

Contaminated Land

Issues

Contaminated land, where it is disturbed, poses a risk to the environment and to people's health and safety.

The National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health (NESCS) contains a national rule framework for managing contaminated land for human health but, as a Standard, does not include objective and policy guidance to assist the Council when processing resource consents that are required under the Standard.

Operative District Plan Approach

Because of the NESCS, the Operative Plan does not include rules relating to contaminated land. In broad terms, the policy direction lacks any specific direction on how existing, or potentially, contaminated sites should be managed, and instead focuses more on the management of activities to avoid contamination arising.

Proposed Plan Approach

It is proposed to include a policy framework to guide consideration of resource consents that are required under the NESCS.

Changes

Key changes include:

Direction requiring: investigation of contaminated land or potentially contaminated land in specific circumstances; subdivision, use or development of contaminated land to follow a best practice approach; and for remediation of, or management works undertaken on contaminated land to not increase or preferably reduce risks to human health.

Reasons

The provisions are intended to provide guidance for consideration of resource consents that are required under the NESCS.

What it Means in Practice

The proposed approach will not alter the requirements under the NESCS that stipulate in what circumstances resource consents are required. However, they will assist with how resource consents, when they are triggered by the NESCS, are considered and what consent conditions may be imposed.