

22 JULY 2021, 7-9PM – ROTARY LOUNGE, UPPER HUTT LIBRARY

Introduction

Officers provided an overview of the agenda for the meeting and a review of the progress of the plan change.

Zoning and precincts

Officers progressed to reviewing the proposed zones for the rural area, which had been covered in previous sessions. An explanation was provided for a small amendment to the definition for the General Rural Zone, which specified that primary production was constrained within this zone.

A review of the proposed precincts for the rural area was provided. Three precincts are proposed, including:

- Staglands precinct
- Hutt Valley Clay Target Club acoustic buffer precinct
- Village Precinct (around Maymorn Station and Mangaroa)

Officers explained how Staglands is an established use, but that the precinct confirms its use and will ensure that it will be able to continue to operate under the precinct rules. The key issue which the precinct provisions will address are the potential traffic impacts of any increased patronage for the site.

The precinct relating to the Clay Target Club focuses on the establishment of acoustic controls within a 500m buffer of the Club which would seek to ensure that noise from activities at the site would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of any potential new development in the surrounding area. Members were sceptical that the proposed buffer would be suitable and would achieve the sought outcomes due to their experiences with the noise produced from the club, however members did not raise objections about the activity itself.

Officers presented the proposed extents of the precincts for the Maymorn Railway Station and Mangaroa area, and invited members to comment on the proposed extents. Members enquired whether Maymorn Railway Station is a rapid transport route, with officers confirming that it was not.

Members commented that they believed the precinct extent around Mangaroa was not logically laid out, for example it did not appear to conform to landscape constraints and consideration of traffic flows in the area, whereas they believed the precinct around Maymorn Station was rational and it was clear how it was laid out.

Officers mentioned that the precinct within Mangaroa was constrained by a number of factors, most noticeably flooding associated with the Mangaroa River. This had been a strong influence on the extent of the precinct in this area. The Village Precinct area here was also located over where dwellings were mostly located, so sought to capitalise on where density already existed.

Officers progressed to a review of the Gabites greenfield area. This included an explanation of the proposed zoning extent of the site and the intention that a development plan be created for the site. Members enquired about how development on different areas of the site would be sited to ensure that it was appropriately located and rural character was maintained. Officers explained that with the proposed zoning any development at the rear of the site wouldn't be visible from the road. This included a protection of the ridge escarpment running through the site.

Members enquired about the funding for roading and how access would be achieved to the site. Access would be restricted to two roads joining Maymorn Road and no private driveways exiting onto Maymorn Road. Officers explained that the development would be required to pay development contributions for roading. The members also enquired about whether the roads would be in private ownership. Officers explained that the roads would likely be vested to Council due to their potential scale.

Officers then reviewed the requirements for on-site servicing for the Gabites area, which was linked to the 2,000m² site size and due to the constraints of existing three water services. Officers detailed the potential level of housing delivery for the site based on the proposed zoning.

The potential for future development at Gabites to be required to meet eco-building standards was enquired about. Officers mentioned that there was no requirement under the District Plan for this, but forthcoming changes from the building code review could be more influential in this regard.

Members raised the findings of the Housing and Business Development Capacity Assessment (HBA) and enquired whether the potential delivery of housing at Gabites was calculated into the HBA deficiency numbers. Officers mentioned that the HBA was currently being updated, noting that the rural area was not intended to provide for housing sufficiency as this was an urban matter.

A brief overview of the comparison between the current rural zoning extents and the new proposed rural extents was provided. Officers then provided an overview of the proposed zoning at each locality in the rural area and the justification for the zoning extents.

Rural Provisions

Officers progressed to the progressed provisions for the rural zones. Officers provided a summary of the enablement of certain activities and the controls of other activities within the different zones.

The proposed subdivision controls were outlined to members, including minimum site area and site coverage for each of the zones. This included an explanation of how the consideration of landscape character influenced subdivision and site coverage rules to maintain rural character. The proposed averaging rules applicable for the Rural Lifestyle zone was explained in greater detail.

Members commented on the proposed site coverage extents for the different zones, and that the proposed site coverage limits may be too restrictive in some instances. Officers explained that the existing rules within the Plan do not have controls for site coverage, and that the approach PC50 was taking was to ensure that there is a consenting pathway where site coverage extents have been breached. Other members noted that the non-residential component of permitted building site coverage was still quite generous, with Officers reminding members that consent could still be applied for greater allowances.

Officers stepped through with members the proposed zone rules relating to secondary dwellings, including the permitted sizes for secondary dwellings and how they relate to the established dwelling unit. Members mentioned that they believed proposed non-residential permitted coverage

was excessive for the rural lifestyle zone, and that the new rules may hinder the opportunities for multi-generational living.

Officers explained how the rule would work with the relative location of secondary dwellings to the main residence, which would only apply for the General Rural and Rural Production Zones. The principle behind this rule being that the development would not result in the sprawl of housing across a site, but would show that the secondary dwelling was associated with the primary dwelling. If the second dwelling was beyond the permitted standard then consent would be needed, and potentially a landscape assessment to demonstrate the effect of the breach was not resulting in significant adverse effects. Officers confirmed that the two dwellings would not be required to share services, but would be expected to share access.

Officers detailed the rules relating to light reflectance value for buildings would be proposed for all rural zones, except the Settlement Zone. Officers explained that this would not form part of the resource consent process but would simply be considered at the building consent stage. Members queried how this would work for people re-painting their buildings, with officers explaining that it would only be applied for people applying for new building consents, and therefore wouldn't affect the repainting of buildings. The majority of members were supportive of the proposed introduction of reflectance value controls and saw it as an easy means to reduce building prominence within the rural landscape.

Reviewing the proposed building setbacks across the different zones members commented that the setbacks for agricultural buildings may need to be rethought, as these buildings or structures may need road access and therefore could need to be located closer to a road than the proposed setbacks would allow.

The proposal for clustered development in the lifestyle and settlement zones were detailed by officers. The clustered approach focuses on allowing for reduced allotment size against a larger balance lot. Some members commented that this was undoing the rules of the underlying zoning, but officers explained that clustering could only be considered if the proposed site was large enough. They noted that there were a very limited number of existing sites that met this criteria, reducing its overall impact. Members enquired as to who would be the owner of the balance lot. Officers explained that the ownership of that lot was subject to the developer, and that the lot could be developed but would not be able to be subdivided, and that restrictive covenants would be put in place on the title to prevent ensure this outcome was achieved. The proposed approach resulted in some debate on clustering metrics and permitted density, however most members understood the rationale that this could enable the most efficient use of land best suited to rural-residential living.

The provisions relating to home businesses were discussed. Members commented that the restriction of 2 heavy vehicle trips per day may be restrictive for a number of rural businesses. Officers explained that the rules would not be applicable to agricultural and horticultural activities. However, the restriction on heavy vehicle use would still effect some businesses, for example selling firewood or equestrian activities. Members agreed with officers that simply not having controls for different vehicle types would resolve this issue. Members also mentioned that the hours of operation may need to be adjusted to allow for activities to be occurring at an earlier hour, and that the maximum area of a dwelling or other building which could be used for business uses was too limited. Officers noted these comments. It was agreed that much of the home business controls was down to a definition issue and that officers needed to be clear what activities would be exempt in the rural environment.

Officers stepped through the visitor accommodation rules and provided an overview of the limitations of total occupancy which relates to the size of the main dwelling.

Follow-up Questions

Officers provided an opportunity for members to ask subsequent question on the zoning extent and the proposed provisions. Members asked about property specific examples of how the provisions would be applied, which officers stepped through for clarity.

Members queried how the proposed zoning changes through PC50 would impact the rates of landowners where there site was rezoned. Officers explained that although rates are not exclusively linked to zoning, the change of zoning is likely to have an effect on the rates of people, depending on whether the rules are tightened or relaxed for that specific site.

Members enquired about the date when PC50 will have legal effect, with officers explaining the likely timeframe for this being notification in July 2022 and that legal effect would be potentially 2 years after that, depending on the scale of feedback and appeals.

Consultation

Officers explained the proposed consultation approach for the next stage of public engagement. Member stated that they believed it was key that an FAQ section was available for the public, and that it needs to be a clear message about the changes to the rural lifestyle zone.