

30 MARCH 2021, 7-9PM – ROTARY LOUNGE, UPPER HUTT LIBRARY

Introduction

Council Officers welcomed members and thanked them for attending considering the short time that had elapsed since the last meeting. An overview of the upcoming milestones and next steps for the plan change over the upcoming months was provided for members.

Exercise

The focus on the session would be to review the draft mapping extents for the rural area. The rural area had been split into 6 different localities, with maps provided of the draft zoning extents and the factors that had been an influence on those zoning extents (including flood hazard, highly productive soils and slope hazard, etc).

The new zones were those that had been discussed in detail during the last workshop, and are as follows:

- General Rural Zone
- Rural Production Zone
- Rural Lifestyle Zone
- Settlement Zone

The group was asked to review the draft zoning and provide comments in pairs, and then the group would gather at the end of the session to discuss their comments. Members used the notes from the previous meeting as an indication for density controls for each zone. For the Maymorn example, officers presented an example of what a development plan over the Gabites Farm site could look like, reflecting the direction of draft objectives and policies to require a development plan to be produced for the site.

Discussion

Akatarawa and Gillespies

- Members enquired as to the justification of the extent of the Settlement Zone through Akatarawa Valley, with some members suggesting it could go further than the draft mapping currently showed, also located within the valley floor.
- Officers explained that the mapping of highly productive soils was an influence on the zoning through the Akatarawa Valley. However, Officers also explained that this data is rather dated and is proposed to be updated through the upcoming National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL).
- Members also commented that the definition for production needs to be improved for clarity. Officers agreed, stating that it was their expectation an improved definition would be provided in the NPS-HPL.

- The ability of people to subdivide down to the minimum, and the fact that it was almost inevitable that land would be subdivided down to that minimum, was highlighted as something that needed careful consideration.
- Some members believed stronger controls on different land uses were required to get the right outcomes for the rural areas.
- Although there was discussion among members about the meaning of production and the protection of highly productive soils, other members mentioned that stewardship of the land and a non-commercial view of retaining production was also important.

Blue Mountains and Whitemans

- Members wanted to see more lifestyle zones through these areas. They noted that a number of areas that had been identified as productive were being used for productive purposes.
- Members questioned why some areas in other parts in rural areas had been categorised as Settlement Zone, whilst being in productive soil areas, while others had not. Officers stated that they had sought to adopt areas where growth opportunities had been identified, recognising that draft policy from the NPS-HPL protected growth areas, also cautioning that it had yet to be determined what the final NPS would state and could change the discretion that Council had.
- Officers explained that while the Blue Mountains locality had a good proximity to the urban area was good, accessibility was poor and the open expanse of the area meant that an increase in density could be highly visible and poorly accessed.
- Some members questioned where additional housing was going to be provided. Officers stated that the purpose of residential zone was to provide for accessible housing options.
- Members were generally agreeable about the draft zoning extents, and agreed with the rationale behind the zoning.

Maymorn wider area and development plan example

- Some members expressed full support for the zoning extents for Maymorn, including the development plan example for the Gabites Block. Those members also supported the extension of Settlement Zone to Maclaren Street.
 - o These members also wondered whether there were any other sites, other than the Gabites Farm, where development opportunities existed.
- Other members stated that the zoning extent seemed a little disjointed, with Maclaren Street standing out. They did not want to see Settlement Zoning around Maclaren Street, only having Lifestyle zone north of the street and Rural Production Zone south of the street.
 - o These members felt that Settlement Zone was best placed only along Maymorn Road, using Parkes Line Road as the demarcation for Settlement Zone to Rural Lifestyle Zone. They felt that this better eased the transition from the urban perimeter to rural production areas, whilst being better aligned with development plan outcomes over the Gabites Farm.
 - o They stated that having Settlement Zone along Parkes Line Road could have a suburban feel to it, reducing rural amenity.

Moonshine and Kaitoke

- Some Members commented that they believed that the Bulls Run Road area was currently underutilised and the Lifestyle zoning should extend further north.
- However, other members also mentioned that around that area there are a number of large farms operating, which is likely one of the few areas large farms can exist.
- Some members wondered if there were any other opportunities for rural-residential development in the valley. They stated that zoning extents should better seek to adopt logical graduations from higher to lower density rural zones, much like other rural zoning observed.
- Members expressed support for Settlement Zoning around Plateau Road and around Mangaroa.
- Members commented on the proposed zoning of Aston Norwood, and how the growth of that business would need to be considered due to the constraints associated with SH2. Members supported the Settlement Zone area further towards the ranges.

Officers asked if the members had any final comments on the proposed zoning. Some members commented that they believed there was not enough 'small lot' zoning throughout the district. Other members commented that they were less happy with the zoning around Te Marua and the protection of rural amenity in this area.

Members provided some further comments on the need to ensure suitable sustainability policies are in place, and that land use will be key, including the scales of production land uses and other rural land uses.

Members also commented on the conflict of interest between protecting highly productive soils and providing for house growth. Officers provided an overview of the National Policy Statement for Urban Development, and explained that the aim was to provide for housing growth by intensifying in the urban area, which addresses the potential conflict of interest.

Next Sessions

Officers explained how the feedback from this session would be used, and the next steps for PC50.