

RMA FORM 5  
**Submission on  
publicly notified  
Proposed Porirua  
District Plan**

Clause 6 of the First Schedule, Resource Management Act 1991

To: Porirua City Council

1. Submitter details:

Full Name	<i>Last</i> Mosey	<i>First</i> Gail
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2. This is a **submission** on the **Proposed District Plan** for Porirua.

3. I could  I could not   
gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.  
(Please tick relevant box)

If **you could** gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission please complete point four below:

4. I am  I am not   
directly affected by an effect of the subject matter of the submission that:  
(a) adversely affects the environment; and  
(b) does not relate to trade competition or the effects of trade competition.  
(Please tick relevant box if applicable)

Note:

*If you are a person who could gain an advantage in trade competition through the submission, your right to make a submission may be limited by clause 6(4) of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991.*

5. I wish  I do not wish   
 To be heard in support of my submission  
*(Please tick relevant box)*

6. I will  I will not   
 Consider presenting a joint case with other submitters, who make a similar submission, at a hearing.  
*(Please tick relevant box)*

Please complete section below (insert additional boxes per provision you are submitting on):

<b>The specific provision of the proposal that my submission relates to:</b>
ECO-R1 Removal of indigenous vegetation within a Significant Natural Area All zones 1. Activity status: Permitted  Where: a. The trimming or removal of indigenous vegetation is to: i. Address an imminent threat to people or property represented by deadwood, diseased or dying vegetation and ECO-S1 is complied with; ii. Ensure the safe and efficient operation of any formed public road, rail corridor or access, where removal is limited to within the formed width of the road, rail corridor or access; iii. Enable the maintenance of buildings where the removal of indigenous vegetation is limited to within 3m from the external wall or roof of a building; iv. Maintain, upgrade or create new public walking or cycling tracks up to 2.5m in width undertaken by Porirua City Council or its approved contractor in accordance with the Porirua City Council Track Standards Manual (Version 1.2, 2014) and where no tree with a trunk greater than 15cm in diameter (measured 1.4m above ground) is removed; v. Construct new perimeter fences for stock or pest animal exclusion from areas or maintenance of existing fences provided the area of trimming or removal of any vegetation does not exceed 2m in width; vi. Enable necessary flood protection or natural hazard control where undertaken by a Statutory Agency or their nominated contractors or agents on their behalf as part of natural hazard mitigation works; vii. Comply with section 43 of the Fire and Emergency Act 2017; or viii. Enable tangata whenua to exercise customary harvesting.
<b>Do you: Support? Oppose? Amend?</b>
Oppose
<b>What decision are you seeking from Council?</b> <b>What action would you like: Retain? Amend? Add? Delete?</b>

A complete rewrite, in line with ECO-P3, permitting indigenous vegetation removal within Significant Natural Areas identified within SCHED7 - Significant Natural Areas where it is of a scale and nature that maintains the identified biodiversity values, at least for SNAs on private land.

Suggested provisions more in line with provisions applied by KCDC -

- Protection of species nationally or locally endangered, threatened or rare - list of such species to be provided by the council.
- Protection of individual trees of other species over a certain size - suggest 5m in height and with a trunk diameter of 300mm at a height of 1.4 m.
- Protection of the area itself by permitting the removal of indigenous vegetation covering a contiguous area of no more than 50m<sup>2</sup>, and no more than 5% of the native vegetation within any one area.
- Permit the removal of indigenous vegetation which is not native to the area and which poses a threat to local vegetation due to invasive nature - list to be provided by the council.

Most of the other provisions should then be unnecessary, as the activity would then be permitted.

If other clauses are retained, then clauses should be added to permit the removal of indigenous vegetation to

- Clear a zone of 10m around a dwelling, as recommended by the NewZealand Fire Service
- Maintain existing private tracks and roadways.

### Reasons:

The policy outlined in ECO-P3 is reasonable enough - as below

ECO-P3 Appropriate use and development in Significant Natural Areas

Enable vegetation removal within Significant Natural Areas identified within SCHED7 - Significant Natural Areas where it is of a scale and nature that maintains the identified biodiversity values, including;

1. Maintenance around existing buildings;
2. Safe operation of roads, tracks and accessways;
3. Restoration and conservation activities; and
4. Opportunities to enable tangata whenua to exercise customary harvesting practices.

But the rules outlined in ECO-R1 do not implement this reasonable approach.

The whole ECO-R1 section effectively treats every tree in an SNA as if it were a scheduled Notable Tree. When reading statements from Council literature such as "Porirua city was once extensively covered in kohekohe-tawa forest. Extensive clearance of this vegetation in the mid and late 1800s for timber and farming.....has left the city with only scattered remnants of this former forest cover", the mind naturally fills with pictures of trees dating back to pre-1900, magnificent forest giants - of *course* these deserve tight protection.

So - a representative photograph of the area of SNA 215 on my own property.



Kohekohe-tawa? No - mahoe/whiteywood. Centuries old? No - regrowth after clearance, 20-30 years old at the most. If you had any of these trees at the bottom of your garden, you would feel no guilt about removing them as and when you pleased. And there are thousands of them on my property alone.

These are not pre-colonisation jewels, the rightful property of the community, by chance on the property of the current owners. Most of them only exist at all because of the hard work of recent owners in planting, pest management, and protection, done on a voluntary basis because they love the bush. And now the reward for all that hard work is to be an unworkable regime of micro-management.

Is it reasonable to require resource consent and an arborist to remove or prune a single one of these mahoe? In my view, it is an absurdity. Does it support the ECO\_P3 policy 'Enable vegetation removal within Significant Natural Areas identified within SCHED7 - Significant Natural Areas where it is of a scale and nature that maintains the identified biodiversity values'. No, of course not - removal of a single one of these trees would have no impact on the biodiversity of the area at all. The value of this type of vegetation is in the area as a whole, and not in the individual trees.

Protection such as that in ECO-R1 obviously needs to be given to plants of endangered, threatened or rare species. This could be achieved by reference to a council-provided list.

It could also be given to particularly old/sizeable specimens of common species - any tree over a given height and trunk diameter, although the 15cm diameter is too small - mahoe can reach this in 5 years or so. 30cm would be more reasonable, as used by KCDC.

Protection also needs to be given to the integrity of the area itself, which could be achieved by limiting the contiguous area of vegetation which could be removed without consent. It would also be necessary to limit percentage of vegetation within each hectare which could be removed, to avoid clearance of too many patches, each within the limit, but too close together.

This type of protection would be far more likely to be workable, and to encourage the owners to continue to value their SNA and carry on their work to improve it. It is simply lazy to determine that notable tree rules should be applied without any consideration of the type of activity which would and would not impact the biodiversity of an SNA. The protection as currently described is unworkable and makes the SNA a burden on its owner. Deprived of their voluntary work, these areas may be expected to deteriorate. Landowners will also be likely to ensure that other areas of regeneration on their property never reach SNA standard.

It is not clear that permitted activities include maintenance of existing PRIVATE tracks within an SNA - only public ones. Where the SNA is on private property, then removal of vegetation to maintain/prevent overgrowth of existing tracks should clearly be a permitted activity.

Permitted activities only include removal of vegetation within 3 metres of a building. NZ fire service suggests that a 10m zone be cleared of thick vegetation for safety, and this should be a permitted activity. It is not reasonable to jeopardise the safety of householders in the case of a fire, as evidence from the Australian bush fires should teach us.

Not all indigenous vegetation is equally desirable. Certain plants may be native, but are not naturally occurring within this region. These are recognised as potentially invasive weeds in the greater Wellington area, and have been referenced in pest management plans. Removal of these plants should be a permitted activity. The Coastal Five Finger/Houpara (*Pseudopanax lessonii*) is one example which hybridises with the local Lancewood (*Pseudopanax crassifolius*). The resulting hybrids are very vigorous, and threaten to displace the Lancewood entirely.

I submit that the whole of ECO-R1 needs to be re-thought.

Please return this form no later than **5pm on Friday 20 November 2020** to:

- Proposed District Plan, Environment and City Planning, Porirua City Council, PO Box 50-218, PORIRUA CITY or
- email [dpreview@pcc.govt.nz](mailto:dpreview@pcc.govt.nz)

Signature of  
submitter  
*(or person authorised  
to sign  
on behalf of  
submitter):*

Date 19/11/2020

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*A signature is not required if you  
make your submission by electronic  
means*