Newslink Case-notes for October 2017 prepared 23 September 2017.

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Legislation Case-notes – October 2017

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We would appreciate comments and suggestions from members on content, format or information about cases that might be of interest to members but may have not been reported in "Your Environment".

The Case-book Editor Roger Low can be contacted through the National Office, or by e-mail, Roger Low<rlow@lowcom.co.nz>

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Summaries of cases from Thomson Reuter's "Your Environment".

This month we report on seven court decisions covering diverse situations associated with subdivision, development and land use activities from around the country; most result from decisions made in district and unitary plans:

- A decision about the application of policies relating to water quality not in accordance with the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional "One Plan";
- Judicial review of a decision of Auckland Council to grant non-notified consent for construction of a large shed on a rural property near Pukekohe intended by the owner for use by a manufacturing business;
- A decision of the Environment Court about acceptability of Housing New Zealand to be accepted by the Council to be a party to an appeal about re-zoning of land at Takanini to which it had not made submissions;
- The split decision of the Environment Court relating to a plan change seeking a zoning change and removal from heritage status of the Gordon Wilson flats near Victoria University;
- A further decision relating to limitation of quarrying of the summit of Saddle Hill, near Dunedin.

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CASE NOTES OCTOBER 2017:

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Wellington Fish and Game Council v Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council –

[2017] NZEnvC 37

Keywords: declaration; regional plan; regional policy statement; regional rule; resource consent; conditions; council procedures; farming; activity

The Court considered an application for declarations by Wellington Fish and Game Council and the Environmental Defence Soc Inc. The applicants sought declarations that Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council ("the council") had been failing to apply statutory requirements and provisions of the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plan ("the One Plan") since it became operative in 2014. The applicants asserted that the provisions relating to restricted discretionary activities ("RDAs") under rr 14.2 and 14.4 of Chapter 14 of the One Plan had been improperly applied by the council regarding new and existing intensive farming activities. Further, they submitted that the council had failed properly to consider relevant provisions of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management ("NPSFM") and of the RMA regarding applications for consents for RDAs. The Court considered the seven declarations sought, its jurisdiction under ss 310 and 313, the nature of RDAs under s 87A of

the RMA the provisions of ss 104 and 104C regarding the consideration of resource consent applications for RDAs.

The Court stated that the terms of a council resolution of 25 June 2013 ("the 2013 resolution") were at the core of the present application. Under the 2013 resolution, the council adopted a nutrient management plan consent process whereby, if an intensive farming activity provided a trajectory of nitrogen ("N") reduction, which was achievable on the farm, then resource consent would be granted for a specified number of years. The 2013 resolution also took into account whether the farm operating system was economically and environmentally efficient and whether any low cost options for compliance were available. Further, the applicants alleged that the basis on which the council had applied version 6 of the OVERSEER software model to RDAs and controlled activities was not robust.

The first declaration sought asserted that to have regard to the 2013 resolution, the council when making decisions on resource consent for RDAs under r 14.2, was unlawful, invalid and in contravention of the RMA. The Court stated that it agreed that the 2013 resolution should not form any part of the council's consideration of a consent application. In fact, the 2013 resolution had now been revoked, and the Court noted that the council now agreed that it had acted wrongly in considering matters contained in the 2013 resolution which were not relevant matters for consideration under rr 14.2 and 14.4 or the relevant sections of the RMA.

The second declaration sought specified the matters to which the council was required to have regard when considering applications for resource consent for RDAs under rr 14.2 and r 14.4, and ss 104 and 104C of the RMA. The Court noted that the applicants were concerned that the assessment of environmental effects of such applications had been inadequate, in particular the cumulative adverse effect of non-compliance with the cumulative leaching maximum values specified. The Court stated that the council had advised that no consent applications had in fact been declined under rr 14.2 and 14.4, and that by 31 October 2016 about 160 consents had been granted. The Court agreed with the applicants that in the circumstances a precautionary approach might be justified and there had been no reliable assessment as to whether water quality was being maintained or improved. The Court stated it was important that the council had regard to all matters over which discretion was restricted under rr 14.2 and 14.4, the One Plan policies, the NPSFM provisions and the RMA, and it was appropriate to highlight such matters in a declaration.

The third declaration related to the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Sources of Human Drinking Water) Regulations 2007 ("the water regulations") and stated that the council was under a duty not to grant resource consents which were contrary to the water regulations. The Court agreed that there would be a benefit in the legal position being thus made clear.

Declaration 4 as sought by the applicants asserted that when considering and granting resource consent under rr 14.2 and 14.4 of the One Plan, the council had a duty to give reasons for its decisions, including reasons that addressed matters in specified polices of the One Plan. The Court considered s 113 of the RMA and relevant case authority and concluded that without a reasoned decision being given the public could not be sure that consents were being issued in a principled and lawful manner. Accordingly, the Court found there was utility in making the declaration.

Turning to consider the fifth declaration, the Court noted that it sought clarification of the requirements under s 88 and the Fourth Schedule of the RMA and the associated Resource Management (Forms, Fees and Procedure) Regulations 2003. After considering the issue, the Court concluded that there was a need for a declaration on what must be included with applications under rr 14.2 and 14.4 with the exception of s 107 of the Act. The Court also found it was not acceptable for the council to "fill the gap" by resorting to s 92 of the RMA – further information – requests for fundamental matters which should be addressed in an Assessment of Environmental Effects.

Declarations 6 and 7 concerned consent conditions and advice notes, and the use of these by the council to include authorisations for activities other than those regulated by rr 14.2 and 14.4. The applicants alleged that such conditions and advice notes allowed consents to be granted beyond the scope of what was applied for and sidelined consideration of the standards in the One Plan rules. For example, the applicants referred to advice notes or conditions which

purported to allow adjustments to leaching limits. The Court agreed that there were deficiencies in the council's practice in this regard and it was appropriate to make declarations as to what was required in the future. The Court stated that: although a management plan could provide information as to how parameters could be met, it was inappropriate for the parameters themselves to be left to the management plan; the consent, through conditions, must set the maximum leaching allowed on the face of the consent document and it was inappropriate to leave this to the management plan; and that there should be no implication in the wording of the conditions or advice notes that the nitrogen leaching limit could be "updated". The Court said it was important that the interpretation and application of resource management plans was a question of law, and thus amenable to declarations on lawfulness. This was particularly so where the potential impact of the activities in question was very significant. The Court made declarations accordingly. Costs were reserved.

Decision date 19 April 2017   Your Environment April 2017

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Shanks v Auckland Council - [2017] NZHC 745

Keywords: High Court; judicial review; resource consent; public notification; activity permitted; home occupation

J and P Shanks and others ("the applicants") applied for judicial review and interim relief regarding decisions by a commissioner for Auckland Council ("the council") concerning the grant of consent to D and D Vujanic ("V"). V wished to construct a 300 m^2 shed in their rural property at 4 Sawyer Rd, Bombay ("the site"). The applicants sought to stop such construction pending the hearing of the substantive judicial review application. The shed for which consent was granted was for a home occupation, relating to V's mould-making business, currently located on an industrial site at Otahuhu. V wished to relocate the business to the shed. The applicants lived on properties adjacent to or near the site.

The grounds for the judicial review application were: that the decision not to notify the consent application was unlawful; that the grant of consent was unlawful; and that the council acted unreasonably in not giving the applicants the opportunity to participate in the decisions. The application for interim relief sought orders: restraining V from implementing the consent pending the resolution of the review application; and restraining V from constructing the shed as an accessory building for a home occupation at the site.

The Court stated that the parties were now agreed that the present hearing would be restricted to a consideration of whether the shed was a permitted activity under the provisions of the Auckland Unitary Plan ("AUP"). Further, V, in reliance on an undertaking by the applicants as to damages, had given an undertaking that they would not undertake their mould-making business home occupation, but would use the shed only for permitted activities listed in r H19.8.1 of the AUP ("the rule"), until the judicial review proceedings were resolved.

The Court considered the law reading the grant of interim relief. The first issue was whether there was a serious question to be tried, and whether it was arguable that the shed was not a permitted activity under the AUP. The Court addressed the provisions of the rule and stated that the activity status of new buildings, including accessory buildings, was determined by reference to the activity status of any activity that the building was intended to accommodate or facilitate. The first step therefore was to establish the use to which the shed would be put, if constructed. V submitted that they hoped ultimately to operate their mould-making business from the shed. However, they also intended it to be used to house a lawnmower, quad bike, trailer and other farming equipment ("the other uses"). The Court said that the other uses could properly be described as accommodating dwelling and/or farming activities. Both dwelling and farming were permitted activities in the Rural Production zone under the AUP, in which the site was located. Accordingly, the Court did not consider that there was an arguable case that the shed was not a permitted activity under the AUP if used for the other uses. Accordingly, the interim relief application was resolved.

Turning to consider the balance of convenience, the Court noted that construction of the shed was almost completed, minus finishing the roof, and the site was hazardous if left uncompleted. Accordingly, the balance of convenience also favoured V. The Court stated that, if the
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applicants succeeded in their substantive application for review, V would not be able to use the shed for the proposed home occupation.

The application for interim relief to stop construction of the shed was refused. Further to their undertaking, V were prohibited from undertaking the mould-making business in the shed and could use the shed only for permitted uses until the judicial review proceedings were determined. The Court made directions as to applications for costs.

Decision date 1 May 2017 Your Environment 02 May 2017.

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Wallace Group Ltd v Auckland Council - [2017] NZEnvC 106

Keywords: appeal procedure; party; district plan proposed; zoning

This decision concerned whether or not Housing New Zealand ("HNZ") was entitled to be a party. The proceeding was an appeal against the decision of Auckland Council ("the council") to accept the recommendation of the Hearings Panel that land at 55 Takanini School Road ("the site") be rezoned Residential – Mixed Use Housing Suburban. Under the proposed plan as notified, the site was "split zoned" Light Industry and Single House. The present proceedings had been re-activated as a result of the High Court decision in *Albany North Landowners v Auckland Council* [2016] NZHC 138 ("the HC decision"). HNZ now claimed: to be a person who "made primary and further submissions on the proposed plan about the subject matter of the proceedings, being the need for further re-zoning of land for residential purposes in the region"; and to be a person with an interest in the proceedings greater than the general public, because it was a major landowner in the region and the proposed plan set the planning framework for enabling and managing future development, including residential development. HNZ submitted that if the appeal were allowed the outcome would be contrary to the purpose of the RMA. The appellant, Wallace Group Ltd ("WGL") opposed the joining of HNZ to the proceedings because: the subject of the appeal was not general housing intensification; HNZ had made no submissions directly relating to the site; HNZ did not lodge submissions supporting general rezoning of industrial land to residential; and the submissions identified by HNZ in the HC decision did not concern housing intensification issues.

The Court first considered HNZ's claim that it had the requisite interest under s 274 of the RMA. Referring to relevant case authority, the Court noted that such interest must be one of some advantage or disadvantage which was not remote, and that an interest in the property affected was usually enough to establish standing. HNZ acknowledged that it had no ownership or other interest in the site or immediate vicinity, although it had considerable interests and holdings in residential property in the region. HNZ submitted that it faced the prospect that its land holdings might be compromised if the present appeal succeeded. The Court agreed with WGL that HNZ's submissions on the proposed plan relating to residential zoning were generic and not site-specific, and did not seek up-zoning of industrial land nor did they specifically address the site in question. The Court acknowledged the importance of HNZ's broad objectives and that it was a major landowner with responsibilities for the provision of affordable housing. However, lack of evidence of any advantage or disadvantage relating to the current proceedings, of a non-remote kind, meant that HNZ failed in its claim to have the requisite interest under s 274 of the RMA.

Similarly, addressing HNZ's second claim that it had made submissions about the subject matter of the proceedings, the Court found that to the extent that HNZ made submissions, seeking general intensification on property other than its own property, such submissions sought "up-zoning" of notified residential zones and not re-zoning of industrial land to residential. Accordingly, HNZ's second claim under s 274 of the RMA also failed. Costs were reserved.

Decision date 17 August 2017   Your Environment 18 August 2017

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The Architectural Centre v Wellington City Council - [2017] NZEnvC 116

Keywords: district plan change; building; zoning; heritage value

The Architectural Centre ("the appellant") appealed against Proposed Plan Change 81 to the Wellington City District Plan ("PC81"), requested by the Victoria University of Wellington ("the University") and accepted by Wellington City Council ("the council"). PC81 concerned the Gordon Wilson Flats ("the building"), situated at 320 The Terrace ("the site"), and would rezone the land at the site from Inner Residential to Institutional Precinct and also delist the building from the District Plan Heritage List. The delisting would facilitate, but not directly authorise without resource consent, the University's proposal to demolish the building. The building, which contained 87 residential units, was constructed by the Crown in 1959 and managed by Housing New Zealand Corporation until the site was purchased by the University in 2014 with a view to incorporating the site into the campus. In 2011 the building was declared Earthquake Prone and was evacuated, since when it had remained unoccupied. The appellant submitted that while the present condition of the building was poor, it could be repaired and reinstated as housing for students. The appellant considered that the heritage values of the building justified the difference in costs between demolition and rebuilding and the costs of repair and that the building was a strong example of the Modernist style and was a memorial to Gordon Wilson, who had been a senior public sector architect. The University submitted it had no viable use for the building as accommodation space and that it bought the site to redevelop it as part of the campus. The council supported PC81. Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga advised the council that the building was not entered on the New Zealand Heritage List and that it had no issues with its potential demolition.

Regarding the relevant planning provisions, the expert planning evidence for the University was that that as the building had been vacant for so long that its existing use rights under s 10 of the RMA were now lost and a resource consent would be required for a non-complying activity if resumption of residential use of the building was proposed. Further, the scale, design, external appearance and siting of the building did not comply with the Residential Design Guide under the current district plan. The plan's heritage provisions stated that the demolition of any listed building was a restricted discretionary activity, under Rule 21A.2.1 ("the rule"). The relevant criteria under the rule were: whether there was any change in circumstances resulting in a reduction in the building's heritage significance; and whether adaptive reuse would enable the owners to make reasonable and economic use of the building. In addition, the University submitted that it was relevant to consider whether there were reasonable alternatives to the demolition of the building.

The Environment Court was divided. Judge Thompson would have declined the appeal. However, Commissioner Mills and Deputy Commissioner Kernohan concluded that the appeal should be allowed. The majority view was that the focus should be on the heritage value of the building. Expert opinion differed: the council's heritage expert concluded that the building was of moderate heritage significance; the University's expert witness was unconvinced that a poorly constructed, dilapidated and red-stickered building was an fitting memorial to an important architect; and the appellant's heritage experts argued that the building was of high national significance as a rare example of its kind. The majority view of the Court was that the building had significant heritage value and should not be delisted from the council heritage list.

On the other hand, Judge Thompson in the minority stated that the building was of moderate heritage value, according to the district plan listing, was not ranked by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, was unusable for any purpose in its present state, had an external structure which was unsafe, and was unsuited to current needs and practices. The University had no wish to use it for any purpose, and the council and Housing New Zealand had rejected it as unsuitable for their current needs. However, there was a perfectly sensible and productive alternative use for the site if the building were demolished. The readapted use of the building might be "nice to have" but the opportunity cost of repair completely outweighed any benefit.

The appeal was allowed to the extent that the delisting of the building should not proceed. Costs were reserved.

Decision date 4 September 2017 Your Environment 5 September 2017

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Dunedin City Council v Saddle Views Estate Ltd _ [2017] NZEnvC 123

***Keywords**: consent order; enforcement order; strike out*
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The Environment Court considered two applications relating to the interim enforcement order issued on 25 February 2015 ("the interim order"). The interim order was made, at the request of Dunedin City Council ("the council") to limit the area on Saddle Hill to be quarried by Saddle Views Estate Ltd ("SVEL"). The two present applications were: by SVEL to cancel the interim order; and by the council to vary the grounds of the interim order, to prevent any further earthworks which might alter the profile of the Saddle Hill ridgeline ("the new order"). The council submitted that: the Court in its Fourth Decision of 13 October 2016 had declared that the purpose and volume of the consent granted in 1960 was now spent; SVEL had not established any existing use rights to continue quarrying; the new order was necessary to ensure irreversible adverse effects on the ridgeline were avoided. SVEL opposed the new order.

The Court considered the provisions of s 320(3) of the RMA. The effects of not making the new order were those alleged by the council on the values of the Saddle Hill Conservation Area. The council had not given any damages undertaking, which the Court accepted in view of the council's regulatory role, acting in the public interest. The Court stated that the new order was a temporary measure, to preserve the status quo, and considered it appropriate to make it. While the Court said it was sympathetic to the operational difficulties facing SVEL, it was not appropriate to grant any extension to the working areas of the quarry. The course open to SVEL was to apply for a certificate of existing use under s 139A of the Act or to apply for a declaration as to any existing use. The Court held that on the balance of convenience the new order should be made, on the terms set out in the decision.

Decision date 14 September 2017   Your Environment 15 September 2017

(See previous decisions reported in Newslink in September, November and December 2016 and the previous two years.)

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This month's cases were selected by Roger Low, rlow@lowcom.co.nz, and Hazim Ali, hazim.ali@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

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Other News Items for October 2017

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Wind farm to cut down hours after noise complaints. *Stuff* reports the owner of a Manawatu wind farm is to cut down on the amount of time the turbines operate following the Palmerston North City Council receiving 1700 noise complaints from residents. Read the full story here.

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Upgrade for Tauranga Airport. The *Bay of Plenty Times* reports that Tauranga Airport will receive a $12.7m expansion and upgrade. The terminal passenger area will be expanded over the next 15 months, with the floor area of the terminal more than doubling from 1700m^2 to 3800m^2. Read the full story here.

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Dunedin heritage redevelopment approved. The *Otago Daily Times* reports that a 10-apartment heritage redevelopment by Dunedin's harbourside has been approved by Dunedin City Council. The former Gregg's building at 21 Fryatt St and the Wharf Hotel building at 25 Fryatt St are being redeveloped by Russell Lund. Read the full story here.

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Decision to reinstate Christchurch cathedral. *Radio New Zealand* reports that Anglican Synod has voted to reinstate the quake-damaged ChristChurch cathedral. It is hoped a rebuild could be completed within ten years. Read the full story here.

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Bogus building products affecting construction industry. *Newsroom* reports that inferior alternatives being used in housing projects as substitutes for code-compliant products are the primary concern of Auckland Council's inspectors. Read the full story here.

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Takapuna Beach campground's future secure. *North Shore Times* reports the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board has voted unanimously that Auckland's Takapuna Beach campground will be leased to a private operator for a 20-year period, with a 10-year right of renewal. More than 1200 submissions were made on the campground before the board made a final decision about the future of the site. Read the full story here.

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Hauraki settlement stalled. *Waatea News* reports Treaty Negotiations Minister Chris Finlayson has said Hauraki's deed of settlement cannot be signed at this time because of the absence of agreement between iwi groups. Tauranga Iwi Nga Te Rangi opposes the inclusion of properties in Te Puna and Katikati in Hauraki's redress. Hauraki Collective chair Paul Majurey saidNgai Te Rangi's opposition to the settlement is dishonest and lacks mana. Read the full story here.

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Hobsonville Point development offers some long-term leases. *Stuff* reports on a joint venture, Kerepeti homes at Hobsonville Point, where the developers are offering some long-term leases of 7 years with an option to end the leases early. The developers say they believe they are the first company to offer long-term leases on a large scale and say they are compliant with the Residential Tenancies Act. Read the full story here.

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Mortgagee sale of Craigieburn Station. *Stuff* reports on the mortgagee sale by the Heartland Bank of Craigieburn Station near Arthur's Pass which will sever a 100 year link of the Westenra family with the station. Craigieburn is one of several high country stations owned by the University of Canterbury and involves a perpetual lease. PGG Wrightson agent Sam Davidson expects good interest in the station. Read the full story here.

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Both National and Labour keen on urban development authorities. *Stuff* reports that both the Labour and National political parties are keen on the idea of urban development authorities with power to master plan and acquire land to advance major urban projects. Both parties are also reluctant to arm such authorities with compulsory acquisition powers under the Public Works Act but are prepared to do so to prevent the possibility of land bankers gaming the system. Read the full story here.

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Waipa District Council's $4m roundabout plan. The *Waikato Times* reports that a $4 million roundabout will be created at the northern entrance to Cambridge to fix an intersection which has been the scene of fatal and serious car crashes. Read the full story here.

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Lobby group says crisis growing over substandard buildings. *Radio New Zealand* reports that a lobby group helping apartment owners with repairs and litigation says there is a growing crisis over substandard buildings. The Home Owners and Buyers Association says it is aware of half a dozen new apartment blocks in Auckland with deficient weather tightness, fire protection or other building work. Read the full story here.

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Western Bay of Plenty District Council considers tiny homes for affordable housing. The *Bay of Plenty Times* reports that Western Bay of Plenty District Council is considering tiny house villages as a potential option for affordable housing. The council has voted to include tiny house villages as part of the District Plan review next year. Read the full story here.

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National's election policy on Landcorp farms sales will be scrutinised says iwi advisor. *RNZ News* reports that iwi advisor Willie Te Aho has said the National Party's election policy announcement that it will sell some state-owned (Landcorp) farms under lease to buy arrangements over 5 to 10 years to young farmers will be closely scrutinised by Maori. National has said it will respect iwi rights of first refusal. Read the full story here.

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Economist warns of job losses in real estate. *Stuff* reports that in his weekly newsletter BNZ chief economist Tony Alexander has warned real estate agents that with a downturn in sales of real estate a number of them will have to find different employment. Houses sold by registered agents in the 12 months to July 2017 stood at 80,000 and the BNZ expects that number to fall within a year to around 65,000.

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China extends rural land reform trial to end-2018.

(Reuters) BEIJING - China's central government has approved a plan to extend a rural land reform pilot programme by another year to the end of 2018, the *Economic Information Daily* reported on Tuesday (September 12 2017) citing sources at the Ministry of Land and Resources.

The land ministry's pilot started in 2015 and is meant to develop mechanisms for rural land use rights to be transferred on markets, allowing rural residents to receive more of the benefits from their rights to land.

China has been looking to reform landholding rights for rural citizens for years as it promotes urbanisation and more efficient, large-scale farms, though progress has been slow and there has been some resistance at the local level.

"We think the main reason for the extension concern issues regarding the revision of land administration laws, indicating the central government's wariness of conflict with local governments when implementing the reforms," analysts at Sun Hung Kai Financial said in a research note.

Farmers in China hold the long-term rights to small plots of land, but technically can lose the right to that land if they move away or do not actively cultivate the land.

Many have been informally leasing the rights to the land, though a lack of clear rules governing land rights has hampered the development of a healthy market for farmland. © Thomson Reuters 2017

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Two landowners settle at mediation regarding proposed Waimea Dam. *Stuff* reports that two landowners, Matt Stuart and Mitch Irvine, have settled at mediation with the Tasman District Council over the compulsory acquisition of their land under the Public Works Act for the proposed Waimea Dam. Outstanding issues the District Council still has to finalise are agreement with Ngati Koata over their land and also 9.9 hectares of Department of Conservation, with the latter still considering its position. Read the full story here.

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$6.5 million wastewater treatment plant near Gore. The *Southland Times* reports that Mataura Valley Milk is investing $6.5 million to build a wastewater treatment plant near Gore, in a joint initiative with the Gore District Council. The council will oversee construction and operate the plant once it is finished. Read the full story here.

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Community-owned wind turbine rejected by the Environment Court. *Radio New Zealand* reports that the Environment Court has refused a plan for a community-owned wind turbine near Dunedin. Blueskin Energy went to the court to save the project, after Dunedin City Council turned down resource consent. Read the full story here.

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London mayor tackles city's affordable housing crisis with purchase plan. (Reuters) London - The mayor of London plans to spend 250 million pounds buying land to tackle the city's affordable housing crisis, which he described on Wednesday (September 6 2017) as the single biggest barrier to prosperity for Londoners.

The money will be used to buy land to sell to homebuilders, and the proceeds used to purchase additional sites and create a self-replenishing fund, a draft housing strategy said.

"A generation of Londoners are being priced out of our city," London Mayor Sadiq Khan said in the document. "Many cannot afford their rent, live in overcrowded conditions, and see buying their own home as a distant dream," he said.

Housing prices in London have risen 90 percent in a decade, beyond the reach of workers making average wages.

The fresh funds come on top of 3.15 billion pounds pledged by the government last year to start building 90,000 new affordable homes over the next four years.

An opposition politician dismissed the housing strategy, Khan's first since he took office in May last year.

"His pledges to maximise land use is at best vague idealism," Andrew Boff, a Conservative member of the London Assembly, a body elected to hold the mayor's office to account, said in a statement. "He has also failed to explain in any detail where he will obtain 250 million pounds to buy up new land."

But the strategy was welcomed by g15, which represents London's largest non-profit housing organisations and manages more than 400,000 houses in the city.

"City Hall has a crucial role to play in securing the land needed to build the homes, which is the single biggest challenge to increasing supply," Paul Hackett, g15's chairman, said in a statement.

He said g15 is building about a quarter of the new homes in London and "if we can secure enough land to build on, and rally the support of our partners, we can build many more.". Khan cautioned that solving London's housing crisis will be "a marathon, not a sprint" and said 50,000 new homes are needed each year.

After a three-month consultation, the final housing strategy is to be published next year.

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Land corridor connects Abel Tasman and Kahurangi national parks. Abel Tasman and Kahurangi national parks are now connected by a 169-hectare block of land purchased by the Nature Heritage Fund, Associate Conservation Minister Nicky Wagner has announced.

The land, purchased for $275,000, has high ecological value and will be added to Abel Tasman National Park.

"The purchase of this land completes a chain of legally-protected natural areas linking Abel Tasman National Park with Kahurangi National Park. These protected areas form a scenic skyline of continuous native forest on the crest of the Pikikiruna Range and Takaka Hill," Ms Wagner said.

"The Nature Heritage Fund is also purchasing an adjoining 43-hectare block from the same landowner. This block needs to be surveyed before being transferred to the Department of Conservation (DOC), but it too will be added to Abel Tasman National Park.

"These parcels of land contain diverse and rare ecosystems. Nearly half the land is covered in original forest and vegetation, and more than 200 native plant species grow there, including species only found locally or in the wider north-west Nelson area.

"Birdlife on the land includes the threatened bush falcon/kārearea, and populations of tūī, kererū and bellbird."

The 169-hectare block borders Abel Tasman National Park to its north and its southern boundary adjoins Takaka Hill Scenic Reserve. It is being managed by DOC as scenic reserve while the process of adding it to Abel Tasman National Park is completed.

Since 1990 the Nature Heritage Fund has protected over 341,880 hectares of indigenous ecosystem through legal and physical protection.

Media Release

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