

Shaping Horowhenua

Survey Results

March 2010



**HOROWHENUA
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Shaping Horowhenua

Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

Shaping Horowhenua is the name of the Horowhenua District Plan Review project. The current District Plan became operative 13 September 1999 and one was of the first to be prepared under the Resource Management Act. The time has come to review the existing District Plan

The Council has taken a less traditional approach to engaging the community and ratepayers by asking for feedback and suggestions before any form of draft or proposed document has been prepared. The Shaping Horowhenua survey was posted to all ratepayers and copies were also made available throughout the District for non-ratepayers.

The questions were designed to provide respondents with the opportunity to raise issues that are important to them as well the opportunity to provide an indication on how the existing rules or policies are perceived.

The District Plan Review process has been specifically designed to have flexibility to allow the outcomes of the responses to be used to guide Council on which issues from a community perspective need to be addressed as part of the review project.

This document has been prepared to provide a summary of the responses received and form a basis for discussion on the identification of further issues for consideration in the next District Plan. Identifying the issues is considered to be one of the first major steps in the process of writing the objectives, policies and rules for the Plan.

For ease of interpreting the responses they have in some cases needed to be grouped to provide a degree of consistency. This document makes no assessment of the merits of the points raised or whether they are relevant to the question or the District Plan Review.

An Appendix has been included at the end of this report which provides the results to each question in the form of a graph.



We Asked, You Told us and We are Listening...

We Asked

In December 2009 the Shaping Horowhenua survey was posted to approximately 13,500 ratepayers, with additional copies made available throughout the District for non-ratepayers. The survey was advertised through local media, including local newspapers, Community newsletter and radio commercials. The survey was also made available on the website. Respondents had from mid December until the 12 February 2010 to complete and return the survey form.

The survey formed the first of several rounds of consultation that the Council will carry out as part of seeking community input into the District Plan Review.

There was a fantastic response to the Shaping Horowhenua Survey with over 1370 responses received. It was particularly pleasing to see that it was not just local residents or ratepayers that took the time to respond. Responses were received from as far afield as Hong Kong and the United States of America, as well as numerous responses from landowners currently residing outside the District. Just over half of all the responses received were from the Levin residents.

The response received varied greatly, some people chose not to answer all questions, while other questions attracted multiple answers. In general most people provided short answers, however, a number of respondents took the opportunity to provide longer and more detailed answers.

You Told Us

We asked what do you like most about living in the Horowhenua?

The top five responses to this question were

1. Location/Proximity
2. Natural features
3. Climate
4. Pace of Life
5. Facilities and Services

Many of you commented on the how well Horowhenua is situated being just a short drive to Palmerston North or Wellington, as well as being handily located in relation to beaches, rivers, lakes and the hills.

The wide range of natural features in the Horowhenua, including the numerous beaches, rivers, lakes, and mountains were aspects that appealed to respondents.

Many respondents liked the climate of the Horowhenua commenting that they enjoyed the fact that Horowhenua does not get the extreme temperatures that other parts of the country experience.

The pace of life in the Horowhenua being a more comfortable pace or a change from life in the city was appreciated by many of you, together with the size of the towns and settlements, and the associated quietness. These aspects seemed to be a particular draw card for those spending their weekends or holidays here.

The facilities and services on offer appealed to many of you with the number of schools, sports grounds, parks and reserves within Horowhenua making it an ideal place for families and active residents.

Other aspects that were commonly appreciated by respondents included the people of Horowhenua, the rural character and the ease of accessibility around settlements and the District.

We asked what do you think are main environmental issues facing Horowhenua in the next 10 years?

Your top five responses to this question were

1. Water
2. Rubbish/Pollution
3. Transport
4. Sewerage
5. Lake Horowhenua

Water

Responses included comments regarding both water availability and quality. Concerns were expressed about water contamination not just of the drinking supplies but also of the rivers and waterways throughout the district. Many responses made no specific comment beyond identifying water as an issue of significant concern.

Some of the common issues or concerns raised regarding water included:

- Poor quality of water
- Disgusting taste of water
- So many boil water notices
- Consistent water supply
- Sound infrastructure to provide healthy water
- Water supply to meet the increasing population
- Deterioration of the lakes and waterways
- Available irrigation for intensive farming
- Affordable price for water
- Poor water supply to outer areas



Rubbish/Pollution

Responses recognised that dealing with rubbish and its disposal was an issue that seemed to be getting bigger. Many of your responses raised concerns that our assets such as our waterways were being polluted through a variety of sources and saw this as an issue that would need to be addressed over the next 10 years. A number of suggestions were made regarding what should be done to resolve the issue of rubbish/pollution in Horowhenua.

Some of the common concerns or suggestions raised regarding rubbish/pollution included:

- Cleaning up roadside drains
- Pollution from sprays
- Reducing as much rubbish as possible
- Removing litter from beaches and waterways
- Industry waste being disposed into water
- Farm run-off needs more control
- Promoting recycling
- More rubbish bins required in rural areas and Main Street, Foxton
- Landfill seepage from old Hokio site
- Light pollution from development is a major killer of wildlife
- Do not bring in other district's refuse



SHANNON RECYCLING CENTRE

Transport

Responses focused on the current and proposed state highway through the District as well as public transport services within the District and to the likes of Wellington and Palmerston North. Other more localised issues were also raised. A number of improvements were suggested to address some of the perceived transportation issues.

Some of the common concerns and suggestions raised regarding transport included:

- Provision of a bus service
- Diversion of heavy traffic (including stock trucks) away from town centre and urban areas
- Better public transport in and out of the region
- Better roading required
- Provision of a ring road around the town centre
- New State Highway plans and other major road developments
- Provision of more free parking required
- Prevention of illegal parking on footpaths
- Improvements for cyclists
- Traffic congestion
- Whirokino Bridge should be 4 lanes wide
- Keep stock off roads



Shaping Horowhenua | Survey Results

Sewerage

The responses were generally of a negative nature. Increased pressure on existing services, improving and/or increasing the current disposal methods, avoiding future contamination of waterways were all aspects associated with sewerage that were recognized as being an issue for Horowhenua. A number of responses made no specific comment beyond identifying sewerage as an issue of concern.

Some of the common issues and concerns raised regarding sewerage included:

- Levin sewerage outlet
- Sound infrastructure required
- Infrastructure capacity to meet the increasing population
- Controls over sewerage ponds
- Smell from treatment plant
- Problems with existing infrastructure

Lake Horowhenua

The clean up, management and use of Lake Horowhenua were matters considered likely to make Lake Horowhenua an environmental issue over the next 10 years.

Some of the common concerns and suggestions raised regarding Lake Horowhenua included:

- Unsafe water for recreation
- Cleaning up the lake
- Making the lake an attraction not a disgrace
- Removing lake weed
- Developing the lake and make use of its potential
- Agreement of Maori groups as to the use and care of Lake Horowhenua



LAKE HOROWHENUA AT DAWN

Other issues raised included

Issue	Concerns or suggestions raised
Manawatu River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up the river • Improve the state of the river • Control over the river course • Improve flow into the Foxton Loop • Make the river safe for swimming
Urban Sprawl and Subdivision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of ruralness, country areas should be kept as country areas • Uncontrolled housing development in rural areas • Overdevelopment caused by poor planning • Eroding of the rural countryside • Too much coastal development • Need to keep enough open space • Rules are needed to control rural subdivision

Issue	Concerns or suggestions raised
Weed & Pest Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Use of 1080 in the forest park and water catchment areas · Weed control · Control of rabbit pests · Management of coastal wattle on dunes
Development Contributions/Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Development contributions will stifle development in the District · Rising rates · Increasing development levies · Increasing user fees for Council sports facilities
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sea level rise · Flooding from global warming · Adverse weather patterns as a result of climate change · Wetlands are suffering from climate change and the drier winters
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Mobility scooter access – provide smooth paths · Access to beaches · Improve walking access for pedestrians · Maintain footpaths · Make frontages along waterways attractive for tourists and walkers · Post office needs to be in a car friendly location · Enforce no cycling on footpaths
Economic Growth & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop and assist small industry by creating small industrial parks · Do not allow too much growth too soon · Commercial development in Foxton · Create job opportunities · Make towns more user friendly, provide more shaded areas · Fill empty shops · Loss of unique identity
Hazard Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Flood protection of lowland · Remedying of frequent flooding of pasture · Overgrown sections becoming fire hazards · Flood and drought management · Flooding -more protection of waterway edges and maintenance of drains · Foreshore erosion
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reduce the number of consents required · Poor planning · Need for legislation to achieve balance between Maori and Pakeha views

Issue	Concerns or suggestions raised
Maintenance of Facilities & Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better care of trees and verges • Improve facilities such as tennis courts and halls • Cut the grass in the reserves and parks • Upkeep of the Adventure Park • Replace large roadside trees with smaller ones
Natural Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Tararua Ranges free of wind farms • Protect and enhance unique natural features • Respect for the natural areas • Protect wetlands and coastal areas • Keep natural areas undamaged • Replace trees that have been cut down and re-establish the bush areas • Vehicles on the beaches cause damage to the coastal environment • Maintenance of beach environments • Removal of hedges and shelter belts for dairy farming is resulting in a loss of habitats
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy vehicles in urban areas
Productive Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of good arable land • Sustainability of productive land • Division of high quality arable land into irreversible lifestyle housing • Development pressures are reducing the viability of agriculture
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote tourism in Horowhenua • Improve park areas for campers • Encourage tourist activities that are low cost.

We asked you...

What would be the one environmental issue that the Council should address in the urban area?

The top three responses that you came back with were:

- Rubbish/Recycling
- Water
- Traffic



What would be the one environmental issue that the Council should address in the rural area?

The top three responses were:

- Water
- Pollution
- Subdivision



We wanted to know what you thought of the current District Plan rules where you live (or own a property). We asked whether you thought the rules for specific aspects should be made less restrictive, more restrictive or whether there should be no change.

Building Heights

Seventy one percent (71%) of respondents felt there should be no change to the current rules regarding how high you can build.



Building Setbacks

Sixty seven percent (67%) of respondents felt there should be no change to the current rules regarding how close to the boundary you can build.

Site Coverage

Fifty six percent (56%) of respondents agreed that there should be no change to the current rules regarding how much of your site you can build on.

Subdivision Controls

Eighty four percent (84%) of respondents felt the controls over the amount of subdivision should not be made less restrictive, with a near even split between those who felt there should be no change (41%) and those who felt the controls should be made more restrictive (43%).

Minimum Section size

Eighty three percent (83%) of respondents felt the minimum lot size should not be made less restrictive, with fifty three percent (53%) indicating there should be no change while thirty percent (30%) thought the minimum section size should be made more restrictive.

Fence Heights

Seventy two percent (72%) of you felt there should be no change to the rules regarding the maximum height of fences.



We asked you whether you would like to see some changes to a number of matters that potentially affect the whole District.

Protected Trees

Forty eight percent (48%) of you felt there should be no change to the number of trees protected in our district, while forty two percent (42%) of you felt there should be more trees protected.



Rural Roadside Advertising Signs

Ninety one percent (91%) of you felt there should not be more rural roadside advertising signs in our District, with fifty two percent (52%) suggesting there should be no change to the current number of signs while thirty nine percent (39%) thought there should be fewer roadside advertising signs.

Protection of Native Vegetation and Natural Habitats

Sixty one percent (61%) of you felt there should be more protection given to native vegetation and natural habitats, while just four percent (4%) thought there should be less protection given.

Protection of Historic Heritage Features

Fifty two percent (52%) of you considered that there should be more protection given to the Historic Heritage features in our District, while six (6%) felt there should be less protection provided.



ALL SAINTS CHURCH: FOXTON



IHAKARA GARDENS: FOXTON

Protection of Sites of Cultural Significance

Forty nine percent (49%) of respondents agreed there should be no change to the current level of protection afforded to sites of cultural significance, while thirty four percent (34%) of respondents felt more protection should be provided.

We wanted to find out whether you agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding the future direction of the District

We asked you whether greater priority should be given to protecting the environment over land use and development, even if this may lead to increased user or development costs.

Sixty five percent (65%) of agreed or strongly agreed with this statement

We asked if the District Plan should encourage people to run businesses from their homes

Forty nine percent (49%) of you responded by saying you agreed or strongly agreed, while twenty nine percent (29%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, and twenty two percent (22%) of respondents offered no opinion on this matter.



We asked if the District Plan should promote walkways and cycleways to encourage fewer car trips

Eighty two percent (82%) of you agreed or strongly agreed with this statement

We asked should incentives be offered to encourage landowners to establish or protect areas of native trees and plants and natural habitats on their land.

Eighty seven percent (87%) of you agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.



PROTECTED 90 YR OLD KAURI TREE

We asked should incentives be offered to encourage landowners to protect historic heritage features or structures on their land.

Seventy six percent (76%) of you agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

We asked should there be greater controls over the design, materials and colour of buildings in rural areas that have a strong rural character.

The responses were quite divided, thirty nine percent (39%) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement while forty two percent (42%) of you disagreed or strongly disagreed.

We asked should there be greater controls over the design, materials and colour of buildings in areas with buildings of historic character such as Main Street, Foxton or Plimmer Terrace in Shannon.

Sixty percent (60%) of you agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.



FORMER SHANNON POST OFFICE

Your Ideas

Many of you took the opportunity while completing the survey to provide specific ideas for the future of Horowhenua. There were far too many to include all of them in this report but here is a selection.

- Make the area between the traffic lights on Oxford Street, Levin a car free area.
- Develop former Kimberley Hospital site as Horowhenua's Botanical Gardens.
- Provide more lighting around the recycling depots.
- Develop a road right around Lake Horowhenua and include a camping area.
- Redevelop Levin Mall away from SH 1 to lessen impact of future highway bypass.
- Plant more street trees.
- Provide more car parks by the railway station.
- Every new road should include a cycleway.
- Have smokefree parks and reserves.
- Have more street cameras in the business and shopping areas.
- Introduce a 'bounty scheme' as part of pest control.
- Tidy up and beautify the southern entrance to Levin.
- Provide incentives for solar heating.
- Make market gardeners clean up the mud left on the roads from their tractors.
- Have a general rubbish pick-up day once every six months for all the rubbish that doesn't fit in the bins for normal collection.
- Provide more seating along footpaths for the elderly.
- Encourage shopping on side streets not just the main street.

We are Listening...

The responses to the survey and the results outlined above provide the Council with a very good indication of what issues or changes you would like the Council to consider as it undertakes the District Plan Review.

Council officers will begin working through the issues identified preparing background reports with a view to developing options and alternatives for addressing the issues raised. There will be further opportunities for you to be involved and to have your say.

As part of the survey we asked how you would like to be kept informed about this Project. Whilst all available options received some support, the three most preferred forms of being kept informed on this project were

1. Letter/Brochure
2. Newspaper
3. Internet

With this in mind we will throughout the project endeavor to use these preferred forms to keep you informed. That does not mean to say we will not from time to time use other methods as well or that we won't try to find new and innovative ways to keep you informed. We do want everyone who is interested in this project to have access to information and to know when and how they can be involved.



www.horowhenua.govt.nz

Finally

Congratulations to the winners of the prize draw, drawn by Horowhenua District Council Chief Executive Officer, David Ward.

Earlybird \$200 Grocery Voucher Winner

Mariette Merson, Waitarere Beach

\$200 Grocery Voucher Winners

Margaret Strawbridge, Levin

Garry Aiken, Levin

\$100 Grocery Voucher Winners

David Anderson, Shannon

David & Stephanie Butel, Waikawa Beach

\$50 Petrol Voucher Winners

Jill Schlup, Levin

Edward Reece, Levin

Olivia Bull, Shannon

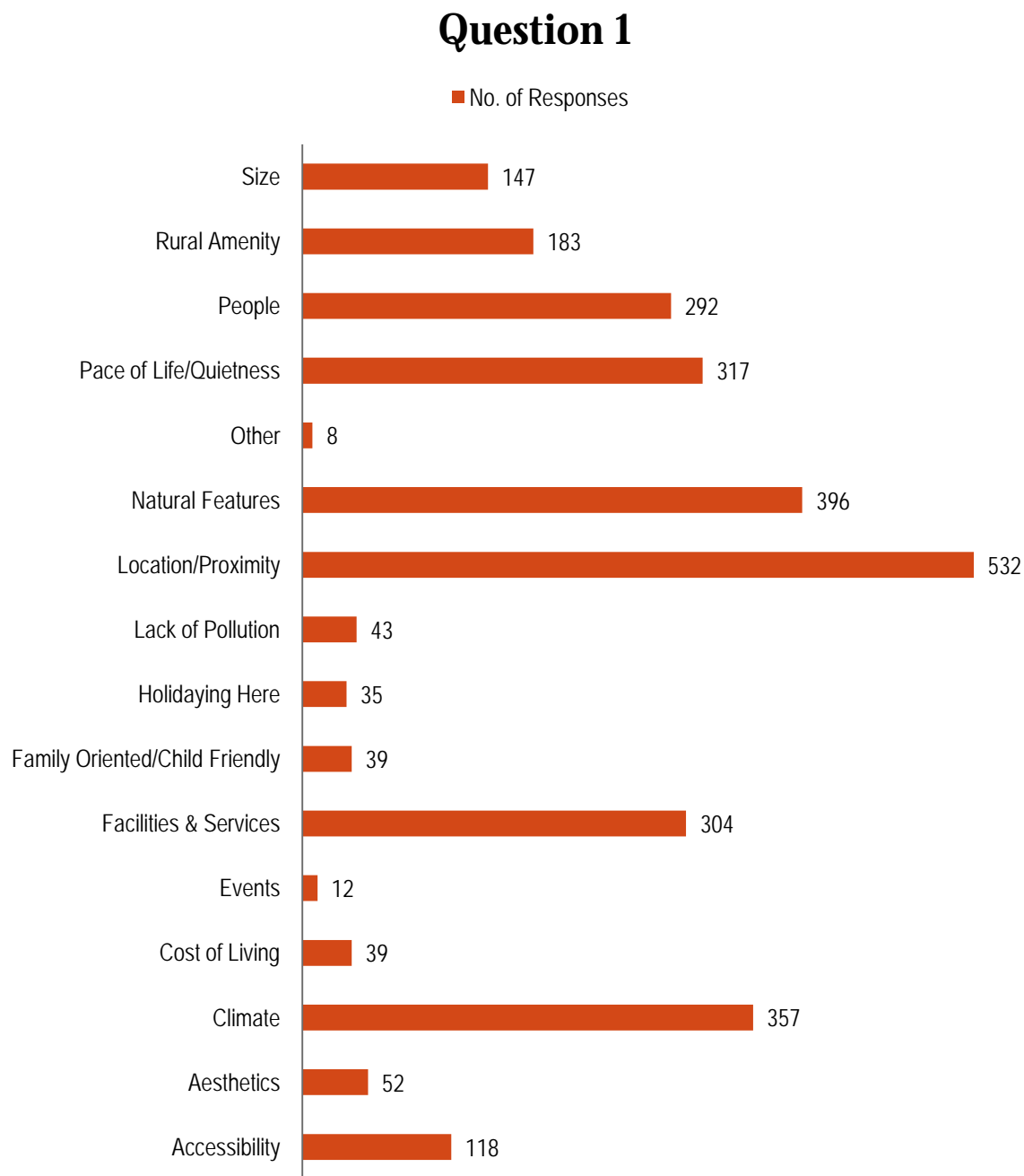
John Waltz, Foxton

Thank you to all those who took the time to fill out and complete the survey. We have been overwhelmed by the level of interest. We have found the responses received to be very helpful in identifying the issues you consider important.

We look forward to your further input into this project as we begin developing options and alternatives for addressing the issues you have helped identify.

APPENDIX: Survey Questions & Results

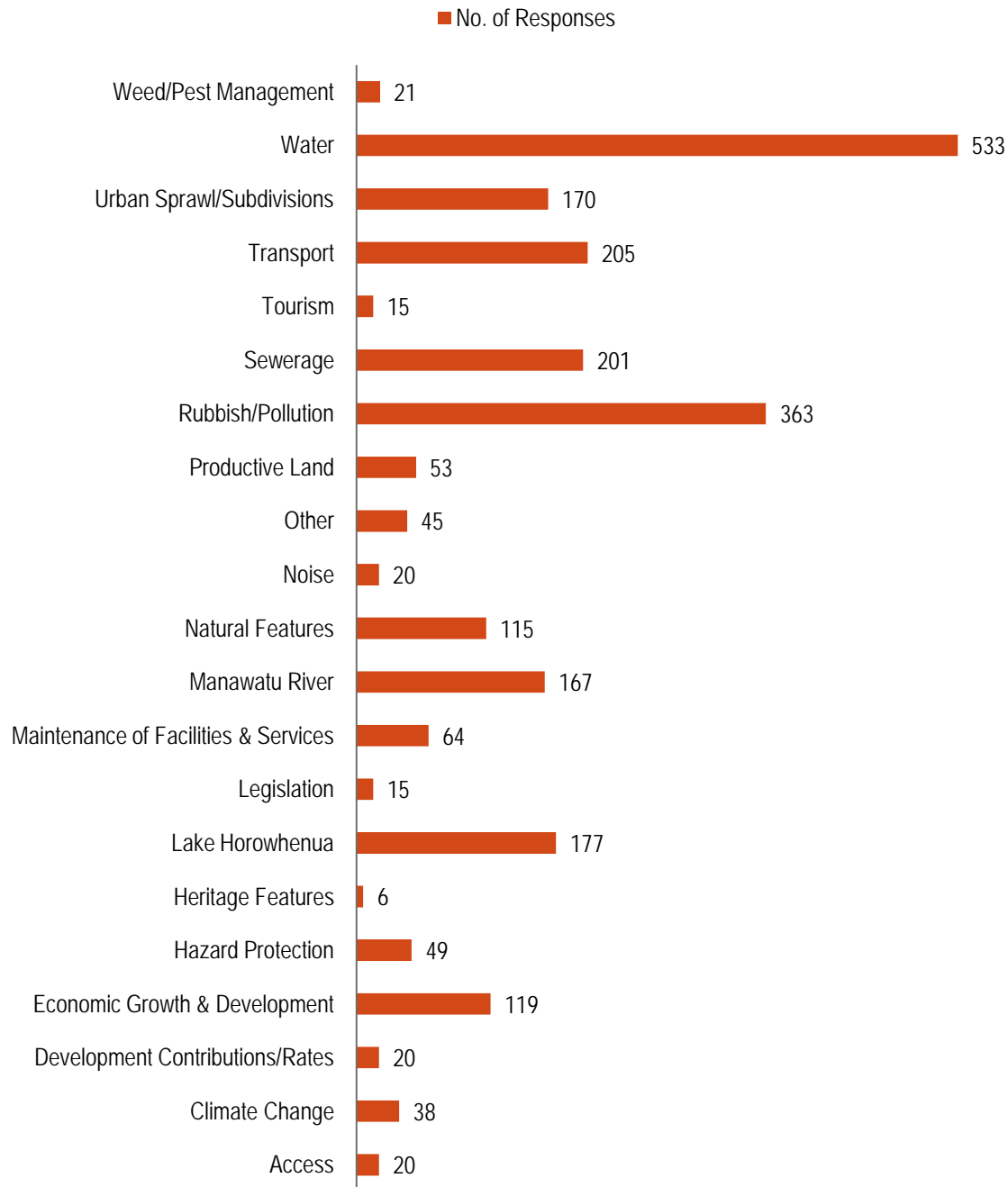
1. What do you like most about living in the Horowhenua?



(Please note that the number of responses for this question is greater than the number of respondents due to some respondents putting down more than one answer)

2. What do you think are the main environmental issues facing Horowhenua for the next 10 years

Question 2

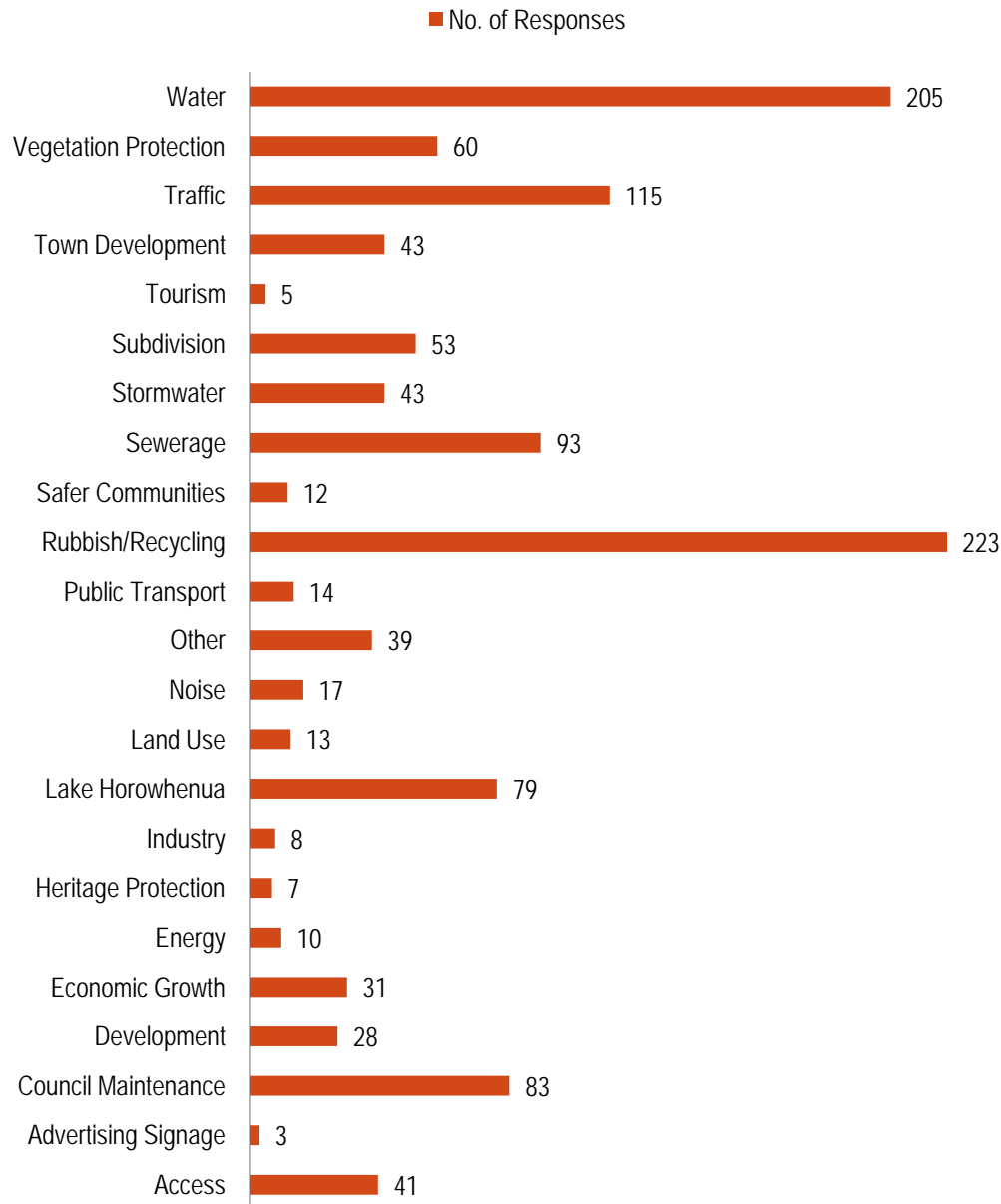


(Please note that the number of responses for this question is greater than the number of respondents due to some respondents putting down more than one issue)

3. What would be the one environmental issue you think the Council should address in each of the following areas?

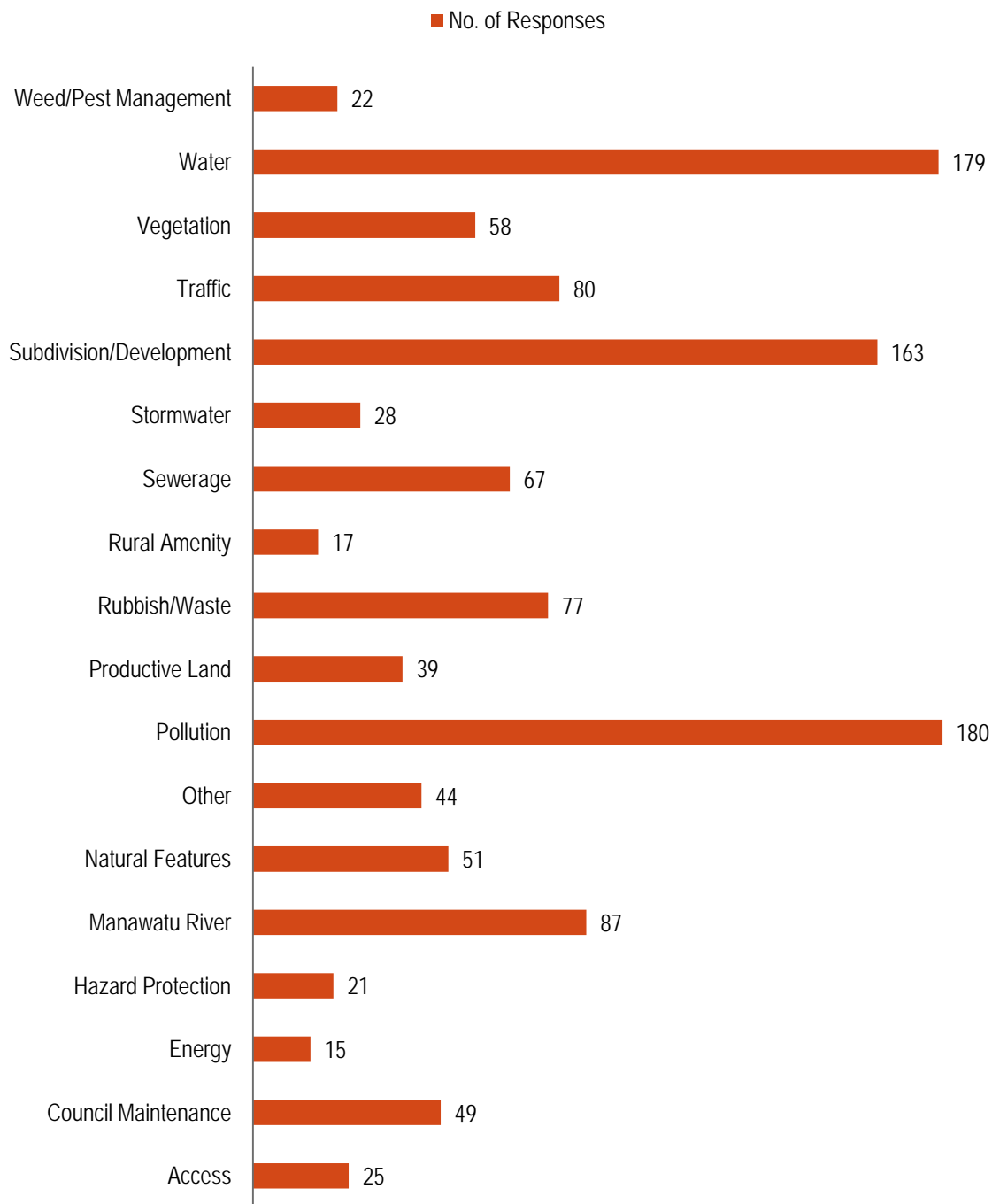
- Urban
- Rural

Question 3 - Urban



(Please note that the number of responses for this question differs from the total number of respondents due to some respondents choosing not to answer the question or putting more than one answer)

Question 3 - Rural



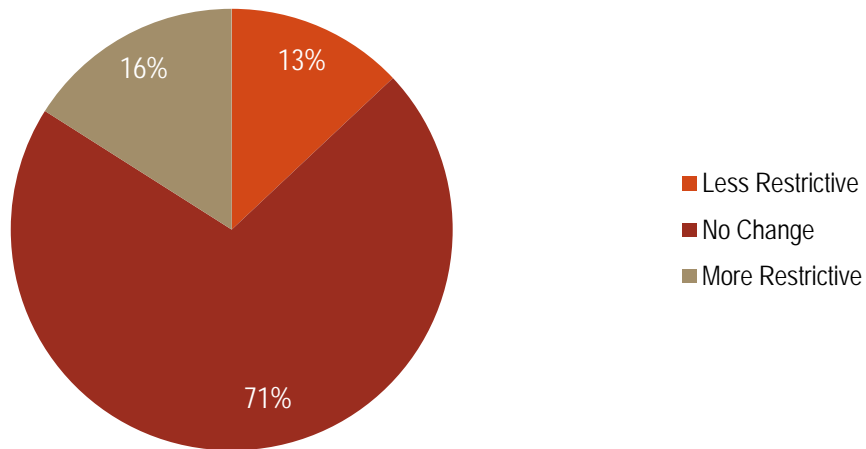
(Please note that the number of responses for this question differs from the total number of respondents due to some respondents choosing not to answer the question or putting more than one answer)

4. For where you live, what would you like to see for the following aspects of the District Plan?

(Respondents were given a choice of answering Less Restrictive, No Change or More Restrictive)

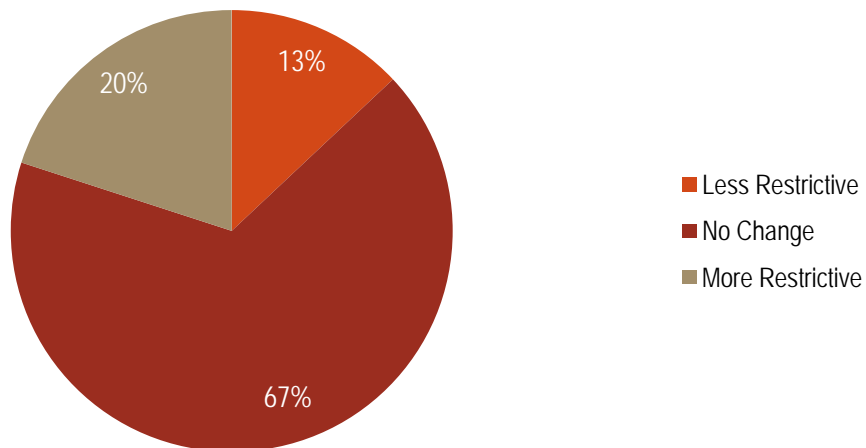
How high you can build

Building Heights



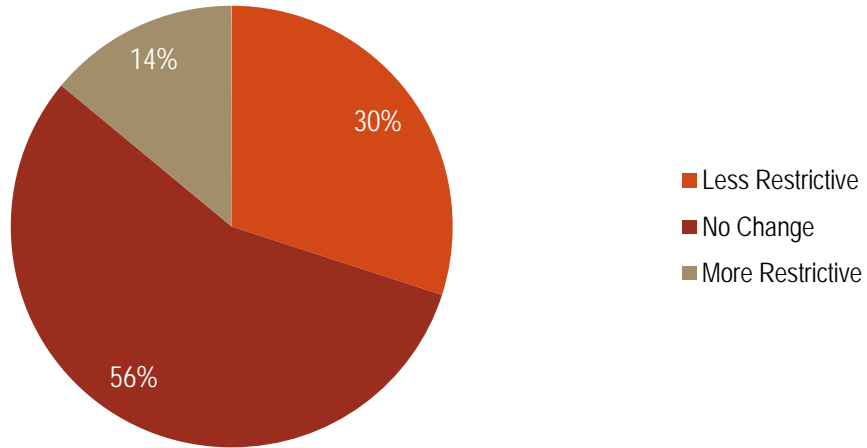
How close to the boundary you can build

Building Setbacks



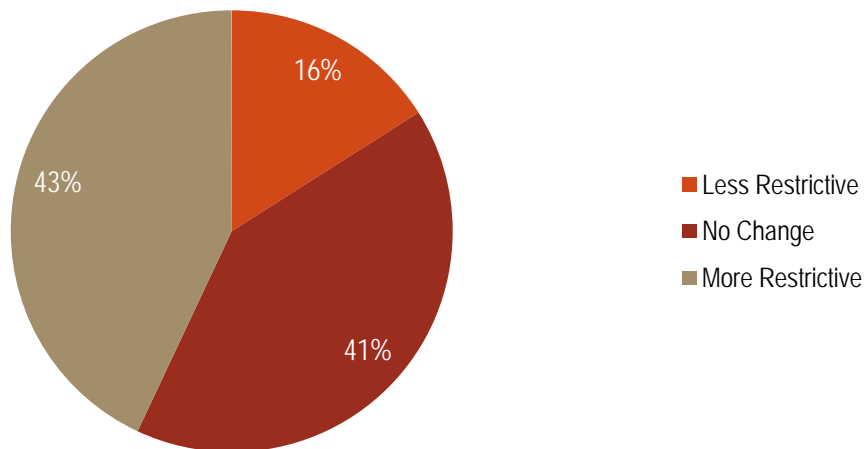
How much of your site you can build on

Site Coverage



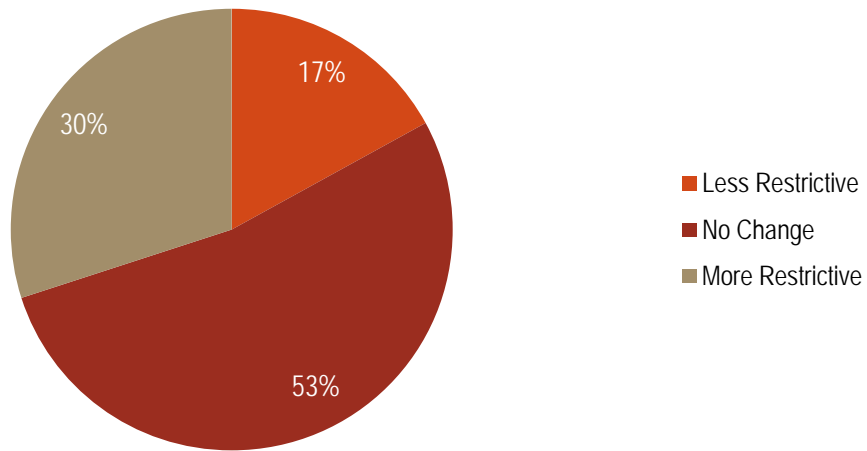
Control over the amount of subdivision

Subdivision Controls



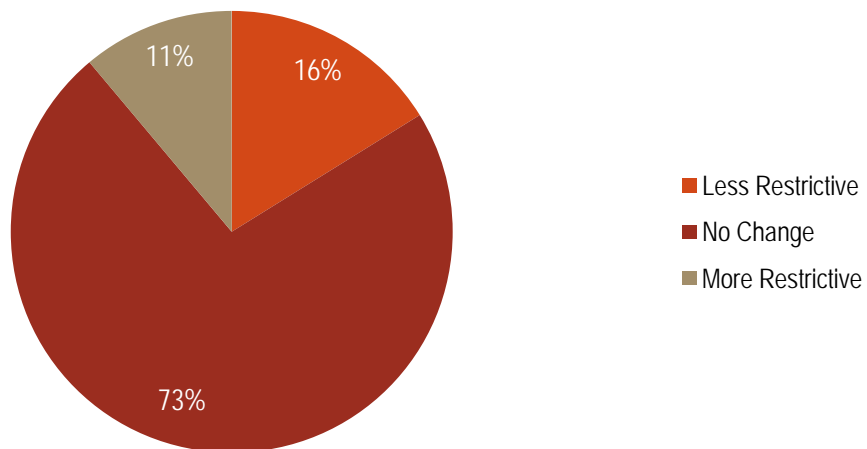
The minimum section size

Minimum Section Size



Maximum height of fences

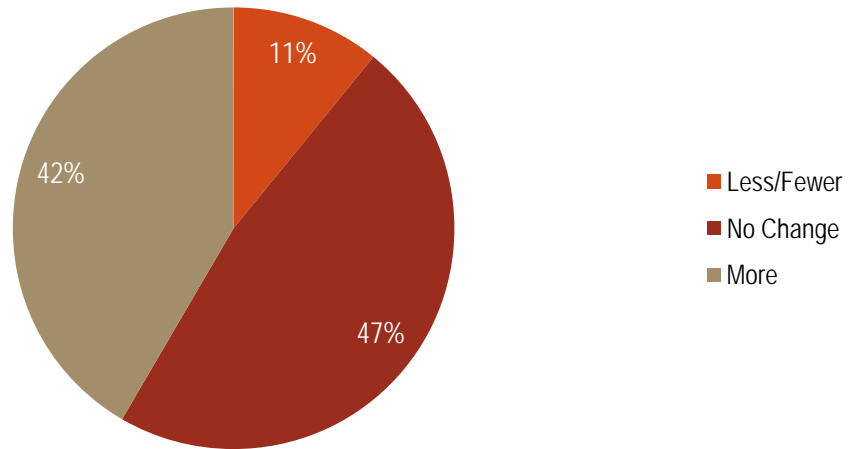
Maximum Fence Heights



5. **Through the Horowhenua District would you like to see changes to the following**
(Respondents were given a choice of answering Less/Fewer, No Change or More)

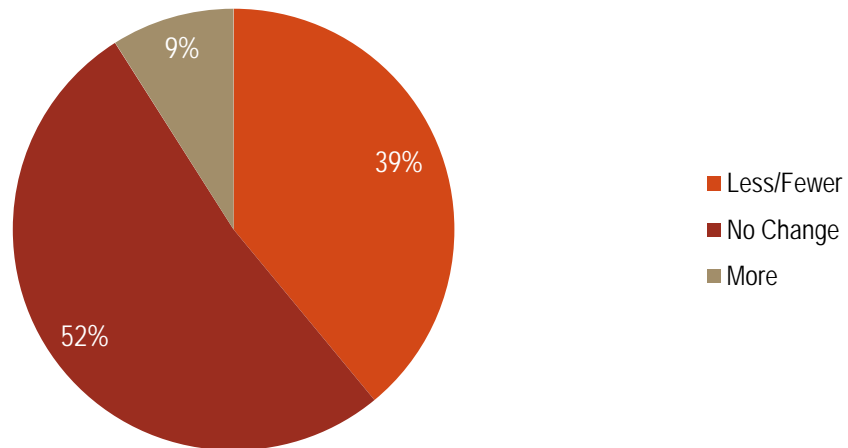
The number of trees protected

Number of Protected Trees



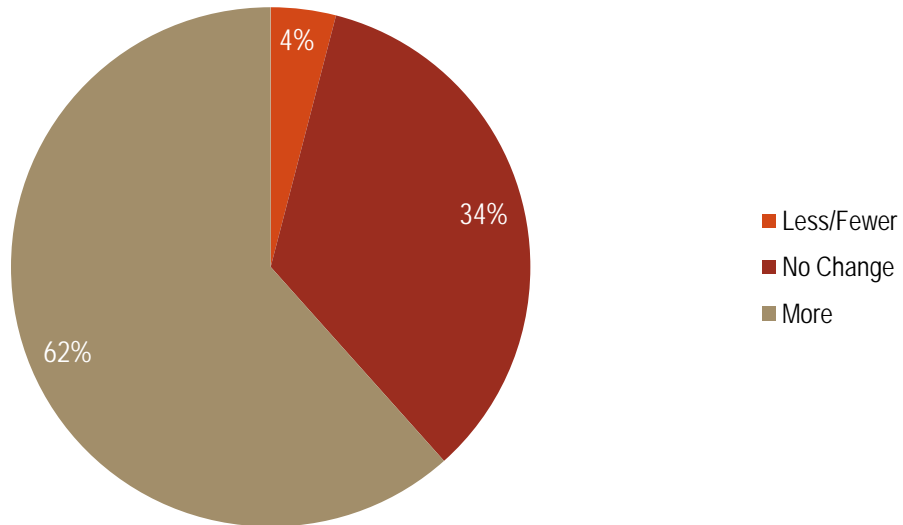
The amount of rural roadside advertising signs

Rural Roadside Advertising Signs



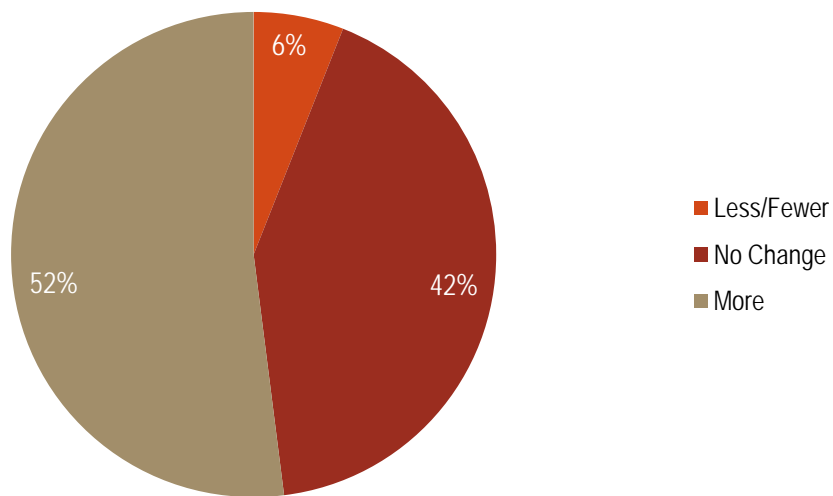
The level of protection of native vegetation and natural habitats

Protection of Native Vegetation & Natural Habitats



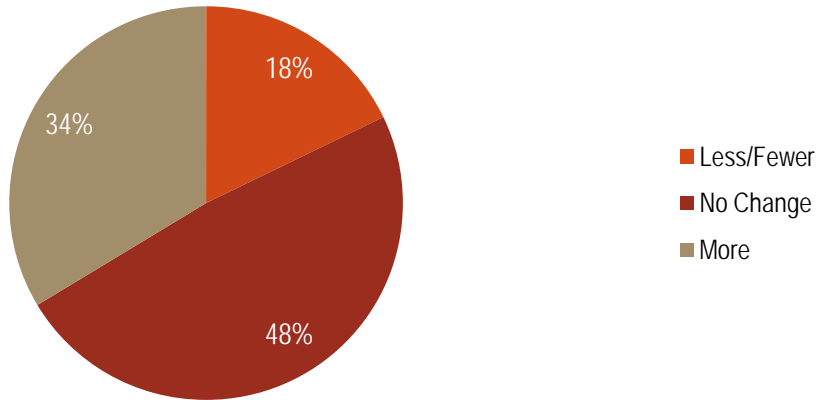
The level of protection for historic heritage features (such as historic buildings)

Protection of Historic Heritage Features



The level of protection given to sites of cultural significance (such as sacred sites)

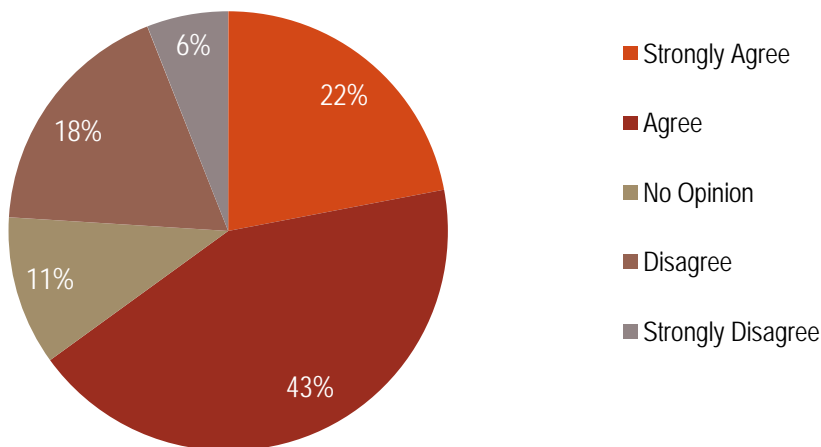
Protection of Sites of Cultural Significance



For the following six questions, respondents were given the choice of answering Strongly Agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree)

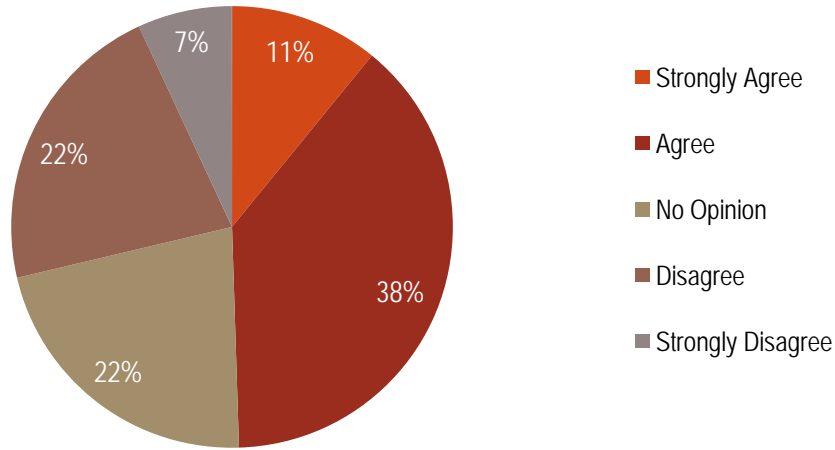
6. **Greater priority should be given to protecting the environment over land use and development, even if this may lead to increased user or development costs**

Question 6



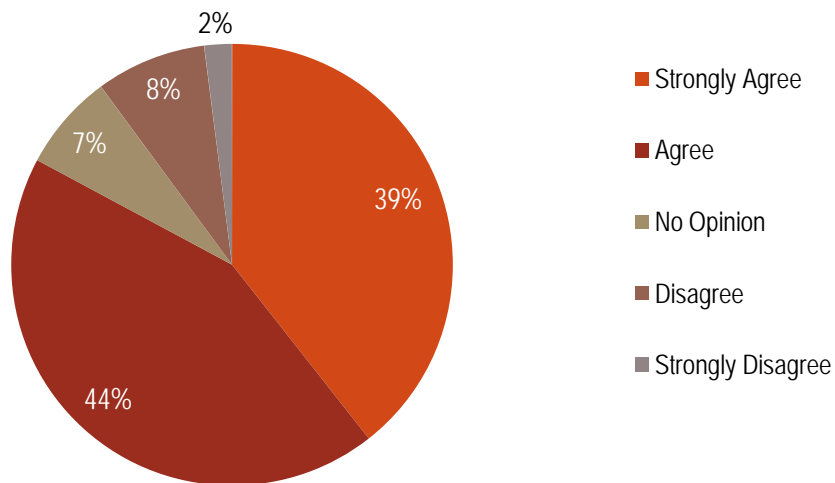
7. The District Plan should encourage people to run businesses from their homes

Question 7



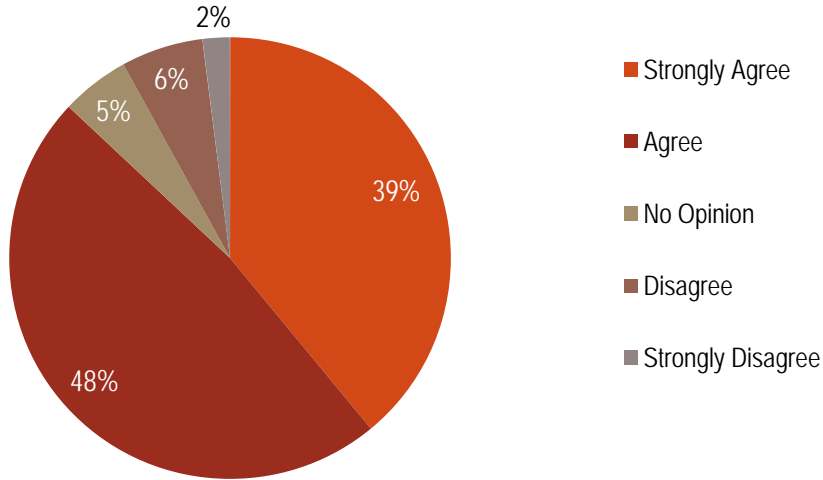
8. The District Plan should promote walkways and cycleways to encourage fewer car trips

Question 8



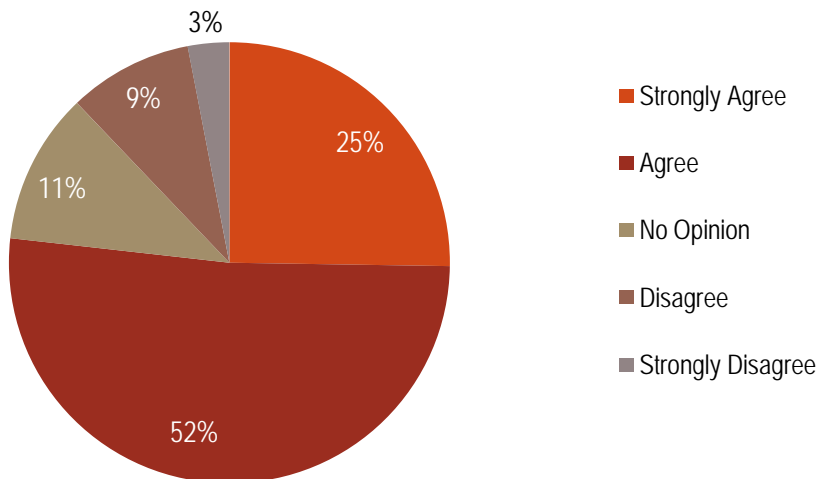
9. Incentives should be offered to encourage landowners to establish or protect areas of native trees and plants and natural habitats on their land

Question 9



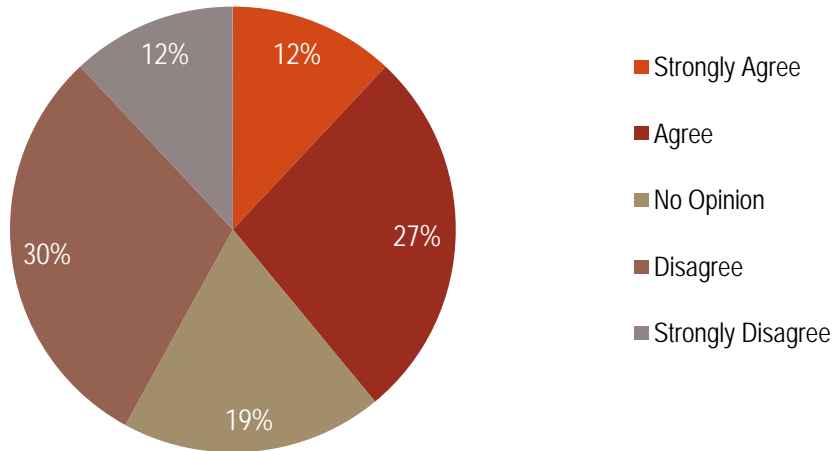
10. Incentives should be offered to encourage landowners to protect historic heritage features or structures on their land

Question 10



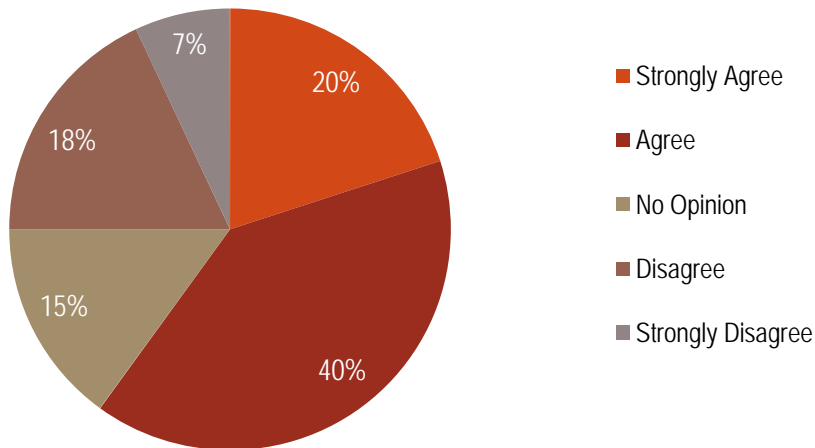
11. There should be greater controls over the design, materials and colour of buildings in rural areas with strong natural rural character

Question 11



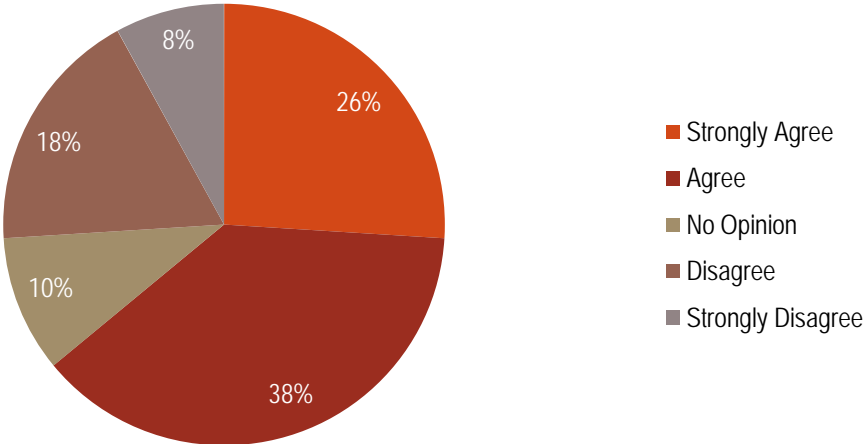
12. There should be greater controls over the design, materials and colour of buildings in areas with buildings of historic character such as Main Street, Foxton or Plimmer Terrace, Shannon.

Question 12



Foxton Respondents Only

Question 12 - Foxton



Shannon Respondents Only

Question 12 - Shannon

