

PC50 Rural Focus Group – Meeting 2 Notes



26 NOV 2019, 7-9PM – RORARY LOUNGE, UPPER HUTT LIBRARY

Recap from previous session and setting of agenda. Overall feedback from members:

- RRA is keen to have some more information to spread throughout their network.
- Having an overall bird's eye view of UH will help articulate the integration of land use issues.
- There is a need to balance both human and environmental/biodiversity values.

Council officers presenting on changes that can be anticipated over a 50 year period by showing changes that have happened since 1970s. This also extended on current projections to indicate what demands may be possible over the next 50 years, to 2070. Response from members:

- Do we know where people worked then? How many were employed locally and how many are anticipated to be employed locally in 2070?
- This is a large time period and potentially requires a greater conversation.
- There is a need for smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms).

Council asked members about what positive essence they recently recalled within Upper Hutt. Responses received included:

- Electric train transport is available around the region. Gaps need to be addressed.
- Investment in and around the Upper Hutt Station has been very positive. Great to see investment in the CBD after years of no investment. How it looks now makes us proud of our District.
- Garden beds and green spaces across the District are very well kept and well presented.
- There is a strong sense of openness in Upper Hutt. Most rural areas are well away from neighbours (but not all). There is also a good proximity to wilderness.
- This is a good place for families to be. There is a strong relationship with neighbours and across the community.
- Quality infrastructure that is multi-functional and attractive positively contributes to the District, such as Haywards Interchange. Street signs are also well kept and legible.
- Upper Hutt is close enough to the city and other services. The District is fairly self-sufficient and is generally not isolated.
- Our water and waterways are of relatively good quality.

Council asked members to state what they would like Upper Hutt to look like in 2070. Responses received included:

- Sustainable city and sustainable community. Being resilient, reducing carbon and miles spent to service the District (i.e. shipping from overseas).

- Maintain current value and appearance.
- Having a community that is interconnected with nature.
- Gateways to Upper Hutt could be improved. North and South entry points are good, but entries like Whakitiki Street need to be improved.
- Need to consider how we attract new businesses? What sets us apart across the region? Need to play to our strengths (e.g. earthquake resilience, outdoor leisure, number of amenities, etc.).

An overview of the planning process was provided by Council officers, covering the influence of national policy and Councils' discretion through the RMA. This was followed by an overview of Land Use Strategy values that relate to the rural area that form part of the outcomes of Plan Change 50. Queries raised by members included:

- Policies to protect hills have not been very effective: development that faces urban areas is restricted, however houses are developed on the rural side (e.g. 'Shanty Town').
- People are not willing to pay for highly productive land – the land value of rural farms is too high.

Council officers discussed the Traffic Light Assessment that had been completed for the rural area to assess the suitability of areas to cater for growth. Feedback was sought from members as to whether what had been captured was accurate. The following feedback was received:

OVERALL:

- The Moonshine area is missing in the overview.
- It would be useful to have maps of areas to have a wide overview of constraints.
 - *Note: Officers intend to provide further mapping in the next meeting.*
- Council staff also noted that the assessment had not incorporated Geotechnical Hazard information which was being developed in tandem.

TE MARUA:

- This is a potential transition area between urban and rural environments. This could easily go down to 1ha lots.
- Growth Area [Gabilities Block] has attachment to the former 'Maymorn Waters' development.
- The area is a gateway to Pakuratahi Regional Forest.
- There are potential heritage sites in the area, like the former railway station.

MANGAROA VALLEY:

- Road networking summary: this could potentially be a Red Colour under the Traffic Light categorisation, as roading currently contains development in this area (requires further investment).
- There is potential for a village around the Wallaceville Church area to cater for community use, tourism, and residential multi-use. This could develop around the Council-owned land, which could be utilised as a community resource [Lot 8 DP3082].

WHITEMANS VALLEY:

- Road networking summary: this could potentially be a Red Colour under the Traffic Light categorisation as rural roading upgrade is a priority.
- Speed limits here should be reduced and enforced – especially if further development is enabled.

GILLIESPIES:

- Heritage features summary: Campbell's Sawmill is a potential heritage site.

AKATARAWA VALLEY:

- Natural Hazards summary: is this accurate? What about earthquake risks?
- Resource consent activity and sales data summary: There are some non-compliances up the valley that have not been captured.
- Versatile & High Class Soils summary: check whether there are no high class soils.
 - Officers noted that information to inform this had been done at a large scale, some time ago, and needed to go through more detailed assessment in order to be validated at a site-by-site level.
- Proximity to community facilities / open space summary: the area is riddled with [official] walking tracks, mainly though regional council land.
- Roading network summary: some members questioned whether the traffic summary was accurate.

KAITOKE VALLEY:

- Growth potential area (LUS) summary: there is land around the research farm that has capacity to develop into 4ha blocks.
- Proximity to community facilities / open space summary: this is the Southern entrance to the Tararua's. There is the Kaitoke YMCA Centre, Regional Park, and tourism – could create something here to leverage off this interest to attract more people.
- Heritage features summary: Remutaka incline is listed. Black Stump could also be included.
- Roading network: road security/assurance is important. Recent interactions with NZTA over a development proposal is testament to this.

MOONSHINE VALLEY AND MOONSHINE SETTLEMENT:

- Potential Growth Area summary: there is currently a disincentive to develop in this area due to paper roads – a rule relating to the treatment of paper roads could be introduced as removing this is an expensive and time-consuming exercise. There is still subdivision potential in this area.
- Heritage features summary: Trader's Sawmill is a potential heritage feature.
- Versatile & High Class Soils summary: check whether there are no high class soils. Site tests in other areas that had been classified as low had been found to have high class soils.

Council officers closed the meeting at 9pm, stating that the next meeting would likely be in February 2020. There may be an opportunity to meet together with the Residential Group.

Things to think about for next meeting:

- Are there any other points you wish to make about the localities and the summaries provided for in the Traffic Light Assessment?
- Regarding the Terms of Reference and your approval for images to be used, are you comfortable the membership of the Rural Focus Group being distributed?