

Attachment C: Public Feedback on the Rates remission and postponement policy

Consultation was open to the public from 13 March to 13 April. Notification was targeted to:

- current recipients of legacy remission and postponement schemes
- ratepayers currently charged the Accommodation Provider Targeted Rate
- administrators for villages receiving the remission for licence to occupy retirement villages
- relevant key stakeholders including the Queen Elizabeth the Second Trust and Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand (Forest and Bird).

Feedback related to remissions for natural heritage

Theme	Feedback Points	Officers Comments
QEII covenanted land should be non-rateable	37	Land is only non-rateable if owned or used by (for example under a lease) the QEII trust. The QEII Trust is empowered by its establishing legislation to pay the rates on land that has a covenant to the Trust
Will be worse off because not GST registered	9	Officers recommend funding the GST component which would leave recipients in the same position as currently. This will cost \$10,000.
Ongoing support (after three years) is uncertain	28	Neither grants nor remissions guarantee on-going support, as policies can be changed. All support should be subject to regular review to ensure value for ratepayers in terms of outcomes achieved.
Grants require more administration	24	Grants can provide long-term support with same administration requirements as current schemes. Properties in Waitakere already receive grants for rates
Grants will not encourage people to covenant land in future	30	The incentive value of remissions is minimal compared to the opportunity cost of covenanting land. Council offers grants that can be used for costs associated with covenanting land.
Remissions recognise value to environment of QEII covenants	51	Grants offer flexibility to increase recognition of the beneficial outcomes achieved.
Remissions recognise the cost of maintaining covenanted land	51	Amount of remission is limited to the amount of rates charged to the land and is not related to the costs of maintenance. Grants provide more flexibility in level of support offered. This issue can be considered in future options
Costs of maintaining QE2 land as identified in Waikato study¹ which put the cost to owners for establishing a covenant at \$64,000, and the annual cost of maintaining the land at \$6000.	12	Figures in the study were derived from a sample of properties with QE2 covenants, of which 11 were in Auckland. For the Auckland sample, the study records an average cost for establishment as \$8,457 in cash and \$2,818 in non-cash costs. Annual maintenance costs were \$319 cash and \$1,062 non-cash.
Removing remissions is inconsistent with RMA and/or Unitary Plan	22	Council uses a variety of mechanisms to meet its obligations under the RMA and Unitary Plan.
Extend remissions to SEAs	10	Significant Ecological Area status does not guarantee enduring protection for native habitats

¹ Waikato University: "2017 Investment in Covenanted Land Conservation" prepared for the Queen Elizabeth the Second Trust

Feedback related to remissions for community and sporting organisations

Theme	Feedback Points	Officers Comments
Ongoing support is uncertain	14	Neither grants nor remissions guarantee on-going support, as policies can be changed.
Grants require more administration	11	Grants can provide long-term support with same administration requirements as current schemes.
Support should be continued because of the benefit the organisation provides to the community	14	Feedback reflects concerns for continuation of support rather than the form in which it is received.
Removing support will have significant financial impact on organisations	13	It is proposed that options for future support be developed with input from relevant sectors within the three years.
Supports grants or remissions so long as support maintained	2	
Rates cost will need to be met through existing funding agreement with council	1	Harmonising funding mechanisms will reduce administration for some organisations

Feedback related to remission for the Accommodation provider targeted rate

Response to Remissions	Feedback Points	Officers Comments
Remission assists those who most need it	2	This feedback reflects the key issues for and against adoption of an APTR remission
Remission supported because can't pass on rate to operator	12	
Remission shouldn't be offered - everyone should pay	4	
No APTR should be charged	13	6 supported and 6 opposed the proposal
Remission should be available to more properties	8	3 supported, 4 opposed proposal
Full remission should be granted until lease ends	4	1 supported proposal
Should use bed tax or similar charge rather than APTR	7	2 supported, 1 opposed proposal