



Rural Plan Changes: Proposed Rural Area

Section 32 Evaluation Report

Prior to Notification Part 2

This forms **Part 2** of the section 32 (s32) evaluation reports for the Rural Plan Changes. This part should be read in conjunction with the other **Parts 1 – 9**. The general introduction, statutory assessment and analysis of higher order policy documents is contained within **Part 1**.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview and background

1. This forms **Part 2** of the section 32 (s32) evaluation reports for the Rural Plan Changes. This part should be read in conjunction with the other **Parts 1 – 9**. The general introduction, statutory assessment and analysis of higher order policy documents is contained within **Part 1**.

1.2 The proposed plan change

2. Plan Change 85 (PC85) seeks to introduce new objectives, policies and performance standards for the rural environment and new definitions and changes to definitions in Chapter 4 of the Operative Whangarei District Plan (WDP). PC85 includes:
 - New 'Rural Area' (RA) chapter – with objectives, policies and performance standard rules for the Rural Area.
 - Consequential changes to some WDP objectives and policies.
 - New definitions and consequential changes to the WDP, Chapter 4 Meaning of words.
3. PC85 includes a description of the RA to identify the environmental expectations and outcomes sought in the rural environment and the proposed Environments (zones) through the proposed objectives and policies.

1.3 What is the proposed RA?

4. The efficiency and effectiveness monitoring of the WDP and the Rural Development Strategy (RDS) have concluded that having the majority of the rural environment zoned as Countryside Environment (CE) in the WDP does not provide sufficient spatial and policy direction for the rural environment. The RDS recommends that a "new middle layer" of overarching geographic policy direction for the rural environment be created. To avoid confusion of district plan terminology (Environment as a zone versus environment in a general sense) the rural environment in PC85 is referred to as the 'Rural Area'.
5. The RDS also concluded that the use, amenity, character and very nature of the rural environment are variable throughout the district. It is difficult for one or two district plan zones to adequately describe and achieve appropriate resource management outcomes. To fill this policy gap multiple zones are recommended by the RDS. The proposed RA will apply over the proposed zones addressing the zone boundary issues and any policy matters that appropriately apply across all proposed rural Environments.

2. Proposed structure of RA provisions

6. Consistent with direction set in the Whangarei Growth Strategy Sustainable Futures 30/50 (30/50) and the RDS, PC85 seeks to provide a greater level of purpose and direction for the rural environment. The RA aims to introduce a description and expectation and overarching objectives, policies and performance standard provisions for the rural environment, setting a geographical context for the rural Environments. The proposed Description and Expectations describe the outcomes for the rural environment:

The rural area, outside of the urban areas of Whangarei City, Ruakaka and Marsden Town Centre includes rural and coastal villages (three of which are identified growth nodes) and rural living clusters. More than 80% of the land area of the Whangarei district is rural. The rural area extends to all of the district boundaries adjoining Far North and Kaipara Districts; it also encompasses land areas on the coast. These coastal areas contain similar rural productive uses, but have the added influence of the coastal environment.

The rural area is comprised of a diverse landmass, including a variety of landforms, significant areas of natural biodiversity and a number of at risk aquifers stream and rivers. The area also contains a vast roading network including State Highways, and major network utility services. The vast majority of the land is classified as having moderately productive soil types, being generally identified as stable productive hill country.

The rural area has a diverse mix of land use ranging from living in villages and lifestyle areas to productive uses such as forestry, horticulture, agricultural activities and industry that support primary production activities. There is a continuing demand for rural land for rural tourism and recreation use. The transportation of goods throughout the rural area, primarily on Strategic Forestry Routes and State Highways, is not only essential to the economic viability of Whangarei district but also neighbouring districts.

As a predominantly working environment, the rural area has particular amenity and environmental values which are important to rural people. This area is typified by the close economic, social and physical links between the rural resources and the people who live and work with them. Activities within the rural area reflect the productive nature of land and resources; these contribute to 'rural' characteristics. The resulting character defines the expected rural scale of development and level of effects. Included are such features as large allotments with very low site coverage and limited areas of impervious surface, buildings that are predominantly a minor element within the environment, with a few large buildings that are generally industrial and utilitarian in character. Noise and odour associated with animals and farming activities are expected within the rural area.

It is important to strengthen the district's economy by providing for an on-going range of land use activities in the Rural Area. However the priority is to sustain the productive potential of the land and the rural character and amenity values that are a key element of the district. Productive usage includes farming, forestry, quarrying, dairy processing, cement manufacturing, recreation and tourism. It also includes sustaining our biodiversity and productive ecosystems as these are equally important to the health and wellbeing of communities and the economy.

Consistent with the direction of the Whangarei District Council Growth Strategy and Sustainable Futures 30/50 2009, consolidation of development particularly residential and commercial is key for the Rural Area. Historical uncoordinated subdivision and development patterns have resulted in cumulative effects on resources such as biodiversity, heritage, landscape, productive land and have led to constraints on the viability of some farming and horticultural operations.

To address this, residential and commercial subdivision and development is expected to largely occur where and when it has been planned for, rather than in a scattered pattern of development. Careful management of competing land use is required to avoid reverse sensitivity effects.

The Urban Growth Strategy 2009 identifies land in close proximity to Whangarei City that is influenced by the urban environment and may be required for future urban growth, consistent with Whangarei district Council Growth Strategy and Sustainable Futures 30/50 and Council adopted Urban Structure Plans.

To address the diverse and varied issues and outcomes associated with the rural area, five different Environments apply:

Rural Production Environment (RPE)

Rural Production Environment provides primarily for the productive use and development of rural land and resources. Residential, commercial and industrial land use and development is expected to be secondary to productive uses.

Rural Living Environment (RLE)

Rural Living Environment provides for the on-going lifestyle development of land and rural living activities in locations that have an existing density of lifestyle development.

Strategic Rural Industry Environment (SRIE)

Strategic Rural Industry Environment recognises and provides for the on-going operation of established larger scale industrial developments within the rural area.

Rural Village Environment

Rural Village Environment provides for the on-going operation and development of rural villages through three Sub-Environments:

Rural Village Residential Sub-Environment (RVRE)

Rural Village Residential Environment provides for the residential development and living activities of established rural villages.

Rural Village Centre Sub-Environment (RVCE)

Rural Village Centre Environment provides for and protects the commercial centre of larger rural villages.

Rural Village Industry Sub-Environment (RVIE)

Rural Village Industry Environment recognises and provides for the on-going operation of established industrial developments within rural villages.

Rural Urban Interface Environment

Rural Urban Interface Environment provides for rural residential land use and future urban development on the fringes of Whangarei City.

7. No mapping of the RA is proposed in the WDP Environment Maps.
8. As an overarching policy chapter the RA does not propose to introduce methods that specifically correspond to the proposed objectives and policies. It is anticipated that the methods will be contained within the relevant Environment provisions.

3. Section 32 analysis

9. S32(1)(a) requires Council to examine the extent to which the proposed objectives are the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA. PC85 has been prepared in direct response to the need to introduce an additional layer of description and outcomes for the rural environment. There is no status quo in the WDP therefore new objectives are appropriate to respond to resource management issues. PC85 proposes the following objectives:

TABLE 1: REASON FOR PROPOSED RA OBJECTIVES

Proposed RA Objective	Reason/Issue
RA.1.2.1 Protect the long-term viability of the productive functions of rural land in a manner that delivers economic benefit and sustains the environment.	The productive potential of rural land is currently being compromised by the on-going use of rural land for non-rural activities and subdivision. The RDS sets a clear directive to protect productive land for productive uses; the economic benefits of productive uses are seen as important to the wellbeing of the district. Sustaining the environment takes a direct link from s5 of the RMA.
RA.1.2.2 Avoid, remedy or mitigate reverse sensitivity impacts especially in relation to established and productive rural activities.	The efficient use and operation of rural activities is being restricted by the reverse sensitivity effects resulting from conflicting land use activities. This issue received significant feedback in the consultation on the RDS.
RA.1.2.3 Avoid cumulative impacts in the rural environment by preventing lifestyle subdivision and development outside of planned areas.	30/50 has confirmed that the district's rural environment is being fragmented as a result of on-going subdivision for lifestyle development purposes. As the density of lifestyle land use increases the amenity of the rural environment changes from an active, productive working environment. The demand and nature of infrastructure changes as owners may seek sealed roads, reticulation of water and sewer, foot paths, street lights etc.
RA.1.2.4 Avoid development in hazard prone areas in the first instance and consider remediation or mitigation if proposals have production or other recognised benefits.	Hazards are a separate topic to be addressed within the WDP rolling review. As a Resource Area this will be dealt with as a district wide plan change. Proposed objective RA.1.2.4 recognizes that the avoidance of hazards is necessary in the rural environment to meet the requirements of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). The RPS takes a cautious approach to hazards, proposed policy 7.1.2 sets direction as to when subdivision and development in flood prone areas may be appropriate. Method 7.1.7 seeks to implement this policy and clause (6) requires Council to ensure that the risk of natural hazards is assessed prior to rezoning.
RA.1.2.5 Recognise the range of amenity values and characteristics in the rural area.	The rural environment of Whangarei district is varied in its amenity. It ranges from active productive characteristics to lifestyle and village amenity to quite isolated conservation areas. S7(c) of the RMA requires the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values. Proposed objective RA1.2.5 seeks to achieve s7(c) while recognizing that the amenity of the RA is varied.
RA.1.2.6 Consolidate rural living development in areas where productive rural land uses have already been compromised or on less productive land without significant adverse effects on the environment.	30/50 and the Consent and Monitoring Report (2015) confirms that there is a demand for choice in living and provision of rural lifestyle options is an important choice. The RPS provides strong direction within Policies 5.1.5 and 5.1.3 regarding the compromise of high class soils and the avoidance of adverse effects of subdivision, use and development on primary production activities. To give effect to this policy direction proposed objective RA.1.2.6 seeks to consolidate rural living development to avoid further compromising productive rural land.
RA.1.2.7 Provide for areas of rural residential development on the fringe of Whangarei City while ensuring that these areas can accommodate future urban growth.	30/50 and the Urban Growth Strategy (UGS) provide direction as to how and when Whangarei City should grow. Consolidation of residential development in Whangarei City urban areas is an outcome sought in both Strategies. A balance is needed between providing for residential growth and protecting the rural environment from fragmentation.
RA.1.2.8 Provide for a range of land uses in the rural area, including residential, lifestyle, commercial, industrial and rural production in appropriate areas.	The RDS has concluded that non-rural land use activities are sprawling across the rural environment as a result of permissive zone provisions in the WDP. 30/50 seeks to consolidate residential and business development in urban areas. Vibrancy and resilience of rural villages is also necessary to support the social and economic wellbeing of the district. Direction of land uses to the appropriate locations is therefore sought by proposed objective RA.1.2.8.

RA.1.2.9 Provide for managed growth of rural villages.	The Coastal Management Strategy (CMS) sets direction for each coastal village, including the establishment of structure plans identifying potential land rezoning to provide for population growth for a 20-30 time period. Constraints on physical locations and the ability to provide for services places technical limitations on how villages can grow.
RA.1.2.10 Achieve the provision of onsite and reticulated infrastructure in a sustainable manner.	Availability of infrastructure varies across the rural environment, ranging from reticulation into Council systems to on-site systems. Provision of infrastructure to support the health and wellbeing of the community is important. Sustainable management of services and the release of land for residential purposes as and when reticulated services are available is a direction set in both the 30/50 and the UGS.

3.1 Appropriateness in terms of purpose of the RMA

10. Part 2 of the RMA outlines the purpose and principles of the RMA. The following table demonstrates that the proposed RA objectives achieve the purpose of the RMA. Many sections within Part 2 of the RMA are not relevant to PC85 or are specifically addressed by the Resource Area provisions within the WDP.
11. Additionally, with regard to s8, consultation with Tangata Whenua has been undertaken as part of the plan change process and no matters have been identified that would indicate that PC85 is inconsistent with s8.

TABLE 2: EVALUATION OF PROPOSED RA OBJECTIVES AGAINST PART 2 OF THE RMA

		Proposed RA Objectives									
		RA.1.2.1	RA.1.2.2	RA.1.2.3	RA.1.2.4	RA.1.2.5	RA.1.2.6	RA.1.2.7	RA.1.2.8	RA.1.2.9	RA.1.2.10
Resource Management Act Part 2 Sections	S5(2)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	s5(2)(a)	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	
	s5(2)(b)	√		√			√	√	√	√	√
	s5(2)(c)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	s6(a)		√			√					
	s7(b)	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
	s7(c)			√		√	√	√	√		
	s7(f)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	s7(g)	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	

12. Having assessed the proposed objectives against Part 2 of the RMA it is considered that they achieve the purpose of the RMA and promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

3.2 Appropriateness in relation to higher order documents

13. The provisions of higher order documents were considered in the formulation of the objectives and policies in PC85. Of particular relevance to PC85 are the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS), RPS, Whangarei District Long Term Plan 2015 – 2025 (LTP), 30/50, Coastal Management Strategy (CMS), RDS and the UGS. Part 1 of this report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the consistency of PC85 in relation to relevant higher order documents; however, the following table provides an overview of how the proposed RA objectives' are consistent with the relevant higher order documents.

TABLE 3: EVALUATION OF PROPOSED RA OBJECTIVES AGAINST RELEVANT HIGHER ORDER DOCUMENTS											
Proposed RA Objectives											
		RA.1.2.1	RA.1.2.2	RA.1.2.3	RA.1.2.4	RA.1.2.5	RA.1.2.6	RA.1.2.7	RA.1.2.8	RA.1.2.9	RA1.2.10
Relevant Higher Order Document	NZCPS					√	√	√		√	
	RPS	√	√	√	√		√	√	√		√
	PRPS	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√
	LTP	√		√			√	√	√	√	√
	30/50	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	CMS	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	RDS	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	UGS			√			√	√			

3.3 Appropriateness in relation to the WDP

14. The proposed RA objectives are subservient to the higher order District Wide objectives set out in Part C of the WDP. The proposed RA objectives do not alter or diverge from the outcomes sought by the higher order objectives, which being settled are deemed to achieve the purpose of the RMA. Instead, the proposed RA objectives supplement and provide further specific details in relation to the outcomes sought in the rural geographical context.
15. Using the rationale set out on the Long Bay decision¹ the proposed RA objectives need to be examined as to whether they are the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the

¹ Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society Inc v North Shore City Council (A078/08)

settled higher order WDP objectives. Having considered this principle, the proposed RA objectives directly relate to, and are therefore considered to be the most appropriate way of achieving the following Anticipated Environmental Results identified in the WDP²:

TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENT OF WDP ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS	
Relevant Anticipated Environmental Results in the WDP	Proposed RA Objectives
Land use and development is consistent with the preservation and/or enhancement of amenity values appropriate to each particular Environment	RA.1.2.5
Conflict between incompatible activities in regard to amenity values (particularly on Environment boundaries) is avoided, remedied or mitigated	RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.2 and RA.1.2.8
Rural amenity values in the Countryside and Coastal Countryside Environments are maintained and/or enhanced and the conflicts between rural residential and primary production are minimised. <i>(note consequential changes required)</i>	RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.5 and RA.1.2.8
Sporadic, sprawling or ribbon development patterns of coastal development are avoided.	RA.1.2.3 and RA.1.2.9
Avoidance of reverse sensitivity effects and appropriate separation of incompatible land uses.	RA.1.2.2 and RA.1.2.8
Avoidance of loss of productive farmland.	RA.1.2.1, RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.6, RA.1.2.7 and RA.1.2.8
A pattern of land use and development complementary to the character of the locality, whilst at the same time avoiding conflicts between incompatible land use activities	RA.1.2.2, RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.5 and RA.1.2.8
A pattern of consolidated land use and development that allows for the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources, avoids sporadic subdivision and ribbon development, particularly along the coast, and ensures a density of development appropriate to the location	RA.1.2.1, RA.1.2.2, RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.5, RA.1.2.6, RA.1.2.7 and RA.1.2.10
The avoidance of subdivision and development in areas of high risk from noise levels and from natural hazards	RA.1.2.4 and RA.1.2.8
The protection of the district's versatile soils, water quality, natural features, landscapes, open spaces, significant ecological areas, biodiversity, public access to coast, lakes and rivers, heritage, cultural and amenity values from inappropriate subdivision and development	RA.1.2.1, RA.1.2.3, RA.1.2.5, RA.1.2.6, RA.1.2.7, RA.1.2.8

16. The RA chapter sets out only those objectives that are specific to the rural environment. However, there are a number of higher level District Wide objectives and policies that are equally relevant. The policies and methods set out within the RA chapter seek to achieve the objectives of both the RA and many of the District Wide objectives.

3.4 Effectiveness and efficiency of proposed policies and methods

17. For the purposes of the s32 assessment, it is important to determine whether the preferred approach will be more effective and efficient than other alternatives and whether this effectiveness and efficiency comes at a higher cost than other alternatives. It is also important that the Council considers whether the costs potentially outweigh the benefits. S32(2)(a) states that an environmental, economic, social and cultural effects assessment be undertaken in relation to the proposed provisions, including economic growth and employment opportunities provided or reduced.

² Refer Amenity Chapter 5, Built Form and Development Chapter 6 and Subdivision & Development Chapter 8

18. It is considered that the level of analysis undertaken in this report is appropriate to the scale of the proposal. It was not considered practicable to quantify the costs and benefits of the proposal. For ease of evaluation the provisions have been packaged by issue topic.
19. The following table demonstrates that the proposed RA policies proposed implement the proposed RA objectives:

TABLE 5: LINKING OF PROPOSED RA PROVISIONS	
Proposed RA Objective	Proposed RA Policy
RA.1.2.1 Protect the long-term viability of the productive functions of rural land in a manner that delivers economic benefit and sustains the environment.	RA.1.3.2, RA.1.3.3, RA.1.3.10 and RA.1.3.11
RA.1.2.2 Avoid, remedy or mitigate reverse sensitivity impacts especially in relation to established and productive rural activities.	RA.1.3.4, RA.1.3.10, and RA.1.3.11
RA.1.2.3 Avoid cumulative impacts in the rural environment by preventing lifestyle subdivision and development outside of planned areas.	RA.1.3.2, RA.1.3.3 RA1.3.5, RA.1.3.6, RA.1.3.8 and RA.1.3.10
RA.1.2.4 Avoid development in hazard prone areas in the first instance and consider remediation or mitigation if proposals have production or other recognised benefits.	RA.1.3.7
RA.1.2.5 Recognise the range of amenity values and characteristics in the rural area.	RA.1.3.1, RA1.3.2, RA.1.3.3, RA.1.3.4, RA.1.3.5. RA.1.3.6 RA1.3.9 and RA.1.3.10
RA.1.2.6 Consolidate rural living development in areas where productive rural land uses have already been compromised or on less productive land without significant adverse effects on the environment.	RA.1.3.3, RA.1.3.5 and RA.1.3.6
RA.1.2.7 Provide for areas of rural residential development on the fringe of Whangarei City while ensuring that these areas can accommodate future urban growth.	RA.1.3.6
RA.1.2.8 Provide for a range of land uses in the rural area, including residential, lifestyle, commercial, industrial and rural production in appropriate areas.	RA.1.3.1, RA.1.3.2, RA1.3.3, RA.1.3.4, RA.1.3.5, RA.1.3.6, RA.1.3.9, RA1.3.10 and RA.1.3.11.
RA.1.2.9 Provide for managed growth of rural villages.	RA.1.3.5, RA.1.3.8, RA.1.3.10 and RA.1.3.12.
RA.1.2.10 Achieve the provision of onsite and reticulated infrastructure in a sustainable manner.	RA.1.3.8, RA.1.3.12 and RA.1.3.13

3.5 Evaluation of provisions options

Proposed policies

20. Alternative ways of addressing the resource management issues for the rural environment were considered in the RDS. Creating the RA with targeted objectives appropriately achieves the purpose of the RMA. The following reasonably practicable policy options to achieve the RA objectives have been evaluated.

Option 1: Status Quo – Retain the current policy and methods in the WDP.

Option 2: Introduce new policies for the RA and amend some of the existing policies to avoid inconsistencies in the district plan. (Plan change option).

21. Evaluation of these alternative options have been summarised in the table below:

TABLE 6: EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR RA POLICY

	Costs	Benefits
<p>Option 1: Status Quo – Retain the current policy and methods in the WDP.</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Council will not fulfil its duties under the RMA to achieve the integrated management of the effects of the use and development of the land and resources. Current provisions do not fully address identified issues concerning rural land fragmentation and potential reduction of the productive capability of the resources including impacts on life-supporting capacity of soils resources and reverse sensitivity effects associated with rural residential activities. The generic policy approach and assessment criteria do not support consent processing where a complex resource consent application is lodged. There is some uncertainty about the robustness of consent conditions and environmental outcomes. Does not give effect to the consolidated growth pattern adopted by 30/50. The objectives and policies are generic and do not address all key elements of the rural environment. Does not give due regard to the finite nature of the rural land resource (s7(g)).</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Ongoing fragmentation of rural land for non-rural activities, such as rural residential development, contributes to land price inflation, increased reverse sensitivity effects and impacts on the ability to utilise rural land for primary production activities and decisions to further invest in primary production.</p> <p><u>Social</u> Failure to actively manage rural resources would mean that non-rural activities, particularly rural residential activities, may compromise the productivity of rural land and lead to a reduction in the ability of people and the community to provide for their social and economic well-being. The cumulative impact of rural residential development (including higher density integrated developments) and non-rural activities, will impact on the overall rural character and amenity. Health and well-being of some landowners compromised by failing on-site effluent disposal systems.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known.</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Current provisions provide some policy direction for avoidance of ribbon, sporadic and scattered development. Policy approach relies upon assessment of the existing environment which is compromised in parts of the rural environment. RA strong direction with regard to the consolidation of development, infill, contiguous and choice directing the release of land for residential development.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Rural activities are enabled subject to avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects. Provides certainty for landowners, investors, residents and the market about the controls on land use and subdivision in the rural areas.</p> <p><u>Social</u> No change to the current provisions for landowners, investors and residents. Continued flexibility for landowners and investors in terms of land use and development options.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> Provides a level of familiarity for plan users and certainty about consenting practice and decisions. No cultural shift required to implement.</p>
<p>Option 2: Introduce new policies for the RA and amend some of the</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Layered policy in the may be complex.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Ongoing fragmentation of rural land for non-</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Council will fulfil its duties under s31(1)(a) to achieve the integrated management of the effects of the use and development of the land and</p>

<p>existing policy. (Plan change option).</p>	<p>rural activities, such as rural residential development, contributes to land price inflation, increased reverse sensitivity effects and impacts on the ability to utilise rural land for primary production activities and decisions to further invest in primary production.</p> <p><u>Social</u> None known.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> Cultural shift required to adopt a strategic management approach to managing rural land and controlling rural-residential development.</p>	<p>resources.</p> <p>Policy focuses on sustainable rural land use and development, avoiding, remedying or mitigating environmental effects.</p> <p>More certainty for landowners, investors and residents that activities not anticipated in the zones, or activities which do not meet performance standards, will be subject to greater scrutiny and comprehensively assessed.</p> <p>Gives effect to the consolidated growth pattern adopted by 30/50.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Productive rural activities are enabled subject to avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects. Provides certainty for landowners, investors, residents and the market about the controls on land use and subdivision in the rural areas Clarifies the criteria that formed the proposed spatial extent of each Environment. Balance is achieved in terms of the policy framework for assessing resource consent applications. Rules improve Council's ability to take legal/enforcement action where there is a non-compliance with consent conditions, and, therefore, less costly than if there was no rules.</p> <p><u>Social</u> None known</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known</p>
	Efficiency	Effectiveness
<p>Option 1:</p>	<p>The benefits of the Status Quo option (the current provisions) are outweighed by the significant costs of not aligning with the RPS, 30/50 and RDS and, hence, this option is not efficient.</p>	<p>The status quo option is not effective as it does not 'give effect' to the RPS, 30/50 and RDS and does not provide for the effective use and development of rural land for primary production activities. Status quo has resulted in the fragmentation of the rural environment and the compromise of productive uses.</p>
<p>Option 2:</p>	<p>Option 2 is effective it provides policy direction for decision making and strengthens the implementation of methods.</p>	<p>Option 2 is effective as it implements the RPS, 30/50 and RDS. Option 2 provides specific policy direction that will be effective in achieving the RA objectives particularly when considering discretionary and non-complying activities.</p>
Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities		
<p>Option 1:</p>	<p>This option has a moderate to high impact in terms of economic growth and employment.</p> <p>The 30/50 and RDS show that the highly productive rural land resource is becoming highly fragmented in terms of the number of small parcels (between 1-4ha). There is a high risk in the current business climate and in a peri-urban context that maintaining the status quo (4ha) will lead to the creation of more small parcels in the rural environment with adverse flow-on effects for the continued viability of productive uses. The adverse effects of land fragmentation include elevated rural land prices, increased potential for sites to convert to non-rural uses such as rural-residential sites, and increased reverse sensitivity effects, making conventional productive uses not feasible.</p> <p>Option 1 maintains the status quo and does not provide strong direction in the WDP to stop the fragmentation of the rural environment and change the loss of economic growth from productive uses.</p>	
<p>Option 2:</p>	<p>This option has a moderate to high impact in terms of economic growth and employment.</p>	

	<p>The 30/50 and RDS show that the highly productive rural land resource is becoming highly fragmented in terms of the number of small parcels (between 1-4ha). There is a high risk in the current business climate and in a peri-urban context that maintaining the status quo (4ha) will lead to the creation of more small parcels in the rural environment with adverse flow-on effects for the continued viability of productive uses. The adverse effects of land fragmentation include elevated rural land prices, increased potential for sites to convert to non-rural uses such as rural-residential sites, and increased reverse sensitivity effects, making conventional productive use not feasible. A strong district plan response is required to support ongoing rural production activities in the peri-urban context.</p> <p>Option 2 has the potential to increase the economic growth potential from the rural environment by reducing fragmentation. A structural shift in the regulatory site size for rural subdivision will put productive uses on a more sustainable footprint. Larger sites have more utility for productive uses and can also support larger farming systems, e.g. a run-off, cropping unit or raising yearlings, with the potential to be used for production sizes.</p>
Risk of acting and not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information	
	<p>There is no risk due to insufficient information.</p> <p>The objectives and policies in the WDP have to give effect to the RPS, Option 1 does not update the policies resulting in a high risk of not acting.</p> <p>Failure to actively manage rural resources would mean that non-rural activities, particularly rural residential, may compromise the productivity of rural land and reduce the ability of people and the community to provide for their social and economic well-being.</p>

22. Option 2 is considered to be the most appropriate option to give effect to the proposed RA objectives.

23. Some of the WDP objectives and policies within chapters 6 Built Form and Development and 8 Subdivision and Development apply specifically to the rural environment, being:

Objective 6.3.2

1. *Subdivision and development that ensures consolidated development in appropriate locations and avoids sprawling or sporadic subdivision and ribbon development patterns in the coastal and rural environment.*
2. *Subdivision and development providing incentive to protect significant areas of native forest, public access to coast/harbour edge, the retention of built heritage and is environmentally sustainable.*

Objective 6.3.13

Minimise loss of productive soils and economic farming units from urban expansion.

Policy 6.4.2 Consolidated Development

To consolidate urban development by:

- i) *Focusing residential development on those urban areas with demand, where the landscape and natural character have already been compromised.*
- ii) *Further develop within existing built up areas, so as to avoid sporadic or sprawling subdivision and ribbon development patterns, particularly in rural areas and along the coast.*
- iii) *Directing rural lifestyle and rural-residential development to appropriate locations adjacent to existing settlements, rather than allowing sporadic development throughout rural and coastal areas.*

- iv) *Promoting clustered, mixed use activity that focus on existing urban and coastal centres.*
- v) *Retaining and encouraging a distinctive sense of place.*

Policy 6.4.10 Productive Soils

- i) *To identify and protect the district's highly productive and versatile soils for their productive capacity.*
- ii) *To recognise the value of productive soils and economic farming units to the district's economy.*

Policy 8.4.15 Maintenance of Primary Industry

To sustain a viable primary industry community within the district by maintaining opportunities for diversity of rural land use without significant interference from adjacent residential, lifestyle or rural residential activities.

- 24. The proposed RA objectives provide outcomes addressing issues that these WDP policies directly relate to.
- 25. Proposed policies RA.1.3.2 and RA.1.3.3 provide the same policy direction as WDP policy 6.4.10 through targeted zoning. Proposed policy RA.1.3.1 and RA.1.3.11 provide the same direction as WDP policy 8.4.15.
- 26. Bullet points ii) and iii) in Policy 6.4.2 also relate directly to the rural environment and would fit better as policy within the RA chapter. Proposed policies RA.1.3.1, RA.1.3.5 and RA.1.3.6 provide a similar direction as WDP policy 6.4.2 ii) and iii).
- 27. Therefore PC85 proposes to delete the identified objectives and policies from chapters 6 and 8 as consequential changes.

Performance standards

- 28. The WDP has a vast number of land use and subdivision rules relating to the general performance of activities. These rules do not necessarily create efficiency and effectiveness issues for the implementation of the WDP, but they are extremely repetitive throughout the WDP. To achieve the outcome of streamlining the DP these provisions need to be considered.
- 29. The existing rules in the WDP address matters such as radioactive activities, offensive trades, hazardous substances, signage, outdoor storage, lighting, aerials, subdivision design, infrastructure provision, connections to services. The proposed RA objectives seek to recognise, maintain and protect rural character and amenity while promoting a wide range of productive activities to occur. To achieve both the WDP and RA objectives, performance provisions should be necessary and flexible to achieve both outcomes.
- 30. Alternatives considered:

Option 1: Retain Status Quo rules relating to activities in each Environment.

Option 2: No performance provisions.

Option 3: Establish performance provisions based primarily upon the existing CE provisions which apply across all proposed Rural Environments. (Plan change option).

TABLE 7: ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS		
	Costs	Benefits
Option 1: Status Quo.	<p><u>Environmental</u> Council may not fulfil its duties under the RMA to achieve the integrated management of the effects of the use and development of the land and resources. Repetitive provisions throughout the WDP.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Costs associated with compliance, or for non-compliance gaining resource consent, will continue as per status quo.</p> <p><u>Social</u> Social costs remain consistent, proximity to neighbours, maintenance of privacy, maintenance of rural outlook and health remains the same.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known.</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Current level of amenity, effects to the environment and density of built development remains consistent.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Costs associated with compliance or for non-compliance gaining resource consent will continue as per status quo. Avoids costs to Council of preparing a plan change and implementing new district plan provisions.</p> <p><u>Social</u> No change to the current provisions for landowners, investors and residents.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> No cultural shift required to implement.</p>
Option 2: No performance provisions.	<p><u>Environmental</u> Council fails its duties under the RMA to achieve the integrated management of the effects of the use and development of the land and resources. Ad hoc built development resulting in adverse effects to amenity, health and safety, loss of sunlight, loss of privacy and increased risk of land use conflicts.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> In the absence of rules, built development can occur ad hoc resulting in potential for serious land use conflicts leading to limitations on production activities and the reduction of economic viability.</p> <p><u>Social</u> In the absence of rules, built development can occur ad hoc resulting in potential adverse social effects due to loss of amenity, land use conflicts and health risks.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> In the absence of rules, built development can occur ad hoc having the potential to impact on cultural resources and values particularly as a majority of Māori land and Sites of Significance to Māori are located in the rural environment.</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Streamlines the WDP and reduces repetitive rules.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> No costs associated with compliance, or for non-compliance gaining resource consent.</p> <p><u>Social</u> None known.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known.</p>
Option 3: Establish performance provisions based primarily upon the existing CE provisions which apply	<p><u>Environmental</u> Maintains a similar level of amenity as the status quo.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Costs associated with compliance, or for non-compliance gaining resource consent, will continue.</p>	<p><u>Environmental</u> Council fulfils its duties under the RMA to achieve integrated management of the effects of the use and development of the land and resources. Environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated as a result of the amendments to the existing provisions</p>

<p>across all proposed Rural Environments. (Plan change option).</p>	<p><u>Social</u> Social costs remain consistent, proximity to neighbours, maintenance of privacy, maintenance of rural outlook and health remains the same.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known.</p>	<p>addressing issues raised. Streamlines the WDP and reduces repetitive rules.</p> <p><u>Economic</u> Costs associated with compliance, or for non-compliance gaining resource consent, will be reduced from status quo as more clarity is provided.</p> <p><u>Social</u> Social costs remain consistent, proximity to neighbours, maintenance of privacy, maintenance of rural outlook and health remains the same.</p> <p><u>Cultural</u> None known.</p>
	<p>Efficiency</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p>
<p>Option 1:</p>	<p>Consultation and research have confirmed that while the status quo option may have some merit as a package of provisions, maintaining repetitive rules in the WDP is not an efficient and effective method of implementation.</p>	
<p>Option 2:</p>	<p>Option 2 would result in no performance provisions which will not result in any kind of management of effects, being completely inefficient.</p>	<p>Option 2 would result in no performance provisions which will not result in any kind of management of effects, being completely ineffective.</p>
<p>Option 3:</p>	<p>Option 3 is considered to be an improvement of the status quo provisions providing a more efficient method of achieving the outcomes of the PC85.</p>	<p>Option 3 would result in the improvement of the status quo provisions increasing the effectiveness of the performance provisions to meet the outcomes of PC85.</p>
<p>Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities</p>		
<p>There is a low impact in terms of economic growth and employment associated with all options. Performance provisions have a direct relationship to the amenity and sense of place of an area, these controls have the ability to increase or decrease development costs associated with built development. Building costs do have an effect on overall economic growth; however options considered present reasonable mitigation with a low cost implication.</p>		
<p>Risk of acting and not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information</p>		
<p>There is no risk due to insufficient information. The objectives and policies for the WDP have to give effect to the RPS, the risk of not acting is high.</p>		

31. Option 3 is considered to be the most efficient and effective method to achieve the proposed RA objectives.

4. Conclusion

32. Proposed PC85 includes the most appropriate objectives, policies and methods to ensure consistency and maintain the integrity of the WDP.
33. The objectives proposed in PC85 are evaluated to be the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA
34. It is considered that a combination of options as described in section 3 of this report is the most efficient and effective means of achieving the objectives proposed in PC85.