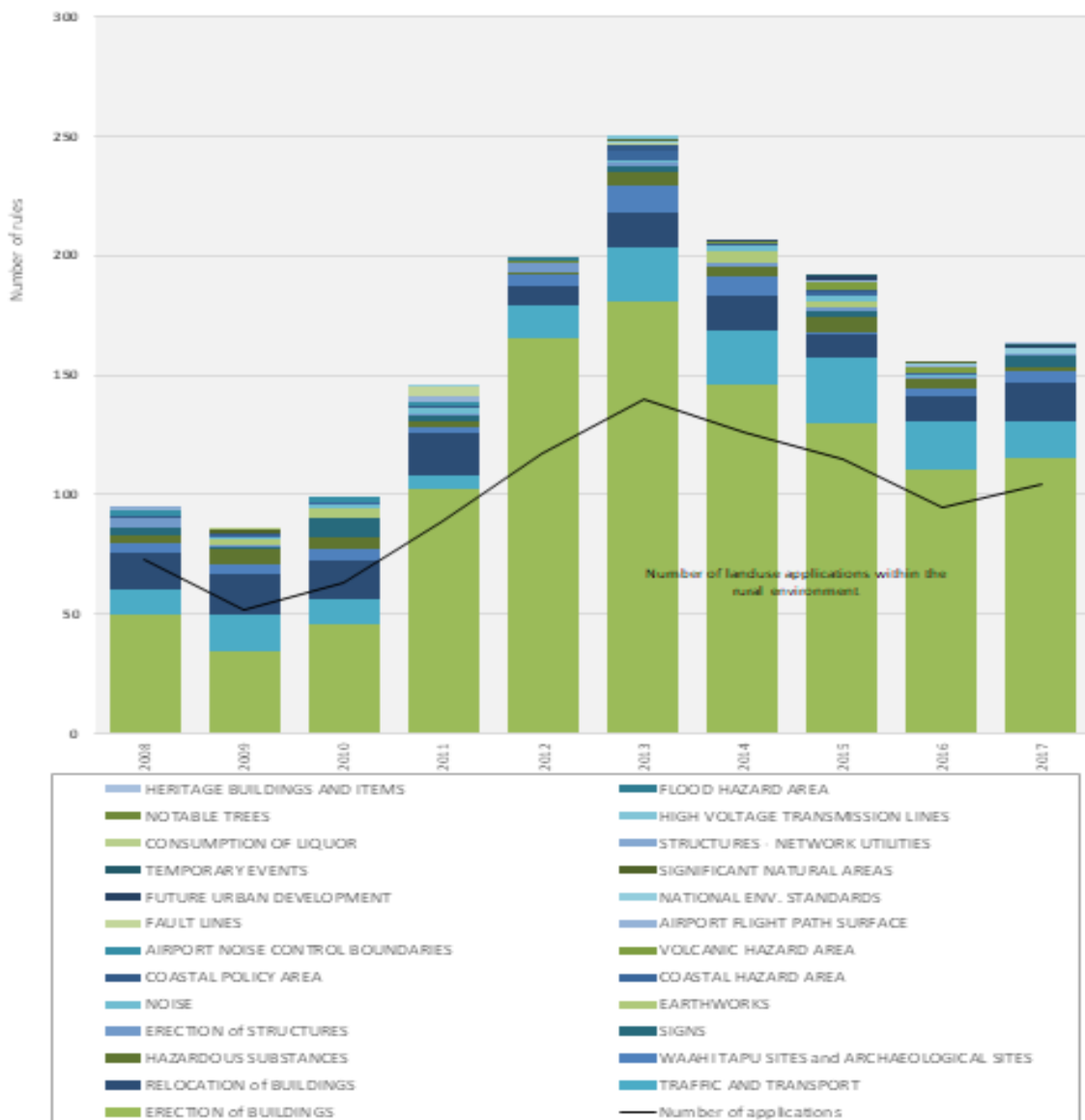
What is noted in evaluating the subdivision data, and review of subdivision applications, is the increase significantly in the 10 year period, particularly in the last 3-4 years, of the number of rules triggered per subdivision application. Of note is the trend relating to an increase in the subdivisions that related to indicative roads.

The model data above does not reflect the number of lots contained within the subdivision consents. On review of several of these applications for subdivision consents, it was found that in the majority of situations the subdivision consents related also to the establishment of new infrastructure in the form of new roads and services. Such infrastructure was necessary as the subdivisions created a significant number of residential or rural lifestyle allotments on urban fringe areas in the rural environment.

The overall trend is not specifically that rural subdivision is decreasing, rather the subdivision consents being considered by Council has entailed greater areas of land on the periphery of the urban area to enable urban growth.

In the 10 years from 2008, land use resource consent applications have steadily increased, which can be seen by the black line in the graph below.

Landuse Consents - Rural Environment Area



The high number of resource consents granted for development, erection and relocation of buildings, in the rural environment has been significant over this period time. Noting these figures represent only the number of dwellings, ancillary buildings and rural buildings that required resource consent during this period. In addition to these are those buildings that established in the rural environment that did not require resource consent. This indicates a high level of development in the rural environment. Further research of the resource consents for buildings within the rural environment indicated that such consents related predominantly to boundary setbacks, with those being in areas within rural lifestyle subdivisions or closer to the urban areas. In considering the nature of the rural environment and the activities operating, the resource consents for boundary setbacks were predominantly for habitable, and their ancillary, buildings.

4.4 Effectiveness of the Operative District Plan Approach

The face of the rural environment has changed over the life of the Operative District Plan, with various types of land use activities establishing within rural areas of the District to an intensity and scale that in some instances result in a range of adverse effects including effects on landform and the transport network as well as reverse sensitivity effects.

Objective 4 is the key objective of the Operative District Plan for the Rural Environment Area in seeking to ensure that subdivision, land use and development maintains elements of rural character.

Several policies were included in the Operative District Plan as part of Plan Change 27. For example, Policy 4.3 implements Objective 4 for land use through the control the density, scale, location (including on-site location) and design of activities, including:

- (a) Imposing a maximum height for all buildings to allow for rural uses to operate.
- (b) Providing a maximum area that can be covered by buildings to control the effects of larger scale activities on small sites.
- (c) Requiring buildings to be setback from the road boundary in order to maintain spaciousness.
- (d) Requiring buildings to be setback from the side boundary to maintain separation between buildings and related activities.

Controlling the density, height and on-site location of habitable buildings is initiated through Policy 4.4 and ensuring sensitive design elements of development in the rural area is given by design principles in Policy 4.5.

The Operative District Plan's land use provisions seek to reinforce these policies through managing the effects of development, operational components of activities and how these may have an influence on the quality of the rural community and those immediately adjoining it. The existing approach is permissive, unless standards are not met, where predominantly a resource consent for a restricted discretionary activity is required.

What is evident is that the rural land use standards are struggling to implement the overall Operative District Plan objective of ensuring activities do not adversely affect existing activities or the values of the rural area, both in an environmental and amenity sense, or adversely affect existing activities. While effective to a point, when it comes to larger scale rural/commercial/industrial activities and lifestyle subdivision there is limited regulatory stringency or policy direction to ensure environmental character and amenity are not adversely affected. While some of these matters are addressed by other Proposed District Plan Chapter's Section 32 reports, such as Subdivision and Urban Growth Areas, there are matters that reflect directly on the RPROZ.

The key implementation issues that are being experienced with the Operative District Plan Rural Environment Area provisions are summarised below.

Issue	Comments	Response
<p>Issue 1: Inadequate management of the evolution of land use activities in terms of scale and nature of non-rural and non-productive activities and some rural activities, including dairy and poultry farming.</p>	<p>Ability to manage diversity Subsequent effects on rural environment as a result of changes.</p>	<p>Provide greater direction on the nature and type of land use activities within the rural area. Consider operational constraints, such as topography and transportation networks.</p>
<p>Issue 2: Inadequate management and protection of rural amenity and character.</p>	<p>Strike a balance between providing for a range of uses, development of natural and physical resources, and preserving rural character and amenity values. Traditional rural activities are increasing in scale Locating in the appropriate zone for the type of activities, guidance and/or management on scale/location through performance standards to maintain amenity are considered necessary Height, scale, density and number of buildings should not dominate the landscape and open space qualities of the rural environment.</p>	<p>Provide greater direction on nature and type of development and land use activities. Manage these within the rural area, taking into consideration the ability to maintain rural amenity and character.</p>
<p>Issue 3: Inadequate protection of rural based activities from reverse sensitivity effects</p>	<p>Management of reverse sensitivity effects is necessary to manage incompatibility between different land uses. Where there is a greater range of land uses, or relative proximity between sensitive activities that give rise to nuisance effects, the potential for conflict between land uses increases. The Operative District Plan does not consider, with exception of limited number of activities (i.e. poultry</p>	<p>The sporadic nature of life-style type subdivision in the District, and future residents filling current vacant rural sites, have the potential to create new reverse sensitivity problems and compromise productive land uses, such as legitimate rural based activities (i.e. quarrying, poultry farming and horticultural activities (e.g. spraying and bird scaring devices). This also needs to be balanced with maintaining rural amenity (i.e. noise levels, odour strength, air</p>

Issue	Comments	Response
	<p>farming) effects resulting from reverse sensitivity prior to an activity establishing.</p> <p>Depending on type of activity, associated building size and location, and the proximity and sensitivity of adjacent land uses, adverse effects can be experienced beyond site boundaries.</p>	<p>quality and visual appearance) so as not to detract from but contribute to the overall pleasantness and attractiveness of the rural environment.</p> <p>Sometimes adverse effects cannot be avoided. Plan includes an interface of provisions to manage the location of more sensitive activities to rural based activities and vice-versa when new activities establish.</p>
<p>Issue 4: Inadequate management of urban growth in close proximity to or within the rural area</p>	<p>There is pressure on rural land close to urban centres to accommodate additional growth through creation of lifestyle properties, expanding urban boundaries, and providing for other commercial (i.e. dementia home) and industrial activities.</p> <p>Demand is generated from activities seeking to complement agricultural activities, take advantage of space, utilise the rural ambience, or increase marketing profile by locating on selected high traffic routes through the rural area.</p> <p>While rural subdivision can provide for economic and lifestyle opportunities, it can also negatively impact on the functioning of productive and other rural land use activities, rural character and amenity values, and create demand for services, particularly as activities establish on these allotments.</p>	<p>Provide balance between maintaining rural character and landscape while providing sustainable balance for urban growth</p> <p>Mainly addressed through the Urban Growth and Subdivision chapters, for the RPROZ this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some areas within the RPROZ will be identified for long-term future development and lifestyle living so as to ensure remaining areas are rural in nature. • encouraging growth and urban development to be focused in satellite towns and rural and coastal towns and discourage growth in other rural areas.

Overall, and on the basis of the above assessment, the existing provisions require changes, including a greater focus on land use conflict issues and enabling wider consideration of the effects including:

- Cumulative effects.
- Land use conflict.
- Reverse sensitivity of land use and development in rural areas of the district.

In particular, ensuring that land uses and associated buildings in the rural environment are of a design, size, scale and intensity that is compatible with the rural area's function, landscape and character needs to be a key focus of the RPROZ standards. This will assist in ensuring sustainable use and development of the rural land resource.

4.5 Effectiveness of Other Methods

4.5.1 New Plymouth Rural Subdivision and Development Design Guidelines (May 2012)

This guideline, while sitting outside of any formal statutory document, is a useful tool in assisting with the assessment of resource consents relating to land use and subdivision in the Rural Environment. It is particularly useful in its guidance to practitioners and Council staff when considering intense rural activities with significant operational and/or bulky requirements.

The guideline is used within the Council to assist in discussions with practitioners and land owners when considering resource consent applications. The content of the guideline is appropriate and remains reflective of the intended form of development sought, and appropriate, within the current rural environment. However, the guideline is not as effective as intended sitting outside of the Operative District Plan due to the lack of connection between the direction given by the objectives and methods of implementation and the assessment criteria relating to the standards for the Rural Environment Area.

Given the restricted discretionary activity status of land use activity not meeting the permitted standards in the Rural Environment Area of the Operative District Plan, the Council's discretion is limited to the assessment criteria listed, which do not provide reference to the guideline. The criteria for assessing restricted discretionary activities do not always refer to, and thus limit assessments in relation to, the character and amenity of the rural area.

As such, with modification of the objectives and policies the intentions of the guideline can be captured with greater clarity and reflected in the status of various activities within the RPROZ and the rules in terms of bulk, location and scale of activities. Incorporation of the guideline text into the Proposed District Plan will support consideration of rural landscape and amenity at the time of subdivision.

4.6 Other Relevant Research/Documents

Current practice has been considered in respect of the RPROZ, with a review undertaken of the following District Plans:

Plan	Local Authority	Description of approach
<p>South Taranaki Proposed District Plan</p> <p>Updated with decisions November 2016 (STDP)</p>	<p>South Taranaki (STDC)</p>	<p>The maintenance and enhancement of rural amenity and character are key issues. The Rural Zone objectives identify their intent to manage diverse activities and their potential effects on the rural environment.</p> <p>The policy direction identifies the effects associated with rural-based activities and the standards provide spatial buffers which include setback requirements to manage these.</p> <p>The policies further direct how the adverse effects of land use activities can be managed and that follows through to standards and the tiered resultant activity status where compliance is or isn't achieved. In addition, specific activities, such as farming and intensive farming and rural service activities, Papakainga development, and home-based childcare and visitor accommodation, are listed where activity status has been pre-determined due to the adverse effects they are known to generate.</p> <p>Location, design and setback standards are used to reduce the obtrusiveness of built elements in the rural environment and manage potential reverse sensitivity conflict between rural activities and more sensitive activities.</p>
<p>Auckland Unitary Plan</p> <p>Operative in part November 2016 (AUP)</p>	<p>Auckland Council</p>	<p>While there are five rural zones varying from <i>Rural Production Zone</i> to <i>Countryside Living Zone</i>, the objectives and policies could be translated into the Proposed District Plan to assist with strengthening the management of rural amenity and character, while recognising there are activities that can operate in the rural area, for example:</p> <p>H19.2.1. Objectives – general rural</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Rural areas are where people work, live and recreate and where a range of activities and services are enabled to support these functions. (2) Rural production activities are provided for throughout rural area while containing adverse environmental effects on site. <p>H19.2.2. Policies – general rural</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Enable activities based on use of the land resource and recognise them as a primary function of rural areas. (2) Require rural production activities to contain and manage their adverse environmental effects on-site to the fullest extent practicable...

Plan	Local Authority	Description of approach
		<p>(5) Enable a range of rural production activities and a limited range of other activities in rural areas by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) separating potentially incompatible activities such as rural production and rural lifestyle living into different zones; ... (c) managing the effects of activities in rural areas so that; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) essential infrastructure can be funded, coordinated and provided in a timely, integrated, efficient and appropriate manner; and (ii) reverse sensitivity effects do not constrain rural production activities. ... or (e) providing for tourism and activities related to the rural environment.... <p>(6) Recognise that a range of buildings and structures accessory to farming and forestry, and other operational structures for rural production activities are an integral part of rural character and amenity values...</p> <p>An activity table provides the basis for the activity status of listed activities within each of the five zones. The activity status is also determined by an activity meeting the standards identified. There are no controlled activities. Where the standards are not met the activity status is either: restricted discretionary, discretionary or non-complying.</p>
<p>Christchurch District Plan Operative December 2017 (CDP)</p>	<p>Christchurch City Council</p>	<p>The rural environment objectives enable primarily rural productive activities, but also provide for other activities which use the rural resource efficiently. The contribution of rural land to maintaining the values of the natural and cultural environment is recognised.</p> <p>There is one objective, Objective 17.2.1.1, that is specific to the rural environment and it is succinct in its purpose:</p> <p>a. Subdivision, use and development of rural land that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. supports, maintains and, where appropriate, enhances the function, character and amenity values of the rural environment and, in particular, the potential contribution of rural productive activities to the economy and wellbeing of the Christchurch District; ii. avoids significant, and remedies or mitigates other reverse sensitivity effects on rural productive activities and natural hazard mitigation works; iii. maintains a contrast to the urban environment; ...

Plan	Local Authority	Description of approach
		<p>Activity specific and built form standards for the activities listed for the various rural zones determine whether the activity is permitted or falls within the controlled, restricted discretionary, discretionary, non-complying or prohibited activity status. Such standards relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height; • Setbacks; • Separation distances; • Maximum ground floor area and/or impervious surfaces; and • Maximum numbers, such as one rural produce retail area per site. <p>The activities listed are extensive but still retain a level of generic terminology, such as <i>community facility</i> and <i>guest accommodation</i>.</p>

These above plans were selected because they have been subject to recent plan changes/reviews that have addressed similar issues regarding the rural environment in their respective districts. A summary of the key findings of this current practice exercise is as follows:

- The objectives and policies (although numerous) of the STDP provide clear direction of the character and amenity the STDC are trying to achieve within the rural area of their district. The issues faced by STDC are not too dissimilar to those of the Council and the outcomes sought for the rural environment in the New Plymouth District. Although it is considered by the Council that the policies in the STDP to address their issues and objectives may not be totally reflective of New Plymouth District's, the objectives and policies of that plan provide a good benchmark for the Proposed District Plan's policies and standards.
- The AUP consists of five rural zones that provide the main framework for the management of subdivision, use and development in the rural areas. The example given is only a small snippet of the objectives and policies of the AUP that relate to rural zones. While not all these objectives and policies are appropriate for the New Plymouth District, as they reflect the diverse and expansive area of the Auckland Council, they can be nevertheless be translated to respond to the issues identified in the Proposed District Plan. In addition, although the specific standards may not be appropriate to the District, the activity status afforded activities, such as those relating to retail activities and those with bulky buildings/structures, has been considered in the New Plymouth context.
- The CDP is succinct with the objectives and policies therein addressing the issues faced in the rural areas in Christchurch City Council. These issues are not too dissimilar to and the matters identified above for the New Plymouth District. The activities listed within the various rural zones, along with the activity specific and built form standards provide a useful guide in consideration for the activities and standards for the Proposed District Plan.

5 Consultation

Extensive consultation has been undertaken by the Council as part of this District Plan Review process with key stakeholders and the local community. Refer to the General Overview Section 32 Report for details on the methods that were used to carry out that consultation. Feedback from consultation relevant to the RPROZ is summarised below.

5.1 Specific Consultation on Draft District Plan Rural Production Zone

The first Draft Plan 2016 was released for public comment in 2016, which contained draft objectives, policies and a summary of rules for each chapter.

Those comments received on the RPROZ chapter focussed on significant natural areas and the loss of income through setting this land aside and highlighted a concern in retaining farming operations given the standards within the Operative District Plan. However, in a wider context the comments received generally sought greater provision for rural lifestyle development.

The draft policies which identified the reserving of *productive and versatile land for rural and rural industry activities* were commented on as inappropriate as some *rural industry* activities were considered not to contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of the communities due to their very intense nature and reverse sensitivity effects.

The comments received on the Draft Plan 2016 informed the redrafting of the provisions and were reflected in the amendments to provisions in the updated Draft District Plan (Draft Plan 2018) released for further public comment in 2018.

Those comments received through feedback to the Draft Plan 2018 while in the main were generally supportive of the RPROZ and the associated objectives and policies, a summary of the more focussed comments included:

- Better management of the rural character and amenity in relation to the low density of built form in comparison to the open space character of the area.
- Greater acknowledgement of specific and specialised industry based within the RPROZ as forming part of the existing rural environment, with clarification in relation to 'large scale' farming.
- Clarity in relation to the standards and requirements in relation to industrial and more intense activities within the RPROZ.
- Amenity and character considerations within the RPROZ with consideration to the daily functional requirements of 'traditional' rural activities.
- Clarity between the functions of the regional and district authorities.

5.2 Consultation with Iwi Authorities

Nga Kaitiaki provided feedback on the Draft District Plan 2016 (Draft Plan 2016) RPROZ chapter. The comments from Ngā Kaitiaki on the Draft Plan 2016, including some comments on the effectiveness of the Operative District Plan, are summarised below:

- Preference for alignment of subdivision, land use/development, regional resource consent requirements and Heritage New Zealand processes.
- Promotion of different rule approaches/performance standards to address the issues, for example:
 - Introduction of a minimum permeable surfaces rule. This is to support on-site primary treatment of stormwater through retention of green space, rain gardens etc.

- Conditions to limit the size of built development, ensuring enough permeable surfaces to provide for stormwater runoff proportionate to the quantity of runoff from impermeable surfaces.
- Density controls for subdivision. Consider the use of a maximum number of dwellings per hectare for different catchments as opposed to blanket minimum allotment size resource consent triggers. This would also assist in supporting development to provide a range of section sizes, and subsequent residential dwelling typologies.

Working with Ngā Kaitiaki since that time has highlighted:

- The need for greater recognition of the impact of productive activities on the rural environment, such as indigenous vegetation, is required to sit alongside the outcomes set out in current rural zone objectives.
- Rural character should acknowledge the broad range of activities, values, associations and features that are culturally important and form a part of rural character so as to balance the development orientated nature of the Rural Environment Area.
- The need for clearer policy direction for Māori Purpose Activities.
- Remediation of noxious, large scale rural activities or rural industry on completion of activity to the net environmental benefit of the immediate area and community.

The feedback from Ngā Kaitiaki was considered during redrafting of the provisions and consequent amendments to the provisions have been made.

6 Key Resource Management Issues

As summarised above, the Council faces a number of challenges in relation to the management of the rural environment and they can be summarised as follows:

- Evolution of land use activities in terms of scale and nature of activities, including dairy and poultry farming.
- Degradation of rural amenity and character.
- Increased potential for reverse sensitivity between rural based activities and residential or other more sensitive rural based activities.
- Loss of rural land suitable for production, including land between existing settlements, for urbanisation and the continued demand for lifestyle blocks and rural residential development.
- Increasing demand for urban type services in the rural environment such as refuse collection, stormwater, wastewater and water supply.
- Rural landscapes being visually altered by structures such as dwellings, and associated buildings in close proximity - sometimes resulting in an urban type environment.

Following identification of the key resource management issues, the existing objectives, policies and methods were reviewed to determine whether they effectively address the issues. Based on this review, the RPROZ provisions were revised, and new draft provisions were circulated to interested parties for feedback and revised where appropriate. This feedback was considered by the Plan authors, and the draft provisions have been revised where appropriate. The details below summarise this evaluation.

7 Proposed District Plan Provisions (Objectives, Policies and Methods/Rules)

7.1 Strategic Objectives

The applicability/relevance of all the proposed Strategic Objectives will need to be considered for all development proposals requiring resource consent under the Proposed District Plan. Of particular relevance to the Rural Production Zone provisions are the following proposed Strategic Objectives:

UFD-13 The district develops in a cohesive, compact and structured way that:

- 1. maintains a compact urban form that provides for connected, liveable communities;*
- 2. manages impacts on the natural and cultural environment;*
- 3. recognises the relationship of tangata whenua with their culture, traditions, ancestral lands, waterbodies, sites, areas and landscapes and other taonga of significance;*
- 4. enables greater productivity and economic growth;*
- 5. enables greater social and cultural vitality;*
- 6. takes into account the short, medium and long-term potential impacts of climate change and the associated uncertainty;*
- 7. utilises existing infrastructure and/or can be efficiently serviced with new infrastructure; and*
- 8. meets the community's short, medium and long-term housing and industrial needs.*

UFD-23 Primary production and rural industry activities are able to operate efficiently and effectively and the contribution they make to the economic and social well-being and prosperity of the district is recognised.

UFD-24 Productive, versatile land and natural, physical and cultural resources located within rural areas that are of significance to the district are protected and maintained.

7.2 Zoning Structure

The same Operative District Plan Rural Environment Area zone structure has been carried over into the Proposed District Plan, with the area to now be known as the Rural Production Zone, which reflects national direction set out in the National Planning Standards.

Focused on being a production-oriented working environment, the Rural Production Zone will provide for primary production activities, such as pastoral farming, livestock, horticulture and forestry. It will also provide for resource extraction, such as quarrying and oil and gas activities, and intensive indoor farming (for example indoor poultry and pig farms). The RPROZ is characterised by an open, vegetated landscape that is interspersed with low density buildings and structures that are predominantly used for rural activities, such as barns and sheds, or larger, more numerous buildings of industrial scale and appearance used for intensive primary production or rural industry. There will be a general lack of urban infrastructure in the zone to maintain rural character.

Although the basic structure and role and function of the zone remains the same, the policy direction and permitted activities has been overhauled. These are described below.

7.3 Objectives and Policies

The main driver for the objectives and policies of the RPROZ is the desire to document, with greater clarity and precision, what the Plan is seeking to achieve and how it expects those objectives to be met. Greater guidance has become important in light of amendments to legislation over the past ten years. More consistent interpretation of the Plan is expected to occur as a result of the revised objectives and policies. It is no longer considered necessary to include assessment criteria in addition to the revised policies. In summary, the proposed Objectives and Policies comprise:

- Provide for a functional, production and extraction orientated working environment where activities and associated buildings are compatible with the role, function and character of the RPROZ.
- Maintain the predominant character of the RPROZ and manage adverse effects of activities to maintain or ensure a reasonable level of rural character and amenity.
- Maintain natural features, soil productivity, versatility of land and rural character and/or discourage adverse changes to landform, intensification of land use and/or built form, or urbanisation.
- Manage sensitive activities to ensure the impact of adverse effects and conflict with rural activities are minimised.

7.4 Rules

7.4.1 **Permitted activity** rules provide for the following specially identified activities, subject to all RPROZ effects standards and relevant Overlay and District Wide rules being complied with:

- Agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activities.
- Residential unit.
- Minor residential unit.
- Building activities (except relocation of a building).
- Papakainga housing.
- Home Occupation.
- Residential visitor accommodation.
- Rural produce retail.

7.4.2 **Controlled activity** rules provide for relocation of a building and goat farming within 2km of Egmont National Park, subject to standards.

Restricted discretionary activity rules apply for:

- Rural industry (excluding petroleum exploration and production)
- Rural Transport activities.
- Intensive Indoor Primary Production.
- Aquaculture.
- Boarding houses.
- Supported residential care.

- Community activities.
- Sport and recreation activities.
- Camping ground.
- General retailing.
- Entertainment and hospitality activities.
- Business service activities.
- Commercial service activities.

7.4.3 **Discretionary activity** resource consent will be required for:

- Industrial activity.
- Quarries.
- Mining.
- Any other activity not otherwise listed.

7.4.4 **Non-complying activity** resource consent will be required for:

- Integrated retail activity.
- Large format retail activity.
- Visitor accommodation.
- Multi-unit developments.
- Additions and/or alterations not associated with a land use activity.
- Erection of buildings and structures not associated with a land use activity.
- Retirement villages.
- Supermarkets.
- Education activities.

There are no **prohibited activities** in the RPROZ.

7.5 Effects Standards

The effects standards described below cover a range of parameters, including height, and setbacks. In most cases the equivalent Operative District Plan standards have been carried over or the standards have been amended to address gaps or to promote better outcomes. There are also several new standards which are being introduced.

7.5.1 Maximum building height

This standard has been amended. The Operative District Plan structure height of 15m or 10m divided by the average width of the structure to has been reduced to 12m in the Proposed Plan. The Operative District Plan building height of 10m has increased to 12m in the Proposed Plan. The height for residential units remains at 8m.

7.5.2 Minimum building setbacks

This standard has been amended to include new setbacks for new residential units near state highways and setbacks for buildings near a Future Urban Zone. The Operative District Plan setbacks from boundaries have been carried over, as well as setbacks from intensive indoor primary production activities.

7.5.3 Shelter belts

This standard has been carried over from the Operative District plan and there is no change.

7.5.4 Height in relation to boundary

This is a new standard.

7.5.5 Maximum number of residential units

The intention of the changes to this standard is to provide for a residential unit on each site within the RPROZ. The rule recognises that 'traditional' and more intense farming activities require on-site workers to be a part of the activity. Where an additional residential unit ancillary to the primary production activity on the site is appropriate then additional provision is made for this, within parameters that ensure the open space and lower scale of development within the RPROZ is maintained.

This rule restricts additional dwellings being erected on sites over twenty hectares in size, beyond the minor residential unit, to address the frequent use of the permitted baseline assessment to obtain further rural subdivision and development. The key benefits include:

- Ensuring that rural character and amenity is maintained;
- Buildings located so as to minimise adverse visual, infrastructure and biodiversity effects; and
- Retaining the integrity of adjoining sites outlook, privacy and sense of openness, particularly in those areas close to the urban environment.

The standards will work in combination of other standards to manage the bulk of development on a site. Failure to achieve this and other standards may signal inappropriate development for the rural area.

7.5.6 Maximum gross floor area

The intention of changes to this rule is to acknowledge that while intensification of activities within the RPROZ is part of the rural environment, varying activities have different requirements in terms of building and structures required for their day-to-day functionality. In some instances the intensity of building/structures is such that these are not appropriate when considering the general open and spaciousness character of the RPROZ. The key benefits include:

- Integration of the bulk of building/structure into the rural environment
- Softening the visual impact of new buildings

The rule will work in combination with other standards, including those that manage the bulk of development on a site, traffic generation and screening. Failure to achieve this and other standards may signal inappropriate activity and development for the rural area.

7.5.7 Farm quarry requirements – maximum area

This is a new standard. The intention of this change is to differentiate between small scale farm quarries which are used to maintain farm tracks on site and large scale commercial quarries (which tend to have greater effects).

7.5.8 Fencing requirements - goat fences

This is a new standard and aligns with the approach taken in the South Taranaki District Plan.

7.6 Definitions

To help clarify the intent of the provisions, manage activities or align with the National Planning Standards, new definitions have been introduced for:

- Agricultural, Pastoral and Horticultural Activities (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Aquaculture (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Farm Quarries (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Home Business (Planning Standards definition).
- Intensive indoor primary production (Planning Standards definition).
- Mining (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Minor Residential Unit (Planning Standards definition).
- Multi-Unit Development (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Primary Production (Planning Standards definition).
- Quarry (Planning Standards definition).
- Quarry Activities (Planning Standards definition).
- Rural Industry (Planning Standards definition).
- Rural Produce Retail (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Residential Unit (Planning Standards definition).
- Residential Activity (Planning Standards definition).
- Retirement Village (RMA definition).
- Residential Visitor Accommodation (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Sensitive Activities (NPDC Proposed Plan definition).
- Visitor Accommodation (Planning Standards definition).

Generic District Plan-wide definitions such as height, site, site access etc are also applicable to the RPROZ.

8 Approach to Evaluation

Section 32(1)(a) of the RMA requires that this report contain a level of detail that corresponds with the scale and significance of the environmental, economic, social and cultural effects that are anticipated from the implementation of this proposal.

The section of the RMA requires that:

- New proposals must be examined for their appropriateness in achieving the purpose of the RMA.
- The benefits and costs, and risks of new policies and rules on the community, the economy and the environment need to be clearly identified and assessed.
- All advice received from iwi authorities and the response to the advice needs to be summarised.
- The analysis must be documented, so stakeholders and decision-makers can understand the rationale for policy choices.

8.1 Evaluation of Scale and Significance

	Minor	Low	Medium	High
Degree of change from the Operative Plan			✓	
Effects on matters of national importance		✓		
Scale of effects – geographically		✓		
Scale of effects on people			✓	
Scale of effects on those with specific interests (e.g. Tangata Whenua)			✓	
Degree of policy risk		✓		
Likelihood of increased costs or restrictions on individuals, communities or businesses		✓		

8.2 Explanation Summary

Overall, it is considered that the scale and significance of the proposed RPROZ provisions are low to moderate. The level of detail in this report corresponds with the scale and significance of the environmental, economic and cultural effects that are anticipated from the implementation of the proposed RPROZ provisions.

In summary:

- The proposal does not directly involve a section 6 of the RMA matter.
- The proposal will assist Council in achieving its obligations under section 7 of the RMA by setting out a policy framework for the efficient use development and management of the rural area of the District whilst maintaining the amenity and quality of the environment and enabling the benefits to be derived from the use and development of the area.
- The proposal does not affect any section 8 RMA matters.
- Two NPS', NZCPS and the Planning Standards are relevant and are given effect to by the provisions in conjunction with other provisions in the Proposed Plan.
- The policy framework in relation to the management of rural-based activities will be of high interest to some individuals, communities, businesses and organisations, many of whom have an express interest in the rural area of the District for personal, economic and/or cultural reasons.
- The proposal introduces a revised regulatory framework for activities, which is a focused approach across the Proposed District Plan.
- The proposal is consistent with current practice adopted in other recent second generation plans by other local authorities managing similar issues.

The proposal is unlikely to:

- reduce development opportunities or land use options;
- have high economic impact on landowners; or
- result in high consequences in terms of social or economic effects if the proposal is ineffective.

9 Evaluation of Objectives

This section evaluates the proposed objectives to determine whether they are the most appropriate to achieve the purpose of the RMA.

While not specifically required under section 32 of the RMA, it is appropriate to also consider alternative objectives to those currently included in the Proposed District Plan, so as to ensure that the proposed objective(s) are the most appropriate to achieve the purpose of the RMA. For the purpose of this evaluation, the Council has considered the following:

Existing Objective(s)	Appropriateness to achieve the purpose of the RMA
<p><i>Objective 1 To ensure activities do not adversely affect the environmental and amenity values of areas within the district or adversely affect existing activities</i></p> <p><i>Objective 1A: To ensure that activities within and adjacent to the Future Urban Development Overlay do not adversely affect the ability to rezone and subsequently develop areas identified as Future Urban Growth Areas.</i></p> <p><i>Objective 2: To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of light overspill and glare, noise, and the consumption of liquor on amenity values and health.</i></p> <p><i>Objective 4 To ensure the subdivision, use and development of land maintains the elements of rural character.</i></p>	<p>Objective 1 relates to the District as a whole and does not express as a primary outcome that the Operative District Plan anticipates rural activities will be the predominant land use in the RPROZ. Instead, it enables a wide range of activities provided they manage their effects. In doing so, this has enabled the type of development identified earlier in this report that has led to the key issues identified through the review process and the community has identified as wanting to avoid in the future.</p> <p>The existing approach, through Objectives 2 and 4, provides only a partially effective framework for maintaining rural character and amenity for the District. In particular, it does not anticipate the scale or form of some of the developments or activities that have established over the life of the Operative District Plan, including PC 27, in the rural areas of the District. They do not adequately signal the importance of rural character and amenity or clearly identify what values underpin the rural character that the Operative District Plan is seeking to manage. This has resulted in ad-hoc decisions being made without sufficient guidance about the outcome desired in respect of the rural area.</p> <p>Decision-making on effects in relation to activities within the rural area and protecting elements of rural character need to improve in relation to giving clear guidance. They are not aligned with current best practice and are more closely aligned with first generation district plans.</p> <p>The evolving nature of the activities 'traditionally' anticipated in rural areas has seen some areas become more intensely used and their rural character change. The face of the rural environment is changing and with that is the intensity and scale of development and activity in the rural area, which in some instances result in a range of adverse effects</p>

Existing Objective(s)	Appropriateness to achieve the purpose of the RMA
	<p>including effects on landform and the transport network as well as reverse sensitivity effects.</p> <p>The existing approach fails to address reverse sensitivity issues that inappropriate activity within the rural environment can give cause to as they are out-of-date and have been left behind by the evolutionary nature of rural activities since they were originally drafted.</p> <p>In economic terms, the operative objectives do not amount to unjustifiable costs on any part of the community.</p> <p>The subject matter of the status quo objectives is not as clear as it could be, leading to a continued risk to the establishment of activities and buildings/structures that are not reflective of the existing character and amenity of the District's rural environment. The objectives do not anticipate the intensity and scale of development and activity in the rural area, which in some instances result in a range of adverse effects, including effects on landform and the transport network, as well as reverse sensitivity effects.</p> <p>The objectives are generally less measurable than the proposed objectives and do not appropriately achieve the sustainable management purpose of the RMA.</p>

Proposed Objective(s)	Appropriateness to achieve the purpose of the RMA
<p><i>RPROZ-01</i> <i>Productive land and resources support a range of production oriented and resource dependent activities which are innovative and efficient.</i></p> <p><i>RPROZ-02</i> <i>The Rural Production Zone is predominantly used for primary production.</i></p> <p><i>RPROZ-03</i> <i>The role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone is not compromised by incompatible activities.</i></p>	<p>The overall approach is to recognise the importance of the rural area of the District both as a lifestyle choice location but also as a working environment on which a large proportion of the District's population is reliant on. Given this, the approach is enabling of activities where their location of the rural area is important, so long their associated effects are managed, albeit those emanating from the activity or any future activity establishing that may have sensitivities to such effects.</p> <p>The proposed objectives recognise the significance of the rural area of the District both as a lifestyle choice and working environment but seek to manage associated environmental effects. Particularly in respect to the status quo, they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identify values that comprise the District's rural character and what values proposals are being assessed against.

Proposed Objective(s)	Appropriateness to achieve the purpose of the RMA
<p><i>RPROZ-O4</i></p> <p><i>The predominant character and amenity of the Rural Production Zone is maintained, which includes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. extensive areas of vegetation of varying types (for example, pasture for grazing, crops, forestry and indigenous vegetation and habitat) and the presence of large numbers of farmed animals;</i> <i>2. low density built form with open space between buildings that are predominantly used for agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activities (for example, barns and sheds), low density rural living (for example, farm houses and worker's cottages) and community activities (for example, rural halls, domains and schools);</i> <i>3. a range of noises, smells, light overspill and traffic, often on a cyclic and seasonable basis, generated from the production, manufacture, processing and/or transportation of raw materials derived from primary production activities;</i> <i>4. interspersed existing rural industry facilities associated with the use of the land for intensive indoor farming, quarrying, oil and gas activities and cleanfills; and</i> <i>5. the presence of rural infrastructure, including rural roads, and the on-site disposal of waste, and a general lack of urban infrastructure, including street lighting, solid fences and footpaths.</i> <p><i>RPROZ-O5</i></p> <p><i>The Rural Production Zone is a functional, production and extraction orientated working environment where primary production and rural industry activities are able to operate effectively and efficiently, while ensuring that:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not lead to a compromise in relation to the District's rural character as they are clear as to the outcome for 'rural' character. • Clearly establish that rural activities are to be the predominant land use, which is not a clear directive in the Operative District Plan. • Are more enabling of technological change in rural land use practice and industry. • Express specific outcomes about the management of sensitive activities to ensure continued efficient operation of anticipated rural activities. • Acknowledge specifically the benefit of some more intensive activities, such as quarrying. <p>The proposal includes objectives for the integrated management of resources and strategic integration of land use.</p> <p>The proposed objectives give clear guidance to decision-makers about the significance of the rural area of the District both as a lifestyle choice and working environment. They are aligned with current best practice, though reflecting the District's rural environment, in relation to second generation district plans.</p> <p>In economic terms, the proposed objectives are not anticipated to amount to unjustifiable costs on any part of the community.</p> <p>There is a relatively high level of certainty around the subject matter of the objectives, and a corresponding low risk of establishing the objectives as proposed.</p> <p>The proposed objectives are consistent with the outcomes identified in consultation with Ngā Kaitiaki.</p> <p>The proposed objectives are clear, measurable and able to be implemented within the ambit of Council's powers, skills and resources. Consistent with best practice the proposed objectives will help the Council carry out its functions for the purpose of achieving the RMA's sustainable management purpose.</p>

Proposed Objective(s)	Appropriateness to achieve the purpose of the RMA
<p>1. <i>the adverse effects generated by primary production and rural industry activities are appropriately managed; and</i></p> <p>2. <i>primary production and rural industry activities are not limited, restricted or compromised by incompatible activities and/or adverse reverse sensitivity effects.</i></p> <p><i>RPROZ-O6</i></p> <p><i>Natural features, soil productivity, versatility of land and rural character and/or amenity are not compromised by adverse changes to landform, intensification of land use and/or built form, or urbanisation.</i></p> <p><i>RPROZ-O7</i></p> <p><i>Sensitive activities are designed and located to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse reverse sensitivity effects and/or conflict with primary production activities.</i></p>	
<p>Summary</p> <p>The proposed objectives are the most appropriate for achieving the purpose of the RMA as they provide clear statements of intent that define the anticipated environmental outcomes for the rural environment. They provides certainty about those outcomes for decision-makers, plan users and the community.</p>	

10 Evaluation of Options to Achieve the Objectives

This section evaluates the associated policies and methods, as they relate to the Proposed District Plan RPROZ’s objectives. Along with the proposed provisions, the Council has also identified through the research, consultation, information gathering and analysis undertaken in relation to this topic one reasonably practicable alternative option to achieve the objectives.

For each potential approach an evaluation has been undertaken relating to the costs, benefits and the certainty and sufficiency of information (as informed by section 4 of this report) in order to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the approach, and whether it is the most appropriate way to achieve the relevant objective(s). For the purpose of this evaluation, the Council has considered the following potential options:

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
<p>Option A: Proposed approach</p> <p>Policies: Ten policies are proposed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for rural activities and industry and, where large-scale, are required to demonstrate they are of an appropriate design and location, including large scale soil and aggregate extraction. • Manage the adverse effects of activities in the RPROZ, including ensuring buildings and structures maintain rural character and visual amenity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of productive use of the rural land resource. • Clear direction in the policy framework as to how the outcomes expected in respect of rural amenity and character of the RPROZ will be achieved within the District. • Standards provide certainty in terms of the level of effects that can be generated. This also benefits neighbours from unreasonable impacts. • The provisions identify those activities which have the potential to create reverse sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some activities in the RPROZ that have the potential to generate substantial effects. Some rural activities, including buildings, will have some degree of effect on the environment even though policy support is provided where they are managed through resource consent processes and conditions. • May potentially impact on some rural landowners’ individual land use plans and relative to the status quo, these are less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs of the approach are outweighed by the benefits. Overall the policy and method approaches are efficient. • This approach addresses current issues, in particular providing appropriate assessment criteria to enable a complete assessment of possible environmental effects based on experience. The approach achieves the proposed objectives in an efficient and effective manner by providing a balance between management of adverse effects and enabling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk of acting on these provisions is that whilst the Council has identified the key issues for the RPROZ and considers that this approach is most effective to achieve the objectives, it has received limited feedback from the community and rural industry on this matter. • The risk of not acting is that the rural land resource will continue to be fragmented and that pressure for “non-rural” uses on these lands will continue with adverse impacts on the continuing use of the

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid activities incompatible to the role, function and predominant character of the RPROZ and only allow where specific matters are considered such that the activities are designed and located appropriately. • Ensure sensitive activities located appropriately to minimise reverse sensitivity effects and/or conflict with RPROZ permitted activities. • Ensure incompatible activities do not locate in the RPROZ. <p>Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Plan rules, standards and other methods to provide for rural activities and industry, including associated buildings and structures, and to manage the effects of those activities on other activities. 	<p>effects and minimises the potential for these to occur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is anticipated that there will be similar compliance and regulatory costs to the status quo. • Minimises the potential for new rural activities to adversely affect existing sensitive activities, thus reducing the need for monitoring and compliance determination, which reduces further compliance costs for the new activity and provides more certainty. • Clear direction means that users of the Proposed District Plan will have upfront understanding of the provisions thus reducing the need for monitoring and compliance determination, which reduces further compliance costs. 	<p>liberal as they relate land use activities anticipated by the objectives, i.e. activity based rather than effects based.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity lists with rules/standards may potentially limit some activities and development, particularly if they are not anticipated in the rural environment. • Initial uncertainty through change in the Proposed District Plan structure and policy framework for the RPROZ, may result in higher compliance costs and associated time for a short period of time until familiarity is achieved. 	<p>appropriate activities to occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy direction will be implemented primarily through the RPROZ rules/standards designed to provide for rural activities and industry as the predominant use in the RPROZ. • This approach will be effective in that it clearly defines the purpose and uses provided for in the RPROZ for decisions makers, investors and residents and enables appropriate assessment of environmental effects of the proposal. • The approach is streamlined through simplified rules that are easier for the Proposed District Plan users to interpret and apply. 	<p>land for primary production activities and on the rural character and amenity of the RPROZ. The risk of not acting is therefore high.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, it is considered that there is sufficient information to act. The risks of not acting are outweighed by the benefits of acting.

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New definitions for activities listed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlined, simplified rules/standards that are easier for plan users to interpret and apply. The reduction in ambiguity is expected to result in increased compliance and effective compliance monitoring. • This a more regulatory approach but will provide certainty to landowners, farmers, neighbours, community and the Council about the nature and scale of activities and development allowed and enables consideration of cumulative effects. • Minimises the potential for new rural activities to adversely affect existing sensitive activities. • Approach is in accordance with comments from Ngā Kaitiaki which has regard to a kaitiakitanga in accordance with the purpose of the RMA. 			

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option B: Status quo regulatory approach. Retain current zone objectives, policies and standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does provide policy direction in relation to the amenity and environmental role played by the Rural Environment Area of the District and the anticipated continuance of that role. Continuation of status quo provides a level of familiarity for landowners, farmers, neighbours and the community generally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not fully address ongoing productive use of the rural land resource. Limited control of large-scale rural activity and industry or bulky buildings/structures associated with these activities. Does not reinforce the outcomes identified in the objectives, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> rural uses should predominate; identified character values should not be compromised; and address reverse sensitivity. In some ways this is like the proposed option, including its enabling of a range of activities that might have environmental effects where they are sympathetic to the carrying capacity of the rural environment to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The benefits of the current provisions are outweighed by the potential costs of not fully addressing demand and effects of rural activity and industry and this is not efficient. The existing approach is not effectively or efficiently achieving the proposed objectives The policy direction and regulatory approach in the Operative District Plan has led to uncertainty, inconsistent decision-making and lack of control over certain activities which would not be anticipated by the proposed objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current policy framework lacks detail and specific direction on management of effects of development and activities in the Rural Environment. The rules are not readily or effectively implemented and/or the Council's ability to manage certain effects is limited. It is considered that the risk of acting on these provisions outweighs the risk of not acting. There is sufficient information not to act on this approach.

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
		<p>sustain associated effects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides limited policy direction and standards in relation to the development of land for rural activities and industry and therefore it is anticipated to have relatively higher regulatory and compliance costs. • Lack of certainty means that users of the Operative District Plan have difficulty determining and interpreting the provisions and as a result the likely activity status of a proposal leading to higher costs to determine activity status and applicable standards. • Ineffective consideration of adverse effects and poor quality environmental outcomes. 		

Options to achieve the District Plan objectives relating to the RPROZ	Benefits	Costs	Efficiency and Effectiveness	Risks of acting/not acting
<p>Quantification</p> <p>Section 32(2)(b) requires that if practicable the benefits and costs of a proposal are quantified.</p> <p>Given the assessment of the scale and significance of the proposed changes above it is considered that quantifying costs and benefits would add significant time and cost to the s32 evaluation processes. The evaluation in this report identifies where there may be additional cost(s), however the exact quantification of the benefits and costs discussed was not considered necessary, beneficial or practicable.</p>				
<p>Summary</p> <p>The above table has demonstrated that Option A (proposed approach) is the most appropriate method in managing the RPROZ matters in the District. The existing effects-based approach is ineffectively providing for farming and other rural based activities and development and managing their effects on the environment. The assessment conclusions the following methods are the most appropriate in achieving the objectives for this RPROZ:</p> <p>Rules and standards based on a permitted activity provide a high level of certainty that enable the operation and development of farming and other rural based activities, whilst also managing their effects on the environment.</p> <p>The resource consent process is effective and efficient to assess proposals which extend beyond the parameters permitted by the standards or other activities with are not permitted. This process enables neighbours and other parties to participate where they may be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Retaining the existing rules and standards do not provide for appropriate activities or development, provide certainty, or manage the adverse effects on the environment.</p>				

11 Summary

This evaluation has been undertaken in accordance with Section 32 of the RMA in order to identify the need, benefits and costs and the appropriateness of the proposal having regard to its effectiveness and efficiency relative to other means in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The evaluation demonstrates that this proposal is the most appropriate option as:

- The objective provide certainty to all Proposed District Plan users on the outcomes expected for the RPROZ, with a focus on a maintaining and enhancing the rural amenity and character.
- The policies, rules, standards and other methods clearly implement the objectives, including by articulating a range of activities anticipated within the RPROZ together with direction about the appropriateness of effects associated with those activities.

Overall, it is considered that the set of preferred provisions is the most appropriate given that the benefits outweigh the costs, and there are considerable efficiencies to be gained from adopting the preferred provisions relative to the alternatives considered. The subject matter of the provisions is well understood, and the risk of acting is low.



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**

Appendix B – Exerts from TRC Regional Air Quality Plan 2011 (Updated July 2023)

includes such matters as effects relating to odour and dust and loss of amenity.

The notification requirements, when the Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity will not be more than minor, are restricted to those that were located within the buffer (refer to Table 1 Appendix IV), at the time this Plan became operative or the time the activity was first established²¹, whichever was the earlier.

This approach has been proposed to acknowledge the issues that are currently being faced by intensive farming operations, that is, new developments are establishing near lawfully established intensive farming operations, that have addressed off site effects as far as is practicable and reasonable, and are now becoming constrained by the emergence of new and often incompatible land uses in the neighbourhood, especially at the time of consent renewal or consent replacement.

Rule 49: Discharges from new large intensive pig farming processes

Activity classification: Restricted Discretionary

This Rule applies to discharges of contaminants to air from new large scale intensive pig farming operations when a consent is being applied for the new operation.

Provided conditions relating to separation distances from places of public assembly, off site dwellinghouses, roads and other sensitive land uses, can be met, the consent can be applied for as a restricted discretionary activity.

The Council will be guided by the relevant policies in the Plan and the good management practice guidelines contained in Appendix IV of the Plan. The Council's power to decline a resource consent and to impose conditions are restricted to the matters which the Council has restricted the exercise of its discretion, noted in the 'control/discretion' column of the rule table and includes such matters as effects relating to odour and loss of amenity.

Rule 50: Discharges from intensive pig farming processes that do not satisfy Rule 47, Rule 48 or Rule 49

Activity classification: Discretionary

This Rule applies to any discharges to air of contaminants from intensive pig farming where the discharge is not listed in Rules 47, 48 or 49 or does not meet the conditions in Rules 47, 48 or 49.

Discharges to air from intensive pig farming operations can have significant adverse environmental effects. Where the discharge is not listed in Rules 47, 48 or 49 or the conditions of Rules 47, 48 or 49 cannot be met, the Council will consider the discharge on a case-by-case basis as a discretionary activity.

The Council will be guided by the relevant policies in the Plan and by the good management practice

²¹ 'Activity first established' means the date an air discharge consent was first issued by the Taranaki Regional Council for the activity.

guidelines contained in Appendix IV of the Plan, when considering discharge permit applications under Rule 50.

Discharges from intensive poultry farming processes

Rule 51: Discharges from small intensive poultry farming processes

Activity classification: Permitted

This Rule applies to discharges to air from intensive poultry farming when no more than 30 000 poultry are kept at any one time.

The Rule allows for the activity to occur without the need for a resource consent, provided there is no offensive or objectionable odour or dust at or beyond the boundary of the property. This is considered to be an appropriate level of control for this scale of operation.

Problems from odour may arise from this type of activity because incompatible land uses are located near each other. This has occurred in the Taranaki region, particularly where residential development has occurred adjacent to already established intensive farming operations.

The Council has designed this Rule to acknowledge that these activities when appropriately managed will not result in offensive or objectionable odour or dust at or beyond the boundary of the property.

Rule 52: Discharges from existing poultry farming processes

Activity classification: Restricted Discretionary

This Rule applies to discharges of contaminants to air from larger scale existing intensive poultry farming operations when a new consent is being applied for to replace or renew an existing consent. Provided the nature and scale of the effects of the activity are unchanged a consent may be granted as a restricted discretionary activity.

The Council will be guided by the relevant policies in the Plan and the good management practice guidelines contained in Appendix V of the Plan. However, the Council's power to decline a resource consent and to impose conditions are restricted to the matters to which the Council has restricted the exercise of its discretion, noted in the 'control/discretion' column of the rule table and includes such matters as effects relating to odour and loss of amenity.

The notification requirements, when the Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity will not be more than minor, are restricted to those that were located within the buffer (refer to Table 1 Appendix V), at the time this Plan became operative or the time the activity was first established²², whichever is the earlier.

This approach has been designed to acknowledge the issues that are currently being faced by intensive

²² 'Activity first established' means the date an air discharge consent was first issued by the Taranaki Regional Council for the activity.

farming operations, that is, new developments are establishing near lawfully established intensive farming operations, that have addressed off site effects as far as is practicable and reasonable, and are now becoming constrained by the emergence of new and often incompatible land uses in the neighbourhood, especially at the time of consent renewal or consent replacement.

Rule 53: Discharges from new large intensive poultry farming processes

Activity classification: Restricted Discretionary

This Rule applies to discharges of contaminants to air from new large scale intensive poultry farming processes when a consent is being applied for the new operation.

Provided conditions relating to separation distances from places of public assembly, off site dwellinghouses, roads and other sensitive land uses, can be met, the consent can be applied for as a restricted discretionary activity.

The Council will be guided by the relevant policies in the Plan and the good management practice guidelines contained in Appendix V of the plan. The Council's power to decline a resource consent and to impose conditions are restricted to the matters which the Council has restricted the exercise of its discretion, noted in the 'control/discretion' column of the rule table and includes such matters as effects relating to odour and loss of amenity.

Rule 54: Discharges from intensive poultry farming processes that do not satisfy Rule 51, Rule 52 or Rule 53

Activity classification: Discretionary

This Rule applies to discharges to air of contaminants from intensive poultry farming where the discharge is not listed in Rules 51, 52 or 53 or does not meet the conditions in Rules 51, 52 or 53.

Discharges to air from intensive poultry farming operations can have significant adverse environmental effects. Where the discharge is not listed in Rules 51, 52 or 53 or the conditions of Rules 51, 52 or 53 cannot be met, the Council will consider the discharge on a case-by-case basis as a discretionary activity.

The Council will be guided by the relevant policies in the Plan and by the good management practice guidelines contained in Appendix V of the Plan when considering discharge permit applications under Rule 54.

Discharges not provided for by Rules 1 – 54

Discharges from any industrial or trade premises, production land, waste management process, site development, earthworks, the application of soil conditioners, aquaculture or intensive

farming process not provided for in other rules

Rule 55: Discharges to air that cannot comply with Rules 1 - 54

Activity classification: Discretionary

This Rule applies to any discharge of contaminants into the air from any industrial or trade premises not listed in any other rule or where the activity is listed in a rule but the conditions for that rule cannot be met **OR**

any discharge from production land, waste management processes, site development, earthworks, the application of soil conditioners, aquaculture or intensive farming processes where the activity is listed in a rule but the conditions for that rule cannot be met.

Section 15(1) of the Act contains a presumption that, unless a regulation or a rule in a plan provides to the contrary, all discharges to air from industrial and trade premises require a resource consent. Rules 1 to 29 deal with discharges from industrial or trade premises, and in the case of Rules 1 to 7 discharges from production land, and provide different levels of controls on the various discharges depending on the effect of those discharges. Rules 30 to 41 deal with discharges from waste management processes. Rules 42 to 45 provide for site development, earthworks, and the application of soil conditioners on industrial or trade premises, residential and commercial properties, and farmland. Rules 46 to 54 apply to aquaculture or intensive farming activities.

Rules 30 to 54 apply to activities which are fundamental to: a) farming and commercial operations within Taranaki; and b) waste management processes. Rules 30 to 54 are activities which can result in significant adverse effects, specifically with regard to odour and dust, and therefore should be controlled by the Council. Rules 30 to 54 provide different levels of controls on the various discharges depending on the effect of those discharges.

Rule 55 applies to all discharges that do not come within the scope of the preceding rules. By classifying Rule 55 as a discretionary activity, the Council retains the ability to grant or decline a consent in accordance with the principles and objectives that are contained in the Act and the plan. This approach is considered to provide the maximum amount of flexibility for the Council in managing discharges from industrial and trade premises, production land, other places or sources, site development, earthworks, the application of soil conditioners, aquaculture and intensive farming, while retaining sufficient certainty and operational efficiency for resource users.

Discharges of agrichemicals into the air

Rule 56: Discharge of agrichemicals from farmland

Activity classification: Permitted

This Rule applies to the discharge of contaminants to air from the spraying of agrichemicals on production land.

Discharges from aquaculture or intensive farming processes

Discharges from Aquaculture Processes

Activity	Rule	Standards/Terms/Conditions	Classification	Notification	Control/Discretion	Policy Reference
Discharges of contaminants to air from aquaculture processes other than the discharge of agrichemicals into the air	46 Aquaculture processes	a) Discharge must not be noxious, dangerous, offensive or objectionable at or beyond the boundary of the property	Permitted			

Discharges from Intensive Pig Farming Processes

For information requirements refer to Section 5

Activity	Rule	Standards/Terms/Conditions	Classification	Notification	Control/Discretion	Policy Reference
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive pig farming when no more than 25 pigs are kept at any one time	47 Small intensive pig farming processes	a) Discharge must not result in offensive or objectionable odour or dust at or beyond the boundary of the property	Permitted			
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive pig farming when more than 25 pigs are kept at any one time, and where; the pig farm is an existing operation and a new consent is being applied for to replace or renew an existing consent	48 Existing intensive pig farming processes	a) Nature and scale of the effects of the activity are unchanged from that of the existing consent that is to be replaced or renewed	Restricted Discretionary	Applications will be publicly notified unless the Taranaki Regional Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will not be more than minor If the Taranaki Regional Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will not be more than minor, the Council will serve notice of applications on the owners and the occupiers of any off site dwellinghouse that is located within the buffer distances specified in column 3 of Table 1 in Appendix IV of the Plan at the time this Plan became operative, or the time the activity was first established ⁴³ , whichever was the earlier, who have not otherwise given written approval for the activity	a) Duration of consent b) Monitoring c) Effects relating to odour and dust and loss of amenity value of air d) Imposition of limits on or relating to discharge or ambient concentrations of contaminants, or on or relating to mass discharge rates e) Best practicable option to prevent or minimise any adverse effects on the environment f) Any matter contained in Appendix IV g) Review of the conditions of consent and the timing and purpose of the review h) Payment of administrative charges i) Payment of financial contributions	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

⁴³ 'Activity first established' means the date an air discharge consent was first issued by the Taranaki Regional Council.

Activity	Rule	Standards/Terms/Conditions	Classification	Notification	Control/Discretion	Policy Reference
Discharges of contaminants to air from new intensive pig farming processes when more than 25 pigs are kept at any one time	49 New large intensive pig farming processes	a) Any discharge of contaminants into air shall be located in accordance with Table 1 – 'Recommended buffer distances' in Appendix IV	Restricted Discretionary		a) Duration of consent b) Monitoring c) Effects relating to odour and dust and loss of amenity value of air d) Imposition of limits on or relating to discharge or ambient concentrations of contaminants, or on or relating to mass discharge rates e) Best practicable option to prevent or minimise any adverse effects on the environment f) Any matter contained in Appendix IV g) Review of the conditions of consent and the timing and purpose of the review h) Payment of administrative charges i) Payment of financial contributions	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive pig farming, where; the discharge is not listed in Rules 47, 48 or 49 or does not meet the conditions in Rule 47, Rule 48 or Rule 49	50 Intensive pig farming processes that do not comply with Rules 47, 48 or 49		Discretionary			1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Discharges from Intensive Poultry Farming Processes

For information requirements refer to Section 5

Activity	Rule	Standards/Terms/Conditions	Classification	Notification	Control/Discretion	Policy Reference
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive poultry farming when no more than 30 000 poultry are kept at any one time	51 Small intensive poultry farming processes	a) Discharge must not result in offensive or objectionable odour, or dust at or beyond the boundary of the property	Permitted			
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive poultry farming when more than 30 000 poultry are kept at any one time, and where; the poultry farm is an existing operation and a new consent is being applied for to replace or renew an existing consent	52 Existing intensive poultry farming processes	a) Nature and scale of the effects of the activity are unchanged from that of the existing consent that is to be replaced or renewed	Restricted Discretionary	Applications will be publicly notified unless the Taranaki Regional Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will not be more than minor If the Taranaki Regional Council is satisfied that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will not be more than minor, the Council will	a) Duration of consent b) Monitoring c) Effects relating to odour and dust and loss of amenity value of air d) Imposition of limits on or relating to discharge or ambient concentrations of contaminants, or on or relating to mass discharge rates e) Best practicable option to prevent or minimise any adverse effects on the environment f) Any matter contained in Appendix V g) Review of the conditions of consent and the timing and purpose of the review	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Activity	Rule	Standards/Terms/Conditions	Classification	Notification	Control/Discretion	Policy Reference
				serve notice of applications on the owners and the occupiers of any off site dwellinghouse located within the buffer distances specified in column 1 of Table 1 in Appendix V of the Plan at the time this Plan became operative, or the time the activity was first established ⁴⁴ , whichever was the earlier, who have not otherwise given written approval for the activity	h) Payment of administrative charges i) Payment of financial contributions	
Discharges of contaminants to air from new intensive poultry farms where more than 30,000 poultry are kept at any one time	53 New large intensive poultry farming processes	a) Any discharge of contaminants into air shall be located in accordance with Table 1 – 'Recommended buffer distances' in Appendix V	Restricted Discretionary		a) Duration of consent b) Monitoring c) Effects relating to odour and dust and loss of amenity value of air d) Imposition of limits on or relating to discharge or ambient concentrations of contaminants, or on or relating to mass discharge rates e) Best practicable option to prevent or minimise any adverse effects on the environment f) Any matter contained in Appendix V g) Review of the conditions of consent and the timing and purpose of the review h) Payment of administrative charges i) Payment of financial contributions	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3
Discharges of contaminants to air from intensive poultry farming, where; the discharge is not listed in Rules 51, 52 or 53 or does not meet the conditions in Rule 51, Rule 52 or Rule 53	54 Intensive poultry farming processes that do not comply with Rules 51, 52 or 53		Discretionary			1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Note: Appendix IV contains information on good management practices for intensive pig farming to prevent or minimise off site effects from odour or dust and Appendix V contains information on good management practices for intensive poultry farming to prevent or minimise off site effects from odour or dust.

⁴⁴ 'Activity first established' means the date an air discharge consent was first issued by the Taranaki Regional Council.

Appendix V: Good management practices for intensive poultry farming

Appendix V: Good management practices for intensive poultry farming

This appendix has been included in the plan for guidance to the poultry industry, and for general public information and education purposes. The information contained in this appendix provides general guidance on the range of options for preventing or minimising adverse effects on the environment from emissions from poultry farming, whether for egg production or broiler farming. It also provides a general indication of the matters that the Taranaki Regional Council will consider and the nature of the conditions that might be attached to a resource consent for the discharge of contaminants into the air from poultry farms (refer Rules 51 to 54).

The material presented in this appendix must not be considered as a set of rules that will be applied universally. Each individual situation will be considered by the Taranaki Regional Council on its particular merits and circumstances, with regard for the level of environmental protection that is appropriate in that situation.

Before starting a new poultry farm, or extending an existing operation, it is strongly advised that the proposal should be discussed with officers of the Taranaki Regional Council as well as with the local district council and the neighbours of the site.

This appendix is based primarily on experience gained in the Taranaki region since 1992, together with information contained in 'Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Air' (UK Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food 1998), 'Odour Management at Intensive Livestock Installations' (UK Environment Agency 2005, www.environment-agency.gov.uk/agriculture then select 'pigs and poultry'), 'Poultry Industry Agreed Standards and Codes of Practice', October 1995, developed by the Poultry Industry Association of NZ (Inc), a draft code of practice prepared by Environmental Science and Research for Taranaki Regional Council, 1994, the 'NSW Poultry Farming Guidelines (draft)' October 1992, developed by NSW Agriculture and referenced by the Environment Protection Authority (NSW), and 'Victoria Code for Broiler Farms 2001' (Department of Primary Industries Victoria, www.dpi.vic.gov.au).

a) Environment management plan (EMP)

Applicants and operators should prepare an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that describes measures for minimising environmental risks and contingency actions for responding to problems. The EMP should cover:

- a list of all key risk events for odour;
- a list of all key risk events for dust;
- waste management issues;
- the day-to-day best management practices and responses that will be put in place on

the site to avoid or reduce these events and issues;

- details of contingency plans, describing actions, allocating responsibilities, and providing contact details for any outside advice, notification or assistance that might be required;
- details of any self-monitoring that will be carried out, including property boundary odour surveys;
- familiarisation of all staff with consent conditions and the contents of the EMP;
- trigger events and target response times;
- procedures for corrective actions taken as a result of an owner's own identification of any issue; and
- procedures for addressing complaints and incidents.

Readers should in particular refer to the Victoria Code and to the Department of Primary Industries (Victoria) Generic EMP, and the UK Environmental Agency Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) guides for greater detail than is set out above (note that not all information or requirements set out in these references are applicable in Taranaki).

Operators should seek to ensure that they incorporate the best practicable options currently available for reducing emissions regardless of whether their operations meet the recommended buffer distances set out on page 154.

The EMP should be updated every five years (at a minimum).

b) Buffer distances

Preferred minimum buffer distances between sheds and other features are set out in Table 1 (page 154). It should be noted that buffer separation is not a substitute for good management of sheds, nor will observation of these distances without consideration of other factors ensure no odour problems off site.

Table 1: Recommended buffer distances

Number of poultry	1. Distance to nearest off site dwellinghouse	2. Distance to nearest sensitive area (refer to Policy 2.3)	3. Distance to road	4. Distance to any boundary
	metres	metres	metres	metres
Fewer than 30,000	100	100	100	50
30,000 – 59,999	200	200	100	50
60,000 – 79,999	300	300	100	50
more than 80,000	400	400	100	50

The Taranaki Regional Council will have regard to these buffer distances in determining whether notification of resource consent applications is required, and in determining the extent of any mitigation requirements. If these buffer distances cannot be met, it does not mean that resource consents will automatically be declined.

The distances in Table 1 above are calculated from the wall of the nearest shed. However, in the case of 'tunnel' sheds (fan-forced ventilation along the length of the shed, exiting at one end), the buffer distances are calculated from the shed exit end, provided that shed construction and maintenance are such that all fugitive emissions are minimised.

c) Future expansion

Applicants should consider whether their proposed site is capable of supporting an expansion without increasing off site effects to adjacent neighbouring properties, even if this is not immediately planned. The granting of a consent for a particular size of operation does not guarantee a consent can be varied to accommodate an expanded activity at some time in the future.

d) Prevailing winds

If sensitive land uses (refer policy 2.3 of the Plan) are located downwind under prevailing wind directions, or are located downslope, the preferred buffer distances above may be increased by up to 50%. Prevailing wind directions are generally as follows -

North Taranaki: from south-east, west, and north-east

Central Taranaki: north and south

South Taranaki: from west and south-east

Local micro-climates may be different to these. For advice on particular localities, operators should check with the Taranaki Regional Council. Consent applicants will be expected to have obtained information on local wind directions.

e) Meteorology

Some parts of Taranaki are more prone than others to atmospheric conditions that trap emissions and prevent them dispersing. Operators should seek advice from the Taranaki Regional Council when considering both a general locality and a specific site for their facilities.

f) Shed configuration

Shed design and specific site considerations will apply. In general, the preferred shed configuration is:

- across the direction of prevailing winds, rather than parallel to them; and
- with multiple emission points, rather than a single discharge source (but see below re: 'discharge point design');

Shed layout should be such that bird and litter removal takes place at the end of the sheds furthest from neighbours.

It is acknowledge that other site specific considerations will also have to apply, such as (1) the avoidance of conflict between air discharge points and neighbouring dwellings (2) land contours (3) orientation to the sun.

g) Discharge point design

Dispersion of discharges is enhanced by:

- increasing the height of discharge points;
- avoiding the use of conical rain shields over the top of discharge stacks;
- increasing vertical exhaust velocities by appropriate fan speeds, fan sizes, and shaft sizes;
- the use of vertical discharge fan units with minimal obstruction to the outside shaft's airflow;
- tunnel shed design, with large capacity fans in one end wall to discharge to one end of a farm;
- the use of air direction baffles or ramps; and
- possibly shelter belt plantings (but see [I] 'Screening' below).

Having the point of discharge at least 3 metres above the peak roofline of the shed and adjacent buildings provides maximum dispersion, by avoiding eddies and downdraughts and promoting dilution.

h) Shed construction

Sheds should be constructed in a manner that makes them free of draughts and leaks, and subsequently well maintained. Materials should be impervious, to assist in cleaning and to avoid absorption of odours. Horizontal

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surfaces (other than the floor) will tend to accumulate dust and other wastes, and should be avoided. Flooring must be impervious and easily cleaned and disinfected. Ventilation systems should not allow rain to enter the building and dampen litter.

A well-insulated shed will mean less air flow is required to maintain shed temperature, and hence improves dilution and mixing downwind of the shed.

i) Topography

Sheds should not be sited within the same valley system as sensitive receiving environments, unless the site is both downslope, and downwind under all prevailing wind directions. Sheds should not be sited on slopes above sensitive receiving environments. The direction of night breezes should be considered.

Notes and comments

Valleys tend to channel emissions, preventing dispersion. Katabatic drift (the movement of air at night as it cools down) tends to flow down slopes, and can carry long distances.

j) Aprons and access roading

These should be constructed of impervious material, and large enough to allow clean out of shed litter and loading for transport off site, without litter falling onto soil, surrounding gravel surfaces, or into any water or drainage channels.

k) Moisture control of litter

The moisture content of the litter should be controlled by:

- prompt repair of leaks in roof and exterior walls;
- prompt repair of leaks in drinking water piping and drinkers;
- a suitable depth of bedding litter;
- the removal of damp litter around drinkers; and
- adjustment of fogging spray systems, if used, so that droplets do not fall onto litter.

Nipple drinkers or drip cups (or alternative on-demand systems) are preferred over water troughs or bell drinkers, to avoid wetting litter.

A litter moisture content of 20-25% is considered optimal, avoiding dust (too dry) and odour (too damp), and promoting aerobic bacterial action. If litter is caking or sticky, it is too wet.

l) Screening

Tree planting that screens buildings from neighbours or other sensitive receiving environments should be undertaken and maintained. While there is no clear evidence that vegetation reduces odour, it will disturb air flow (enhance mixing and thus dilution), and by reducing awareness of an activity will potentially reduce sensitivity. Planting should be high and dense enough to screen buildings from the sight of neighbours.

Earthen embankments or fences up to 2 metres high may also be used.

m) Air flow

When considering screening (see [l] above), it should at the same time be remembered that planting that encroaches around the buildings will prevent free air flow around them, and may need to be avoided in the interests of adequate ventilation of the sheds and dispersion of emissions. A minimum separation between buildings and trees of 20 metres is advised. However, shading and cooling of sheds by trees in summer may also be an advantage. Similarly, parallel poultry houses should be separated by a distance of at least five times the height of the buildings if dispersion of emissions is to be maximised.

n) Dead birds

Dead birds should be collected from the sheds and disposed of on a daily basis. Acceptable options include holding in frozen storage pending removal off site, incineration in a licensed incinerator, disposal in an offal hole, or a properly controlled composting operation.

o) Offal holes

Refer to Rule 35 of the plan for offal hole requirements. A sealed and lined offal hole will promote anaerobic decomposition and is generally favoured for small numbers of mortality, subject to avoiding an accumulation of methane gas (explosive and suffocating).

p) Litter spillage

Litter should be removed from site in covered/enclosed vehicles. Litter spillages (e.g. during its removal from sheds or from the property) should be recovered as soon and as completely as practicable, and particularly before becoming damp. To the extent practicable, litter removal should be timed and managed for periods when wind speed and direction are less likely to carry odour and dust towards neighbouring residences.

q) Litter stockpiling

If used litter is stockpiled on the property (whether prior to removal, or for ultimate use on the property), then it must be substantially covered by tarpaulins, sheeting or similar, or in a draught-proof building with closed doors, if the pile is within 200 metres of any dwellinghouse off the site.

r) Litter spreading

Animal litter spreading on any day between the last Sunday in September and the first Sunday in April should be undertaken prior to 2.00 pm (daylight saving time). Avoid spreading on weekends and public holidays. Records should be kept of date, locations, quantities, and weather conditions prevailing when litter is spread. As far as practicable, spread litter only when the wind is away from neighbours, roads, and sensitive receiving environments.

s) Noise

Noise is not a matter that the Taranaki Regional Council can consider. However, it is a matter of observation that reducing awareness of an activity will reduce sensitivity to that operation. Appropriate management of noise generation and noise reduction measures will reduce the likelihood of complaints.

t) Complaints

Any complaints concerning dust, odour, or other effects of discharges to air, received by a farm operator, should be recorded in writing by the operator, and the records retained for at least six months. Details should include:

- the time, nature and extent of the effect as reported;
- the location, name and contact phone number of the complainant (if known);
- the wind direction and speed at the time of the incident;
- general weather conditions (e.g. humid, fine and clear, misty);
- general operational status of the farm;
- any on-farm circumstances that may be related to the incident;
- any investigations undertaken as a result of the complaint;
- any changes made to farm activities as a result of the incident; and
- the nature of any feedback given back to the complainant.

u) Emission abatement technology - dust

Dust mitigation measures include:

- control of dust content of supplied litter;
- misting sprays within sheds;
- avoiding over-dry litter;
- optimising bird movement and activity;
- maintaining a vegetation cover on areas around buildings;
- avoiding overly high air flow velocities inside sheds;
- using dust filters, baffle plates, nets, or other dust abatement systems on extraction ducting;
- adequate separation from neighbouring properties/premises;
- tree screening;
- avoiding dusty feedstocks; and

- controlling vehicle speeds on unpaved access tracks.

v) Emission abatement technology - odours

Odour mitigation measures include:

- an adequate depth of litter in the shed – 10-15 cm as a minimum;
- misting sprays within sheds;
- proper stocking rates;
- control of feed formulations and additives;
- avoiding over-damp litter;
- proprietary odour control systems of proven performance;
- proprietary litter additives of proven performance
- adequate separation from neighbouring properties/premises;
- elevated discharge into the air from buildings; and
- tree screening.

While there are proprietary odour masking or neutralising agents on the market, the efficacy of these is generally unproven.

w) Burning of wastes and rubbish

Other than as covered elsewhere in the Regional Air Quality Plan for Taranaki, or by a resource consent, the burning of wastes is not generally favoured because of the likelihood of smoke and odour nuisance.

x) Shed washdown water disposal systems - design and operation

Washdown collection and transport systems should be designed so as to avoid ponding or stagnation of washdown water.

Drains (other than collection channels) should be enclosed pipes rather than open. Site drainage should prevent stormwater ingress into sheds and contamination of stormwater systems by litter or washwater runoff.

Washdown water holding tanks or sumps should be covered or enclosed, to minimise odour release. Sediments in sumps should be removed at no longer than three monthly intervals.

Note: this section addresses only air emission effects from washdown water. Water quality impacts should also be addressed.

y) Washdown water and effluent disposal

Contaminated seepage from manure or litter on site, or washdown water from heavily soiled sheds, needs to be disposed of in a safe manner, as under Rule 40 or 55 in this plan.

z) Feed formulations

Research indicates that feed mixtures and formulations do influence the odour of manure. As yet this research is not sufficiently advanced to give comprehensive specific guidance. However, operators should remain abreast of continuing developments. All feed stock should be kept dry.

aa) Temperature control

A lower shed temperature reduces the rate at which odours are released. It also reduces microbial activity, which is a significant cause of odour. When shed temperatures are being optimised, these factors should be considered.

bb) Contingency planning

To safeguard against the consequences of a high mortality situation, a contingency plan for the rapid disposal of very large numbers of birds should be prepared e.g. access to off site incineration or prior discussion with the Taranaki Regional Council over an acceptable burial area and burial procedures.

cc) Reverse sensitivity

To safeguard the opportunity for future expansion, site owners should remain aware of any proposals to subdivide or to change the zoning (land use controls) of nearby land that may allow any establishment of activities that are incompatible with intensive farming.