



25 November 2022

Hon David Parker
Minister for the Environment
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Dear Minister Parker

A new resource management system

Te Kōkiringa Taumata, the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI), congratulates you and the Government on the release of the Natural and Built Environments Bill and the Spatial Planning Bill.

NZPI has been working with the Government and we continue to be invested in working together to create a new robust, efficient, and effective system that will deliver the Government's desired outcomes. To that end, we have been actively working with the 3000+ resource management professionals who make up our membership to ensure that they are up to speed with the proposed new legislation and can provide meaningful and constructive input through the Select Committee process. Planners fill many roles in the Resource Management System, and their work is intrinsically linked and integral to the success of the system.

We were, however, concerned to read your comment that the reforms would be "helping local government tame their planning departments". From the outset, NZPI has supported the reform as we agree improvements are needed and we acknowledge local government planning departments need help. Currently some of our members are working in high stress situations, having to make fast decisions, or providing advice that carries significant professional, legal or political risks, without adequate support. This impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of decision making within the resource management system. Along with LGNZ, we have been imploring central government about the need for further resourcing to support the resource management system. If the problem with the system was solely council planning departments, then the Randerson report would simply have recommended further professional development for the planning profession. Rather, the report recommended a comprehensive overhaul of the legislation, a clear indication that the issue is more structural than cultural.

Therefore, we ask that moving forward you are more considered in your comments about the actors in the system.

The Institute considers that there needs to be emphasis through the reform on ensuring that the intent of the reforms is realised. In our mind, this will mean that central government will need to be more actively involved than it has been through the implementation of the RMA. We applaud you for your recognition that there has been a lack of cohesive and integrated national direction to achieve consistency and environmental bottom lines, and that you are making this a cornerstone of the new system. We will continue to work with your officials to ensure that the new national planning framework and regional spatial strategy and national and built environment plan framework will be robust, effective, and efficient and be able to achieve the anticipated systems outcomes.

NZPI would welcome the opportunity to talk with you personally on these matters.

Yours sincerely



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