



AgResearch Wallaceville Site

The 66-hectare site at Wallaceville offers a unique opportunity to create a model for sustainable, integrated urban living – a 'smart village' worthy of association with a research centre of international standing.

Some 4 hectares of land will be retained for the new National Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Disease. Four related government and crown research agencies will be based here, creating a scientific heart for the development of the balance of the site.

The balance of the site, approximately 62 hectares of land, will be made available for sale and development. This land will need to be re-zoned in order for its development potential to be realised.

Vision for a 'Smart Village'

AgResearch has identified the following development vision for Wallaceville:

- Wallaceville as an innovative, leading edge, 'smart' Village within Upper Hutt City
- Sustainable, 'low impact' development with efficient use of resources
- Comprehensive design and implementation of subdivision and land use.
- Development to complement the landscape and character of Wallaceville.

Upper Hutt City Council recognises that this large site represents a regionally significant development opportunity. It supports the AgResearch vision, and especially wants to ensure that more locally based employment opportunities are created and that best practice concepts in sustainable management and urban design are followed.

Site Features

The balance of the site offers a number of features which lends itself to becoming a model of sustainable, integrated urban development:

- A strong brand – Wallaceville is known for its agricultural research work around the world
- 62 hectares of flat land
- Convenient location within 1km of Upper Hutt city centre and 35 minutes by road to central Wellington.
- Excellent public transport access, including the Hutt Valley rail commuter service
- Urban services
- Alternative road access options
- Adaptable buildings forming part of the Ward Street campus, including a listed historic building
- Substantial areas of undeveloped farmland
- An important forest remnant, known as Grants Bush
- Mature native and exotic vegetation, including totara and beech trees
- The 'runoff' strip from the Trentham Racecourse cuts a 500-metre line diagonally through the farmland.

Development Potential

A range of opportunities potentially exist for the site, including:

- Opportunity to create a new 'hi-tech' business park, redeveloping the existing campus area along Ward Street. Such a business park would be complementary to the adjoining National Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Diseases and would build on the 'Wallaceville' brand. State of the art communication technologies would be integral to the development. Offices, visitor accommodation and conference facilities would be permitted as part of this concept.
- Opportunity to create a medium to high density comprehensive residential development incorporating sustainable environmental design principles such as energy efficiency, on-site water conservation measures and other 'soft' measures for stormwater management. About 500 new dwellings could be created, but the final yield will depend on the total area made available for housing, management of stormwater, and overall integration and design of the development to create a high standard of living environment.
- Opportunity for very low density residential development on the tree clad hills to the south of Alexander Road, with designated house sites designed to minimise the need for tree clearance and earthworks.
- Opportunity to create an attractive open space network, providing for walking and cycle access within and beyond the site, protecting Grants Bush and as many of the individual specimen trees as possible.
- Opportunity to secure a regionally significant amount of flat, serviced land adjoining the Trentham Racecourse and Ministry of Defence land, and opposite Alexander Park, for future development of employment related activities such as warehousing and light industry.

Development Constraints

While there are a number of opportunities for development of this large site, there are some factors which must be carefully managed. These include:

- Effective stormwater management
- Remediation of any contaminated soils
- Protection of any buildings and structures of historic significance
- Protection of significant trees and natural areas
- Suitable road links with State Highway 2
- Reverse sensitivity issues, especially between housing, employment, the National Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Disease, the Racecourse and Defence land.

Preliminary 'Smart Village' Concept - 2005

The concept of a 'Smart Village' at Wallaceville was first introduced to the public at the Upper Hutt City Expo in September 2005. The following opportunities were identified:

- Commercial – including offices, visitor accommodation and conference facilities
- Industrial park – warehousing and light industry
- Residential – variety of densities and types
- Open space network.

Structure Plan

Proposal

A structure plan process is an effective way of guiding future development and redevelopment of the balance of the campus and farm.

A structure plan maps out:

- The general pattern of development and land uses
- Open spaces
- Key walking/cycle links
- Key transportation links
- Key infrastructural services [water, wastewater, stormwater, power, gas, phones]
- Drainage catchment management [possibly a linked system of ponds, streams and overland flowpaths]
- Any other key features, such as the heritage buildings and trees warranting protection.

Where possible, the developer will be encouraged to adopt more innovative and sustainable methods of servicing the development. It is envisaged that a higher density of residential development will be possible because of the comprehensive nature of the development.

The plan on page 26 shows a general layout proposed by the Upper Hutt City Council for the various land uses only. This proposal as it stands does not have the support of the landowners, AgResearch, and discussions are continuing to identify a mutually agreeable solution.

As a whole this concept provides for an integrated, high quality development which would enable people to live in an attractive environment, with work opportunities, the central city, open spaces, schools and public transport all close at hand.

It also provides for a critical mass of land to be zoned for business development that would complement the National Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Disease, and additional land for future development of light industry opposite Alexander Park. Appropriate buffer zones between business areas and adjoining residential land and racecourse uses would be incorporated into the open space network. The development may be staged in order to manage the orderly release of land with appropriate urban services.

The existing designation will be retained for the National Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Disease.

From Proposal to Development

Council will introduce a comprehensive plan change to give effect to the development proposal as a high priority.

The plan change will cover a range of implementation techniques, including:

- Structure Plan
- Catchment Management Plan
- New land use zones
- Subdivision rules
- Development and performance standards
- Tree and heritage protection rules
- Design guide for higher density housing
- Open space management plan
- Removal of the 'contaminated site' status
- Removal of the Wallaceville Animal Research Centre designation from the 62 hectare balance of land.

Council is committed to working closely with the current or any future land owners and developers to facilitate the development of this site.