

**Chairperson and Committee Members
ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

8 MAY 2014

Meeting Status: **Public**

Purpose of Report: For Decision

RATES REMISSION FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This report tables the rates remission applications for Land Protected for Natural or Cultural Conservation Purposes for the 2013/14 year and seeks approval for recommended allocations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION

- 2 The recommendations in this report do not trigger the Council's significance policy.

BACKGROUND

- 3 The Annual Plan for 2012/13 references a policy for rates remission for land protected for natural and cultural conservation purposes. The detail of this policy is included in the 2012 Long Term Plan as Part 8 of the Rates Remission Policy (Attachment 1).
- 4 This Part 8 of the Rates Remission Policy supports the provisions of the Kāpiti Coast District Plan regarding incentives for heritage feature management and protection. 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.
- 5 The granting of a rates remission as an incentive for encouraging the protection and management of heritage features is consistent with Council's responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Historic Places Act 1993. It is also consistent with Community Outcome 1: 'There are healthy natural systems which people can enjoy'.
- 6 Historically the remission fund has been consistently oversubscribed, leading to an increase of funding for rates remission for natural or cultural conservation purposes from \$15,000 in 2007/08 to \$27,661 in 2013/14.
- 7 A total of 96 ratepayers benefited from the policy in 2012/13, and the land area to which remission applied totalled 655 hectare (ha). Having applied successfully for rates remission, ratepayers may continue receiving it provided they follow approved management plans designed to protect the natural and cultural values of their sites.

CONSIDERATIONS

Issues

2013/14 Applications

- 8 The Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes programme was advertised in local media in November 2013. Four new applications were received, and are recommended for approval. These have been added (marked with an asterisk) to the list of recommendations included as Attachment 2.
- 9 The first application recommended for approval is for 0.6ha of primary kohekohe-tawa forest at 146 Rahui Road, Ōtaki. The area is part of Ecological Site K018, a 6.09ha tract of bush listed on the District Plan Heritage Register and classified as regionally significant because it is the largest remnant of kohekohe-tawa forest in the Manawatu Plains Ecological District.
- 10 The applicants are dedicated conservationists who are managing their land to restore its biodiversity values. After buying the property last year they have started controlling pest animals and weeds and are planting local native plants to buffer the bush edges. As the area is protected and is being managed for conservation purposes, the application meets the Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes criteria.
- 11 The second application is for 11.09ha of kohekohe forest at 80 Waterfall Road, Paraparaumu. The area is part of an 83.2ha remnant of kohekohe forest and kanuka forest listed as Ecological Site K098 in the District Plan Heritage Register, where it is classified as regionally significant because of its size and species diversity. The area was placed under QE II National Trust covenant by the previous owners, and the current owners propose enlarging the covenanted area by 3ha. They are undertaking pest animal and weed control and their commitment to protective management fulfils the criteria for receiving rates remission.
- 12 The third application is for 2ha of kohekohe forest and wetland at 153 Main Road North, Paraparaumu. The remnant is part of the 7.6ha Muaopoko swamp forest, a regionally significant ecological site listed as K089 in the District Plan Heritage Register. The new owners of the property are committed to restoring the degraded values of the forest and wetland by fencing to exclude stock and controlling pest animals and weeds. Their demonstrated commitment to protection and restoration make them eligible to receive rates remission according to the criteria.
- 13 The fourth application is for 2.8ha of wetland at 218 Pukenuamu Road, Te Horo. The wetland is part of the regionally significant Te Hapua wetland complex, listed as ecological site KO55 in the District Plan Heritage Register, and protected by a QE II National Trust covenant. Te Hapua wetland complex is one of the largest and best remaining representatives of a habitat type once common throughout the district, and contains a range of rare and threatened plant and bird species. The applicants are committed to upholding the conditions of the QEII covenant, which requires them to maintain stock-proof fencing and control pest animals and weeds. By so doing they also fulfil the criteria for receiving rates remission.

Principles of Rate Remission for Land Protected for Natural or Cultural Conservation Purposes

- 14 The following sections discuss the principles of rates remission, a range of funding scenarios (presented in a table format), and a recommendation made on the levels of rates remission for 2013/14.
- 15 The main principle behind this particular rates remission programme is to recognise the conservation efforts of ratepayers and the positive contribution their actions make to the district's cultural and biodiversity values.
- 16 The owners of these properties are often motivated solely by the desire to protect and manage their environment, and their actions are voluntary. Many are keen conservationists while others may fence off a bush remnant as the pasture gain is negligible or to better manage stock movement. Whatever their motivation, addressing significant pressures such as stock grazing or noxious pests has a positive impact on the Kāpiti Coast environment.
- 17 Landowners could use the rates rebate for the upkeep of stock-proof fencing or pest animal and weed control. However in most instances the amount of remission is far less than the true cost of these activities.
- 18 Rates remission is an added incentive for landowners to respect the conservation values in the situation where that property has a legal protection mechanism in place. The provision of rates remission also provides a good basis for an ongoing partnership between Council and the land owner.

Calculation of Rates Remission

- 19 Rates remission amounts are calculated according to the size of the heritage feature as shown in Table 1. This method is coarsely related to the level of contribution towards the environment as larger areas of forest or wetland are generally more significant. This does not take into account, however, the presence of rare and endangered species or the amount of time and effort put into management.
- 20 This method allows an adjustment to the level of remission using minimum, medium and maximum remission bands as shown in Table 1. The selected band applies to all recipients. This year's (2013/14) budget allowed for a 2.4% increase in remission levels to compensate for inflation, and this increase has been applied to all remission bands.

Table 1: 2013/14 Level of Remission vs Feature Size

Size of total protected area/feature (ha)	Minimum rates remission possible (\$)	Medium rates remission possible (\$)	Maximum rates remission possible (\$)
Up to 1.0 ha	\$63	\$95	\$128
1.001 – 5.0 ha	\$125	\$190	\$256
5.001 – 10.0 ha	\$187	\$285	\$384
10.001 – 20.0 ha	\$250	\$383	\$511
20.001 – 30.0 ha	\$312	\$477	\$638
30.001 – 40.0 ha	\$376	\$573	\$767
40.001 – 50.0 ha	\$437	\$669	\$894
50.001 – 70.0 ha	\$500	\$764	\$1,021
70.001 – 100.0 ha	\$562	\$860	\$1,105
More than 100 ha	\$625	\$956	\$1,278

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 21 Applying the maximum band results in modest levels of remission, e.g. \$256 for areas between 1.001ha and 5ha, and most areas are smaller than 5ha. Council approved the application of the maximum band of rates remission for the 2012/13 year.
- 22 The amount of rates remission allocated in 2013/14 if the maximum band were applied would be \$28,215, exceeding this year's budget of \$27,661 by \$554. As the difference can be accommodated from within the wider Parks and Open Space activity budget, it is recommended that the maximum band of remission is applied.

The payments are credited directly to the rates account for each property.

Legal Considerations

- 23 There are no legal considerations.

Delegation

The Environment and Community Development Committee has authority to decide this matter under the following section of the Governance Structure and Delegations document approved by Council on 7 November, 2013:

Section 13.1

“7.9 Authority to consider and approve applications for Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes”

Consultation

24 There are no consultation considerations.

Policy Implications

25 There are no policy implications.

Publicity Considerations

26 A media release will be prepared to publicise the Council’s decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

27 That the Committee approves the maximum band of rates remission to the properties set out in Attachment 2 to report CS-14-1151 in accordance with Council’s Policy for Rates Remission for Land Protected for Natural or Cultural Conservation Purposes.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

Rob Cross

Tamsin Evans

Biodiversity Advisor

Group Manager Community Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Policy on Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes

Attachment 2 – Properties recommended to receive Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes in 2013/2014, and recommended amounts.

Attachment 1 (from the Long Term Plan Rates Remission Policy)

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.

Attachment 2 – Properties recommended to receive Rates Remission for Conservation Purposes in 2013/14, and recommended amounts.

Property Location	Valuation	Area - Hectares	Amount \$
331 Valley Rd, Paraparaumu	15400-04300	7.8	\$383
222 Valley Rd, Paraparaumu	15300-06403	3	\$256
62 Hadfield Rd, Peka Peka	14900-05300	1.9	\$256
234 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	14890-01104	3.5	\$256
150 Taylors Rd, Ōtaki	14861-20208	.4	\$128
140 Taylors Rd, Ōtaki	14861-20207	.4	\$128
96 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-09601	.6	\$128
243 North Highway 1, Ōtaki	14861-24200	8.2	\$384
432 Mangaone South Rd, Waikanae	14900-23400	40	\$767
518 Mangaone South Rd, Waikanae	14900-23401	.9	\$128
115 Arcus Rd, Te Horo	14881-27403	.45	\$128
566 Rahui Rd, Ōtaki	14881-51200	22.9	\$638
0 Akatarawa Rd, Waikanae	14885-16803	13.1	\$511
117 Ruapehu Street, Paraparaumu	15251-64400	.3	\$128
197 State Highway 1	15262-04900	.4	\$128
310-312 Te Hapua Road, Ōtaki	14890-01116	9	\$384
67 Waihoanga Rd, Ōtaki	14881-58704	1.8	\$256
331 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-06600	1.1	\$256
176 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	14890-00800	1.4	\$256
69 Mickell Rd, Te Horo	14881-66504	5.1	\$384
52 Ruahine Street, Paraparaumu	15251-31600	.1	\$128
168 Taylors Rd, Ōtaki	14861-20212	1.5	\$256
200 Reikorangi Rd, Waikanae	14885-16102	.9	\$128
54 Kohekohe Rd, Waikanae	14941-49000	.1	\$128
30-34 Greendale Drive, Paraparaumu	15260-35024	2.1	\$256
71 Aston Rd, Paraparaumu	15150-12400	11.5	\$511
366 State Highway 1, Paekakariki	15400-02404	1.1	\$256
207 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	14890-01114	1	\$128
98 Old Coach Rd North, Ōtaki	14861-03300	8.5	\$384
5 Matata Place, Waikanae	14960-55362	.7	\$128
227 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	14890-01113	1.7	\$256
90a Winara Ave, Waikanae	1488159001	26.4	\$638
54 Makora Rd, Otaihanga	15260-04900	n/a	\$128
48 Ruahine St, Paraparaumu	15251-31500	.1	\$128
91A Ringawhati Road, Ōtaki	14861-54000	1.4	\$256
0 State Highway 1, Paraparaumu	15150-11900	13	\$511
16 Aston Rd, Paraparaumu	15150-12422	6	\$384
15 Catley Rd, Te Horo	14881-24001	.4	\$128
14 Riwai Street, Paraparaumu	15251-42300	.1	\$128

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Property Location	Valuation	Area - Hectares	Amount \$
158 Taylors Rd, Otaki	14861-20209	1.5	\$256
15 Manu Grove, Waikanae	14951-07600	.5	\$128
87 Belvedere Avenue, Waikanae	14951-29300	.4	\$128
126 Te Hapua Rd, Ōtaki	14890-00702	1	\$256
184 State Highway 1, Paraparaumu	15262-27100	3.2	\$256
70 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-08900	.3	\$128
0 State Highway 1 South, Ōtaki	14861-17000	1.3	\$256
75 Forest Lakes Rd, Ōtaki	14861-19900	3.8	\$256
204 Te Hapua Rd, Waikanae	14890-01100	10.9	\$511
108 Huia Street, Waikanae	14960-35150	1.5	\$256
152 Te Hapua Rd,	14890-00700	10.5	\$511
298 Mangaone Rd, Waikanae	14900-24900	5.3	\$384
20-24 Reikorangi Rd, Waikanae	14885-15600	.8	\$128
99 State Highway 1, Waikanae	14890-19600	7.1	\$384
387, 405 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-07600	1.7	\$256
0 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-07000	4.6	\$256
362-368 Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-20000	6.8	\$384
514 State Highway 1, Waikanae	15150-13800	10.6	\$511
60 Octavius Rd, Waikanae	14900-05605	1.2	\$256
424 Te Moana Rd, Waikanae	14941-15500	.1	\$128
Otaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	14881-64700	85	\$1,105
217 State Highway 1, Paraparaumu	15262-05500	.5	\$128
528-530 State Highway 1, Paekakariki	15400-02500	21.2	\$638
3 Hadfield Road, Te Horo	14900-03207	1.2	\$256
92 Old Hautere Road, Te Horo	14881-18100	1.7	\$256
111 Ngatiawa Rd	14900-18701	.1	\$128
156 Maungakotukutuku Rd	15400-04400	3.1	\$256
2 Kereru St, Waikanae	14960-65000	.1	\$128
248 Ngarara Rd, Waikanae	14890-15200	43.7	\$894
66 Smithfield Rd, Waikanae	14890-17300	2.5	\$256
Park Avenue, Waikanae	14931-75200	20.8	\$638
53 Mangaone Rd, Te Horo	14900-18900	.1	\$128
121 Otaihanga Rd, Paraparaumu	15260-32800	1.7	\$256
2 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16200	.3	\$128
8 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16201	1.3	\$256
16 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16203	2.1	\$256
31 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16204	.1	\$128
27 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16205	.3	\$128
19 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16206	.3	\$128
17 Jacks Bush Rd, Waikanae	14890-16207	.2	\$128
Hadfield Rd, Peka Peka	14900-03212	3.3	\$256
21 Kakariki Grove, Waikanae	14960-67100	.1	\$128
19 Kakariki Grove, Waikanae	14960-67101	.1	\$128
568 Otaki Gorge Road, Ōtaki	14881-57510	4.2	\$256
231 Te Hapua Road, Ōtaki	14890-01115	2.9	\$256

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Property Location	Valuation	Area - Hectares	Amount \$
233 Te Hapua Road, Ōtaki	14890-0111	1.5	\$256
182 Te Hapua Road, Ōtaki	1489000900	11.3	\$511
1400 Ōtaki Gorge Rd, Ōtaki	1488165809	136.4	\$1,278
319 Mangaone Nth Rd, Hautere	1488167200	20.2	\$638
95 Panorama Drive, Paraparaumu	1530150001	5.1	\$384
79 Belvedere Avenue, Waikanae	1495128900	.05	\$128
16 Tongareiro Street, Paraparaumu	1525120400	.1	\$125
91A Ringawhati Road, Ōtaki	1486154000	2.8	\$256
80 Waterfall Rd, Paraparaumu*	15400-04100	9.1	\$384
218 Pukenamu Road, Ōtaki*	1489000213	2.8	\$256
146 Rahui Road, Ōtaki*	1486155800	.6	\$128
153 Main Road North, Paraparaumu*	1526203500	2	\$256
		Total = 654.4	Total = \$28,215