

**Extraordinary Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday 10 July 2018 at 9.30am**

# **AGENDA**

## Northland Regional Extraordinary Council Meeting Agenda

Meeting to be held in the Council Chamber  
36 Water Street, Whangārei  
on Tuesday 10 July 2018, commencing at 9.30am

**Recommendations contained in the council agenda are NOT council decisions. Please refer to council minutes for resolutions.**

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**TITLE:** Adoption of the rating policies pertaining to the Far North district

**ID:** A1076948

**From:** Bree Torkington, Assistant Management Accountant

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### Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to present the rating policies for the Far North district for adoption and confirmation by council.

The rating policies are differentiated by district. The Far North District Council (FNDC) made changes to its rating policies at both its long-term plan deliberations meeting, and on 28 June 2018 during final adoption. We recommend that the same material changes resulting from these decisions also be made to our rating policies.

Due to the late changes to FNDC's rating policies, and our approach of materially matching the policies of the district councils, it is proposed that adoption of the rating policies for Far North district to be effective from 1 July 2018. Legal advice was received from Simpson Grierson which confirmed the appropriateness of this approach. The potential for an implementation issue stemming from this approach has been resolved with FNDC.

Legal advice was also received prior to consultation on the policies; however, several recommended minor amendments were unable to be incorporated at that time. These changes have now been incorporated. The rating policies underwent a period of public consultation concurrently with the Long Term Plan 2018–2028.

Council is required to consider Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) when determining its policies on the Remission and Postponement of Rates on Māori Freehold Land, and it may consider Schedule 11 in determining its other policies. This consideration is included.

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### Recommendations

1. That the report 'Adoption of the rating policies pertaining to the Far North district' by Bree Torkington, Assistant Management Accountant and dated 20 June 2018, be received.
2. That having undertaken consultation in accordance with sections 82 and 83, and pursuant to section 102 and sections 108-110 of the Local Government Act 2002, and having considered Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 2002, the council adopt the rating policies for the Far North district (including the Policy on the Remission and Postponement of Rates on Māori Freehold Land), effective from 1 July 2018, as attached to this report.
3. That council authorises Dave Tams, Group Manager – Corporate Excellence, to make any necessary minor drafting, typographical, or presentation corrections to the rating policies prior to the document going to print.

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### Background

The council's rating policies set out its policies on: remission and postponement of rates on Māori freehold land, remission and postponement of rates and penalties, and early payment of rates.

The Far North, Kaipara and Whangārei district councils collect rates on Northland Regional Council's behalf. It is administratively efficient that, where possible, the council adopts policies on the remission and postponement of its rates and penalties, and early payment of its rates, that are materially the same as those of the three district councils.

Rating policies for the Kaipara and Whangārei districts were approved by council at its 21 June 2018 meeting. In mid-June, FNDC advised it would be proposing further changes to its rating policies at its 28 June 2018 meeting, so presentation of council's rating policies for the Far North district was delayed until these changes could be confirmed. These changes have now been confirmed, and are incorporated into council's rating policies where applicable.

Please note that the numbering of the policies has changed since the 21 June 2018 agenda item, due to the removal of the original 'FN03 Extreme Financial hardship' policy. The changes are reflected in the **attachments** to this item.

The rating policies for rating units in the Far North district are:

- FN01 Common-use properties
- FN02 Community, sports and not-for-profit organisations
- FN03 Incentivising Māori economic development
- FN04 Landlocked land
- FN05 Land subject to protection for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological purposes
- FN06 Māori Freehold Land not used
- FN07 New users of Māori Freehold Land
- FN08 Papakāinga on Māori Freehold Land
- FN09 Penalties
- FN10 Properties spanning multiple districts
- FN11 Residential rates for senior citizens
- FN12 Treaty settlement lands
- FN13 Unusable land.

Legal advice was received on the policies from Simpson Grierson prior to consultation. Many of the recommended changes to the wording of the rating policies were minor, but due to limited time were unable to be incorporated prior to consultation. These recommended changes have now been incorporated.

The rating policies were consulted on in conjunction with the consultation for the Long Term Plan 2018-2028, in accordance with section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA). Several changes to the rating policies were proposed and consulted on. These included significant changes to policies that apply to rating units in the Far North district (including alterations to ensure that the unique history and nature of Māori freehold land ownership was recognised).

The FNDC have now had their deliberations on its Long Term Plan, which included its rating policies. At its deliberations, FNDC made some changes to its rating policies. At its 28 June 2018 meeting where FNDC's final long-term plan and policies were adopted, the FNDC made two further changes to its rating policies, one of which impacts our rating policies for the Far North district.

The final rating policies (**attached** to this report) have been prepared in accordance with:

- legal advice;
- the council resolution resulting from the Northland Regional Council deliberations;
- the changes arising from FNDC's deliberations; and
- the changes made by FNDC on 28 June 2018.

A summary of the changes to the rating policies for the Far North district since consultation is included as supporting information to this report.

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## Considerations

### 1. Options

Staff recommend option 1, to confirm and adopt the rating policies.

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Confirm and adopt the rating policies pertaining to Far North district.	Council will achieve compliance with the LGA, and have rating policies consistent with FNDC, allowing administrative efficiency.	Different rating policies will apply in each district.
2	Do not confirm and adopt the rating policies pertaining to Far North district.	None.	Council will not achieve compliance with the LGA, and will have rating policies inconsistent with FNDC, causing administrative inefficiency.
3	Establish new rating policies which apply across Northland.	A single set of rating policies across Northland.	Policies for Kaipara and Whangārei districts were adopted on 21 June 2018, so would need to be revoked and replaced in early July. This is not administratively viable for 2018/19.

### 2. Significance and engagement

Section 76AA of the LGA directs that council must adopt a policy setting out how significance will be determined and the level of engagement that will be triggered. This policy assists council in determining how to achieve compliance with the LGA requirements in relation to decisions.

Council was required by section 102 of the LGA to undertake consultation on the rating policies, which also achieved compliance with council's Significance and Engagement Policy, in particular "We will consult when we are required to by law, when a proposal is considered significant, and when we need more information on options for responding to an issue".

The decision to confirm and adopt the rating policies follows a process of consultation and it is considered that in making this decision council is compliant with its Significance and Engagement Policy.

### 3. Policy, risk management and legislative compliance

The decision to confirm and adopt the rating policies is in accordance with:

- Section 102 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA), which requires local authorities to adopt a policy on the remission and postponement of rates on Māori freehold land, and allows a local authority to adopt rates remission and postponement policies.
- Sections 108 to 110 of the LGA, which require the policies to be reviewed at least once every six years.

Due to the late changes to FNDC's rating policies, and council's approach of materially matching the policies of the district councils, we considered several options to best adopt our rating policies for the Far North district. Note that in all instances, the rating policies will apply from 1 July 2018.

Option 1 was preferred by staff, as it presented the lowest legislative risks, and did not penalise Kaipara and Whangārei for delays in the Far North district.

No.	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	<b>Preferred</b>  Adopt the Whangārei and Kaipara policies on 21 June 2018, then adopt the Far North district policies once Far North District Council had adopted any further changes.	Rating policies for Far North adopted once, administratively clear and s82 of LGA is not triggered again.	Rating policies adopted on a different date for Far North than for Whangarei and Kaipara.  Potential for implementation issues in Far North district (now resolved, See <i>Implementation issues</i> ).
2	Adopt the Whangārei, Kaipara and Far North policies on 21 June 2018, then adopt any changes required following the Far North District Council's 28 June 2018 meeting	Rating policies adopted on same date for all districts – but only if no further changes are required.	Rating policies potentially adopted twice for Far North district: administratively messy, and risk of meeting s82 of LGRA being required again.  Will likely still result in rating policies adopted on a different date for Far North than for Whangarei and Kaipara.
3	Adopt the Whangārei, Kaipara policies, and the expected Far North policies on 21 June 2018.	Rating policies adopted once on same date for all districts, and administratively simple, unless expected Far North policies are not adopted.	Pre-empts FNDC decisions: may result in future changes being required, and risk of meeting s82 of LGRA being required again.
4	Adopt the Whangārei, Kaipara and Far North policies in July 2018.	Rating policies adopted once on same date for all districts, and administratively simple.	Based on advice from WDC and KDC, this would compromise implementation of rates assessments for Kaipara and Whangārei districts.

In determining its policies on the Remission and Postponement of Rates on Māori Freehold Land, council is required to consider Schedule 11 of the LGA. In determining these policies, and other policies, the council has considered Schedule 11 of the LGA, and recognises that the nature of Māori Freehold Land is different to general title land. This includes recognising that certain unoccupied Māori Freehold Land may have particular conditions, ownership structures, or other circumstances which make it appropriate to remit or postpone rates for defined periods of time. The council's considerations on these policies for the Far North

district was included as supporting information to the the 21 June 2018 report “Adoption of rating policies pertaining to the Kaipara and Whangārei districts”, and is attached again with minor revisions to consider the final policies, including addition of the revised policy numbers.

### Further considerations

#### 4. Community views

The views of the community on the amendments and alterations in the rating policies were obtained during a period of consultation in accordance with sections 82 and 83 of the LGA. Community views have been provided to council by way of a summary of submissions report and full submission book, and were also summarised in council’s deliberations report.

Council has considered the proposals included in the rating policies by way of a deliberations meeting that centred upon the public feedback received.

#### 5. Māori impact statement

The rating policies were consulted on as part of the Long Term Plan 2018–2028 consultation. During the process of developing the Long Term Plan 2018–2028, council staff engaged with the Te Tai Tokerau Māori and Council Working Party Māori Technical Advisory Group (TTMAC) over the course of three intensive workshops, where feedback was obtained and incorporated into the plan development process. Engagement was also carried out with Te Uri O Hau representatives during development of the plan.

The process of public consultation on the plan included targeted engagement with Māori by way of pānui circulated to all iwi and hapū groups on council’s database, and regular reporting to the TTMAC working party.

#### 6. Financial implications

The expected rates remissions as a result of the adoption of these rating policies are being taken account of in setting the rates for 2018/19. This process will occur every financial year.


#### 7. Implementation issues

We are proposing adoption of our rating policies for the Far North district after the rates will be assessed (which occurs on 1 July 2018). FNDC have advised that because of this delay, which it has caused, it will not finalise its rates assessments until after we have adopted our rating policies for the Far North district. As a result, we do not anticipate any implementation issues for the rating policies following adoption.

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### Attachments

Attachment 1: Draft "Rating policies: Effective 1 July 2018" for Far North district [↓](#) 

Attachment 2: Summary of changes to rating policies for Far North district [↓](#) 

Attachment 3: Schedule 11 considerations for Far North district rating policies [↓](#) 

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### Authorised by Group Manager

**Name:** Dave Tams  
**Title:** Group Manager, Corporate Excellence  
**Date:** 28 June 2018

# Rating policies: Effective 1 July 2018



## Rating philosophy and objectives

The Northland Regional Council reviews its rating policies annually and has targeted region-wide rates and differentiated specific targeted rates in order to better direct rate funding to those activities suited to either fixed and/or differentiated charges.

The Revenue and Financing Policy sets out the sources of funding applied to activities undertaken by the council. The council will consider applying a specific targeted rate where it better aligns to the expenditure being funded or where the distribution of benefits of providing particular activities is attributable to a subset of a community, or where the application of specific targeted rate promotes equity, transparency and accountability of its funding decisions.

## Rates collection

Rates are assessed under the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 (LGRA). Each of Northland's three district councils is appointed as a collector for the Northland Regional Council in terms of section 53 of the LGRA. This means that the district council's issue rates assessments and invoices for the Northland Regional Council rates and also collect the rates.

Where rates are based on value, the values assessed by Quotable Value New Zealand (QV) will apply in the Far North and Kaipara districts; and QV currently, changing to Opteon, in the Whangārei District.

## Policies on the remission and postponement of rates and penalties, and early payment of rates

The Northland Regional Council's policies on the remission and postponement of rates and penalties, and early payment of rates are the same as the region's three district councils. The council remits rates and penalties, postpones payment of rates, and manages early payment of rates in accordance with these policies. While these policies differ from council to council, it would be administratively inefficient to adopt uniform policies across the region and then require each district council to apply two sets of policies.

The council's annual rating resolution resolves that penalties will be added to unpaid rates, and stipulates the dates for payment of rates instalments and the penalty regime applicable for each district. The district councils record these rating transactions on the rating information database and rates records which they maintain on behalf of the Northland Regional Council.

The intended policies on the remission and postponement of rates and penalties, and early payment of rates for the constituent districts of the Northland region that will apply to the regional rates assessed in those districts are set out in the following section. These rating policies are effective from 1 July 2018.

Northland Regional Council makes all decisions regarding the remission and postponement of its rates and penalties, and early payment of council's rates, in accordance with its rating policies. The district councils assist with the administration of these policies. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes, but is not limited to:

- Where applications are required, they must be made to the relevant district council, as per its application process. The application will then be passed on to Northland Regional Council for its consideration.
- Any reporting required must be submitted to the relevant district council, and will be passed on to Northland Regional Council.
- The district councils may gather information needed to assess applications, or consider acting on behalf of land owners (as in the case of Māori freehold land not used).

## FAR NORTH DISTRICT

### Making an application? This is what you need to know:

1. All applications under these policies must be made in writing, signed by the owner/ratepayer, and accompanied by any required supporting documentation. After an application has been submitted, further documentation may be requested. In that event, the applicant will be notified accordingly.
2. As provided for in section 88 of the LGRA, a postponement fee may be calculated and added to the postponed rates.
3. The basis of calculating the postponement fee is included in each year's Funding Impact Statement, which can be found in the Long Term or Annual Plan for that year.
4. The owner(s) of the property must provide proof of eligibility which will be confirmed with relevant council information.
5. Where land is in multiple ownership, a written statement authorising an individual to act for one or more owners must be submitted with all applications.
6. Where a property or part of that property is sold within the period of remission or postponement, the council has the right to recover the rates remitted or postponed for the applicable period. This may apply to the whole property or only to that portion of the portion that has been sold.
7. The council may require further information from the applicant if deemed necessary to process the application.
8. The council reserves the right to inspect the use of a property, where appropriate, for application assessment and to confirm compliance with policy criteria from time to time.
9. Any decision made by the council under this policy is final.
10. Remissions or postponements granted under previous policies will remain in force as per those policies.
11. Applications may be made for a remission or postponement of rates in circumstances which are not included in the separate policy category sections set out below. These are known as "outside of policy" applications. The council's authority is restricted by the

provisions of the LGRA. For that reason, all such applications "outside of policy" must be in writing, and accompanied by sufficient detail and documentation to support a decision by the council.

12. The council is under no obligation to approve any applications that do not comply with the established policies and the council's decision on the matter is final.
13. The council's decision whether to grant or deny an application for remission or postponement of rates will be based upon:
  - a. The application itself; and
  - b. All supporting documents submitted by the applicant; and,
  - c. Any relevant information and/or documentation held in the council's records.
14. Except where otherwise indicated, the council reserves the right to grant or deny any and all applications for remission or postponement of rates under these policies.

### Definitions

*For the purpose of these policies, words used in the singular include the plural, and words used in the plural include the singular.*

ARREAR means unpaid rates as at 30 June of the rating year prior to application.

THE COUNCIL means the Northland Regional Council and includes any person or agent authorised by the Northland Regional Council.

LANDLOCKED has the same meaning as defined in the Property Law Act 2007.

MĀORI FREEHOLD LAND has the same meaning as defined in Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 Part VI section 129(2)(a).

NATURAL DISASTER has the same meaning as in the Earthquake Commission Act 1993.

NEW USER is a person that has not been previously identified in the council's Rates Information Database as being responsible for the rates on the land.

OCCUPIED means a formal right by occupation order or informal right by licence to occupy Māori Freehold Land, or other arrangements are in place and are exercised.

OCCUPIER means a person, persons, organisation, or business entity that is using a rating unit or portion of a rating unit under a lease, license or other formal agreement for a specified period of time.

OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPE refers to any largely unmodified landscape with characteristics and qualities that amount to being conspicuous, eminent or remarkable. These landscapes are afforded protection through the Resource Management Act 1991 as a matter of national importance.

PAPAKĀINGA has the same meaning as in the operative version of the Far North District Plan.

POSTPONEMENT means an agreed delay in the payment of rates for a certain time, or until certain defined events occur.

RATEPAYER includes, under the LGRA, either the owner of the rating unit or a lessee under a registered lease of not less than 10 years, which provides that the lessee is required to be entered into the Rating Information Database as the ratepayer.

REASONABLE ACCESS has the same meaning as the Property Law Act 2007.

REMISSION means that the requirement to pay the rate levied for a particular financial year is forgiven in whole or in part.

STATUTORY LAND CHARGE means a charge registered against a Certificate of Title of a property by someone who has a financial interest in the property, such as debt or part ownership.

TREATY SETTLEMENT LANDS means any land which has been returned to Māori ownership in a Treaty Claims Settlement, or land which may have been purchased from Treaty settlement monies to replace land which could not be returned because it is in private ownership.

USED includes use for the purposes of any residential occupation of the land, or any activity for business or commercial purposes, including lease agreements, or storage of equipment, stock or livestock.

## FN01 Common-use properties

### Background

Section 20 of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 requires that multiple rating units be treated as one rating unit if they are:

- a. Owned by the same person or persons; and,
- b. Used jointly as a single unit; and,
- c. Contiguous or separated only by a road, railway, drain, water race, river or stream.

This policy expands on the provisions of the LGRA, and provides for commercial operations to be treated as one rating unit to assist economic development in the district.

### Policy objectives

1. To provide for farming by treating multiple rating units as one rating unit if they are physically separated but used jointly as one farming operation.
2. To assist development in the district by treating multiple rating units of a development as a single rating unit for a maximum of three years.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statements

In addition to the provisions of section 20 of the LGRA, the council will treat the following separate rating units as a single rating unit if they are owned by the same person or entity:

- a. A farm that consists of multiple rating units but functions as one commercial operation;
- b. Rating units of a residential or commercial development which are vacant and owned by the original developer, pending their sale or lease to subsequent purchasers or lessees.

### Conditions and criteria

1. Applicants must provide sufficient evidence that the multiple rating units in question are being jointly used as a single farming operation, or are part of the same subdivision or commercial development.
2. In the case of a residential or commercial development, multiple rating units will be treated as a single rating unit for a maximum



- term of three years. This term is calculated from 1 July in the year that this provision first applies.
3. Residential or commercial developments that have already received this remission under a previous policy are not eligible for remission under this policy.
  4. In the case of a farm, the separate multiple rating units must be owned or leased by the same person or entity. If any of the separate rating units are leased, the term of the lease must be 10 years or more, including rights of renewal. The owners of each of the separate rating units must confirm in writing that their unit is being jointly used as a single farming operation.
  5. In the case of a farm, the rating units must be situated within a radius of two kilometres from the boundary of the primary property.
  6. The council reserves the right to exclude any specific targeted charge from this policy.
- a. Registered charitable organisations or Inland Revenue Department (IRD) approved donee organisations; or
  - b. Any entity which has, as its principal purpose and function, the provision of free access to family counselling, or, assessment, counselling and in-patient treatment for people with alcohol, drug and mental health related problems.
2. The council may remit 50% of the rates payable on land owned or used by an entity for the purpose of providing benefit to Far North residents through:
    - a. The promotion of recreation, health, education, or instruction; or
    - b. The running of a campground on land for the purposes listed in section 2(a) above.

## FN02 Community, sports and not-for-profit organisations

### Background

Community and voluntary groups provide facilities to enhance and contribute to the wellbeing of the residents of the Far North. This policy provides rating relief for those organisations that operate for the benefit of the community.

### Policy objectives

1. To assist in the ongoing provision of community services and recreational opportunities that benefit Far North residents.
2. To facilitate and support access to drug, alcohol and mental health facilities for Far North residents.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statements

1. The council may remit up to 100% of the rates payable on land owned or used by:

### Conditions and criteria

1. Relevant financial information must accompany all applications. This includes:
  - a. Statement of organisation objectives
  - b. Full financial accounts
  - c. Information on activities and programmes
  - d. Details of membership or clients.
2. No remission will be given on land on which a licence under the Sale of Liquor Act is held.
3. No remission will be given on land where any person or entity receives private financial profit from the activities carried out on the land. All income earned by ratepayers and entities receiving a remission under this policy must be spent on reasonable salaries, wages and other costs reasonably related to its community, sports, or not-for-profit purposes.
4. Land used for an activity which is commercial in nature does not qualify for rates remission. For example an "op-shop" does not qualify for rating relief under this policy.

## FN03 Incentivising Māori economic development

### Background

The council recognises that there is a need to incentivise economic development on Māori Freehold Land. Enabling and incentivising Māori economic development through the remission of rates may see direct economic and social benefits to landowners generating a return on

the land, as well as to the council from future rates contributions, as the venture grows and becomes sustainable.

### Policy objectives

1. To provide incentives for Māori land owners to develop Māori Freehold Land for economic use.
2. To enable owners to develop an economic base and to assist with the subsequent payment of rates.

### Scope

This policy applies to Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council will remit rates on Māori Freehold Land for the purposes of incentivising economic development.

### Conditions and criteria

1. The council will remit rates under this policy on an eight-year sliding scale as follows:
  - Years 1-3 - 100% remitted
  - Year 4 - 90% remitted
  - Year 5 - 80% remitted
  - Year 6 - 60% remitted
  - Year 7 - 40% remitted
  - Year 8 - 20% remitted; and
  - Year 9 - 0% remitted
2. The land, or portion of the land, for which relief is sought must be considered suitable for development, and confirmed as currently not used.
3. Applications must be accompanied by a business case, and a meeting with council staff will be required to determine any other necessary documentation.
4. Key considerations by the council may include:
  - a. professional advice has been obtained;
  - b. there is a suitable management structure in place;
  - c. appropriate financial arrangements for the development of the land have been made;

d. suitable monitoring and reporting systems have or will be established; and

e. realistic financial projections and cash flows have been provided.

5. Upon approval, a regular annual report and financial statements on the development must be submitted to the council each year.

## FN04 Landlocked land

### Background

The Property Law Act 2007 enables owners of landlocked properties to take legal action in order to gain reasonable access to their property. Ratepayers may be unable to take action under these provisions of the Property Law Act 2007 due to their financial circumstances.

### Policy objectives

To provide rating relief to ratepayers where their land has no reasonable access and the ratepayer cannot afford to take action through the Property Law Act 2007.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council may postpone rates on landlocked land where there is no reasonable access as defined in the Property Law Act 2007.

### Conditions and criteria

1. The land must be landlocked as defined in Section 326 of the Property Law Act 2007.
2. The application must state why access cannot be obtained through procedures set forth in Part 6, Sub-part 3, of the Property Law Act 2007.
3. The application must include a statutory declaration that there is no practical access across adjoining land and that the land is not in use by any person. Fencing to prevent trespassing does not constitute use of the land.
4. The maximum term for the postponement of rates for landlocked property is three years. If the land remains landlocked at the end of that period, postponed rates will be remitted.

5. The owner must advise the council if the status of the land changes, if access is obtained, or if any person commences to use the land. If the land ceases to be landlocked during the period of the postponement, any rates postponed and not remitted under this policy will not be immediately repayable unless the owner fails to keep the current and future rates up to date.
6. The repayment of postponed rates will not be required merely because of a change of ownership of the land, provided that the land continues to comply with the criteria of this policy.

### FN05 Land subject to protection for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological purposes

#### Background

The council recognises that certain rateable land within the Far North district is protected for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, heritage, or ecological purposes.

#### Policy objectives

To provide rating relief to landowners who have reserved lands that have particular outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological values for future generations.

#### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

#### Policy statements

1. The council may remit rates on land subject to protection for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological purposes under the formal protection agreements listed in 2 a) through 2 g) of the conditions and criteria of this policy.
2. The council may postpone rates on land subject to protection for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological purposes under the formal protection listed in 2 h) of the conditions and criteria of this policy.

#### Conditions and criteria

1. Applications must be supported by a copy of the formal protection agreement and a management plan detailing how the values of the land are to be maintained, restored, and/or enhanced.
2. The land must be subject to a formal protection agreement as set out below:
  - a. An open space covenant under section 22 of the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977; or
  - b. A conservation covenant under section 77 of the Reserves Act 1977; or
  - c. A Nga Whenua Rahui kawenata under section 77A of the Reserves Act 1977; or
  - d. A declaration of protected private land under section 76 of the Reserves Act 1977; or
  - e. A management agreement for conservation purposes under section 38 of the Reserves Act 1977; or
  - f. A management agreement for conservation purposes under section 29 of the Conservation Act 1987; or
  - g. A Māori reservation for natural, historic, or cultural conservation purposes under sections 338 to 341 of the Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 (Māori Land Act 1993); or
  - h. A covenant for conservation purposes under section 27 of the Conservation Act 1987.
3. The rating unit or portion of the rating unit that is the subject of the application must not be in use.
4. Where the entire rating unit is the subject of the application, the remission or postponement of rates will apply to all rates assessed on the property.
5. The protected and unprotected portions of the rating unit will be separately valued and assessed as separate parts pursuant to Section 45(3) of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002. In these instances, the remission or postponement of rates will only apply to the protected portion of the rating unit.
6. The following activities will not constitute use of the land:



- a. Work undertaken to preserve or enhance the features covenanted on the land, including but not limited to weed control, planting to counteract erosion, or erection of a fence to prevent trespassing.
  - b. The removal of material by Māori for cultural purposes.
7. Any remission or postponement granted under this policy will become effective on 1 July in the rating year following the submission of the application.
8. Any remission or postponement of rates on the land will be cancelled immediately in the event that the land ceases to be protected under a formal protection agreement. Postponed rates that have not been remitted will be repayable in the event that the covenant conditions and the management plan objectives are breached in the opinion of the council, whose decision is final.

#### **Specific conditions and criteria for postponement of rates**

1. After a term of six years, the postponed rates for the first year of the covenant period will be remitted. After this, one additional year of the postponed rates will be remitted each year, so that a maximum of six years of postponed rates are held against the land at any given time.
2. Upon expiration of the covenant or other agreement, any rates that are postponed against the land at that time, which have not been remitted under paragraph 8 above, will become due.
3. The repayment of postponed rates will not be required as a result of a change of ownership, provided that the land continues to comply with all criteria.
4. The council will not seek repayment of postponed rates where future postponement is revoked due to the council changing its criteria for postponement.

#### **FN06 Māori Freehold Land not used**

##### **Background**

The council recognizes the unique barriers to the use and development of Māori Freehold Land resulting from fragmented ownership. While Māori Freehold Land itself may not be difficult to use or develop, there may be

challenges around the use and the financing of the development of the land which arise from fragmented ownership.

This policy provides relief by giving a remission where land is not used due to the difficulty of multiple ownership, obtaining collective agreement, or the lack of financing options. This policy does not apply to Māori Freehold Land in sole ownership.

##### **Policy objectives**

1. To provide for rates remission for Māori Freehold Land under multiple ownership or portions thereof which are not used.
2. To avoid further alienation of Māori Freehold Land as a result of financial pressures that may be brought by the imposition of rates on lands not used.

##### **Scope**

This policy applies only to Māori Freehold Land.

##### **Policy statement**

The council may, upon application from the owners, authorised agents of the owners, or council itself acting for the owners, agree to remit the rates on such unused land for a period not exceeding three years.

##### **Conditions and criteria**

1. The land must be in multiple ownership. Land in sole-ownership is not eligible for rating relief under this policy.
2. The land must not be used by any person or entity.
3. If the land comes under use at any point, it will no longer receive remission of rates under this policy.
4. The council expects that any rating relief will be temporary, with each application limited to a term of three years. The council may consider renewing the rating relief upon the receipt of further applications from the owners.

#### **FN07 New users of Māori Freehold Land**

##### **Background**

The council recognises that significant rate arrears due to the challenges of multiple ownership can act as a disincentive to any new

use of Māori Freehold Land where a new user could become responsible for the payment of any existing arrears of rates and penalties on the land. This policy has been developed to encourage use of Māori Freehold Land in these circumstances.

### Policy objective

To remove the barrier of rate debt for new users to be able to use or develop the land.

### Scope

This policy applies only to Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council may postpone the arrears of rates on Māori Freehold Land subject to the land being continuously used by a new user and that person agreeing to pay the rates while they are using the land.

### Conditions and criteria

1. The person proposing to use the land must be a new user.
2. Where land has recently moved from multiple ownership to sole ownership, the sole owner will be treated as a new user.
3. The council has the sole discretion as to whether or not to grant the application, and may seek additional information before making its final decision.
4. The new user using the land must, upon approval of the application, keep the current and future rates up to date for as long as they continue to use the land.
5. If the current and future rates are not paid within one month of the due dates, the council reserves the right to reapply the postponed rates to the land.
6. Postponed rates will remain as a charge on the property for a period of six years from the date on which the rate was assessed, after which time they will be remitted.

## FN08 Papakāinga on Māori Freehold Land

### Background

The council recognises the importance of Māori Freehold Land in providing landowners and their whanau with the opportunity to establish papakāinga. The imposition of targeted rates

applied on a uniform basis may act as a disincentive to occupying Māori Freehold Land for papakāinga purposes.

The policy creates apportionments on land which is subject to a license to occupy or has an informal arrangement in place. This means that each occupier will pay targeted rates applied on a uniform basis only upon the land they occupy, rather than upon the entire area of the rating unit.

### Policy objectives

1. To put in place processes to allow the residents with occupation licenses or other informal arrangements to pay their portion of rates in respect of the land that they occupy.
2. To assist Māori to establish papakainga or other housing on Māori Freehold Land.
3. To assist Māori to establish an economic base for future development.

### Scope

This policy applies only to Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council may remit targeted rates which are applied on a uniform basis, for separately used or inhabited parts of a rating unit which are subject to a licence to occupy or other informal arrangement.

### Conditions and criteria

1. The part of the land concerned must be the subject of a licence to occupy or other informal arrangement for the purposes of providing residential housing for the occupier.
2. The area of land covered by each arrangement must have a separate valuation issued by the council's valuation service providers and will be issued with a separate rate assessment pursuant to Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 Section 45(3).
3. The occupier must agree to pay any rates assessed in respect of the part or division of the rating unit that is the subject of the application.



4. The council reserves the right to cancel the remission on the portion of a rating unit upon which rates remain unpaid for a period of more than one month after the due date.
5. Charges on the land will remain in remission so long as the occupation continues to comply with the conditions and criteria of this policy.

## FN09 Penalties

### Background

Penalties are charged where rates instalments are not paid by the due date. The council recognises the economic hardship faced by some ratepayers. This policy provides for the remission of rates penalties on the grounds of financial hardship.

### Policy objective

To allow for the remission of penalties where the ratepayer has entered into repayment arrangements or there are reasonable grounds to remove the penalty.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council may remit rates penalties where the application provides a reasonable reason for remission.

### Conditions and criteria

1. Applications will be considered if:
  - a. The applicant has a previous good record of payment and on-time payments of all rate instalments within the last two years, and an honest attempt has been made to have payment delivered on time; or
  - b. The owner of the rating unit has been given insufficient notice of the invoice due date; or

- c. A request is made on compassionate grounds; or
- d. The ratepayer has entered into a Rates Easy Pay agreement and has maintained the arrangement to clear their outstanding rates.

2. Penalties may be remitted upon payment of all outstanding rates.

## FN10 Properties spanning multiple districts

### Background

There are a small number of properties situated across the boundary line between the Far North district and other districts. These properties incur rates from both councils. This policy provides an equitable method of assessing rates for those properties.

### Policy objective

To recognise that some properties span multiple districts, and to ensure that only the portion of property within the Far North district receives a rates assessment for Northland Regional Council rates in respect of the Far North district.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

Rates will be remitted on any portion of a property outside of the Far North district.

### Conditions and criteria

If there is a dwelling on the portion of the property within the Far North district, the land value based rate will continue to be remitted on the portion outside of the Far North district.

## FN11 Residential rates for senior citizens

### Background

The payment of rates for senior citizens on a limited income can affect their quality of life. This policy provides senior citizens with the option of postponing their rates to be paid until a sale of the rating unit takes place, or, in the event that they pass away, until the settlement

of their estate. This will relieve elderly people of potential financial hardship, and enhance the quality of their lives, including the ability to remain in their home longer with limited income.

### Policy objective

To positively contribute to the quality of life for senior citizens by postponing rates payable.

### Scope

This policy applies to General Title Land. The council does not consider the application of this policy appropriate for Māori Freehold Land; because of the nature of Māori Freehold Land, the council does not consider it appropriate to charge postponed rates to the land. Landowners of Māori Freehold Land are eligible for remission of rates under the extreme financial hardship policy.

### Policy statements

The council may postpone rates for ratepayers whose primary income is the New Zealand Superannuation Scheme. Any postponed rates will be postponed until:

- a. The settlement of the ratepayer's estate following their death; or
- b. The ratepayer ceases to be the owner or occupier of the rating unit; or
- c. The ratepayer ceases to use the property as their primary residence; or
- d. The total postponed rates (including Far North District Council rates) exceed 80% of the rateable value of the property (postponed rates will remain due for payment only on death, sale, or the date specified by the council); or
- e. A date specified by the council.

### Conditions and criteria

1. Postponement under this policy will only apply to ratepayers who are:
  - a. eligible to receive the New Zealand Superannuation Scheme, which is, or will be, their primary income; or
  - b. on a fixed income.
2. The rating unit must be used by the ratepayer as their primary residence. This includes, in the case of a family trust owned property, use by a named individual or couple.

3. The ratepayer must not own any property that may be used:
  - a. as a holiday home or rental property; or
  - b. for commercial activities, such as farming or business.
4. The council must be satisfied that the ratepayer is unlikely to have sufficient funds left over, after payment of rates, for normal day to day living expenses, normal health care, and maintenance of the home and chattels to an adequate and reasonably healthy standard.
5. The council reserves the right to request any information around the ratepayer's personal circumstances that it deems necessary to make a decision.
6. People occupying a unit in a retirement village under a licence to occupy must have the agreement of the owner of the retirement village before applying for postponement of the rates payable on their unit.
7. If a property is still under a mortgage, a written and signed approval must be obtained from the Mortgagee as part of the application. This is because the payment of postponed rates will have priority over mortgage payments.
8. Properties that are the subject of a reverse mortgage are not eligible for rating relief under this policy.
9. The council has the right to decline rates postponement for a property that is in a known hazard zone. This is to minimise any risk of loss to the council.
10. Postponed rates will be registered as a statutory land charge on the rating unit title, meaning that the council will have first claim on the proceeds of any revenue from the sale or lease of the rating unit.
11. If rates are postponed, the ratepayer will still be responsible for the amount of rates equal to the maximum rebate available under the central government Rates Rebate Scheme for the current rating year. The Far North District Council advises it is able to assist applicants for the Rates Rebate Scheme. If the ratepayer is not eligible for a rates rebate, they will still be responsible for paying this amount, and will be required to enter into a payment arrangement to cover this portion.
12. The council will charge an annual administrative fee on postponed rates.

13. The postponed rates or any part thereof may be paid to the council at any time.
14. The property must be insured at the time the application is granted and must be kept insured. Evidence of this must be produced annually.
15. Senior citizens for whom rates are being postponed under this policy must promptly inform the council of any substantial change in their financial status which might affect their eligibility for such postponement.
16. For senior citizens who have had rates postponed under this policy but are no longer eligible for the postponement, those rates will remain postponed, and new rates will be charged accordingly.

## FN12 Treaty settlement lands

### Background

The council recognises that post-settlement governance entities (PSGEs), which are formed to receive properties returned as a part of Treaty of Waitangi settlements, will require time to develop strategic plans, restore protections, and complete necessary works for cultural and commercial redress properties. These properties can be classed as General Title, which means that the rating relief policies for Māori Freehold Land do not apply to all of these properties. This policy has been developed in recognition of these circumstances.

### Policy objective

To recognise that lands acquired as part of a Treaty settlement process may have particular conditions or other circumstances which make it appropriate to remit rates.

### Scope

This policy applies only to Treaty Settlement Lands.

### Policy statement

The council will agree to remit rates on Treaty Settlement Lands subject to the criteria set out below.

### Conditions and criteria

1. Before remission of rates may come into effect, the council must receive an appropriate and satisfactory application

supported by sufficient documentation. Any remission granted will come into effect as of the date of that application.

2. The applicant must provide proof that the land which is the subject of the application is Treaty Settlement Land.
3. Returned lands that were non-rateable under the previous ownership will receive a full rates remission for a period of three years.
4. Where returned lands are commercial redress properties and are not used, the council will grant a 50% remission for a period three years.
5. Where the returned lands are commercial redress properties and meet the criteria as outlined in the incentivising Māori economic development policy, the council will remit rates on an eight-year sliding scale as follows:
  - Years 1-3 - 100% remitted
  - Year 4 - 90% remitted
  - Year 5 - 80% remitted
  - Year 6 - 60% remitted
  - Year 7 - 40% remitted
  - Year 8 - 20% remitted; and
  - Year 9 - 0% remitted

## FN13 Unusable land

### Background

Natural disasters can cause land to become unusable for a long period of time. This policy addresses the issue of land that had been made unusable by a natural disaster.

### Policy objective

To provide rating relief to the owners of properties that have become unusable as a result of a natural disaster, and where the loss of the use of the property will result in financial hardship to the owner.

### Scope

This policy applies to both General Title and Māori Freehold Land.

### Policy statement

The council may grant a remission of rates on land that has become indefinitely unusable as a result of a natural disaster.

### Conditions and criteria

1. The applicant must set out in detail the nature of the natural disaster that has caused the land to be unusable.
2. The application must outline the steps that the owner has taken, or will take, to return the land to a usable state. If this is not possible, the application must state why.
3. The application must be supported by a geotechnical report from a registered engineer setting out the reasons why the land has become, and will remain, unusable.
4. The applicant will be required to sign an agreement that any remission will be cancelled immediately if the land is returned to a usable state.



## Summary of changes to rating policies for Far North district in “Rating policies: Effective 1 July 2018”

All rating policy titles have been edited to include a policy code: FN(xx) for Far North district.

### Summary of legal review of rating policies

The previous version of this summary was included with the 21 June 2018 item “Adoption of rating policies pertaining to the Kaipara and Whangārei districts”. This version includes changes stemming from Far North District Council’s late changes to its rating policies.

Section	Removed text	Final text	Notes
Far North district: Making an application? This is what you need to know: 11	<i>the council’s...</i>	<i>The council’s...</i>	Minor typographical error
Far North district: Definitions		ARREAR	Legal request to change to “ARREARS”. No change was made. Term as per Far North District Council policy.
<b>POLICY SUBSEQUENTLY REMOVED</b> Extreme Financial Hardship: Background	<i>In its role as rates collector for Northland Regional Council, the Far North District Council is sometimes approached by ratepayers...</i>	<i>The council is sometimes approached by ratepayers...</i>	Reframe as Northland Regional Council decisions processed by the district councils.
<b>POLICY SUBSEQUENTLY REMOVED</b> Extreme Financial Hardship: Conditions and criteria: 6	<i>The Far North District Council is available to assist applicants for the rates Rebate Scheme.</i>	<i>The Far North District Council advises it is available to assist applicants for the rates Rebate Scheme.</i>	Reframe as what Far North District Council has advised Northland Regional Council it will do.
FN05: Background	<i>The council recognises that certain rateable land within the district...</i>	<i>The council recognises that certain rateable land within the Far North district...</i>	Clarify the district being discussed.
FN05: Conditions and criteria: 4	<i>... the remission or postponement of rates will apply to all rates levied on the property.</i>	<i>... the remission or postponement of rates will apply to all rates assessed on the property.</i>	Replace with correct wording regarding rating.
FN10: Policy objective	<i>... receives a rates assessment for Northland Regional Council rates from the Far North District Council.</i>	<i>... receives a rates assessment for Northland Regional Council rates in respect of the Far North district.</i>	Clarify our interest is in our rates in the Far North district, not the Far North District Council.
FN11: Policy statements: d	<i>The accrued charges exceed 80% of the rateable value...</i>	<i>The total postponed rates (including Far North District Council rates) exceed 80% of the rateable value...</i>	Clarify that both Far North District Council and Northland Regional Council rates contribute to this figure.
FN11: Conditions and criteria: 11	<i>The Far North District Council is able to assist applicants for the Rates Rebate Scheme.</i>	<i>The Far North District Council advises it is able to assist applicants for the Rates Rebate Scheme.</i>	Reframe as what Far North District Council has advised Northland Regional Council it will do.

## Summary of changes arising from Far North District Council deliberations

Section	Removed text	Final text	Notes
Throughout section	<i>Papakainga</i>	<i>Papakāinga</i>	Spelling error.
FN02: Policy statements: 2.	<i>... used by an entity whose principal purpose is to provide benefit to Far North residents through:...</i>	<i>... used by an entity for the purpose is of providing benefit to Far North residents through:...</i>	Strengthen the definition of eligible entities.
FN03: Conditions and Criteria: 2.	<i>... and confirmed as currently unoccupied.</i>	<i>...and confirmed as currently not used.</i>	“unoccupied” is undefined.
FN04: Conditions and Criteria: 5.	<i>Any rates postponed and not remitted under this policy will be immediately repayable if the land ceases to be landlocked during the period of the postponement.</i>	<i>If the land ceases to be landlocked during the period of the postponement, any rates postponed and not remitted under this policy will not be immediately repayable unless the owner fails to keep the current and future rates up to date.</i>	Clarification.
FN05: Conditions and Criteria: 5.	<i>If part of the protected area is being used, the used and unused portions will be ...  ... will only apply to the unused portion of the rating unit.</i>	<i>The protected and unprotected portions of the rating unit will be... ... will only apply to the protected portion of the rating unit.</i>	Contradictions removed.
FN06: Policy Objectives: 2.	<i>... the imposition of rates on unoccupied lands.</i>	<i>... the imposition of rates on lands not used.</i>	“unoccupied” is undefined.
FN08: Conditions and Criteria: 4.	<i>The council reserves the right to cancel the remission on any part of a rating unit if the rates remain unpaid ...</i>	<i>The council reserves the right to cancel the remission on the portion of a rating unit upon which rates remain unpaid ...</i>	Clarification.

## Summary of changes arising from Far North District Council 28 June 2018 resolutions

### 1. Deletion of the “Extreme Financial Hardship” policy.

Note – FNDC also made a change to its Community, sports and not-for-profit organisations policy, however the change did not impact the Northland Regional Council policy, as it related to charges for services (e.g. water and waste).

## Draft “Rating policies: Effective 1 July 2018” for Far North district: *Schedule 11 considerations – matters relating to rates relief on Māori freehold land*

### Background

The Far North District Council collect rates on Northland Regional Council's behalf, and it is administratively efficient that where possible the council adopts policies on the remission and postponement of its rates and penalties, and early payment of its rates that are materially the same as those of the three district councils.

Section 108 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) states that when council is determining its policies on remission and postponement of rates for Māori freehold land, it must consider Schedule 11, which outlines matters relating to rates relief on Māori freehold land. Sections 109 and 110 states that council may also consider Schedule 11 in determining its other policies on remission and postponement of rates.

In summary, Schedule 11 requires the consideration of a number of objectives (clause 2) to each district and an analysis of how the remission and postponement of rates for Māori freehold land achieve any that are relevant. All of these objectives are considered by council to be important within each of the constituencies of the Northland region.

### **Schedule 11**

#### **Matters relating to rates relief on Māori freehold land**

- 1) The matters that the local authority must consider under [section 108\(4\)](#) are—
  - a) the desirability and importance within the district of each of the objectives in [clause 2](#); and
  - b) whether, and to what extent, the attainment of any of those objectives could be prejudicially affected if there is no remission of rates or postponement of the requirement to pay rates on Māori freehold land; and
  - c) whether, and to what extent, the attainment of those objectives is likely to be facilitated by the remission of rates or postponement of the requirement to pay rates on Māori freehold land; and
  - d) the extent to which different criteria and conditions for rates relief may contribute to different objectives.
- 2) The objectives referred to in [clause 1](#) are—
  - a) supporting the use of the land by the owners for traditional purposes:
  - b) recognising and supporting the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands:
  - c) avoiding further alienation of Māori freehold land:
  - d) facilitating any wish of the owners to develop the land for economic use:
  - e) recognising and taking account of the presence of waahi tapu that may affect the use of the land for other purposes:
  - f) recognising and taking account of the importance of the land in providing economic and infrastructure support for marae and associated papakainga housing (whether on the land or elsewhere):
  - g) recognising and taking account of the importance of the land for community goals relating to—

- i) the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment:
- ii) the protection of outstanding natural features:
- iii) the protection of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna:
- h) recognising the level of community services provided to the land and its occupiers:
- i) recognising matters related to the physical accessibility of the land.

### Consideration and analysis

Of the 13 policies that council is to adopt for the Far North constituency, 11 apply to Māori freehold and one policy applies only to Treaty Settlement lands. These policies are set out below, with an analysis of to what extent the policies for remission and postponement support or facilitate achievement of the objectives set out in Schedule 11, or would otherwise be affected if there was no remission or postponement.

<b>Policy that applies remission and postponement to Māori freehold land</b>	<b>Schedule 11 objectives that are supported or facilitated by this remission or postponement</b>
FN01 Common-use properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating any wish of the owners to develop the land for economic use</li> <li>Recognising and taking account of the importance of the land in providing economic and infrastructure support for marae and associated papakainga housing (whether on the land or elsewhere)</li> </ul>
FN02 Community, sports and not-for-profit organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising the level of community services provided to the land and its occupiers</li> </ul>
FN03 Incentivising Māori economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating any wish of the owners to develop the land for economic use</li> </ul>
FN04 Landlocked land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising matters related to the physical accessibility of the land</li> </ul>
FN05 Land subject to protection for outstanding natural landscape, cultural, historic or ecological purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising and supporting the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands</li> <li>Recognising and taking account of the presence of waahi tapu that may affect the use of the land for other purposes</li> <li>Recognising and taking account of the importance of the land for community goals relating to— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment</li> <li>ii. the protection of outstanding natural features</li> <li>iii. the protection of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
FN06 Māori Freehold Land not used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoiding further alienation of Māori freehold land</li> </ul>
FN07 New users of Māori Freehold Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the use of the land by the owners for traditional purposes</li> <li>Facilitating any wish of the owners to develop the land for economic use.</li> </ul>
FN08 Papakāinga on Māori Freehold Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising and taking account of the importance of the land in providing economic and infrastructure support for marae and associated papakainga housing (whether on the land or elsewhere).</li> </ul>
FN09 Penalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific objectives apply.</li> </ul>



FN10 Properties spanning multiple districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific objectives apply.</li> </ul>
FN13 Unusable land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising matters related to the physical accessibility of the land.</li> </ul>

Far North District Council's (FNDC) 'rating relief policies' have undergone significant review by the FNDC, resulting in policies with less repetition and duplication, reduced complexity, and a simpler structure. An analysis of the changes that are to be adopted by council, and the Schedule 11 considerations specific to these changes, are set out below.

Revised policy	Relevant changes	Schedule 11 considerations
FN03 Incentivising Māori economic development	<i>New policy:</i> Remit rates on Māori Freehold Land for the purposes of incentivising economic development.	Provides incentives for Māori land owners to develop Māori freehold land for economic use. Enables owners to develop an economic base and to assist with the subsequent payment of rates.
FN04 Landlocked land	Includes Māori freehold land.	Consistent with equitable approach to policies in the Far North district, recognises matters relating to the physical accessibility of the land.
FN06 Māori Freehold Land not used	The definition of 'use' has been explained in more detail, removed the condition that unused Māori Freehold Land that is deemed to have a high amenity value cannot receive a remission.	Allows for a more consistent approach across Far North district, and addresses issues of equity. Removes contradiction with the Regional Policy Statement regarding preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment.
FN07 New users of Māori Freehold Land	Provision for a sole-owner to be treated as a new user with rates postponed as well, where the land was previously in multiple-ownership.	Recognises the nature of multiple-ownership can create a rates debt that may be passed on to a sole owner.
FN08 Papakāinga on Māori Freehold Land	Aligned definition of papakāinga to the Far North District Plan.	Provides for strategic alignment in Far North district.
FN12 Treaty settlement lands	<i>New policy:</i> Remit rates on Treaty settlement land.	The rating relief policies for Māori Freehold Land do not apply to all properties returned as part of Treaty of Waitangi settlements (as some can be classed as general title). This policy provides the post settlement governance entities time to develop plans for the use or protection of cultural or commercial redress properties.
FN13 Unusable land	Changes from a postponement to a remission, and includes Māori Freehold Land.	Consistent with equitable approach to policies in the Far North district, recognises the importance of land in providing economic support.

**Note: The 'Extreme financial hardship policy' was originally consulted on, but is not being adopted.**