

13 July 2023

Hilary Samuel
Senior Policy Advisor
Taupō District Council

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Kia ora Hilary and team,

Thank you for the opportunity for members of our team to meet with you on the 6th April 2023 about Plan Change 41, and your rationale for the approach Taupō District Council (TDC) have taken. During our meeting members of the TDC planning team fully explained their process and reasoning behind the plan change, which is to remove active faults from the district plan to allow for a more agile way of managing the risk. I am writing to confirm that Toka Tū Ake EQC are satisfied with the explanation of how the changed plan will prevent development on land at risk from fault rupture and no longer wish to oppose the plan change.

We acknowledge that due to the stagnant nature of district planning maps, it is appropriate to use other planning mechanisms (i.e. not district plan maps with associated rules; use of s106 to impose consent conditions/avoid) to prevent new developments on land at risk from fault rupture, and use Building Act controls to prevent further development of existing properties in ways that increase the risk from fault hazards (including the use of the “good ground” definition and building importance categories). Updated active fault maps created by GNS Science are held by the Taupō District Council and used to inform decisions on development, subdivision and building consent.

We’re aware of the difficulty in keeping hazard maps up to date when incorporated into District Plans, due to the lengthy and involved plan change process. Keeping fault hazard maps within the District Plan and updating the maps using the Plan Change process can result in these maps being inaccurate for lengthy amounts of time while a plan change is put into effect. As fault mapping using remote sensing data has greatly expanded in the past decade, many local fault maps may need updating to allow for new information. While the 2003 MfE *Planning for Development of Land on or Close to Active Faults* guidelines recommend that fault hazard maps should be included within District Plans, we acknowledge that these guidelines are now 20 years old and need to be updated to include modern mapping methods and provide for alternative methods of controlling developments in areas close to active faults.


We support the further provisions put in place by the Taupō District Council to increase public access to information about active faults and the hazards associated with them. In particular, we support including the most recent information available on active fault hazards on LIM reports, and including the updated fault maps on the District Council Mapi geospatial mapping application. In the interest of clarifying the policies around fault hazards, we would support including the fault maps as a non-regulatory layer within the district planning maps.

As mentioned at the meeting, it would be great if we could be forwarded a copy of the explanation that was provided, so it can be used as a case study for alternative approaches to those outlined Active Fault Guidelines, to aid in the review of the Active Fault Guidelines, and to highlight issues with the current

planning options. This would be useful for both Ministry for the Environment and Toka Tū Ake EQC to use, with your permission.

Ngā mihi nui,

Sarah-Jayne McCurrach,
Head of Risk Reduction & Resilience, Toka Tū Ake EQC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah-Jayne McCurrach', written over a circular stamp or seal that is mostly obscured by the ink.