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Tabled at: Policy/Planning

on: 9 August 2018

Policy and Planning Chairman's report. August 2018

Good afternoon and welcome to the meeting.

Much of today's order paper deals with matters that we have previously had in front of the committee and it will be good to finally sign these off , especially the liquor control by-law, the animal control by-law and the NES –pf changes to the district plan.

I would like to comment on this last item briefly, as I have in my capacity as a representative of small forestry interests witnessed some of the potential political fallout due to climate bombs and Radiata pine post-harvest. This is a tool that does impact in our compliance space. It is fair to say that central government is becoming increasingly hostile to post harvest environmental issues and is looking to the NES-PF as one of the tools to remedy these same issues.

Another issue that I became aware of at another forest industry forum was the way in which other territorial authorities have responded to the threat of forest harvest on their roading networks. I would emphasise that the inclusive way in which we have engaged with our forest owning entities has been extremely enlightened, as have our approaches to remedying the issues. I am aware that our local government cousins over in the Wairoa district have just imposed a forestry rate some 5 times higher than other primary land users, a rather blunt approach indeed.

Lastly I would like to comment on the Ngaruroro water conservator order process that is in our order paper. These processes are really important in terms of the protection of river systems in their entirety. Some of you may not be aware that our own Rangitikei river has an order of the same nature placed on it back in the 1980's. I would be urging this council to support the Ngaruroro process.

Angus Gordon

Chairman.

8 August 2018

Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment
Planning standards
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Dear David

Submission – Draft National Planning Standards

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the draft national planning standards Council appreciates that these changes represent a shift to an alignment of structure form and e-delivery of RMA plans which has been envisioned for a number of years.

Electronic Accessibility and ePlan Requirement

Council can see the benefits of the electronic accessibility and functionality standard. As technology advances, systems will become available that can save our community time and effort; Council appreciates that there is an expectation from the public that local government ought to keep up with such advancements. However, Council are also aware that new systems come with a cost for implementation.

Rangitikei District Council currently uses, and has invested considerably, in Intramaps in recent years. Intramaps is fully configurable which makes it an appropriate tool for creation and implementation of an ePlan in the future. This will enable Council to link from the mapping system directly to pdf documents of the relevant sections of the plan. Therefore, Council requests that the Ministry do not consider implementing a national programme for mapping and ePlan delivery. However, Council would need to make substantial changes which would require significant resourcing to upgrade the website and enable the HTML display and linking of the district plan. It is unclear whether HTML display is required or if a pdf would suffice.

As a small organisation with limited resources, Council is wary about the significant costs involved with creating an ePlan that is fully integrated with a HTML system. The purchase price of the necessary upgrade to our Intramaps system and website, as well as, the staff time required to create an ePlan has been estimated at approximately $75,000. It is requested that the government cover these costs of implementation.

Additionally, the requirement to hyperlink and reference regional plans will have cost implications for our Council. The cost of referencing regional plans within our existing District Plan has been estimated at $1,000. It is also requested that the timeframe for including hyperlinks to regional plans within existing district plans is increased from 12 months to 5 years.

With reference to the requirement for previous district plans to be made available online, Council has concerns this could also have implications for us in terms of resourcing. Our first generation District

Plan went through over 20 plan changes during the time it was operative. Very few of these documents are currently in an electronic format. It is recommended that this standard is amended so that only versions of the operative plan are available electronically.

Spatial planning tools

Council can understand the reasoning behind the of standardisation of colours for zoning on maps. Council acknowledges that having different visual representations for different layers and features between different local authorities could be confusing for some plan users. In light of the fact that standardisation of zone colours is attempting to alleviate confusion and simplify things, we request that more attention be given to ensuring the colours for each are easily distinguishable, particularly where there are similar zones (for example the colours for low-density residential and medium-density residential will be hard to distinguish in practice). We also ask that that consideration be given to the colour vision impaired and the effect of multi overlays of colour which when overlaid can cause distortions.

Content and metric standards

Council appreciates that standardisation of definitions could reduce the time spent debating the details of certain definitions. However, some of the new definitions set for implementation will require our rules to be altered to retain the existing meaning. While there is provision for consequential amendments not requiring a Schedule 1 process, given some of the changes which will be required to the rules, Council would be likely to amend the definitions alongside a district plan review/change process. The proposed timeframe for the initial roll out of definitions will allow this to occur. We request that if the Ministry add to the mandatory definitions, that this occurs within the next five years, or an implementation timeframe is provided to allow for the incorporation of the definitions in the next district plan review process. We also request that the Ministry will provide comprehensive guidance for organisation about what constitutes as a consequential amendment, and hopes that the Ministry will be well equipped to adequately respond to queries of Councils for plan specific matters.

Structure standards

Council accepts that making plans easier to follow for the layperson is desirable, but whether uniformity across statement structure and formatting will achieve that is not yet proven. In any case, we do not see how it would be of advantage to those who work with a single district plan. The operative Rangitikei District Plan is currently simple and easy to use, and we are concerned the tables set to be introduced may complicate the way our plan reads. We also sense that the Ministry may be underestimating the amount of work involved for Councils with this 'cutting and pasting exercise', to implement this structure standard, particular for smaller authorities such as our own. We therefore hope that there will be sufficient guidance from the Ministry to assist with implementation – including plan specific examples and a point of contact at the Ministry to answer questions.

In summary, Council requests the following:

- That the Ministry does not implement a mandatory national ePlan mode of delivery.
- Costs of implementing hyperlinked electronics standards are provided by the Government - $1,000.
- The timeframe for including hyperlinks to regional plans within existing district plans is increased from 12 months to 5 years.
- Costs of implementing the ePlan are provided by the Government - $75,000.

- The requirement for providing pdfs of all past plans is amended so that only versions of the operative plan are required to be available electronically.
- More attention be given to ensuring the colours for each are easily distinguishable.
- Consideration be given to the colour vision impaired and the effect of multi overlays of colour which when overlaid can cause distortions.
- If the Ministry add to the mandatory definitions that this occurs within the next five years, or provides an implementation timeframe to allow for the incorporation in the next district plan review process.
- The Ministry will provide comprehensive guidance for organisation about what constitutes as a consequential amendment regarding the implementation of standardised definitions, and provides resourcing to respond to queries of Council.
- The Ministry provides guidance to assist with implementation of the structure standards – including plan specific examples and a point of contact at the Ministry to answer questions.

I hope these comments are useful.

Yours sincerely

Andy Watson
Mayor of the Rangitikei

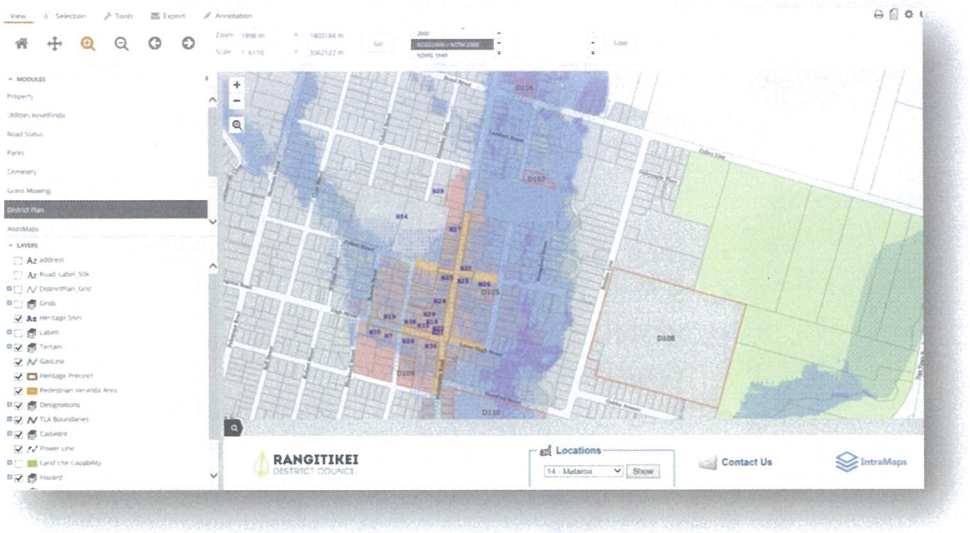
Rangitikei District Council ePlan

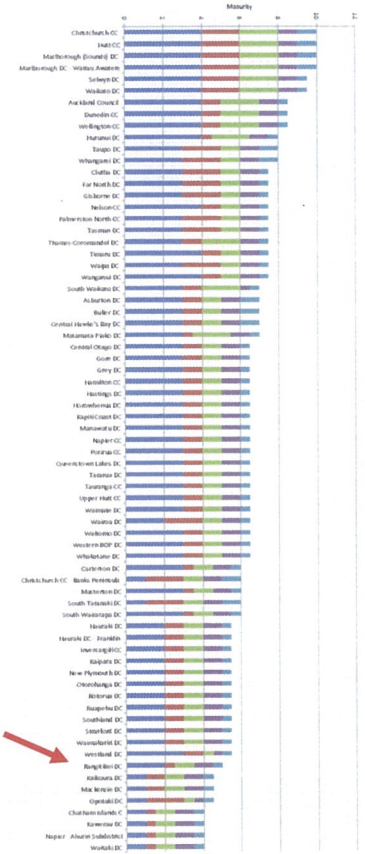
Refers to an electronic plan, located on a website, fully interactive, hyperlinked through the policies with ideally an embedded GIS system (or the functionality)

- The ability to drill through layers to highlight policies that apply to a point or area

STATUS QUO?

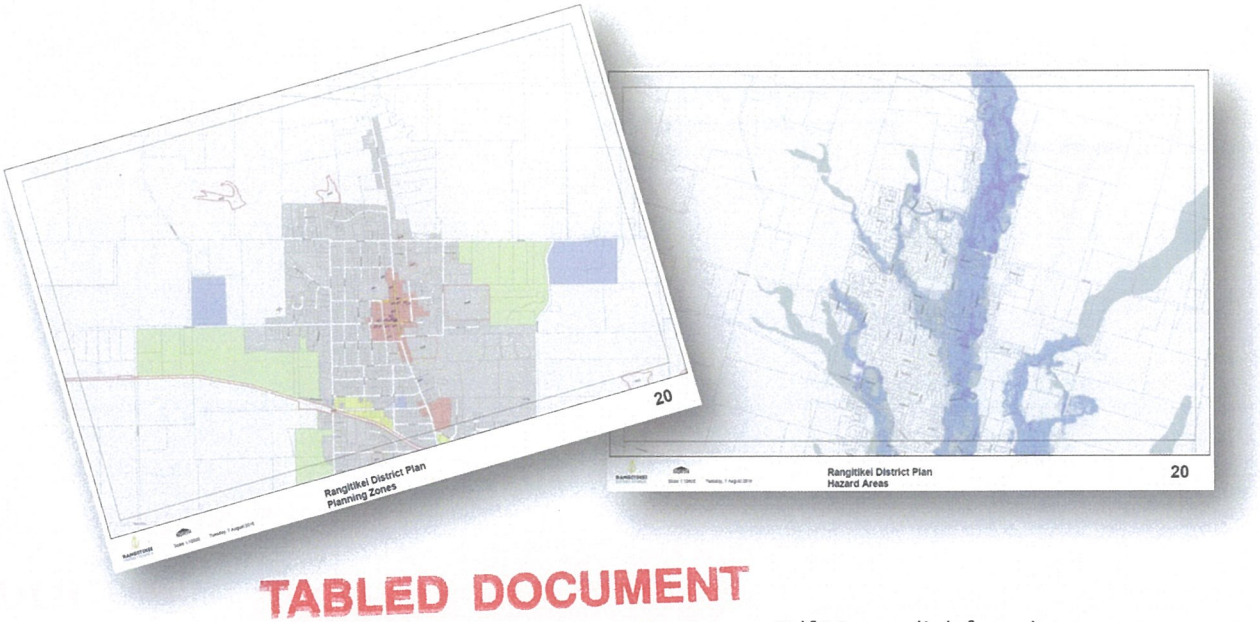
Rangitikei District Council currently have some level of GIS Mapping with links to pdf maps.





Ministry for the Environment summary of plans score for Rangitikei District Council was 5/10 for electronic functionality and accessibility (National Planning Standards Discussion paper H)

Mapping: 2 [DP maps PDF, has GIS capability for other features]
Online consenting payment: 0.5 [No]
Plan format: 1 [HTML]
Ability to search plan for key words: 1 [No]
Online consent application: 0.5 [No]



Pdf Maps – link from intramaps

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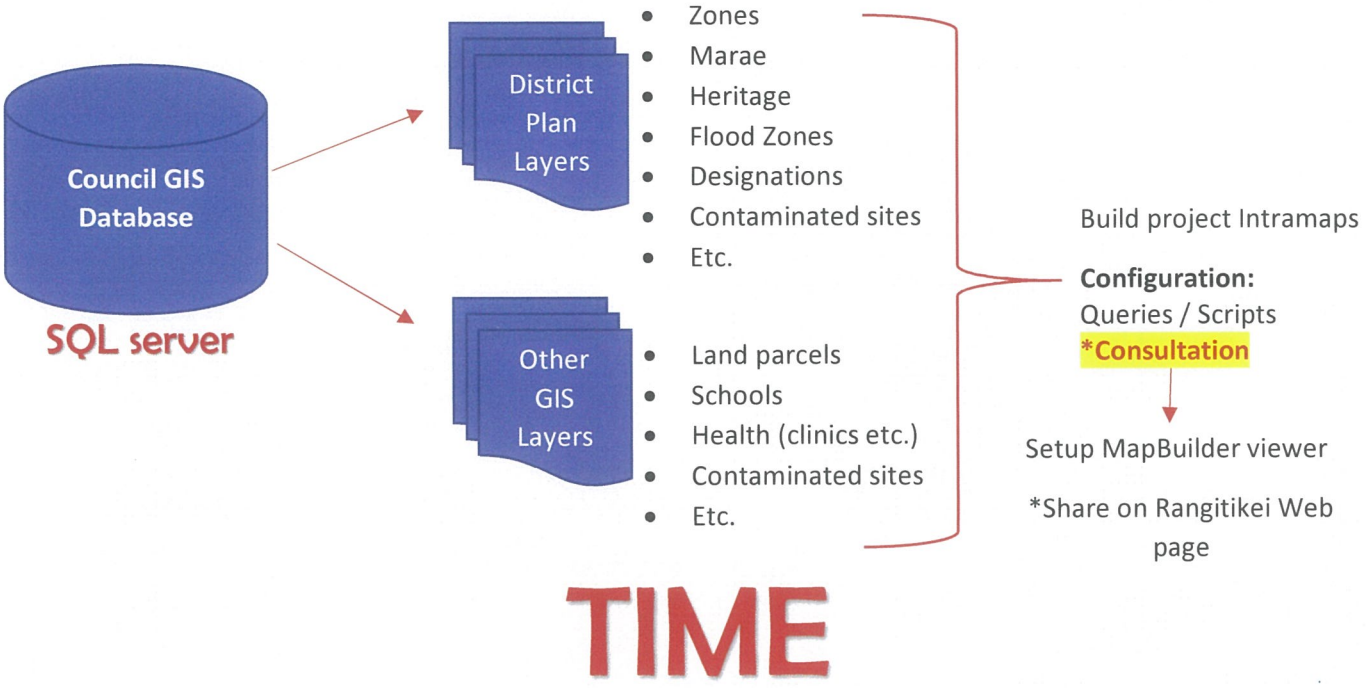
What is needed to improve scores for Mapping and Plan format?

1. Improve Spatial Data
2. Intramaps – Upgrade current District Plan Module with added GIS functionality
3. Provide link to simplified Web Viewer



MapBuilder = Available to use through Intramaps. Provide simplified user experience around a <u>single</u> topic