

Resource Management Update: Select Committee Report on the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill

The Government has recently published the select committee report on the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill

Background

In December 2024, we wrote an article explaining key parts of the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Bill (**Bill**) that was introduced under urgency. The link to that article is available [here](#) explaining the full intended effect of the Bill.

Since that Bill was introduced, it has progressed through the first reading and select committee stages. As part of the select committee stage, the Environment Committee has considered the Bill and public submissions, and has reported back to the House of Representatives through the Select Committee Report (**Report**) on the Bill. The Report includes a different version of the Bill tracked with the recommended amendments. The Report is available on the New Zealand Parliament website [here](#).

Key points

The purpose of this article is to provide a high-level summary of key points from the Report. The Report recommends the following:

- **Consent duration:** continues to include the default period of 35 years duration for renewable energy and long-lived infrastructure resource consents;
- **Resource consent hearings:** in response to substantial opposition to the proposal that a consent authority must not hold a hearing if it determined it had sufficient information to

decide an application, those clauses are deleted;

- **Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS):** recommends removing the ability for councils that have implemented the MDRS to opt out of them; recommends bespoke processes for Christchurch City Council and Auckland Council who have not implemented the MDRS;
- **Auckland:** enable Auckland Council to withdraw its Intensive Planning Instrument and notify a new plan using the streamlined planning process to provide for the same housing capacity;
- **Section 70 (permitted discharge rules):** recognises submitters' concerns that the Bill lacks a specific timeframe for achieving a reduction in adverse effects on water quality and recommends that proposed section 70(3)(c) is amended to require that the relevant council is satisfied that the standards contribute to a reduction in adverse effects on water quality within a 10-year time period;
- **Freshwater Farm Plans:** recommends amendments to require dairy farming to have a freshwater farm plan; and
- **Natural hazards:** recognises submitters' concerns regarding the ability for a consent authority to refuse land use consent in certain circumstances concerning natural hazards, and recommends that the refusal provision would not be applicable to land use consents connected to infrastructure and primary production activities.

Next steps

The Bill will likely have its second reading soon. The House of Representatives will debate and vote on any changes suggested by the Environment Select

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Committee in the Report discussed above. The indication from the Government is that the Bill is "due to become law in mid-2025".¹

Want to know more?

If you have any questions about the proposed changes to national direction or would like help making a submission, please contact our specialist [Resource Management team](#).

¹ Ministry for the Environment "RM reform update – November 2024" (19 November 2024) <www.environment.govt.nz>.