

Report

Summarised Feedback from Landowners Consultation on the 29th January 2009

Prepared for Upper Hutt City Council (Client)

By Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd (Beca)

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1 Maymorn Structure Plan

1.1 Introduction

The Maymorn area was highlighted as a potential growth area for future development in the Upper Hutt Urban Growth Strategy (2007) and is currently the subject of a Structure Plan process. The landowners in the Structure Plan study area were invited to attend an evening consultation event which was held on Thursday 29th of January 2009 between 6pm and 8pm in Upper Hutt. The landowners were informed of the Structure Plan process and initial investigative work with a presentation by the structure planning team (Beca and UHCC). Following this, the landowners were split into facilitated discussion groups and were provided with feedback forms for completion. The issues and perspectives discussed were recorded for further consideration.

Invitation letters were sent to landowners within the study area. Approximately 50 people attended the consultation event including landowners and some professional advisors. The consultation produced 37 feedback forms from participants with various opinions. Thirty two feedback forms were received from addresses within the study area, three provided no address, two provided a PO Box only address, and two were from the Upper Hutt City area. Two forms were from the Plateau Road area and four forms from within the study area were from the same household. Therefore, 28 properties from the Mangaroa/Maymorn area are represented in this sample.

1.2 Summary of Landowners' group discussions

The following key themes or opinions were discussed during the group discussions:

- The need for evidence of population growth and lack of alternative locations for development;
- The need to preserve the rural environment and character of the Mangaroa valley;
- Concerns about the potential provision of affordable housing in the area and questions about what affordable housing means. Suggestion that other locations (Wallaceville, city centre) are better suited for affordable housing;
- The need to retain recreational opportunities in the area (horse riding, cycling, walking);
- Concerns about the impacts of intensification (traffic, noise, air quality);
- The need to upgrade Parkes Line Road and other infrastructure;
- Concerns about housing densities and the location of what is perceived as 'high density' (400 sqm lots) within the area;
- The capacity of the rail service to accommodate any increase in patronage / need to upgrade station facilities including replacing the burnt shelter;
- The possibility to develop the northern end of the valley, along Maymorn Road and Gabites hills, and stop intensification at MacLaren Street; and
- The potential staging of development to allow incremental change and/or the potential to postpone rezoning of some areas until development has taken place and additional areas are required.

1.3 Summary of Landowners Feedback Forms

The following is a summary of comments for each question of the feedback form.

1.3.1 What are the values of the area that you want to see protected?

The respondents felt that they wanted to protect their rural setting and country lifestyle. They wanted to enjoy the rural amenity with the ability to ride horses and raise livestock. They considered that the lifestyle within the Mangaroa Valley is quiet and they feel a part of a secluded community, yet only a short drive to Upper Hutt City. Some wanted to maintain the diversity of land-uses and sense of community.

1.3.2 What are the issues that you see with developing the Maymorn Area?

The participants held the opinion that it would change the rural environment, and while most considered that there were more appropriate places for high density living, there were some that believed it to be an obvious development. Some considered that it would be a satellite town and create traffic congestion to gain access to the services in Upper Hutt. This would lead to the requirement to upgrade local roads, and the one way bridge on Mangaroa Hill Road. The funding of infrastructure and the perceived pollution from the new residents were also described. Some were concerned that the development would simply creep further down the Mangaroa Valley, and even questioned the rationale of building on flat land.

1.3.3 What are your initial comments in relation to the three scenarios put forward for the Maymorn Area?

Many of the participants believed that any proposed development was inappropriate for the Maymorn area. They questioned the rationale for the development and the densities proposed, while others cited other areas within Upper Hutt that they perceived were more appropriate for development. A minority noted that if the development was required, then it's a good idea to have a plan. The scenario that focused on the Maymorn Railway Station was said by some to be obvious, but another respondent thought that there was too much emphasis placed on the use of the station in this option.

1.3.4 Do you have a preferred scenario?

There was some division at the preferred scenario, with many offering their own suggestions about locations and dwelling density. The majority signalled Scenario 1 as their preferred option and others offered variations of density for the land north of the railway line. A few believed that scenario 2 would be more cost effective, and scenario 3 was a more long sighted development that incorporated development south of MacLaren Street. Many respondents preferred not to select any of the scenarios and indicated that they preferred to maintain the status quo.

1.3.5 Do you consider there are problems with any of the proposed scenarios? What do you consider these problems to be?

Participants provided various responses to this question with many constructive suggestions. They considered that the projected increase in the Mangaroa Valley population would create a community which did not match the lifestyle of current residents. They considered that re-zoning would be difficult if landowners refuse to subdivide. They insisted that the development should consider the rural character of the Mangaroa Valley. A few considered that the logical progression from scenario 1 through to scenario 3 would limit the effects of development for as long as practical. Some noted that the Mangaroa Valley flooding issues would be exasperated by the projected increase in population and that stormwater run-offs would need to be managed effectively.

1.3.6 Are there any other comments in relation to the Structure Plan you wish to make?

The participants expressed the view that the Mangaroa Valley is an inappropriate location for high density living, and there are other areas in the Upper Hutt area that would be more suitable. Residents noted the agricultural capacity of the Mangaroa Valley and wished to delay any potential development as long as possible. Some perceived that progress was inevitable, but should be limited by minimum subdivision size. Participants wanted to be kept informed on any progress and suggested consulting people within the Te Marua area.

1.3.7 How useful was the presentation and subsequent discussion to your understanding of the Structure Plan?

Most people found the presentation very useful or preferred not to comment.

1.3.8 Please rate the pace of the presentation

Most people found the pace of the presentation just right or preferred not to comment.

1.3.9 Please rate the length of the event

Most people found the length of the presentation just right or preferred not to comment.

1.3.10 Are there any other comments in relation to the Structure Plan presentation you wish to make?

Participants considered that development is more appropriate elsewhere in Upper Hutt. They believed that high density living should be accommodated in Upper Hutt City, potentially within the CBD and retain the Mangaroa Valley for lifestyle properties. Others noted that opening the Cruickshank Tunnel for cyclists and pedestrians would be a great resource for the Mangaroa Valley. Lastly, one mentioned that circulating the reports online enables community participation.

1.4 Conclusion

Some 28 properties within the Mangaroa Valley were represented at the landowners' consultation event and provided comments on a feedback form. Comments were also recorded during the group discussions. Both sets of comments are summarised in this document.

A number of participants consider that the potential increase in population and decrease in subdivision size are inappropriate for the Maymorn area and Mangaroa Valley. Some participants believe that there are more suitable places within Upper Hutt city for urbanisation and intensification. Many wish to maintain their rural existence and country lifestyle.

A minority expressed the view that development in the Maymorn area is a logical choice for Upper Hutt in the long term. These participants consider that development north of the railway line would be appropriate in the short term with development moving down the Mangaroa Valley over time.

Generally, participants were not aware of the content and recommendations of the Upper Hutt Urban Growth Strategy (2007) and requested evidence of housing need and of the rationale for development in the Maymorn area.

2 Appendix 1

2.1 Landowners Feedback Forms

This section provides a detailed account of the comments received on the feedback forms.

2.1.1 What are the values of the area that you want to see protected?

- The rural outlook
- Low density
- To maintain the existing structure
- Historic sites
- Rural environment, wooded fertile soils > Particularly Mangaroa end
- Horse and animal grazing
- Recreational > Horse riding, paragliding, cycling, jogging
- To keep the rural atmosphere
- Retain its rural beauty (2)
- A wonderful, truly rural area, close to all amenities > something that should be valued as it is now becoming nearly impossible to find similar locations
- Rural environment/ rural community
- The great spacious living and country lifestyle
- The current low density zoning
- Lifestyle
- Peace and quite
- Natural resources and beauty
- Community
- Diversity
- Service levels in a global sense
- Open space, no subdivision under 5,000m² (note: The current zoning allows for subdivisions of 4,000 m² across the valley floor and 1,000 m² in the rural lifestyle area)
- Lifestyle blocks and the rural nature and limitation of urban development for as long as possible
- Agricultural use, there is very little good arable land left in the Wellington Region.
- Respect natural features/key landscape elements – hill backdrop, streams
- Being able to hear and see rural at night
- Lack of light pollution to enjoy the night sky
- Riding a horse on quiet roads
- Getting a seat on the train to the Wairarapa
- Rural amenity
- Rural school
- Rural hillscapes should be maintained whether they are pastoral, scrub or bush.
- Maintain semi rural nature of valley flood with a range of lifestyle properties from 1-4 ha
- The feeling of living in a small secluded town in the country side but only minutes from the city centre
- Living surrounded by farm animals
- Sharing the roads with horse riders

- Current policy of “lifestyle” blocks makes an interesting mix of land use
- Abundant native wildlife
- Availability of land for 10 acre lifestyle blocks within commuting distance of Wellington CBD
- Conservation of the endangered falcon which nests on Mt Climie
- Trout in the streams and rivers

2.1.2 What are the issues that you see with developing the Maymorn Area?

- There may be better places within the city for high density, low cost housing
- It's an obvious development
- Ruining our rural environment which we prefer to keep as is
- This development breaches our rights – we all own this land
- The properties proposed for re-zoning are privately owned and often jealously guarded
- Too many people
- The one way bridge (2)
- Mangaroa Hill Road/Fergusson Drive/ State Highway 2 is lethal now
- Ruining a wonderful area of Upper Hutt
- The nightmare of re-assessing infrastructure and making sure that sensible ideas are given full consideration
- It will spoil the Valley, noise, traffic, pollution> It destroys the very reason we moved here
- Loss of privacy and lifestyle
- Rezoning of existing built property
- Pollution
- Over population(2)
- Ruin community and sense of place
- The ‘greenfields’ state of mind
- A house of cards built on sand
- Transparency
- Satellite Town not connected to Upper Hutt
- Too much value placed on train service, won't be enough patronage to be other than an extension of Wairarapa Line
- Water/Sewage infrastructure will still require large investment
- Traffic (2)
- The first step in turning the valley into another Stokes Valley type development
- Why build homes on flat land?
- Loss of attractive open rural character
- Overload on already busy narrow winding roads
- Roading upgrades needed
- Housing too far from shops/schools/ city facilities
- I don't want to live in suburbia
- Loss of rural ambiance
- The development would simply creep further into Mangaroa, extending services as it goes (2)
- Light pollution
- Noise pollution

- Water and energy insecurity
- Lack of acknowledgement of peak oil, water, food, beyond the human scale, vehicles, houses
- Staging and provision of infrastructure
- Funding of infrastructure
- Destroy native wildlife
- Loss of rural amenity
- Low cost housing will encourage population by Upper Hutt undesirable elements thereby destroying the investment and quality of life for some of the residents of Mangaroa

2.1.3 What are your initial comments in relation to the three scenarios put forward for the Maymorn Area?

- If they are needed, is better to have a plan. More thought required on infrastructure and space
- The station development is obvious
- The only reason we came there was the tranquillity of the place
- I will not be selling or dividing any of my land
- It's a bloody dreadful idea. We have spent 20 years working hard to get here – only to have the town come to us. We moved here to get away from the town
- Would like to see scenario D > Do nothing
- It's a great way to increase revenue for the council
- None are acceptable
- Density is far too high
- They are rubbish. These scenarios are student level exercises with no attempt to address social concerns
- Not viable. 250m² high density and 500m² is ridiculous in a rural environment
- Don't like any of them
- With the infrastructure already in place for scenarios 1 and 2 they are a 'cheap option' for the council
- Insanity, maintain the status quo
- Should not become a 'cash cow' for the Council
- Don't underestimate the sentiment of rural landowners
- The Urban Growth Strategy to be redone to reflect the reality of climate change and peak oil and the stage we have reached with this civilization
- Too much emphasis places on having the existing Maymorn Railway Station at the centre of the proposed development
- How will new 'suburbia' neighbours like living with my chickens/pigs/dogs
- The high density core not needed for more than 20 years, or more like 30, 40, if ever
- Although (1) uses land largely undeveloped the possible 2158 dwellings seems far too many
- Does Upper Hutt Really need to expand?
- Increase in already built up areas

2.1.4 Do you have a Preferred scenario?

- Low density

- Either MacLaren Street or Maymorn Station
- Scenario One (4)
- I have no objection to making smaller lifestyle lots on the western side of the rail line - Stick with 4 hectares lots for the rest of the valley
- Scenario D
- Leave the valley as it is
- Elsewhere (2)
- Do nothing at this time, there are other options in Upper Hutt
- Start again
- Provide for more infill development in Upper Hutt City
- Allow subdivision down to 1 hectare over time for the wider Mangaroa Valley – this will allow progressive increase in dwellings but retain rural environment
- Developed Upper Hutts unused hill areas before urbanising the Mangaroa Valley
- Scenario 1, to contain the structured and efficient roll-out of urbanisation
- Start at the north-eastern end of the valley so it can contain the effects on the rest of the valley, and subsequent stages can be extended as and when demand arises
- Proximity of scenario 1 to rail station and edge of existing urban development and services also positive considerations. Also positive to provide a commercial hut around the vicinity of public transport hub
- Probably scenario 2, easier to develop flatter land intensively, though 1,344 dwellings seems excessive for a relatively small area
- Develop area north of railway line as either lifestyle(1ha) or ½ ha blocks but include Rural Hill Zone in this area to the NE above Maymorn Road and North of Railway line as this is suitable for lifestyle blocks too
- Scenario 3 as it is a more long sighted development plan, also takes into account existing high density development in Maclaren St
- Only developing up to Maymorn Station along Maymorn Road, continue the same density from the properties at the start of Maymorn Road

2.1.5 Do you consider there are problems with any of the proposed scenarios? What do you consider these problems to be?

- No room
- No real problem
- People not selling, so retaining a farming lifestyle in your town site
- It will destroy one of the best parts of our city
- Other areas Wallaceville Research, Pinehaven area, Cruickshank area, Gillespies Road 400 acres and 2 other farms
- Re-zoning is a major issue
- Size of plots, triple Valley population
- High density housing will ruin the lifestyle
- I spent a lot of time responding to The Lanes proposal and now you ask me to help you again. What funding is available to assist this?
- Housing density ridiculous, projected demand dubious
- The destruction of the Valley (2)
- The existence of infrastructure: i.e. water, sewage and railway are drivers for this proposal

- What weighting was given to the rural character of the valley?
- Scenarios 2 and 3, since they are located further down the valley growth extending out from these nodes will have wider effects on the valley compared to the compact settlement of Scenario 1
- Earthquakes, floods, peak oil, carbon footprint, hydrology, carrying capacity, climate change, precautionary principle, ecological footprint, food, energy and water security for all of UHC, economic reality
- Scenario 1 is an obvious short term plan with Scenario 2 as a longer plan. Given the proposed development could be up to 50 years out, scenario 3 will be the logical final outcome
- How will horse riders ride along our roads when they are choked with cars?
- Cyclists will not be interested in scenic rides in our end of the valley
- Current residents will oppose rezoning to residential at this stage
- May need to go through a 'lifestyle' stage (1ha) for say 10-15 years then rezone to residential
- Crowded dwelling in an area with flood potential add to run off

2.1.6 Are there any other comments in relation to the Structure Plan you wish to make?

- Keep the public informed on its progress
- Implement Scenario One as soon as possible
- Start looking at area on the western side of the Valley (hills above Totara Part for example) which does not currently have residential dwellings on it. Maymorn is obviously being considered because of the low cost of upgrading infrastructure
- Consult the Te Marua area
- Flat land is becoming very scarce, Councils need to find extra land, but this is a unique area in the Wellington area. We objected to the 'lanes' proposed subdivision and the judgement was based partially on the uniqueness of Mangaroa
- Subdivide within Upper Hutt, instead of 800m² plots to 370m²
- Details of who is making the profit
- There appears to be no option to do nothing
- To see a detailed review of what initiated this and how it got this far down the track with no input
- There is no social input to this plan
- Council staff seems to be thinking the concept is a done deal, just a matter of choosing an option
- 'Progress' is inevitable but this is the best option for Upper Hutt
- I like the idea of using Cruickshank tunnel as an attractive route to Upper Hutt for bikes and the idea of route and open space along the river
- Develop all present urban residential zone first with a large area of that being 'affordable housing'
- Feelings about 'rural' zoning after the 'lanes' proposal still fresh in many minds. Best to let the development evolve naturally with demand by first developing areas north of railway line
- The residents have shown their opposition to developments of this kind following the lanes project. Why is the council proposing a similar destructive plan?
- If the proposed Structure Plan is to maintain the rural values of the Mangaroa Valley, it should limit subdivision size down to 1 ha and develop smaller size sections elsewhere in the district
- Fig 3 shows an ex Army Shed in Mangaroa Hill Road as historic feature "defence hanger". This shed has been partially demolished and there was a covenant at the point of sale that it was to be completely dismantled within 12 months (1994)

- Section 2.4 states that none of the soils are in the highest two categories of quality land yet it is mostly ex dairy land. Our soil test states “ Heretaunga Andy Loam with a high potential for food production including dairy and market gardening. Lime and sulphur are needed but all other nutrients are at good levels”
- When Flux Farm was a part of the Tui Dairy Company collection area (including Wairarapa, Southern Hawkes Bay and parts of the Manawatu), it produced the highest kg/ha butter fat milk content from any farm. Our production of 30 head of cattle plus 10 miniature horse plus bay large plus hay production off 6 ha is testament to its productivity
- The necessity of the whole thing in the first place. There is not enough convincing information that Upper Hutt needs it, Ag Research, and still so many sections unsold in newly developed area, early projections of growth not eventuating
- Encourage increase in number of people per existing dwellings
- Look at behind central government department agencies (defence housing, education, etc) and their responsibilities
- Accommodation in the CBD
- Backdating Strategy 2020, 2030, 2050 etc
- Important to define at the outset the type of environment/urban form/ rural environment/lifestyle etc as it determines the type of environment and amenity that will develop, infrastructure requirements, housing density/mix
- Scenario 1 has a more contained effect on the wider valley in particular if subsequent stages take many years to eventuate
- Protection of the skyline is a myth, Mt Marua has already destroyed this
- Why pay lip-service to the preservation of historic features, e.g old railway, oak trees, steam trains, if there is no desire to protect the historical use of the valley for agricultural purposes
- Since 2001, the Mangaroa community has fought vigorously to secure their treasured Valley, against zoning changes. They worked with Council to support their appropriate decision in respect to Norwards lodge’s request to subdivide below 10 acres, gained council support to reject the Lanes subdivision proposal and apposed Council’s decision to approve subdivision of land owned by Maymorn Contractors Limited
- Council is taking an easy way-out approach to developing Upper Hutt by tapping into existing utilities paid for by the NZ Defence Force and NZ Rail

2.1.7 How useful was the presentation and subsequent discussion to your understanding of the Structure Plan?

- Very Useful – 14
- Fairly Useful – 7
- Not at all Useful – 1
- No Comment - 12

2.1.8 Please rate the pace of the presentation

- Just Right – 20
- Too Fast – 1
- Too Slow – 1
- No Comment - 12

2.1.9 Please rate the length of the event

- Just Right – 15
- Too Long – 2

- Too Short – 4
- No Comment - 13

2.1.10 Are there any other comments in relation to the Structure Plan presentation you wish to make?

- This is a pipe dream and a waste of ratepayers money
- This will ruin the sense of place and character of this area. As recent property owners in the area, from the UK, we will be devastated if this happens. We moved to New Zealand to get away from development such as this
- You will stop any UK immigrants moving to Maymorn
- Can you release a mailing list so we can all stay in touch
- Is there council funding for us to fight this?
- Please look elsewhere for further development. Perhaps extending Mt Marua, Wallaceville Research (3)
- I was not aware of the meeting. So did not attend. However was lent a copy of the Maymorn Structure Plan
- Maymorn can not be considered independently from other possible 'greenfields' areas in Upper Hutt. The shortfall in housing should be split, with the high and medium density housing placed in more suitable area, closer to CBD, transport, facilities, and Maymorn developed as rural lifestyle
- Cycleway to connect to CBD is an excellent idea
- Opportunities for affordable housing missed in such areas as Brentwood, development near to Timberlea – can council influence future developments to ensure affordable housing provided in current urban area, or is there enough 'secondhand' housing which will become cheaper affordable housing over time as these move to new houses?
- Less emphasis and discussion should have been on the time frame which is very much crystal ball gazing. More emphasis should have been placed on the Mangaroa Valley satisfying future lifestyle development with other areas, closer to the CBD targeted for suburban 400-800 m² sections
- More information needed on the statistics backing up the need for a "greenfields" development
- Wider community consultation please
- Providing reports such as the 'Maymorn Structure Plan Site Analysis and Capacity Study' on the Council's website enables informed community participation
- Having a few questions answered would have helped, "how many people and dwellings are living in the Mangaroa/Maymorn area now?"