



HERITAGE - Summary of Community Feedback

Issues

- A strong need for clear heritage protection policy, including identification of sites and making heritage information publicly available.
- Closer integration about the management of heritage (ie integration between agencies with heritage responsibilities, and integration between the Regional Policy Statement and District Plans).
- Concerns were raised about heritage protection measures restricting property rights of land owners.
- Urban heritage in Southland townships also received varied feedback, with some believing there was a need for further urban heritage precincts (such as Winton), and for other small rural townships with urban heritage values (such as Wyndham), more effective engagement and funding was considered necessary.
- Greater protection of archaeological sites was sought, with the sites already recorded in the New Zealand Archaeological Authority database.
- Concerns that some historic farm buildings are being demolished when land use change occurs (eg dairy conversions) and asked that the planning documents provide additional guidance on rural heritage.
- Council planning documents need to provide clarity in respect of heritage terms.
- Support for protecting significant/heritage trees, but also some who believed trees were secondary to heritage protection.

Options

- Differing opinions on whether regulatory or non-regulatory approaches would be the most effective method for protecting heritage, or a combination of both approaches.
- More information and education material sought on economic incentives/tools available for heritage protection work (eg grants, loans, advice, rates relief).
- Establishing a central heritage register and for heritage schedules/lists to sit outside planning documents received varied feedback.

Concern was raised that approach would limit consultation with landowners, while another considered that approach would assist with keeping heritage schedules/lists up to date without the need for constant plan changes.
- One party sought a Regional Heritage Strategy for Southland, which would document how Environment Southland intends to manage heritage areas at the regional level.
- A party asked that the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Heritage Guidelines be used in the review of the planning documents.

Councils' Commentary

Environment Southland and the Southland District Council need to strengthen their planning documents to protect heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, as heritage has been elevated to a matter of national importance under the RMA.

Planning documents should contain clear objectives, policies and methods and rules for protecting heritage. A combination of methods should be used, including regional and district rules, education, economic instruments, protocols and guidelines.

Councils could investigate heritage lists/schedules being maintained outside of RMA planning documents via a central heritage register. This approach would allow one centralised up-to-date register to be maintained, and avoid the need for constant changes and or variations to planning documents.

