

SUBMISSION 112

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Submission PC50 rural review From Rudolf Vos and Ans Potting

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We do not stand to gain commercial advantage from our submission.

In the PC50 rural review, the settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road that was indicated for well over 3 years in all previous draft versions of PC50 was removed without any engagement or communication with the community in the last 12 months. Council has unilaterally decided this without warning or consultation. That big change has come as a very big shock, leading to much confusion and frustration.

It is our understanding that removal of settlement zones from PC50 in the rural review was driven by the introduction of NPS/HPL regulation that seeks to protect productive land with LUC1, LUC2 and LUC3 classifications. However, those residing on the existing lifestyle blocks - classified as LUC3 - in the anticipated settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road cannot make a living through farming on these small lifestyle blocks. They work in the city and merely inhabit these lifestyle blocks without engaging in agricultural activities, often struggling to maintain the land. NPS/HPL is too broad a brush to apply to such a non-productive rural area. Productive use of the land on these small lifestyle blocks is not viable and this does not align with what NPS/HPL aims to protect. Development of the settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road would not diminish the productive capacity of the land and the region.

Considering the 2023 election results and the National Party's housing policies, it's clear they will remove the LUC3 category from the NPS/HPL legislation to enable a better balance in the need to do something about the housing crisis and the need for protection of productive land. National has stated in their housing policy that they will urgently seek to free up LUC3 land for housing development around cities and has stated that they will not accept lengthy council procedures delaying the re-zoning of LUC3 land.

Therefore, proceeding with the PC50 rural review in its current form, which includes the removal of long anticipated settlement zones, is counterproductive and leads to avoidable community frustration and unrest. To prevent this, the council should consider HPS/HPL exemptions and be proactive in anticipating the LUC3 removal from NPS/HPL. If the current NPS/HPL regulation, including the LUC3 classification, is the reason for the removal of settlement zones in the PC50 rural review, the removal of the LUC3 classification from the NPS/HPL eliminates that obstacle.

We are in support of the settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road that was proposed in all previous drafts of PC50 as we see a settlement zone like that as a win for more people to be able to live there and a win for the council towards their long term housing targets. The settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road is small, close to the city centre (6 km, 8 minute drive), already has only small lifestyle lots in place on which productive use of the land is not viable and has easy access on a safe road with clear vision at intersections/driveways. It is also close to amenities such as the church as a community hub, the Mangaroa Farms vege shop and the gun club. It would have a small impact on the pressure on roading and rural character, compared to some of the other proposed developments in PC50 rural review, such as the development of Berkett's farm.

We are seeking the following relief.

We ask the council to reinstate the settlement zone on Mangaroa valley road as anticipated in all previous drafts of PC50 through one of the following options.

- The council reinstates the removed settlement zone in PC50 rural review. This is our preferred option.
- The council postpones the PC50 rural review until the new government has removed LUC3 from the NPS/HPL legislation and then reinstates the removed settlement zone in PC50 rural review. The council can pro-actively prepare for this.
- The council communicates to the community that when the LUC3 removal from NPS/HPL has occurred, the PC50 rural review will be promptly re-evaluated or will be followed by an urgent plan change, initiated by the council with the aim to reinstate the removed settlement zone.

Reinstating the removed settlement zone aligns with what the Upper Hutt council had originally intended based on years of drafting PC50, including its long term housing targets. It also aligns with the new government's policies. And it is also fair to those who were led to believe they were residing in an area slated for re-zoning to settlement zones for well over three years.

We wish to be heard in support of our submission.

Please take into account that at the time of writing this submission, we are overseas, but we will return home on 28 November and will be available for hearings from then.

Regards,

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