

Shae Crossan, Planner for the Applicant.

Shae Crossan – Introduction and Summary of Planning Matters

1.0 Summary of Evidence & Effects

1.1 As you will have read from my evidence, the key RMA issues in my opinion that are relevant to the application and are contested are:

- Rural Production
- Character & Amenity
- Landscape & Visual
- Biodiversity

2.0 Rural Production

2.1 A contested matter between Ms Swan and myself are that the effects that the subdivision would have on the rural productive potential for the site.

2.2 Whilst I acknowledge that the subdivision will remove the majority of land currently utilised for developed avocado orchard on the site, based on the evidence of Mr Stilwell, a review of surrounding productive land uses and other rural land available in the District I consider that the removal of this land from productive rural potential will have little impact on the District's overall rural productive land resource.

2.3 In addition to the effects, I consider that there is limited provision within the District Plan that identifies the zoning as being highly important for Rural Production activities, evidenced by the assertion that some land within the Coastal Zone is used or able to be used for farming and horticultural activities. There are several examples where this is present within Coastal zone areas such as Te Kaha and Waihau Bay, however these areas have large north facing flat plateau areas suitable for growing kiwifruit. There is a significant difference to the elevation of the subject site and the surrounding topography.

In summary, I am of the opinion that the subdivision will have little impact on the overall productive rural land resource of the District and that the proposal is not contrary to the relevant objectives and policies.

3.0 Character & Amenity

- 3.1 I acknowledge that there will be a change to the appearance of the site as a result of the subdivision, however through the choice of location of house sites, compliance with bulk and location standards, proposed planting, and Mr Campbell's recommended building controls, effects are minimised.
- 3.2 Whilst the surrounding area retains a high level of natural character, the site itself is not subject to any special character/visual overlays under the District Plan.
- 3.3 In terms of effects on the character and amenity of the environment, based on the landscape and visual assessment report and evidence provided by Mr Campbell, I am satisfied that effects of the subdivision on character and amenity can be adequately mitigated.
- 3.4 As I have noted in my evidence, the effects of development are sought to be managed rather than prevented or prohibited under the identified resource management issues for the zone, and the objectives and policies of the District Plan.

4.0 Landscape & Visual

- 4.1 As with amenity and character there will be a change to the visual appearance of the site once new dwellings are constructed on the allotments. Dwellings, if unconstrained, have the potential to have a detrimental effect on the landscape and visual appearance of the site. However, through the proposed planting and Mr Campbell's recommended building controls, effects are minimised.
- 4.2 The proposed planting, being native planting, will also increase the degree of naturalness over time as Mr Campbell has noted in his LVA and evidence.
- 4.3 As I have noted in my evidence, I agree that the proposal is not entirely consistent with ODP Policy 9.2.2.5 and Policy 9.2.2.6 in that rural? residential development (being the houses that would result upon the allotments) is not consolidated within an established coastal settlement.
- 4.4 However, in my opinion, in terms of visual effects, based on the landscape and visual assessment report and evidence provided by Mr Campbell, overall, I am

satisfied that visual? and landscape effects of the subdivision can be adequately mitigated.

5.0 Biodiversity

5.1 As detailed in my evidence, I consider that effects generated by the subdivision on the native vegetation located on adjoining sites can be adequately managed through the proposed pest control regime and conditions proposed around the restriction of cats on the properties.

5.2 The proposed subdivision will also introduce native planting on the site that would otherwise not be undertaken should the subdivision not occur (noting some planting of natives has recently been undertaken).

5.3 Overall, it is my opinion that adverse effects on biodiversity can be mitigated and in effect, the proposed native planting will have a positive effect on the environment.

6.0 Staff Report & Conditions

6.1 As noted in my evidence I disagree with Ms Swan's recommendation to decline consent to the proposal.

6.2 I do wish to clarify one point as stated in my evidence at Section 87, where I note that I agree with Ms Swan's recommendation to grant consent to the boundary adjustment. Ms Swan has since made me aware that she did not recommend that the boundary adjustment be approved in her Section 42A report, which I have subsequently re-read and confirm this is the case.

6.3 I do however consider that there is adequate information within the application to approve the boundary adjustment component of the application (as a standalone controlled activity), should the commissioner decide to refuse consent to the subdivision. The original application clearly sets out that a controlled activity boundary adjustment consent is sought and assesses the relevant controlled activity criteria.

6.4 I largely agree with Ms Swan's set of proposed conditions should the commissioner decide to grant consent, subject to those alterations suggested in my evidence.

6.5 Since my evidence was filed, I have discussed the proposed Condition 17 relating to proposed stormwater outfalls from the proposed vested road with Ms Swan and the Council Development Engineer Mr Martin Schutz (Condition queried at Paragraph 94 of my evidence). I have agreed that there are other alternatives to the scruffy dome outlets as shown on the engineering drawings and subsequently accept Ms Swans proposed wording and/or a similar alternative.

7.0 Summary

7.1 Overall, it is my planning opinion that effects can be suitably mitigated, the proposal is not contrary to objectives and policies of the Operative District Plan and is consistent with Part 2 of the Act.

Thank you and I am available to answer any questions.

Shae Crossan

22 August 2022