

BEFORE THE HEARING COMMISSIONERS
AT INVERCARGILL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act
1991 ("the Act")

AND

IN THE MATTER of the hearing of submissions on the
Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan

HEARING WRITTEN QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY
ANDREW BARBER

25 September 2017

Question:

Paragraph 20: Does vegetable production in Southland occur on land with slopes steeper than 9 degrees?

Answer:

I do not have access to topographical information to answer this question directly. However, although 9 degrees does not seem very steep (particularly if you wave your arm out in front of you) in practice it is reasonably steep when measured as an average slope down a cultivated paddock. Specifying a slope does however raise the question about how the slope is measured. Is it the average paddock slope, or a maximum and if so over what distance? Is it the slope over the final 100m? A steep paddock with a flat section at the bottom would have a lower risk of soil leaving the paddock than a flat paddock followed by a steep section at the bottom. Both paddocks might have the same average slope. These differences would be considered when conducting a paddock risk assessment, the first step in the Erosion & Sediment Control Guidelines for Vegetable Production.

Question:

The guidelines for erosion control for vegetable growing are very comprehensive. Is it realistic to have them as guidelines for other farming activities?

Answer:

The principles in the Erosion & Sediment Control Guidelines for Vegetable Production can be universally applied. Prior to cultivation a paddock assessment should be conducted. Where is water entering and exiting the paddock? Step 2 also applies universally, the key to minimising erosion on cultivated land is stopping or controlling the water flowing onto the paddock from the catchments above. Steps 3 and 4, erosion and sediment control are more attuned to intensive cultivated production. Other less intensive activities may have less need for these mitigation measures. However, as part of a process of continual improvement there is no harm in making others aware of these guidelines.

Question:

If this was to be a permitted activity with this guideline as part of the rule how could the council be sure they were being complied with and how would updates to the guidelines be incorporated into the plan?

Answer:

Assessment against Best/Good Practice is the subject of a current piece of work that I am conducting with NZ GAP. This involves the preparation of a Farm Environment Plan, that is underpinned by a risk assessment and selection of practices based on that assessment. With the appropriate training, this can be audited against.

I will let a planner answer how updates can be incorporated. However, this guide has a version number and date that can be referenced.

Question

Mr Barber's recommendation in his evidence (paras 16-21) is different to the recommendation in the Hort NZ submission so could he give us his preferred wording for Rule 25 (b).

Answer:

I will look at this more closely and submit a response by 5pm on the 27th.