Attachment A – Consistency with Northern Councils C Zone Review Final Recommendations

Recommendation	Key Issues	Comment
<ul> <li>When will C Zones be applied?</li> <li>C2 and C3 zones will only be applied if the primary use of the land is considered to be environmental conservation (C2) or environmental management(C3) and the land contains attributes which meet one or more of the criteria for an C2 or C3 zone (Tables 1 and 2).</li> <li>An C4 zone can be applied if the land contains attributes that are consistent with the Department's Practice Note PN09-002 Environment Protection Zones.</li> </ul>	Does the proposed zone meet the primary use of land test?  Is a C4 zone proposed and is it consistent with PN09-002.	Council has provided appropriate supporting information and methodology to establish preliminary primary use to warrant a Gateway determination to be issued for amendments to the Tweed LEP 2014. The issuing of the Gateway determination will allow Council to proceed to public exhibition, which will trigger community consultation. The Gateway determination contains conditions that require targeted consultation with landowners, which will provide an opportunity to formally indicate any disagreement in relation to primary use. Council will be required to resolve any outstanding objections, prior to finalisation. Finally, the Department's independent review process provides landowners with an opportunity to have the land use zoning that has been applied by Council reviewed at the finalisation stage.
		Council has applied three primary use of land categories; environmental, agriculture and other (which comprises urban, commercial, industrial, infrastructure or special purpose zones).
		The environmental primary use category includes 'areas actively subject to revegetation works, habitat remediation or assisted natural regeneration'.
		The Northern Councils C Zone Review Final Recommendations Report (the 'C Zones Report') identifies that land which has been voluntarily revegetated by the landowner will not have a conservation zone (C2 or C3) applied to it without the agreement of the current landowner provided:
		<ul> <li>The revegetation has been actively undertaken and is not the result of natural regrowth,</li> <li>Active revegetation includes a combination of planting, seeding, weed control, fencing, removing stock, watering,</li> </ul>

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		ripping, mulching and soil improvement to encourage the natural regeneration of native vegetation, and  The primary use of the land is agriculture.
		It is further noted that the C Zone Report identifies that private land may be zoned for conservation purposes despite being inconsistent with the criteria if at the request of the landowner. The associated FAQs indicate that private land that does not meet the criteria can be zoned for environmental conservation or environmental management if the landowner agrees to this.
		There are a number of sites where a conservation zone is proposed but the primary use may warrant a different zone, given the surrounding, established urban environment.
		Council has undertaken consultation with landowners in 2022 to inform this proposal. There may be some sites where Council has reached agreement with landowners to inform this planning proposal.
		As such, it is considered appropriate that Council proceed to formal consultation to exhibit the proposal and engage further with landowners regarding the primary use of the land.
		It is recommended that the Gateway determination require Council to confirm in the final planning proposal how the zones applied have satisfied the requirements outlined under the Recommendations Report.
		The planning proposal proposes to apply an R5 zone to a number of sites in the coastal strip. The Gateway determination includes a condition to remove these sites from the planning proposal due to inconsistency with the North Coast Regional Plan 2041.
		Council may wish to consider the introduction of a C4 zone to deal with these sites as part of a future planning proposal if the

Recommendation		Key Issues	Comment
			application of a C4 zone is consistent with the requirements of PN09-002. A C4 zone is not proposed as part of the planning proposal.
<ul> <li>determined?</li> <li>The primary use for which for the last to mean that lad zoned rural or rural zone, but that land who meet the critical included in a surface on the chara may result in being applied.</li> <li>The primary</li> </ul>	use of the land is the main h the land has been used wo (2) years. This may and which is currently will continue to have a but it may have parts of ich have attributes that teria for an C2 or C3 zone a mapped planning control. Use of the land may vary ricular property depending acteristics of the land. This is more than one zone d to the land.  use of land will be ring the preparation of a sposal.	Is the verification methodology for determining the primary use of land consistent with the Secretary's letter of 1 March 2016?	The Secretary's letter of 1 March 2016 states that the primary use of land must be determined based on evidence of the nature of the activities and operations occurring on the land over the last two years.  In determining primary use of land Council has reviewed aerial imagery (dated March 2025), which meets the requirement for aerial imagery not more than 5 years old to be used in the verification process.  Council has supplemented the above with the following information to inform the proposal:  - Tweed Coast Koala Habitat Study 2011, - flora and fauna studies supporting various development applications, - conservation plans, - expert staff witness information, - private land conservation agreements, and - sustainable agriculture programs.  Pre-gateway landowner consultation has also been undertaken in
			2022. Thirty one (31) per cent of the total landowners affected by this planning proposal proactively engaged in discussions with Council regarding their land.
			Primary use will further be confirmed through consultation with landowners post Gateway determination.
			It is considered that Council has undertaken appropriate preliminary consultation to determine primary use of land affected by the proposal. Provided Council adequately considers the requirements

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		relating to voluntary revegetation, as outlined above, it is considered that the methodology is appropriate.
<ul> <li>3. What are the C Zone Criteria?</li> <li>C2 Criteria</li> <li>SEPP 26 Littoral Rainforest</li> <li>SEPP 14 Coastal Wetlands</li> <li>Endangered Ecological Communities</li> <li>Key Threatened Species Habitat</li> <li>Over-cleared vegetation communities</li> <li>Culturally significant lands</li> <li>C3 Criteria</li> <li>Riparian and estuarine vegetation</li> <li>Rare endangered and vulnerable forest ecosystems</li> <li>Native vegetation on coastal foreshores</li> </ul>	Does land meet the C Zone criteria in Tables 1 and 2? Which criterion does the land satisfy to have an C zone applied to it?	Council has provided methodology which lists how conservation zones have been applied within the Tweed LEP 2014.  For land that has a C2 or C3 zone applied, Council has demonstrated which of the criteria the land meets in appendices supporting the proposal.  Private land that does not meet the criteria for a conservation zone can only be zoned C2 or C3 if the landowner agrees. This will be further addressed through consultation.  Public land that does not meet the criteria can be zoned C2 or C3 if the primary use of the land is environmental conservation or environmental management. This will also be further addressed through consultation with agencies.
<ul> <li>4. What is the procedure for applying an C2 or C3 zone?</li> <li>Councils will assess land against the C zone criteria and consider the primary use of the land before proposing an C2 or C3 zone.</li> <li>A C2 or C3 zone can only be applied to land with a primary use of environmental conservation or environmental management and, which has attributes that have been verified to meet the C zone criteria.</li> <li>If the land has attributes that meet the C2 criteria, however the primary use of the land is environmental management rather than environmental</li> </ul>	Has Council satisfied the procedure for Applying C Zones?	Council has provided appendices which outline how the C zone Criteria and primary use of the land has been identified. This has been informed through review of imagery, other supplementary material and pre-Gateway consultation.  Council will however need to undertake further consultation with landowners in order to confirm the primary use of land and the attributes that satisfy the criteria comply with the procedure for applying a C Zone.  It is appropriate that Council be allowed to proceed to consultation to undertake this work.

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<ul> <li>conservation, a council may apply a C3 zone.</li> <li>If a council believes the primary use of the land does not warrant a C zone, and the land meets the C zone criteria, then a LEP Map and associated clauses can be applied.</li> <li>The C zones will not include buffers to the vegetation attributes that meet the C zone criteria.</li> </ul>			
<ul><li>5. How is the C Zone Criteria verified?</li><li>A C2 or C3 zone or other mapped planning controls cannot be applied to land unless the</li></ul>	Has the presence of attributes which meet the criteria been verified by one or more of the	As detailed in row 2 above Council has reviewed aerial imagery (dated March 2025), and supplemented its analysis with the following information to inform the proposal:	
attributes that meet the C2 or C3 criteria have been verified on that land.	methods listed in Recommendation 5.	<ul> <li>Tweed Coast Koala Habitat Study 2011,</li> <li>flora and fauna studies supporting various development</li> </ul>	
Verification of the presence of attributes that meet the C2 or C3 criteria on the site must be undertaken by one or a combination of the verification criteria outlined in the Recommendations Report.	recommendation 5.	applications, - conservation plans, - expert staff witness informatio - private land conservation agree	applications,
		Pre-gateway landowner consultation was undertaken in 2022.	
		As part of the next stage of the proposal, consultation with landholders affected by proposed zone changes will be undertaken to confirm primary use and the vegetation attributes on the site.	
		Where agreement is not reached as to the appropriate land zoning, attributes should be confirmed on the land using a combination of the verification criteria identified in the C Zones Report. The final planning proposal should be updated to confirm how the criteria has been satisfied.	

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		It is appropriate that Council be allowed to proceed to consultation to undertake this work.
Transferring Environmental Zones.     The areas of land to which the current environmental protection zones listed in the Table 3 (below) apply, may be zoned C2 or C3 once councils have verified the attributes of the land against the criteria.  Tweed LEP 2000 7(a) Environmental Protection (Wetlands and Littoral Rainforest) 7(I) Environmental Protection (Habitat)	Is the land already zoned one of the existing "7" zones in Table 3?	According to information submitted by Council, 79 sites contain all or part 7(I) zone and 139 sites contain all or part 7(a) zone to be incorporated into the Tweed LEP 2014.
		For land proposed to be rezoned from one of these zones to a conservation zone across the whole or part of the site and incorporated into the Tweed LEP 2014, Council has provided information that identifies the attributes of the land.
		For land proposed to be rezoned from one of these zones to a rural or "other" zone (as defined by Council in its methodology), Council has provided information that identifies the attributes of the land.
		Council notes that environmental protection (7) zones on private land are required to meet one or more ecological criteria. For private land that does not meet these criteria, an appropriate zone that best reflects the use and context of the land has been applied.
		Further consultation on the approach by Council will be undertaken as part of public exhibition in order to verify these attributes.
		It is appropriate that Council be allowed to proceed to consultation to undertake this work.
<ul> <li>7. Public and Private Land inconsistent with the criteria.</li> <li>Public land may be zoned C2 or C3 despite being inconsistent with the criteria, if the primary use of the land is</li> </ul>	If a C zone has been applied to public land inconsistent with the criteria, is the primary use environmental conservation or	Where a conservation zone is proposed, the planning proposal and associated appendices indicate how primary use has been applied to land which satisfies the criteria for either a C2 or C3 zone.
environmental conservation or environmental management.	environmental management?	The primary use test was applied in accordance with the C Zone Report.
<ul> <li>Private land may be zoned C2 or C3 despite being inconsistent with the criteria, only if it is consistent with a</li> </ul>	If a C zone has been applied to private land inconsistent with the criteria, is it the result of a	The identified primary use of land may potentially change through the post-Gateway consultation and review work, as further

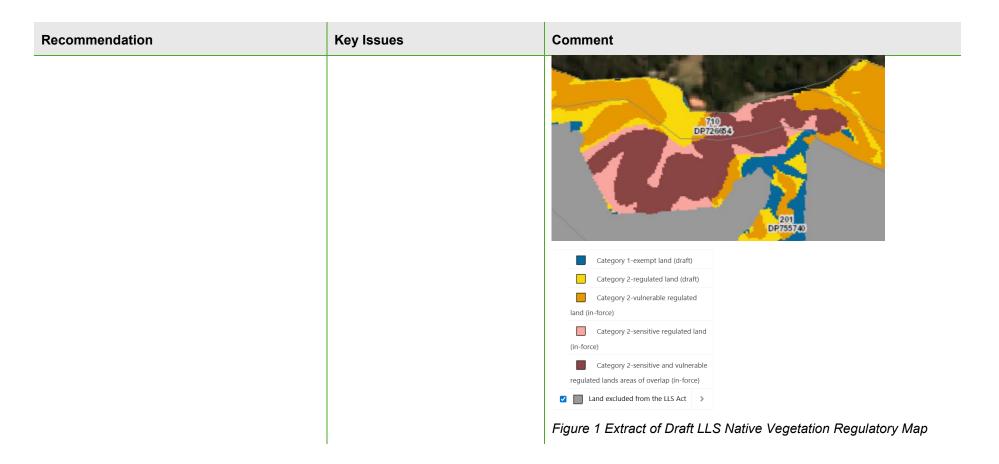
Recommendation	Key Issues	Comment
negotiated development outcome (master plan, rezoning, development consent, designated offset areas) or at the request of the landowner	negotiated development outcome or at the request of the landowner?	assessment against the primary used test and consultation with landholders and agencies is carried out.
		Council indicates it will consider any request from a landowner to retain or propose a C zone that does not meet the criteria on a case-by-case basis. The consideration will determine the ecological merit of the proposed zoning and other proposed uses.
		Further consultation on the approach by Council will be undertaken as part of public exhibition in order to verify primary use.
		It is appropriate that Council be allowed to proceed to consultation to undertake this work.
<ul> <li>Voluntarily revegetated land.</li> <li>Land which has been voluntarily revegetated by the current landowner, will not have a C2 or C3 zone applied</li> </ul>	Is any voluntarily revegetated land affected by this planning proposal?	Council has applied three primary use categories, environmental, agriculture and other (which comprises urban, commercial, industrial, infrastructure or special purpose zones).
to it without the agreement of the current landowner providing:  the revegetation has been actively undertaken and is not the result of	Does it comply with the requirements?	For the environmental primary use category, Council has identified 'areas actively subject to revegetation works, habitat remediation or assisted natural regeneration'.
natural regrowth; - active revegetation includes a combination of planting, seeding, weed control, fencing, removing stock, watering, ripping, mulching		The C Zones Report identifies that land which has been voluntarily revegetated by the landowner will not have a conservation zone (C2 or C3) applied to it without the agreement of the current landowner provided:
<ul> <li>and soil improvement to encourage the natural regeneration of native vegetation; and</li> <li>the primary use of the land is agriculture.</li> <li>Land which has been voluntarily revegetated can be included on a Vegetation Map without the agreement of the current landowner if the</li> </ul>		<ul> <li>The revegetation has been actively undertaken and is not the result of natural regrowth,</li> <li>Active revegetation includes a combination of planting, seeding, weed control, fencing, removing stock, watering, ripping, mulching and soil improvement to encourage the natural regeneration of native vegetation, and</li> <li>The primary use of the land is agriculture.</li> </ul>

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attributes have been verified to meet the criteria for a C2 or C3 zone and the primary use of the land is environmental conservation or environmental management.  If revegetation has been undertaken with the support of grant funding, and a condition of that funding was the ongoing conservation or management of the vegetation, then an C2 or C3 zone may be applied to the land.	The C Zones Report identifies that private land may be zoned for conservation purposes despite being inconsistent with the criteria if at the request of the landowner. The associated FAQs indicate that private land that does not meet the criteria can be zoned for environmental conservation or environmental management if the landowner agrees to this.  There are a number of sites where a conservation zone is proposed but the primary use may warrant a different zone, given the surrounding, established urban environment. Council has however undertaken consultation with landowners to inform this proposal, and there may have been agreement reached with landowners through the pre-Gateway consultation undertaken in 2022. As such, it is considered appropriate that Council proceed to formal consultation to exhibit the proposal and commence more formal discussions with landowners regarding the primary use of the land.	
		The Gateway determination will require Council to confirm in the final planning proposal how the zones applied have satisfied the requirements outlined under the C Zones Report.
When zoning State or regionally significant farmland, councils will have	Has the zoning of State or Regionally significant farmland taken into account the primary use of land test?	Council has outlined that significant farmland within the planning area occurs at Terranora (121ha), Cudgen (580ha) and Duranbah (166ha).
		Council proposes to apply a conservation zone to 6.5ha of State significant farmland within the Cudgen and Duranbah areas.
		Council indicates this accounts for less than 1% of the total area of mapped State Significant Farmland.
		Council states that these areas are not utilised for farming as these are existing native forests and wetlands, with a majority of this land within or adjoining mapped coastal wetlands and situated on the

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		edges of the mapped farmland. Council has determined as a result that these areas have a primary use of environmental.
		In regard to Regionally significant farmland, Council has indicated that this is mostly attributed to floodplains and coastal estuaries within the planning area. Council indicates that these areas are too wet to be farmed and contain areas that meet the C2 ecological criteria.
		The planning proposal does not however specifically identify land mapped as state or regionally significant farmland where a conservation or other non-rural zone is proposed.
		Council has also not addressed the proposal's consistency with section 9.1 direction 9.4 Farmland of State and Regional Significance on the NSW Far North Coast, nor the relevant chapters of the North Coast Regional Plan 2041, to provide further context as to the proposal's consistency with the overlapping legislation and suitability of rezoning Important Farmland.
		As such, it is recommended that all land mapped as Important Farmland not proposed to have a rural zone should be removed from the planning proposal as insufficient evidence has been provided to determine the appropriateness of the proposed changes.
		Council's proposed application of a rural zone to land mapped as Important Farmland is generally considered to be in keeping with a rural primary use of the land.
		Council should consider the above legislation and clearly identify any land mapped as important farmland in the preparation of a future planning proposal that seeks to rezone important farmland.

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<ul> <li>10. Application of multiples zones to a single property (split zoned lots).</li> <li>More than one zone can be applied to</li> </ul>	Are multiple zones applied to a single property?	In some instances, multiple zones have been applied to the subject properties.
properties where the characteristics of different areas of the land reflect the different primary uses of the land.  Councils should consider the suitability	Do these zones reflect the primary use of the land?	Council has sought to apply these zones in accordance with the primary use of the land, reflecting the different primary uses that may be present across one site.
<ul> <li>of alternative zones or including the land on a Vegetation Map when considering more than one zone for a property.</li> <li>As a general principle, the use of multiple zones on a property should be minimised as far as possible.</li> </ul>		As part of the next stage of the proposal, consultation with landholders will be undertaken to confirm primary use and whether the zones applied to land are appropriate. Council will need to address any submissions, and this aspect will likely be revisited as part of the finalisation process undertaken by the Department as the local plan-making authority.
<ul> <li>11. Application of the C4 Zone in Byron Council.</li> <li>Byron Shire Council is to prepare a planning proposal to apply a suitable residential zone to that land where an E4 zone was proposed under the draft Byron LEP.</li> </ul>	Does the proposal apply to land proposed to be zoned C4 in Byron LGA?  Is the proposal applying a suitable residential zone to this land?	Not Applicable. The proposal applies to Tweed LGA and does not currently propose any C4 zoned land.
<ul> <li>12. Application of additional mapped planning controls.</li> <li>Matters of public health, safety, risk and hazard such as drinking water catchments, flooding, coastal risk areas and land subject to strict development controls such as steep land may be included in a LEP Map.</li> <li>A LEP Map is not to be used for areas of scenic protection or aesthetic values.</li> <li>Land that has been verified to meet the criteria for a C2 or C3 zone where the primary use of the land is not environmental conservation or</li> </ul>	Does the proposal seek to introduce overlays or other mapped planning controls?  Do the mapped planning controls apply to matters of public health, safety, risk and hazard?  Do the mapped planning controls apply to land with attributes which meet the E zone criteria but does	The proposal seeks to introduce a steep land overlay to land with a slope of greater than 18 degrees (approx. a 1 in 3 gradient).  Council indicates the intention of the overlay and associated clause is to ensure consideration of the risks associated with erosion, mass movement and sedimentation in order that this does not result in land degradation and contamination of waterways.  The justification provided by Council is that Category 2 Sensitive Land mapping used for managing rural land under the NSW Local Land Services Act 2013 identifies 18 degree slope as steep land and these areas are mapped as regulated land as they are prone to erosion if vegetation is removed.

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environmental management may be included in a mapped planning control, such as a Vegetation Map.	not have a primary use of land that warrants a C2 or C3 zone?	Category 2 Vulnerable Regulated Land, which is a subcategory of category 2, applies to areas of land that are "Steep (greater than 18 degrees from the horizontal) or highly erodible.
		Category 2 Vulnerable Regulated Land is shown as orange on the draft LLS Native Vegetation Regulatory Map while Category 2 Sensitive Regulated land is shown as pink areas (Figure 1).
		Comparing the Steep Land Map to the Category 2 Sensitive and Vulnerable Land mapping, it appears Council has not applied its steep land map consistently with the Category 2 Vulnerable Land mapping as outlined in its justification.
		For example, a site on Boyd Street, Cobaki Lakes (Figure 2) is mapped as Category 2 Sensitive and Vulnerable Regulated Land on the draft NVR Map, which is demonstrated in pink and not orange.



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		Gold Coast LGA
		Figure 2 Extract of Proposed Steep Land Map Cobaki Lakes
		On review of the location of the proposed Steep Land Mapping it appears the mapping is applied mostly to former 7(d) Environment Protection (Scenic/Escarpment), however it has also been applied to other land.
		Council seeks to apply the steep land clause to rural and urban land, however it has not provided justification for the 18 degree slope on urban land, given the justification provided relates to Category 2 land defined in the LLS Act which applies to rural land and excludes urban zoned land.
		There are other controls that governs vegetation removal and erosion. Clause 7.2 of the Tweed LEP 2014 regulates earthworks and provides for matters, including:
		<ul> <li>The likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality of the development,</li> <li>The proximity to, and potential for adverse impacts on, any waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area,</li> </ul>

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		Any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.
		This clause would be considered with assessment of a development application, at the same time consideration would be given to the proposed steep land clause and would appear to cover similar matters.
		Additionally, the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act 2016) part 7 must be considered with assessment of a development application.
		Section 7.3 of the BC Act 2016, requires all direct and indirect impacts must be taken into account. Indirect impacts are defined in the guidelines and include erosion.
		Finally, SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 outlines controls under part 2.2 relating to clearing vegetation in non-rural areas.
		It is not clear, based on Councils justification, how the proposed steep land clause will provide additional protection or control that isn't already established in existing legislation or planning instruments.
		The Gateway determination requires that Council provide further justification for the steep land clause, including articulating why the clause is required given other existing legislation that applies to part 4 development. Council is to also provide justification for the gradient chosen that is relevant to both urban and rural land and is to ensure that the methodology is applied consistently within the planning area.

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<ul> <li>Aesthetic Value.</li> <li>Councils on the Far North Coast will not be permitted to use scenic values as an attribute for the application of an C2 or C3 zone or mapped planning controls.</li> </ul>	Has aesthetic value been used as an attribute for the application of an C zone?	Aesthetic value has not been used as an attribute for the application of a C Zone.
<ul> <li>Permissibility of agriculture in C Zones.</li> <li>Extensive agriculture is to be listed as permissible with consent in the C2 zone for all Far North Coast LEPs.</li> <li>Extensive agriculture is to be listed as permissible without consent in the C3 zone for all Far North Coast LEPs.</li> </ul>	Is extensive agriculture permissible without consent in the C3 zone? Is extensive agriculture permissible with consent in the C2 zone?	There is no change proposed to the existing conservation zone land use tables for C2 and C3. Extensive agriculture is permitted with consent in the C2 zone and permitted without consent in the C3 zone pursuant to Tweed LEP 2014 Amendment 39 (PP-2023-574).
<ul> <li>15. Coastal Zone Management.</li> <li>Far North Coast councils are to use a         Coastal Risk Map and associated         clause to manage land affected by         coastal hazards.</li> </ul>	Has a Coastal Risk Map and associated clause been used to manage land affected by coastal hazards?	A coastal risk map and associated clause has not been proposed.
A Section 9.1 Direction.     A Section 9.1 Ministerial Direction specific to applying C zones and mapped planning controls in Far North Coast LEPs will ensure the consistent application of the final recommendations of the Northern Councils C Zone Review for Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore and Tweed Local Government Areas.	Is the proposal consistent with S9.1 Direction 3.4 Application of E2 and E3 Zones and Environmental Overlays in Far North Coast LEPs.	To be determined.  The consistency of the proposal with Direction 3.4 is to be reassessed after public exhibition has been undertaken and Council has assessed the submissions received by landowners in relation to the primary use of land and the proposed zone.