

South Pacific Tyres Site – Central City

South Pacific Tyres Site

South Pacific Tyres and its predecessor, Goodyear Tyres, have been part of the Upper Hutt economy for over 50 years, based at the large 22 hectare site at the end of Blenheim Street.

In mid 2006, the company announced a proposal to cease manufacturing on the site and the manufacturing plant has now closed. However, tyre distribution and marketing operations for the whole of New Zealand are to continue on the site.

As part of its responsibility in achieving the 'sustainable management of the physical resources' of the city, the Council must also look to the development opportunities presented as tyre manufacturing activities come to an end.

Proposed Vision for the 'South Pacific' Site

- The South Pacific Tyres site offers commercial development in an area which adjoins and is complimentary to the Upper Hutt City Centre.
- Development could include:
 - Big box retail development
 - Major indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities
 - Commuter/public parking
 - General commercial development
 - Light industry, warehousing and distribution activities.

Site Features

The South Pacific Tyres site is extremely well located in relation to the Upper Hutt City Centre and the Wellington – Wairarapa Railway.

Key features include:

- 22.3 hectares of land, of which approximately half is flat and the balance is hillside
- Only large flat site in the vicinity of the CBD, lending strategic importance to the site for both the city and the region
- Convenient location within 200 metres of the Upper Hutt city centre and 25 minutes by road to central Wellington
- Excellent public transport access, including the Hutt Valley rail commuter service
- Adjoining business industrial activities provide an existing core of employment activity and create few reverse sensitivity issues for new business activities
- Urban services
- Bore water
- Alternative road access options – Blenheim Street, Railway Avenue and Wallaceville Hill Road
- Adaptable large buildings
- Part of the flat land is undeveloped
- Potential for activities that need a lot of on-site parking
- Attractive, bush-clad hillside backdrop
- Excellent proximity to Council's leading recreational facilities – H²O Xstream, Maidstone Park and the Expressions Arts and Entertainment Centre.

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Development Potential

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

- Opportunity to create a new big box retail centre, redeveloping and extending the existing factory buildings. Such a development would be of sufficient size to attract a number of large format retail shops in close proximity to the city centre, offering products not currently available to local residents. The centre could be expected to attract a number of visitors in from the wider region, particularly given the proximity of the nearby recreational opportunities.
- Opportunity to develop new indoor and outdoor commercial recreational activities. The hillside link to Wallaceville Hill Road opens up a completely new set of recreational and commercial opportunities, such as a luge, artificial skiing slope or lookout café. These activities could, in time, be linked through to Maidstone Park.
- Opportunity to create additional commuter car parking on part of the site, especially important given the growth of commuters anticipated as the rail service is improved and fuel costs increase.

Although light industry, warehousing and distribution activities are permitted under the current Business Industrial zoning, better suited land is zoned elsewhere in the city for these activities.

Development Constraints

The site features some constraints to redevelopment which are capable of mitigation. These include:

- Remediation of any contaminated soils
- Protection of significant trees and natural areas
- Road links with State Highway 2, notably the double roundabout at Gibbons Street/Main Street/Fergusson Drive and the Blenheim Street rail crossing
- Residential housing interface along Railway Avenue
- Effective stormwater management
- Open space zoning of the hillside.

Proposed Changes to District Plan

In order to facilitate this type of development, Upper Hutt City Council proposes to introduce a combination of plan changes, as follows:

- Re-zone Business Industrial land within the proposed extension of the Upper Hutt CBD to Business CBD to clearly provide for large format retail activities
- Amend Business Industrial zoning provisions to remove the ability to establish large format retail activities elsewhere in the city
- Re-zone Open Space to enable commercial recreational activities whilst also protecting the amenity and ecological values of the hillside area.