

## **New Subdivision Rules Proposed in Hauraki**

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When Hauraki District Council publicly notified their new District Plan last week they were the first in the region to announce new subdivision rules. Waikato District and Waipa District have both been consulting the public in preparation for an announcement later this year. Other Councils in the region are moving in the same direction.

The rules announced are far reaching for landowners in the area but fortunately under the revised Resource Management Act there is still time to take action. The new rules propose to limit rural subdivisions to a minimum 40ha block which will take away many options currently available to farmers in the Hauraki District.

Under current legislation most proposed rules cannot come into play until the public consultation process is complete. The exact timing of this process is uncertain and depends on the public response. If public response is poor and nobody contests Council's decision to the Environment Court the rules can be in place within several months, leaving little time to react.

Currently many landowners are allowed to subdivide off a small lifestyle block from their farm and even subdivide the farm into 6 hectare blocks. This opportunity will not last for long now and unfortunately many won't realise until it is too late. People who don't follow the development of the rules are always disappointed when they actually need to subdivide and find that they can't.

Currently we are busy obtaining Council approvals for those that can see their options disappearing in the near future. Whatever district you are in, you can bet that your options are rapidly diminishing as the months pass.

Whether you want to subdivide a smaller block for retirement, obtain a separate title to the family home before entering an equity partnership or even subdivide the farm into several lifestyle blocks you should look at your options before the new rules are set in concrete.

Now that the Proposed District Plan has been notified, public submissions can be presented to Council. You can either agree, disagree or seek clarification on how your property will be affected by the proposed rules. This is not a daunting process and doesn't mean that you'll need to stand up in front of Council to have your opinion considered. However, if you do have plans for your property don't just hope for the best – simply get on and secure an approval now.

If you are unsure of the process or simply want some support you should discuss it with a professional surveying company experienced with the local rules without delay.

By Brent Trail – Managing Director