Written submission from Hillhouse Estates Ltd

Sporting Rates - We have concerns about the practicalities of the implementation of the re-introduction of sporting rates on shooting & deer forests. Any basis suggested for the valuation would need careful consideration before being implemented, it is likely that the additional administration required in raising the rates could be considerable and not cost effective. We feel that a full social and economic study should have been completed prior to the recommendation of the re-introduction of the rates in order to gain a better understanding of the impact of the reintroduction. The removal of the exemption of the rates, will result in an increase of running costs of land and will impact on over all operational costs which if significant could be detrimental to the long term employment of current employees and as a result have an overall negative impact on local communities if jobs are no longer available in the community. If rates are reintroduced then a small business relief system must be available.

Sustainable Development - We have concerns about how this will work in practice and that there may be a lack of land management expertise within the Land Commission to adequately review requests from communities. An example of one of our concerns is that we would like clarity that woodland which we actively manage and support public access to will not be at risk from the intervention powers.

Community Engagement - Many estates already engage with their local communities however land managers would seek that a sensible balance is met with regard to what level of land management activities require community engagement. We are actively involved with our local communities and engage with various sections of the community and in particular support the community with donations and fund-raising of various projects and activities.