

## Rural Zones

### Issues

- Number of Rural zones: There are eight Rural zones in the Operative District Plan. As the recent National Planning Standards limit the number of zones it has been necessary to rationalise the type and number of zones.
- Provision for rural residential / lifestyle use: The current and previous District Plans have allowed a moderate degree of rural residential/lifestyle development throughout the rural area. The scattered nature of rural residential development has resulted in unpredictable and inefficient servicing demands for water supply, sewage treatment and disposal, roading and access. It has also resulted in constraints on farming operations resulting from complaints by new rural residents.
- Protection of versatile soils: The District has large areas of versatile soils which are a significant resource for the district, region and country enabling efficient production of food and fibre. Over time activities, subdivision, and development (including extensions to towns) has resulted in a reduction in the availability of versatile soils.
- Control of intensive rural activities: There has been a general increase in the intensity of farming, with intensive farming practices creating adverse effects on sensitive activities.

### Operative District Plan Approach

The current Plan includes manages development through the rules of each Rural zone, including those protecting more sensitive environments. The zones are:

- Rural 1: General
- Rural 2: Contains the most versatile land.
- Rural 3: Coastal areas
- Rural 4A and B: Geraldine Downs
- Rural 5: Hill and High country
- Rural Residential (Brookfield Road).

### Proposed Plan Approach

The following zones are proposed for the rural area:

- General Rural Zone: All the rural area, including hill and high country and the coast.
- Rural Lifestyle Zone: This is a new rural zone specifically providing for rural residential development in identified areas adjoining of near townships. Most of these newly zoned areas will be developed through the Future Development Area Plan process in accordance with Development Area Plans to ensure development is timed to coincide with demand and to ensure coordination of servicing. Rural Lifestyle zone Future Development areas have been proposed at:
  - Gleniti North
  - Kellands Heights West Rural Lifestyle Development Area
  - Templer Street, Geraldine
  - Thompson Road, Temuka
  - Manse Road, Pleasant Point.
- Settlement Zone: This zone replaces the current Residential 3 zone and applies to Seadown (Acacia Drive), Cave, Orari, Pareora, Winchester, Peel Forest, Blandswood and Woodbury settlements.

The proposed plan manages land use in sensitive environments by a series of "overlays" which are contained in their own chapters. Many of these overlays e.g. natural character and outstanding and visual amenity landscapes, relate to land within the rural zones.

## Changes

### Key changes include:

#### Residential units in the rural area

The ability to create “rural living sites” for rural residential use in the general rural area is to be replaced by confining rural residential development to new Rural Living zones adjoining or near Geraldine, Temuka, Timaru and Pleasant Point.

The minimum area for a residential unit in the General Rural zone is to be 40ha (unless the site was created before 22 September 2022) and there will be a maximum of one residential units per property and one minor residential unit. The latter is restricted to 80m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area. Resource consent will be required for additional houses.

### Reasons:

To meet the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement requirements for rural residential living and to confine rural residential development to areas that can be efficiently serviced for water, sewage treatment and disposal and roading.

#### Setbacks for sensitive activities

Sensitive activities are required to be setback 500m from intensive primary production, farm effluent disposal area or lawfully established quarry or mine. Note different setbacks apply, refer to the rules.

To ensure primary production is not constrained by sensitive activities.

#### Setbacks for intensive primary production and farm effluent disposal areas

Conversely intensive primary production and farm effluent disposal areas are required to be setback 500m from an existing sensitive activity. Note different setbacks apply, refer to the rules.

To ensure that existing sensitive activities are not adversely affected by primary production.

