

PC50 Rural Focus Group Meeting Notes

15 OCT 2019, 7-9PM – RORARY LOUNGE, UPPER HUTT LIBRARY

Meeting introductions / welcome

First group task: where did you come from & where do you value most in Upper Hutt?

- Members came from a variety of areas across the District and all said that they valued where they lived the most in Upper Hutt

Second group task: pair up, introduce yourself and describe your motivations and expectations for the group

- Common themes amongst members were:
 - Subdivision standards need a degree of flexibility and simplicity, allowing for increased density in certain areas that reflect local use of land (i.e. lifestyle living, commercial production, hobby farming). Subdivision rules can be complex to understand, which can increase the cost of the consenting process.
 - Removal of the averaging rule has made rules more stringent, less flexible.
 - The 4ha limit of the Valley Floor zone is somewhat wedged between lifestyle living and production land. Conventional rural production is typically not possible on this size, however specialist horticultural activity is possible, e.g. commercial flower production
 - No more than 1 dwelling rule is an issue. There needs to be more options to cater for multigenerational living through relaxing the family flat rules, especially in the rural context.
 - Localism appears to be taken out of the rules following the amalgamation of burrow plans.
 - Additional guidance of how consenting/rural development can be achieved would be welcomed, with additional support from consenting staff.

The PC50 Project Plan was discussed by Council Officers (as per attached slides).

- Question raised about whether larger households with multigenerational living had been incorporated in the projection. Officers stated that this was based on StatsNZ projections and housing definitions. Acknowledged that Kāinga Ora has demand for one, two, and five bedroom dwellings, which can reflect multigenerational living households.
- Noted that there was a shortfall in housing based on current development patterns and current future growth areas. These were based on the Land Use Strategy growth areas and larger residential sites already zoned for development. National legislation means that Council will be required to give effect to development capacity results.
- Project Plan identified two key periods for public consultation next year. This would cover 'issues and options' and 'strategic objectives and policies' for rural and residential areas. The purpose of the focus groups is to ground truth external report findings and Councils analysis of overall issues and the best options to move forward to meet the needs of the community.

The Terms of Reference for the group was confirmed with members.

- Members agreed that the time and location of meetings. Members were happy to have the next meeting at the end of November, with the intention to have meetings every six weeks or so. Any reading material would be provided by officers at least two weeks prior to a meeting.
- Members are happy with continuing with the petrol fuel vouchers. Some members wanted their vouchers to be donated to a local charity. Council officers will be giving the vouchers to the Community Development team, so that they can donate to local organisations.
- Release forms were provided to members for their photographs. Members were told to let officers know if they were uncomfortable with names or likeness being used for PC50 correspondence.

The scope of the project was discussed, which seeks to capture the next 50 years in Upper Hutt. The vision is therefore what Upper Hutt should aspire to be in 2070. Questions put forward to help conceptualise this were:

- What positive essence of Upper Hutt stands out to you over the last year?
- How would Upper Hutt look in 2070 if it still maintained this essence?
- What have we got going for us now that we should hold on to?
- What should we work on first to create this 2070 future state?
 - It was acknowledged that 'essence' captures a feeling, value, and/or principle that embodies rural living in Upper Hutt.
 - The purpose of the exercise is to understand what members' value in Upper Hutt's rural environment, what elements of the district they would like to see continued into the future, what the district currently is doing well, and what the plan change should prioritise.
 - Officers would provide more information about the change that Upper Hutt has seen since the 1970s to help appreciate what 50 years of change looks like.

Things to think about for next meeting:

- What your vision is for Upper Hutt in 2070 (as above)
- Do you have anything to change or add to the Terms of Reference?