



Omahu Road Industrial Rezoning – Soils Assessment

prepared for

Hastings District Council

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The Brief

- 1 Describe those characteristics of the land relevant to its productive potential/“life supporting capacity”, and
- 2 The relative versatility of the land for productive relative to other plains zoned land within the Heretaunga Plains.

The Site

New data supplied 22 August 2012 now details the whole re-zoning proposal, which is to be done in two stages:

Stage 1 (which was omitted from the original brief)

- Area A East of Raupare Road to the Hastings urban boundary. This area is 3.8 ha and at present planted in a summerfruit orchard. The portion of the orchard fronting Omahu Road is weak growing, a reflection of low quality soils.
- Area B Raupare Road to Jarvis Road. 11.9 ha in area. The proposed industrial zone here cuts across a number of titles, some of which are small and already being utilized for non-agricultural/horticultural purposes. For those still being used for farming, the dominant land use appears to be annual cropping. There are no established orchards in this area.

Stage 2

- Area C Jarvis Road to Twyford Road. 8.9 ha in area. This area also has numerous small titles, with a significant proportion of the area comprising of dwellings and non-agricultural/horticultural activities. The proposed zone cuts across a small summerfruit and small kiwifruit orchard. These two orchards are already small and probably uneconomic and will be even more so once the land is rezoned.
- Area D The area to the west of Twyford Road. 11.9 ha in area. There are numerous small titles in this part of the zone too, and as much of the land adjacent to Omahu Road is of poor quality, there is not a lot of food production going on within the proposed rezoning area

apart from a recently established apple orchard on the corner of Twyford and Omaha Road.

Soil Types

The soil map of the Heretaunga Plains (1997) Plan No 2683 shows the predominant soil type on the proposed Omaha Road strips is 6, Twyford sandy loam.

Towards the western end of the strip, and also in the vicinity of Raupare Road, there are significant areas of Omaha stony gravels adjoining the Omaha Road boundary. These are very poor soils of little productive value except for the vineyards. Use of the small areas of these soils involved in the proposed rezoning for vineyards would be uneconomic.

The stormwater infiltration ponds are predominantly on 13S, Karamu silt loam/clay loam on sand.

Twyford sandy loam and Karamu silt loam/clay loam are versatile, highly productive soil.

There are some 1,420 ha of Twyford soils on the Heretaunga Plains, so the proposed industrial rezoning will remove around 30 ha or about 2% of this soil type from the Plains zone.

Total area of the Karamu soils is estimated to be 816 ha, so removal of about 2.5 ha for storm water infiltration ponds represents around 0.3% of this soil resource. (Page Bloomer, Versatile soils – productive land report for Hawke’s Bay Regional Council 14 June 2011)

3 The relative versatility of the land for productive uses relative to other Plains zoned land within the Heretaunga Plains.

In general terms, the land being rezoned can be considered less versatile for productive uses than other Plains zoned land within the Heretaunga Plains.

This is largely because a significant portion of it is already subdivided into small lots that do not allow the economies of scale necessary to allow traditional Plains zone land use for food production to be viable.

In addition, some of it is already being used for non-agricultural industrial use.

An issue that will arise, should the zoning go ahead that some of the larger titles will lose 100 metres off their frontage on Omaha Road, which will then make the near portions of these properties less versatile for Plains zone farming and cropping activities. This problem can probably be solved by

allowing amalgamation of the non-industrial zoned portion of these properties with adjacent Plains zoned properties.

Reverse sensitivity issues sometimes arise when urban land use encroaches into agricultural land. This is often a major issue in the case of land being rezoned for residential purposes, but in the case of industrial rezoning is generally not an issue. The proposed 6 metre wide stormwater swale located to the rear of the zone will provide a good buffer between the Plains zone and the new Industrial zone.

Summary

The proposed rezoning to industrial zone will take approximately 35 ha of versatile, high quality productive soils out of the Plains zone. This loss represents around 0.11% of the land use classes 1, 2 and 3 soils available on the Heretaunga Plains.

Due to a significant portion of the area to be rezoned to Industrial already in small titled, some of which are being used for industry, the land is considered less versatile than the Heretaunga Plains zone in general.