

## PART 8

### RATES REMISSIONS FOR LAND PROTECTED FOR NATURAL OR CULTURAL CONSERVATION PURPOSES

#### **Policy Objective**

The objective of this Policy is to:

- preserve and promote natural resources and heritage land to encourage the maintenance, enhancement and protection of land for natural or cultural purposes.

#### **Community Outcomes**

The Community Outcomes that this Policy relates to are:

- Outcome 1: there are healthy natural systems which people can enjoy; and
- Outcome 2: local character is retained within a cohesive District.

#### **Policy Conditions and Criteria**

This Policy supports the provisions of the Kāpiti Coast District Plan and the Heritage Strategy. It recognises that most heritage features are already protected by rules in the District Plan and encourages landowners to maintain, enhance and protect heritage features by offering a financial incentive.

Ratepayers who own rating units which have some feature of cultural or natural heritage which is voluntarily protected may qualify for remission of rates under this Policy, for example:

- properties that have a QEII Covenant under section 22 of the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977 registered on their Certificate(s) of Title;
- properties that have a Conservation Covenant with the Department of Conservation registered on their Certificate(s) of Title;
- properties that have a site listed in the District Plan Heritage Register (excluding any buildings);
- appropriately protected riparian strips; and
- heritage features that are protected by a Section 221 consent notice (Resource Management Act 1991) registered on the Certificate of Title (excluding buildings).

This Policy does not apply to land that is non-rateable under section 8 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 and is liable only for rates for water supply, wastewater disposal, waste collection or recycling.

Applications for rates remission in accordance with this Policy must be in writing and supported by documentary evidence of the protected status of the rating unit, for example, a copy of the covenant agreement or other legal mechanism.

In considering any application for remission of rates under this Policy, the Council Committee responsible for the Council's environmental and natural heritage portfolio (at the time of adopting this Policy this is the Environment and Community Development Committee) will consider the following criteria:

- the extent to which the preservation of natural or cultural heritage will be promoted by granting remission on rates on the rating unit;
- the degree to which features of natural or cultural heritage are present on the land;

- the degree to which features of natural or cultural heritage inhibit the economic utilisation of the land;
- whether, and to what extent, public access to/over the heritage feature is provided for;
- the extent to which the heritage feature is legally (e.g. covenanted) and physically (e.g. fenced) protected;
- in respect of Geological Sites and Wāhi Tapu:
  - the importance of the place to the tāngata whenua;
  - the community association with, or public esteem for, the place;
  - the potential of the place for public education;
  - the representative quality and/or a quality or type or rarity that is important to the District;
  - the potential of the place as a wildlife refuge or feeding area;
  - the potential of the place for its diversity in flora and fauna.

- in respect of Ecological Sites (Areas of Significant Indigenous Vegetation and Significant Habitats of Indigenous Flora) whether the site has:

Representativeness - The site contains an ecosystem that is under-represented or unique in the ecological district;

Rarity - The site contains threatened ecosystems; threatened species; and species that are endemic to the ecological district;

Diversity – The site has a diversity of ecosystems species and vegetation;

Distinctiveness – The site contains large / dense population of viable species; is largely in its natural state or restorable; has an uninterrupted ecological sequence; and contains significant land forms;

Continuity and Linkage within Landscape: – The site provides, or has potential to provide, corridor/buffer zone to an existing area;

Cultural Values – The site has: traditional importance for Māori; recreational values; significant landscape value; protection of soil values; water catchment protection; recreation or tourism importance; and aesthetic coherence;

Ecological Restoration - an ability to be restored; difficulty of restoration; and cost / time;

Landscape Integrity - significance to the original character of the landscape; isolated feature (for example, does it stand out or blend in?); and whether it has a role in landscape protection; and

Sustainability - size and shape of area; activities occurring on the boundaries which may affect its sustainability; adjoins another protected area; links; and easily managed.

Where remission of rates is granted under this Policy the landowner, in conjunction with the Council, will be required to develop a Heritage Management Plan.

The purpose of a Heritage Management Plan is to set out a plan of action for managing a heritage feature within the Kāpiti Coast District that is subject to rates remission.

The Heritage Management Plan will:

- be reviewed on an annual basis by the Council in conjunction with the landowner;
- may contain conditions which shall be complied with on an on-going basis, including requirements to fence off the area, undertake weed control and restoration, undertake pest control and keep stock out of the area; and
- will ensure that the site will be managed in a manner that protects and enhances the heritage feature.

Any decision on whether to grant remission on rates will be at the discretion of the Council Committee responsible for the Council's environmental and natural heritage portfolio (at the time of adopting this Policy this is the Environment and Community Development Committee). The amount of remission will be determined on a case-by-case basis by that same Committee, taking into account the merits of the protected feature and the extent to which it meets the criteria specified in this Policy. The amount of rates remission will be reviewed by that same Committee as appropriate.

In granting rates remission under this Policy, the Council Committee responsible for the Council's environmental and natural heritage portfolio (at the time of adopting this Policy this is the Environment and Community Development Committee) may specify certain conditions before remission will be granted. Applicants will be required to agree in writing to these conditions and to pay any remitted rates if the conditions are violated.

