

OPEN BRIEFING 13 JULY 2022 – 4.00PM



SUBMISSION ON THE NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY EXPOSURE DRAFT

ATTENDEES

Elected Members: Mayor Barry, Deputy Mayor Lewis, Cr Briggs, Cr Dyer, Cr Edwards, Cr Hislop, Cr Mitchell, Cr Shaw.

Staff: Ms J Miller, Chief Executive, Ms A Blackshaw, Director Neighbourhoods and Communities, Ms H Oram, Director Environment and Sustainability, Ms A Geddes, Acting Director Environment and Sustainability, Ms P Rotherham, Head of Planning, Ms K Pascall, Policy Planning Manager, Ms E Campbell, Pou Whakamahere Kaupapa Here Planning, Mr C Page, Intermediate Policy Planner, Ms K Glanville, Senior Democracy Advisor and Ms J Randall, Democracy Advisor.

Presenters: Ms K Pascall, Policy Planning Manager and Mr C Page, Intermediate Policy Planner.

APOLOGIES

Elected Member apology: Cr Milne

ABSENCE

Elected Members: Cr Brown, Cr Barratt, Cr Sutton

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE BRIEFING

The purpose of the briefing was to allow members an opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on Council's submission to the Government's Exposure Draft of the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB). Feedback was required by 21 July.

Slide 1 - **Cover page**

Slide 2 – **Indigenous biodiversity management so far:** Indigenous biodiversity had been explored by Council previously under Plan Change (PC) 46. Since then, Council had been working on a full District Plan review where the issue would be revisited. This was now on hold until the NPS-IB was finalised.

- Slide 3 – **What is an NPS:** A National Policy Statement (NPS) provided consistency for addressing resource management issues.
- Slide 4 – **The NPS-IB:** An explanation of the objectives of the NPS-IB.
- Slide 5 – **Key actions required from Council:** A partnership approach with tangata whenua, assessment of significant natural areas (SNAs) and maintaining indigenous biodiversity outside of SNAs.
- Slide 6 – **How SNAs must be managed:** Activities within a SNA would be deemed non-complying if they affected the natural environment, and a resource consent would be required. There was an allowance for a single dwelling on a vacant allotment. Some exceptions would be allowed.
- Slide 7 – **Timing:** Officers expected to have incorporated the NPS in the District Plan review within the five-year timeframe. More resourcing might be needed.
- Slide 8 – **New support measures:** Funding had been secured to enable central government support.
- Slide 9 – **Biodiversity incentive pilots:** Government had signalled three incentive pilots to support and incentivise action that protected biodiversity.
- Slide 10 – **Proposed submission points – areas of support:** There were five areas that officers supported.
- Slide 11 – **Proposed submission points – areas of concern:** There were eight areas that officers expressed concern about.
- Slide 12 – **Proposed submission points – areas of concern (continued).**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION POINTS ON COUNCIL'S DRAFT SUBMISSION

- A subdivision could only be created if it did not impact a SNA. Blanket rules on SNAs would apply throughout the district. Sites that were vacant at the NPS-IB commencement date would be managed using the Effects Management Hierarchy.
- The NPS-IB framework would give national direction and provide a consistent approach to how Councils identified SNAs.
- Officers would work with other councils in the region to ensure rules at boundaries did not create issues. They would encourage regional consistency on approaches to SNAs.
- Ecological assessments could be subjective - clarity was needed to make them workable for the District Plan.
- The proposed NPS-IB would include small areas of indigenous biodiversity within residential boundaries - this would include many more properties and create a larger workload for officers.

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- The government support funding package of \$19M was for the entire country - this did not seem adequate for the level of support required. It was not clear if the funds would be contestable or allocated.
- Tangata whenua and mana whenua would be involved in the co-design - it needed to be clearer how the funding would be distributed.
- Point 2 should acknowledge that all councils were working to different schedules for their District Plan reviews. Suggest including Council's current position and workload for the review.
- Council should still be mapping all highly mobile fauna areas of SNAs – this is skipped over in the submission.
- Bullet point 3 under Paragraph 3 of the submission could be restrictive and not allow for the creation of new tracks, fire breaks, eco sanctuary fences etc. Add 'and creation of new amenities for public access, safety and protection of biodiversity'.
- Dealing with small areas of SNAs by changing property boundaries was pragmatic but it could weaken the edges of SNAs. It did not reflect the intent of the draft NPS-IB.
- The purpose of the NPS-IB was to protect biodiversity, therefore protection was needed outside of SNAs. Suggest removing the statement that Council did not support having general rules outside of identified SNAs to protect biodiversity.
- The Effects Management Hierarchy was not considered by some members to be unreasonably restrictive.
- The level of protection was quite different under a SNA compared to outside a SNA. The message should be that everyone had a role to play in protecting indigenous biodiversity, not just those with a SNA on their land.
- Re-word to say Council was concerned about the practical ramifications of implementing SNA boundaries but supported protecting all areas. Highlight the practical challenges.
- The Director, Environment and Sustainability agreed to include that Council was unhappy with the rushed consultation by the government, since many residents would have liked a chance to have their say.
- Officers agreed to make it clear to residents that when mapping SNAs Council would not use previous mapping from PC 46.
- Officers would use first principles to define an agreed approach alongside Mana Whenua before beginning work on SNAs.

NEXT STEPS

- The Director Environment and Sustainability agreed to email members the funds available in Council's Indigenous Biodiversity Fund.
- A report would be discussed at the Climate Change and Sustainability Committee meeting on 14 July 2022 where a final decision on the submission would be made.

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Briefing materials:

Attachment 1 – NPS-IB Exposure Draft - Presentation

The briefing closed at 5.00 pm