

**SUBMISSION ON UPPER HUTT CITY DISTRICT PLAN  
PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 50 – RURAL REVIEW**

**To:** Upper Hutt City Council  
By email to: [planning@uhcc.govt.nz](mailto:planning@uhcc.govt.nz)

**Submission on:** Proposed Plan Change 50 – Rural Review

**Name of Submitter:** **Urban Edge Planning Ltd**  
**on behalf of Mangaroa Farms Ltd**

**Address for service:** Urban Edge Planning  
PO Box 39071  
Wellington Mail Centre  
Lower Hutt 5045

**Attention:** Corinna Tessendorf                      Karen Williams  
022 304 4187                                      027 303 8835  
[Corinna@uep.co.nz](mailto:Corinna@uep.co.nz)                              [Karen@uep.co.nz](mailto:Karen@uep.co.nz)

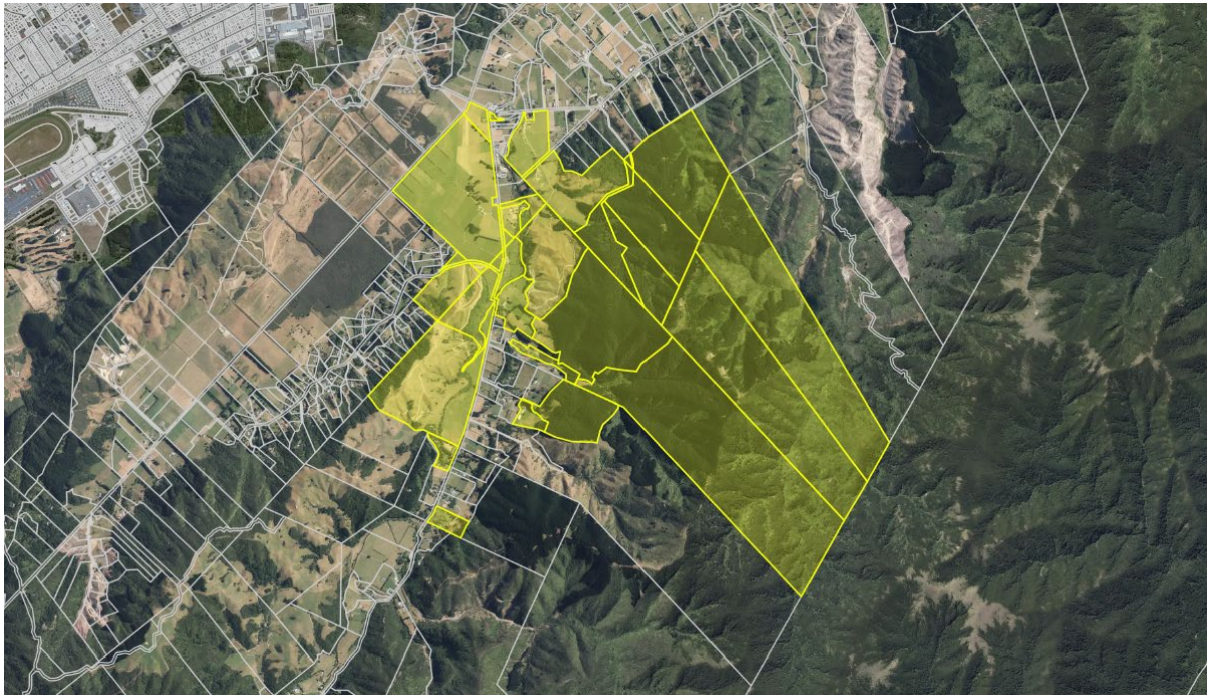
- This is a submission made on behalf of Mangaroa Farms Ltd concerning the Proposed Plan Change 50 – Rural Review as notified by Upper Hutt City Council on 04 October 2023.
- Mangaroa Farms Ltd **could not gain an advantage in trade competition** through this submission.
- Mangaroa Farms Ltd **would like to be heard** in support of this submission.
- Mangaroa Farms Ltd **would not consider presenting a joint case** with others that make a similar submission.
- The specific provision of the plan that this submission relates to is the zoning of sites owned by Mangaroa Farms Ltd.
- **Mangaroa Farms seeks the rezoning of sites and the introduction of a Precinct and Structure Plan to allow for ongoing farming and ancillary and supporting activities.**



## SITE CONTEXT

### The Area

This submission relates to the combined land holdings of Mangaroa Farms Ltd in Mangaroa and Whitemans Valley. The affected sites are mostly located along Mangaroa Valley Road, Whitemans Valley Road and Katherine Mansfield Drive and encompassing some 20 properties with an overall area of approximately 875ha.



*Figure 1: Mangaroa Farms Land Holdings as of 15 November 2023*

We note that at the time of writing this submission, further land acquisitions are being pursued and therefore the scope of this submission is more broad than the sites shown in the map above relates to all Mangaroa Farms Ltd land holdings in this area.

### Current Use and Development

The landholdings of Mangaroa Farms are currently used for a wide range of rural activities. These include but are not limited to:

- Organic crop growing (market gardens);
- Regenerative grazing (cattle, sheep and chicken);
- Farm shop;
- Volunteer days and workshops;
- Farm open days;
- Existing café that provides catering for internal seminars and events;



- Nursery to grow seedlings for restoration planting;
- Restoration and native forest planting to replace existing pine and plantation forests;
- River conservation and riparian planting projects;
- Rural residential / lifestyle blocks; and
- Plantation forestry.

Mangaroa Farms is the only working farm in the area that operates at a scale that is able to make a meaningful contribution to food production and supply for the local and wider community. Mangaroa Farms are dedicated to continue and increase the productive use of their land holdings and are striving to be a community food hub as well as a resilience education centre. It is Mangaroa Farms ambition to become a living laboratory for the transitioning of traditional dairy farming and pine forestry into regenerative agriculture and native forests. Any additional development Mangaroa Farms envisage in the longer term, like the establishment of limited additional houses, is intended to enable the ongoing use of the majority of the land as productive land, open space and recreation.

Mangaroa Farms is a registered nonprofit company.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### Operative District Plan

Under the Operative District Plan (ODP) the affected properties are zoned as:

- General Rural Zone;
- Rural Production Zone; and
- Rural Lifestyle Zone.

The ODP identifies rivers and streams running through the properties as well as a protected ridgeline.

Under the operative provisions individual properties are subject to the following Natural Hazards overlays:

- Mangaroa Erosion Hazard Area;
- Mangaroa River Corridor;
- Mangaroa Overflow Path; and
- Mangaroa Ponding Area.

Some properties are adjacent to but not directly affected by existing Designation UHC51 - Recreation and Local Purpose (Esplanade) along Plateau Road / Maymorn Road / Parkes Line Road / Mangaroo Hill Road / Whitemans Valley Road (Mangaroo River Esplanade Reserve).

The properties are not affected by the Southern Hills Visual, Landscape or Ecological overlays and are not subject to any other Precincts. They do not contain any identified Heritage Features, Notable Trees or Urban Tree Groups.

### **Proposed Plan Change 50 – Rural Review (2023)**

Under Proposed Plan Change 50 (PC50) the following zonings are proposed:

- General Rural;
- Rural Production; and
- Rural Lifestyle.

While the zones proposed under PC50 are the same as under the ODP, the plan change proposes amendments to the locations and boundaries of the rural zones. The proposed zoning changes appear to be aimed at better aligning the zoning with property boundaries and applying the Rural Production Zone to all highly productive land (in the case of Upper Hutt, this is understood to be land accommodating soil class 3).

PC50 proposes areas with property specific precincts with associated provisions and rules, such as Berketts Farm Precinct.

PC 50 also proposes the introduction of a Clay Target Club Acoustic Overlay, which affects some of the sites owned by the submitter.

Plan Change 50 also proposes a range of newly defined activities, and associated provisions and rules relating to such activities.

### **Draft Plan Change 50 (2021 Draft)**

We note that there has been some significant deviation from the initial draft of PC50 - Residential and Rural Review that was consulted on and discussed with Mangaroo Farms in 2021.

With regards to the Mangaroo Farms properties the main differences are in relation to the following sites:

- The land at 40 Mangaroo Valley Road (Lot 2 DP 369137, Part Lot2 DP 58877 and Lot 1 DP 312502) was initially shown by draft PC50 as being rezoned to Settlement Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone. However PC50 as notified now proposes to rezone this land as Rural Production Zone and General Rural Zone.

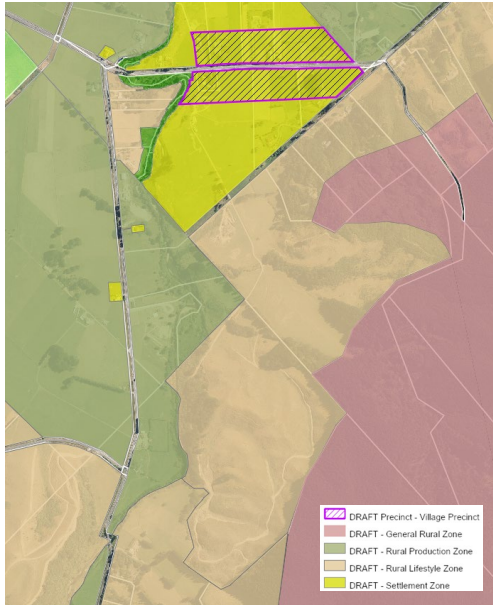


Figure 2: Draft PC50 Zoning – 40 Mangaroa Valley Road

- The properties located to the east of Whitemans Valley Road (169 – 357 Whitemans Valley Rd) were initially shown as Rural Lifestyle Zone and are now proposed to be zoned Rural Production.

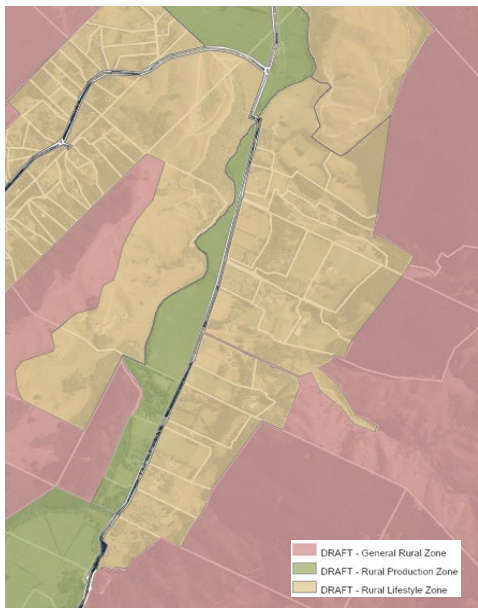


Figure 3: Draft PC50 Zoning – Properties East of Whitemans Valley Road

For the most part, the zone changes indicated through the consultation on the Council’s draft Plan Change 50 were considered by the submitters to be suitably flexible to enable their long-term aspirations across their wider landholdings. The changes now proposed by PC50 (in comparison to Draft PC50) came as a complete surprise to Mangaroa Farms. Despite having far reaching consequences for the future use and development of the extensive land holdings of Mangaroa Farms there has been no further communication or consultation with Mangaroa Farms prior to the notification of PC50.





## Private Plan Change 51

Private Plan Change 51 (PC51) seeks the rezoning of the site at 40 Mangaroa Valley Road. The private plan change request was lodged in August 2020 by the previous owners of the site. PC51 sought the rezoning of the entire site to Rural Valley Floor site and the introduction of a structure plan to enable mixed density rural development. The Structure Plan allowed for the development of 30 residential lots over two stages. The plan change was publicly notified on 27 January 2021 and seven submissions were received. The summary of submissions was notified on 12 May 2021.

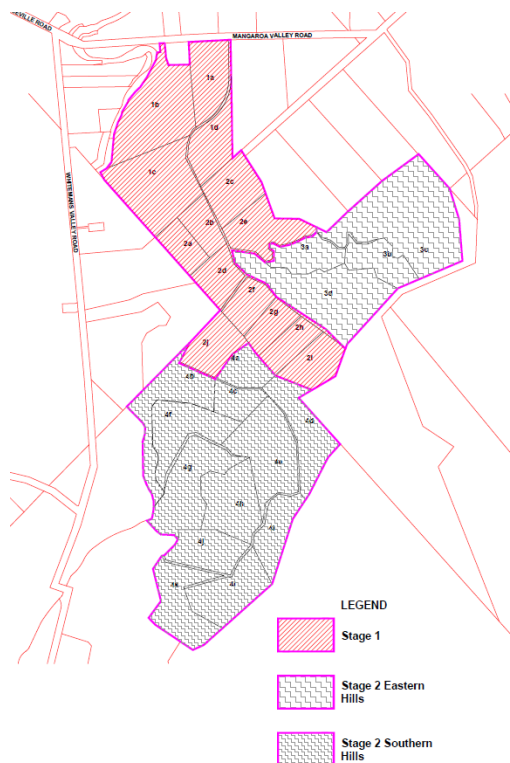


Figure 4: PC51 Structure Plan

The properties subject to the private plan change request have transferred into ownership of Mangaroa Farms Ltd who became the successors to the private plan change application.

After the purchase of the properties subject to the private plan change Mangaroa Farms discussed the options for PC51 with Council and on 16 June 2021 the applicant requested that the private plan change be put on hold until further notice. This request was based on an understanding with Council that the intended outcomes sought by the private plan change could be equally achieved through Council's rural review process (Plan Change 50). However, PC50 as now notified is significantly different from the outcomes sought by PC51 and the initial proposals of Draft PC50.

We note that PC51 (which remains on hold) was notified proposing the zoning of the three blocks as rural lifestyle equivalent, and therefore it is questionable whether the land at 40 Mangaroa Valley Road is subject to the requirements of the NPS-HPL.



## **Proposed Plan Change 47 – Natural Hazards**

Proposed Plan Change 47 (PC47) was notified by Upper Hutt City Council on 5 October 2022 and proposes updates to the Natural Hazards provisions of the ODP. PC47:

- Introduces a definition for Hazard Sensitive Activities, Potentially Hazard Sensitive Activities, and Less Hazard Sensitive Activities;
- Updates natural hazard objectives, policies, rules, and mapping that relate to the Wellington Fault;
- Introduces natural hazard objectives, policies, rules, and maps pertaining to the proposed High Slope Hazard Overlay and Poor Ground Conditions Overlay in Mangaroa. The current District Plan provisions do not address these two hazards; and
- Updates the earthworks and subdivision provisions in relation to natural hazards.

A number of sites owned by Mangaroa Farms Ltd are subject to the High Peat Risk Overlay or the High Slope Risk Overlay introduced by PC47.

*We would like to acknowledge the involvement of James Beban of UEP in the preparation of PC47. We are confident that this does not create a conflict of interest since this submission does not relate to or seek any changes to the provisions or overlays introduced by PC47. In addition, we would like to confirm that Mr Beban has had no involvement in the preparation of this submission.*

## **National Policy Statement - Highly Productive Land**

The National Policy Statement - Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL) was gazetted on Monday 19 September 2022 and has been in effect since Monday 17 October 2022. It provides direction to improve the way highly productive land is managed and seeks to ensure the availability of New Zealand's most favourable soils for food and fibre production, now and for future generations. This includes the management of subdivision, use and development of highly productive land. Council has an obligation under the NPS-HPL to identify and map highly productive land and include it in its District Plan.

We acknowledge that Proposed Plan Change 50 is UHCC's response to give effect to the NPS-HPL within its local planning framework. It appears that for the purpose of this plan change Upper Hutt City Council has relied on the Land Use Capability assessment and resulting classification by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research.

We note that there have been indications that with a change in central government there may be significant changes to the NPS-HPL, which could result in the removal of Land Use Capability Class 3 (LUC 3) land from the definition and mapping requirements for highly productive land.

Should this change be implemented during the processing of Plan Change 50 we request the reconsideration of the spatial extent of the Rural Production Zone in general and the rezoning of areas along Mangaroa Valley Road and Whitemans Valey Road from Rural Production Zone to Rural Lifestyle Zone in particular. We also seek consequential changes resulting from such an amendment.

## **SUBMISSION**

Overall we consider PC50 to be a well-balanced and relatively progressive plan change.

We acknowledge the obligation to give effect to the NPS-HPL and recognise Council's proposal to protect the productive capacity of highly productive land through the proposed provisions and location of the Rural Production Zone. However, as indicated above, we consider that any potential changes to the status of LUC 3 land under the NPS-HPL should be reflected in consequential changes to proposed PC50.

The proposed General Rural and Rural Lifestyle zones appear to provide for a wider range of rural activities and greater flexibility with regards to related activities. In this regard, support is noted for the following activities and associated proposed definitions:

- Conference facilities;
- Farm stay;
- Rural produce retail; and
- Rural tourism.

As indicated above we note the significant deviation of PC50 as notified from the initial Draft PC50 that was discussed with and supported by Mangaroa Farms. As outlined above the main changes in contention relate to the land at 40 Mangaroa Valley Road as follows:

- The proposed zoning of the Lot 2 DP 369137 as Rural Production Zone rather than Settlement Zone (as indicated by Draft PC50); and
- The proposed General Rural Zone on Pt Lot 2 DP 58877 and Lot 1 DP 312502 instead of the previously indicated Rural Lifestyle Zone.

We note that the proposed zoning of this land also does not align with the Structure Plan initially proposed by private Plan Change 51.

We understand that the main reason for the proposed Rural Production Zone is the presence of highly productive soils (LUC 3) as identified by the Land Use Capability assessment carried out by Landcare Research (Manaaki Whenua).

We note that Council states on its website that while highly productive land will generally be zoned Rural Production there may be exceptions where the land is already highly fragmented through subdivision or development. In this regard, many of the sites along Whitemans Valley



Road in the vicinity of Mangaroo Farms do not support viable rural production due to the fragmentation of lot sizes through prior subdivision patterns.

As indicated above it is the intention of Mangaroo Farms to continue the productive farming across their wider land holdings. Indeed, this objective has driven their recent strategic acquisition programme. In this regard, in recent times Mangaroo Farms have significantly reversed previous land fragmentation and re-established sustainable farming practices and food production on their land holdings, with an ambitious regenerative planting programme also underway. The aspirations of Mangaroo Farms are not dissimilar to the overarching outcomes sought by Proposed Plan Change 50.

However, while productive and regenerative farming is at the core of Mangaroo Farms purpose and intentions, there is also a need to provide for the ancillary agri-rural and educational activities and associated development, including a desire to develop a rural Village Area to support the farming activities and the local rural community. Longer-term, there is also aspiration to accommodate a range of low-impact housing, such as clustered/hamlet and rural lifestyle housing on the land in a manner that is sensitive to the land and surrounds, which would occur alongside regenerative planting activities. Such activities would occur within the area of the site shown in figure 5 below. Within the rural context, this would enable a different form of housing choice to members of the community, whilst maintaining respect for the rural environment.

Notwithstanding the above, and to underline and support their intention to maintain, strengthen and increase the use of their land for sustainable farming Mangaroo Farms would be happy to volunteer some land that is currently proposed by Plan Change 50 to be Rural Lifestyle zoning on the western side of Whitemans Valley Road to be rezoned as General Rural.

**Therefore, while Mangaroo Farms generally accept the majority of the proposed zoning across the wider Mangaroo Farms landholdings, the following changes to Plan Change 50 are sought:**

1. Amendments to reflect changes to the NPS-HPL (both in relation to the Mangaroo Farms landholdings, and also across the district generally).
2. Amendments to zoning of land accommodating LUC 3 soils where the land has been previously fragmented into small landholdings.
3. In particular we question and seek the reconsideration/rezoning of the Rural Production zoning of sites south of Mangaroo Valley Road and east of Whitemans Valley Road in light of existing subdivision and development patterns. Such fragmented land would be more appropriately zoned Rural Lifestyle.

#### 4. 40 Mangaroo Road - Rezoning

Mangaroo Farms seeks the rezoning of the parcels of land at 40 Mangaroo Road (Lot 2 DP 369137, Part Lot2 DP 58877 and Lot 1 DP 312502) and 67 Whitemans Valley Road (Lot 3 DP 495158, in part) from General Rural and Rural Production as notified in Plan Change 50 to Rural Lifestyle Zone.

It is noted that Rural Lifestyle Zone would be consistent with the zoning of adjacent properties and would more accurately reflect the zoning previously proposed by draft PC50. It would provide greater flexibility for future use of this portion of the site (see point 5 below). For completeness, it is noted that access to the rear properties would be available through the land parcel that directly fronts Mangaroo Valley Road.



*Figure 5: 40 Mangaroo Valley Road – Rezoning Requested*

Overall the rezoning of discrete areas of the site that accommodate small areas of LUC 3 soils would be outweighed by an increase in the overall productive capacity of the amalgamated areas of the wider farm land holding.

#### 5. Mangaroo Farms Precinct and Structure Plan

As part of this submission, and related to the above point, Mangaroo Farms seek the introduction of a Mangaroo Farms Precinct and associated Structure Plan.

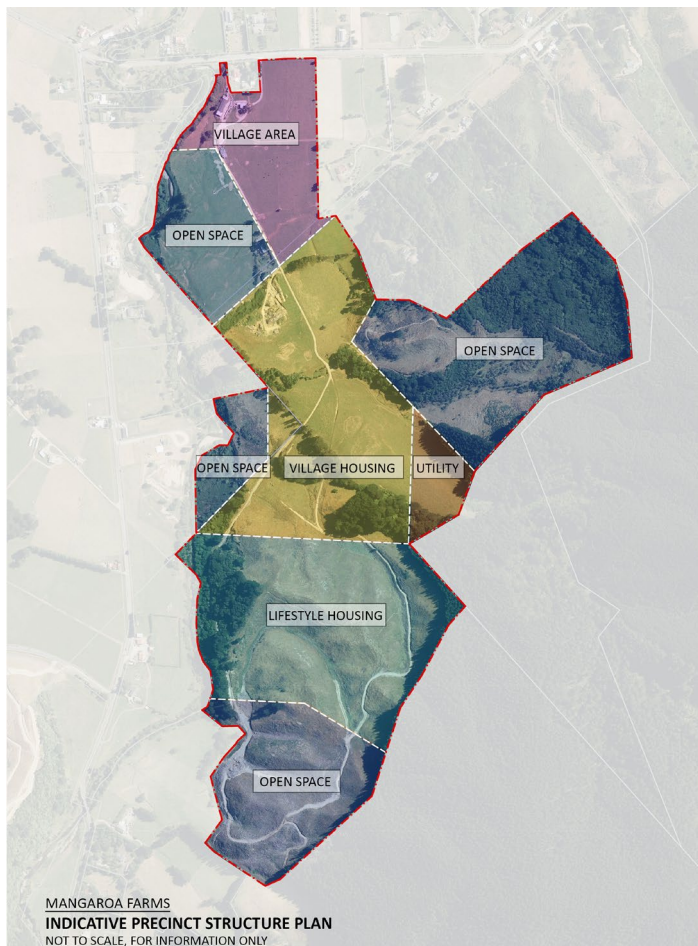
The Precinct and Structure Plan would be specific to the sites at 40 Mangaroo Valley Road and 67 Whitemans Valley Road (in part). An *indicative* Structure Plan for the proposed Precinct is shown in figure 6 below (larger scale at Appendix 1).



The Structure Plan responds to specific constraints and opportunities of the site and the associated Precinct will provide the necessary framework to reflect and facilitate the long term intentions and ambitions of Mangaroo Farms within this area of the wider land holding. In this regard, the proposed framework will assist in bringing alive the broader vision of Mangaroo Farms, which is to have a productive and viable regenerative working farm unit that actively incorporates ecological restoration, while accommodating a collection of complimentary micro-rural businesses and sensitively located cluster housing community.

*The Farm* at Bryon Bay offers an example of the type of aspiration Mangaroo Farms is seeking to achieve - <https://thefarm.com.au/about>.

The proposed Mangaroo Farms Precinct is expected to require the introduction of precinct specific provisions to the relevant Rural Lifestyle zone and Rural Subdivision chapters to allow for the intended development patterns and densities.



*Figure 6: Indicative Structure Plan for the proposed Mangaroo Farms Precinct*

The indicative Structure Plan included in this submission identifies and spatially defines distinct areas. The identified areas are intended to enable existing development and activities to continue and also allow for new development and activities to establish over the multi-generational timeframe of the project, including:

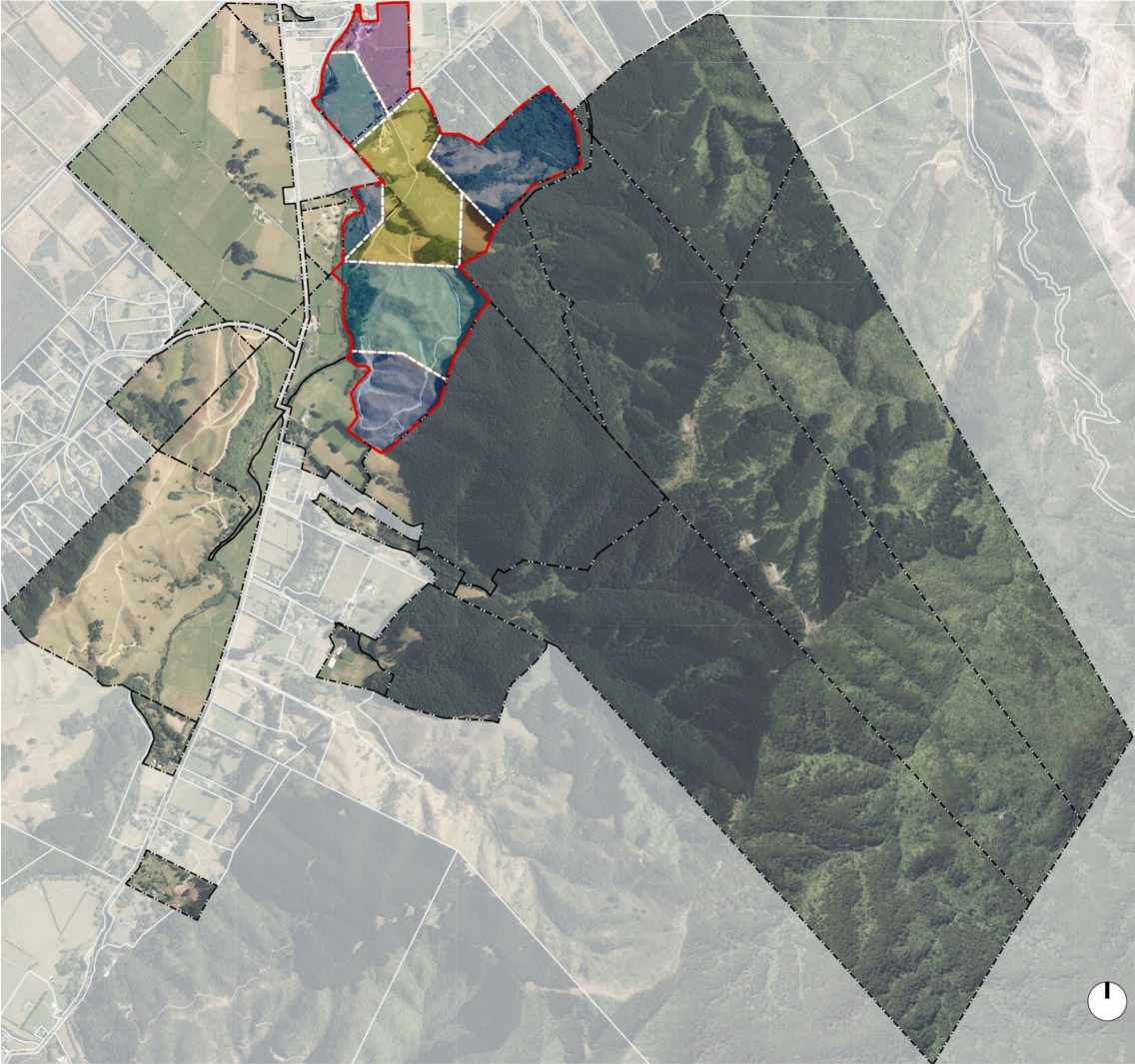


- Village Area (appr 7.5ha)
  - Small scale rural-village style development to serve the local community;
  - Farm shop / Rural Produce Retail;
  - Bakery / Café;
  - Childcare;
  - Plant nursery;
  - Educational activities.
- Village Residential Area (appr 18.7ha)
  - Clustered Housing which creates access to usable open spaces and village amenity;
  - Innovative housing models to provide accommodation for staff and visitors;
  - Indicative number of houses within the first 10 years – approx. 10;
  - Beyond the 10 year horizon – allowing for an average density of 1 house per 2000m<sup>2</sup>.
- Lifestyle Residential Area (appr 18.2ha)
  - Low density housing at a rural lifestyle level;
  - Indicative number of houses within the first 10 years – approx. 2 to 5;
  - Beyond the 10 year horizon – allowing for an average density of 1 house per 3500m<sup>2</sup>.
- Utility Area (appr 2.3ha)
  - Community scale renewable energy generation;
  - Alternative energy generation;
  - Reservoir to enable self-sustaining community;
  - Ancillary utility buildings.
- Open Space Area (appr 34.6ha)
  - Regenerative farming;
  - Restoration and replanting;
  - River conservation and riparian planting;
  - Wetland regeneration.



The intended clustering of identified rural-based activities within the proposed Precinct provides Mangaroo Farms with the pathway to achieve a more efficient use of its wider rural land holding, thereby increasing the overall productive capacity of the land. This approach will enable the Mangaroo Farms to accommodate and support the wider sustainable ancillary activities proposed across the Mangaroo Farms landholdings.

For context, the area of this land is shown in red outline in figure 7 below, sitting within the wider Mangaroo Farms landholding, which will remain as productive farmland and restorative native planting.



*Figure 7: Proposed precinct within wider Mangaroo Farms land holding*

The proposed Precinct and Structure Plan approach aligns well with and is consistent with the current district plan format, and other precinct areas proposed by Proposed Plan Change 50.

Ultimately, the proposed Mangaroo Farm Precinct will enable Mangaroo Farms to achieve their strategic goals while contributing to a thriving and innovative community within the Upper Hutt district.



In relation to this submission point, Mangaroo Farms request that they, and their representatives, are involved in the development of the required framework and provisions to achieve the outcomes sought in relation to the requested Precinct and Structure Plan.

6. 133 Whitemans Valley Road – Consequential Rezoning

If the outcomes sought under 4. and 5. above are enabled through the plan change process Mangaroo Farms would be prepared to offer the rezoning of parcels of land at 133 Whitemans Valley Road (Part Section 8 Upper Mangaroo District [located on the western side of Whitemans Valley Road] and Lot 1 DP 65016) from the proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone as notified in Plan Change 50 to General Rural.

This would align with Mangaroo Farms’ intentions to keep this part of the valley in rural production and avoid the further fragmentation of land for residential development. It would support the ongoing establishment of sustainable farming practices on the site and provide additional certainty to surrounding residents and the wider community.

However, should the outcomes sought under 4. and 5. above not be achievable then Mangaroo Farms may not be able to commit the land at 133 Whitemans Valley Road for farming in the long term but may need to consider the development of this area to enable the ongoing investment in food production, community facilities, open space, reforestation and recreation.



Figure 8: 133 Whitemans Valley Road – Consequential Rezoning





7. Mangaroa Farms request any consequential changes or alternative relief required to achieve the intended outcomes sought within this submission.



Corinna Tessendorf  
Urban Edge Planning



Karen Williams  
Urban Edge Planning Ltd

**On behalf of:**  
**Mangaroa Farms Ltd**

Date: 17 November 2023



## Appendix 1 – Indicative Mangaroa Farms Precinct and Structure Plan

