

WHANGAREI DISTRICT COUNCIL – District Plan - notified Plan Changes 85A, 85D, 87

Marilyn Berry: Presentation to Hearings Panel 27/07/2017 (I could not attend due to illness), representing:

Land area	Owner	Submission no
4.1 ha	W A & O M Hyslop	389
6.5 ha	M E Berry	390
2.5 ha	J D & W Hyslop	391
16.6 ha	TOTAL AREA	

Plan Change 85A – Rural Production Environment.

The WDC has proposed rezoning these three lifestyle blocks at Urquharts Bay, Whangarei Heads from the current “Coastal Countryside” to “Rural Production Environment” (RPE)

The stated aim of the RPE is to protect the viability of primary production and are intended to be active, productive areas. The proposed minimum area for future RPE subdivision is 20ha.

These small blocks (and a couple of even smaller adjacent blocks proposed for similar rezoning) are not suitable for production farming for the following reasons. They are:

- much too small for ‘proper’ farming – they are mostly planted /revegetating with only small grass areas
- directly next door to 10 residential properties
- the lower boundaries are as close as 50 metres from high tide mark and upper boundaries no more than 400 metres from the sea
- drained by two small streams which become “raging torrents” in the increasingly frequent deluges due to the steepness and large catchment area (the western face of Mt Lion). The level of silt washed down by these streams has much reduced over the years as the properties have been replanted (especially the stream gullies), and seagrass beds have successfully re-grown in the bay - effluent from any kind of farm production would often be washed very directly into the sea, in spite of riparian planting
- adjacent at the south and east boundaries to the nationally significant Bream Head Reserve where pest and weed control has led to huge increase in kiwi numbers and recent re-introductions of rare bird species - kiwis are frequently heard on our properties
- contain numerous middens and a registered archaeological site

Plan Change 87 – Coastal Area

The WDC is also proposing to increase the protection of coastal land (including our blocks) from both an environmental and landscape perspective. This increased restriction is not consistent with re-zoning for rural production.

Plan Change 85D – Rural Living Environment (RLE)

“The RLE is identified where there are existing clusters of rural lifestyle development.....”

WDC Information Summary on proposed Pan Changes.

Our properties were subdivided as lifestyle blocks from 15 to 20 years ago, and their most suitable re-zoning would be to RLE – they meet all the WDC criteria for this zone. They are within the ‘arms’ of the existing Urquharts Bay settlement which has been identified as “small village” where limited development within clusters is to be encouraged over ribbon settlement between clusters. While Urquharts Bay already has reticulated water and sewage services, our lifestyle blocks are suitable for the current on-site services, and re-zoning to RLE would have no impact.

SUMMARY:

- The properties in this submission were subdivided 15-20 years ago as lifestyle blocks.
- They are not used for and not suitable for production farming.
- Their sizes range from 2.5 to 6.5ha whereas the future Rural Production Environment is specified as having a minimum lot area of 20 ha.
- Their proposed designation as “Coastal Area” requires tight environmental and aesthetic considerations.
- They should not be rezoned as Rural Production Environment.
- The properties meet all the WDC criteria for Rural Living Environments and should be rezoned as RLE under Plan Change 85D