



URBAN - Summary of Community Feedback

Issues

- A common theme was a need for councils to take a more proactive approach towards managing urban growth issues.
- There was a significant amount of comment and concern about urban sprawl in some areas of Southland and support for approaches aimed at urban consolidation. Te Anau was often referred to or given as an example. Greater direction from councils as to where specific land uses should take place was also seen as desirable.
- Concern about loss of high value productive soils from urban development. The retention of land suitable for production was seen as important.
- Concern was expressed about lifestyle block development occurring in isolated rural areas with a preference for rural/residential growth to occur around existing urban areas where there is existing infrastructure and services.
- Other comments included suggested changes to signage provisions, concern about urban lightspill, concern about air quality, the importance of maintaining the commercial viability of town centres and recognition and protection of cultural heritage and issues associated with the reuse and retention of historic buildings.

Options

- Support for regulatory approaches including:
 - *Rules aimed at consolidating urban growth.*
 - *Zoning, identification and mapping of specific areas for residential, industrial, commercial and rural land uses.*
- A theme that emerged was a need for councils to take a more proactive approach towards urban growth issues. Some of the ways councils could achieve this include:
 - *Use of spatial planning tools.*
 - *Growth management strategies.*
 - *Concept development plans.*
 - *Structure Plans - potentially these could be based around specific urban areas experiencing growth.*
 - *Development of other frameworks that provide direction for future urban growth.*
- Support for other non-regulatory approaches including:
 - *Implement quality urban design through use of the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol 2005.*
 - *Development and use of non-regulatory design guidelines.*
 - *Use of economic incentives, for example, financial help for the repainting of heritage buildings.*

Councils' Commentary

Environment Southland and the Southland District Council recognise issues about growth urban areas are different to those which are static or declining. Both councils need to help maintain the viability and vitality of these towns, and so the planning framework should not stifle economic growth.

A more proactive approach is needed towards urban growth. This could be achieved by clearer regional policy in the revised Regional Policy Statement, which would flow into more appropriate District Plan provisions. It is likely such a policy would centre around consolidating existing settlements, avoiding unnecessary urban sprawl, avoiding isolated development in rural areas and maintaining high producing soils in productive use.

Issues associated with urban air quality have been raised. Current policy may need to be refined to ensure that Southland's air quality is maintained to a standard which is not detrimental to amenity values or human health and meets national standards.

