

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, especially livestock farming. This has resulted in increased traffic movements by heavy vehicles in and around farm buildings, odour and noise.

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).

Draft 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. These newly zoned areas will be developed in accordance with Development Area Plans to ensure coordination of servicing. The proposed Rural Lifestyle zone Development areas are:

Timaru area

- DEV3 – Brookfield Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- DEV4 – Gleniti North Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- DEV5 – Kellands Heights Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- DEV6 – Elloughton Rural Lifestyle Development Area

Geraldine area

- DEV7 – Templer Street Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- Temuka area
- DEV8 – Thompson Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- DEV9 – Guild Rural Lifestyle Development Area

Pleasant Point area

- DEV10 – Manse Road Rural Lifestyle Development Area
- Settlement Zone: This zone replaces the current Residential 3 zone and applies to Seadown (Acacia Drive), Cave, Orari, Pareora, Winchester, Peel Forest, Blandwood and Woodbury settlements.

The Draft 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. There is however an exemption permitting houses to be built on rural living sites created since 1 January 2016.

The minimum area for a residential unit in the General Rural zone is to be 40ha and there will be a maximum of two residential units per property. Resource consent will be required for additional houses.

Setbacks:

Larger setbacks from property and road boundaries and neighbouring houses will be required for all buildings including milking sheds, effluent facilities and stock holding areas and intensively farmed stock.

Future urban development area:

An area for the future residential development of Geraldine is to be created on Orari Station Road.

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.

To reduce adverse impacts of noise, odour and lighting on neighbouring properties and limit the use of the roads and their verges for farm related operations

To avoid activities, subdivision or buildings which could compromise integrated and serviced urban development on this land in the future.

