

8 Rural

Introduction

Approximately 85% of land in the City is outside the urban area. There are a number of distinctive rural locations including the western hills of the Hutt Valley, the land surrounding the urban area of Wainuiomata, properties accessed from Moores Valley Road, land in the Orongorongo and Wainuiomata Valleys and land south of Eastbourne. Matiu/Somes, Mokopuna and Makaro/Ward Islands form part of the rural area.

Much of the rural area is characterised by steep hillsides and exposed ridge lines. From Burdan's Gate to Windy Point (Palliser Bay) the rural area abuts the coast and has high amenity values, especially headland sites. There is limited flat land, and soil quality throughout the rural area is generally poor.

A significant amount of the rural land is in public ownership and managed for water collection, recreation and conservation purposes. The Wellington Regional Council administers 6,446 hectares of land as the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Collection Area. The Department of Conservation administers the Rimutaka Forest Park, which is within both South Wairarapa and this City. A major access point for recreational users is at Catchpool along Coast Road. The Belmont Regional Park and East Harbour Regional Park are administered by the Regional Council. The Belmont Regional Park includes land administered by the Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and Hutt City Council.

There are few opportunities for intensive agricultural use of the land due to the constraints of the topography and soil quality. However, there are a range of activities occurring including animal farming, forestry and recreation. Rural residential lifestyle developments are established uses in some locations.

The approach taken in the Plan is to establish two rural activity areas. These are the Rural Residential Activity Area and the General Rural Activity Area.

(a) Rural Residential Activity Area

Some areas on the Western Hills of the Hutt Valley, at the extension of Fitzherbert Road Wainuiomata, at the beginning of Coast Road Wainuiomata, and in Moores Valley are in the Rural Residential Activity Area.

The Rural Residential Activity Area consists of areas where the subdivision pattern has already allowed for the establishment of rural residential lifestyle development. It also includes areas where future urban development may occur as the land adjoins residential activity areas.

The more intense subdivision pattern allows for a greater intensity of buildings and development than in the General Rural Activity Area.

(b) General Rural Activity Area

The remainder of the rural area falls into the General Rural Activity Area. In this activity area more extensive rural activities occur. The Activity Area includes land adjoining the coast with high amenity values which should be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.