

## National Direction Reforms: Package One - Infrastructure and Development

### Changes to National Direction are proposed to support infrastructure, housing choice and development in areas of reduced natural hazard risk

#### Background

The Government has released three consultation packages detailing proposed changes to a number of National Direction instruments targeted at infrastructure, housing, agriculture and freshwater.

This article focuses on Package One and is the second in a series detailing those proposed changes. You can read more about the full range of proposals [here](#). Submissions are due on **27 July 2025**.

Package One proposes to enable infrastructure and development where it is needed, while managing its effects on people and the environment. Of note, Package One signals that tensions between infrastructure and the natural environmental values addressed in other national direction are proposed to be dealt with in the new RM legislation.

#### New National Direction

##### National Policy Statement for Infrastructure

The Government proposes a new National Policy Statement (NPS) for Infrastructure to enable infrastructure development, provide nationally consistent policy direction and support better long-term planning.

Key aspects include:

- Applies to all infrastructure activities, except renewable electricity generation and electricity transmission and distribution.
- An objective setting out desired infrastructure outcomes for New Zealand, including providing for

national, regional or local benefits, supporting the well-being and health and safety of people, and providing value for money.

- Policies that require the benefits of infrastructure to be recognised, provide for the operation or functional need of infrastructure to operate in certain places, consider spatial planning when locating infrastructure, and managing compatibility between infrastructure and other activities.

##### National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards

The proposed new NPS for Natural Hazards is the first step towards more comprehensive national direction for natural hazards, which is expected in the future. The purpose of the NPS-NH is to set out a risk-based framework for decision-making on new development.

Key aspects include:

- An objective that councils apply a risk-based and proportionate approach to managing natural hazard risk.
- Key elements of a risk assessment and the introduction of a risk matrix to assist councils to assess risk as medium, high and very high.
- A requirement for councils to consider the impacts of climate change over 100-year period and to use the best available information.

##### National Environmental Standards for Granny Flats

The proposed new National Environmental Standards (NES) for Granny Flats aims to improve home ownership rates and increase the supply of small houses. Read more about these proposals in our third [article](#) in this series.

##### National Environmental Standards for Papakāinga

The proposed new NES for Papakāinga aims to reduce barriers to development of ancestral land and unlock development capacity.

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Key aspects include:

- Papakāinga development of up to 10 homes on Māori ancestral land will generally be permitted, subject to standards being met.
- Some non-residential activities ancillary to the papakāinga will also be permitted, e.g. commercial activities, Māori cultural activities, conservation activities, visitor accommodation, educational and health facilities.
- Papakāinga development that does not meet these requirements will be a restricted discretionary (11 – 30 homes) or discretionary activity (>30 homes).

### Amendments to existing NPS and NES

#### National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation

Amendments are proposed to the NPS for Renewable Electricity Generation to better recognise the critical role of REG and enable doubling of REG by 2050.

Key changes include:

- A stronger focus on electrification of New Zealand and the benefits of REG.
- REG with effects on environmental values that are not mentioned in section 6 or other national direction will be enabled (with effects required to be managed).
- Clarification of "operational" and "functional" need, better recognition that changes in generation output have an impact on meeting our REG target, and better enable small and community scale REG.
- Strengthened requirements to consider national benefits of REG projects, better protect existing REG assets (including from reverse sensitivity effects), and enable gains from existing REG assets to be maximised.

#### Amendments to National Policy Statement on Electricity Transmission and National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities

Amendments are proposed to the NPS-Electricity Transmission to expand its scope to electricity distribution, and to update the NES-Electricity Transmission Activities to help achieve electrification, energy security and economic growth objectives.

Key changes include:

- A change of names – to the NPS for Electricity Networks and NES for Electricity Network Activities.
- Provision for tangata whenua interests in relation to electricity network activities under the NPS-EN.
- Permitted activity standards for EV charging infrastructure to enable private use EV charging subject to meeting standards.

#### Amendments to National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Activities

Amendments proposed to the NES for Telecommunications Activities reflect new technologies and changes in the built environment.

Key changes include:

- Permitted activity status for new poles for supporting radio/telecommunication in certain zones and removal of restrictions in road reserves.
- Updated height/ size standards to respond to changes in the built environment.
- Permitted activity status for renewable electricity generators for telecommunication facilities,

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temporary telecommunications facilities, and customer connection lines to heritage buildings.

**Want to know more?**

If you have any questions about the proposed changes to national direction or would like help making a submission, please contact our specialist [Resource Management team](#).