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SUBMISSION ON VARIATION 3 – ENABLING HOUSING SUPPLY TO THE PROPOSED WAIKATO DISTRICT PLAN - DECISIONS VERSION

TO: Waikato District Council (**WDC**)

NAME OF THE SUBMITTER: GDP Developments Limited (**GDP**)

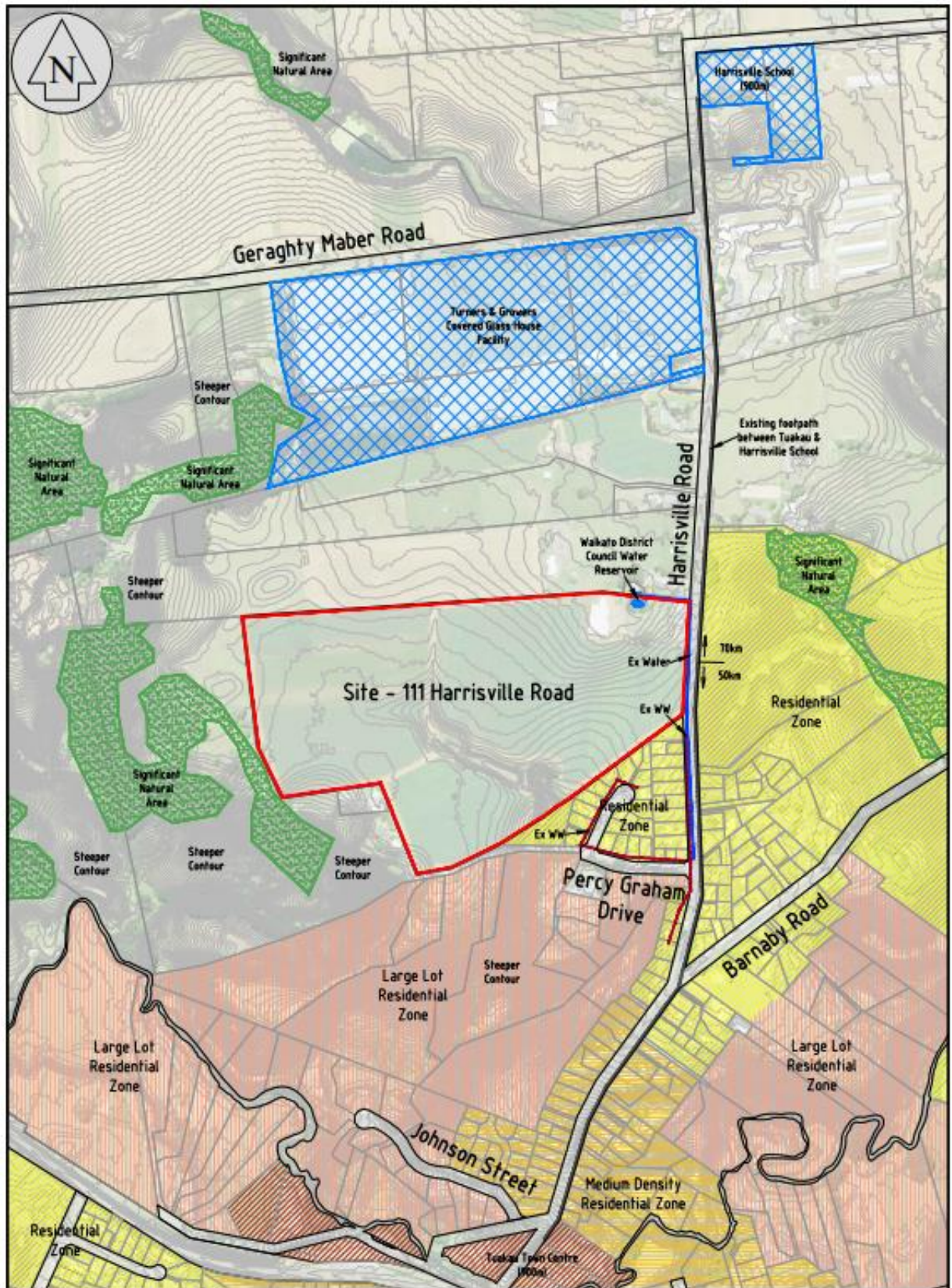
INTRODUCTION

1. This is a submission on Variation 3 to the Proposed Waikato District Plan (**PWDP**) - Decisions Version. Among other matters, Variation 3 proposes the rezoning of 446 sites, including the rezoning of 2 sites from General Rural to General Residential Zone.
2. GDP could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.
3. This submission relates to the planning maps which are proposed to be amended by Variation 3. Specifically, this submission relates to the planning map for Tuakau which is entitled “Proposed zoning detail – Tuakau”.
4. GDP’s submission seeks to amend the planning map for Tuakau to rezone the site at 111 Harrisville Road from General Rural to Medium Density Residential Zone 2 (**MDR2**), or in the less preferred alternative, to General Residential Zone. With that amendment, the planning map for Tuakau will better achieve the objectives of Variation 1, and the requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development, the Waikato Regional Policy Statement, and Council’s own growth strategies.



BACKGROUND

- The subject site is owned by Gerardus and Yvonne Aarts (**The Aarts**) and is located at 111 Harrisville Road, Tuakau. The site is 21ha in area and is located to the north of the Tuakau township as outlined in red on the plan following:



6. The subject site is identified as being required to meet housing demand in the Future Proof Strategy, Waikato 2070 and the Tuakau Structure Plan. The notified version of the PWDP rezoned the land to General Residential however the Hearings Panel decided to instead apply the Rural zone. This decision was not particular to the subject site, but was rather a ‘first principles’, blanket decision that all land containing Class 1 and 2 soils should not be rezoned for residential development, and is currently the subject of an appeal with the Environment Court.

REASONS FOR THE SUBMISSION

Housing Supply

7. Rezoning the subject site at 111 Harrisville Road is a more appropriate way to meet the objectives of the Variation, in particular MRZ2-O2 which requires “a well-functioning urban environment that enables all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future”. Including the subject site in the MDR2 zone will make a meaningful contribution to achieving sufficient development capacity at Tuakau and the Waikato generally. The development plan for the site is for 220 residential lots as per the below:



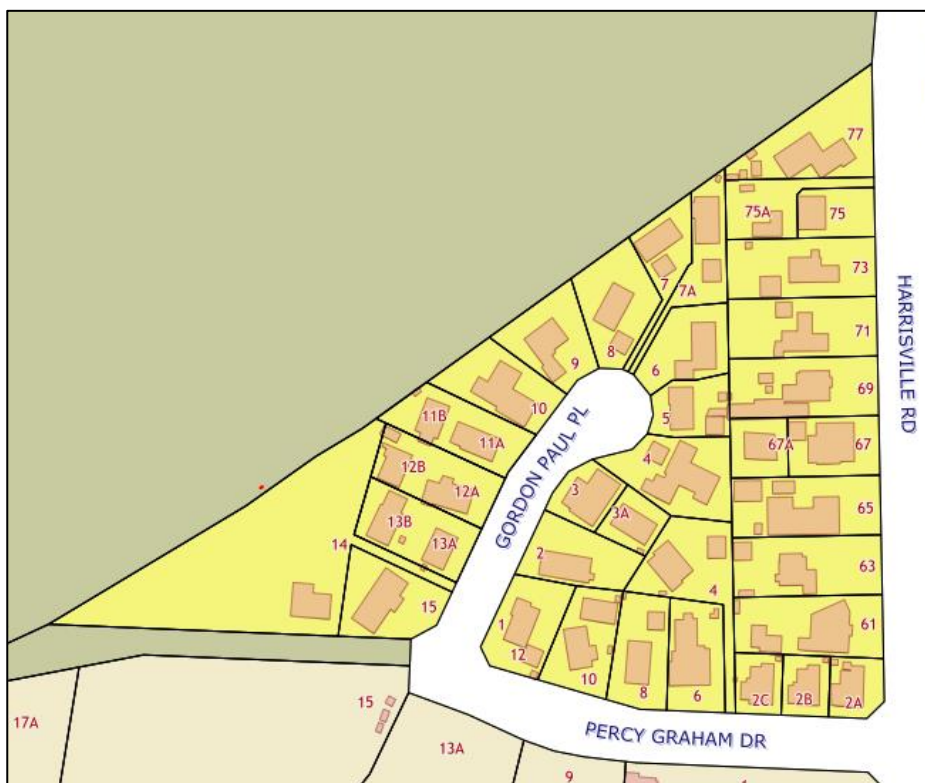
8. The proposed lots are “infrastructure ready” in that they can be serviced with water, wastewater and stormwater in the short term. In addition, the lots are “feasible” and “can reasonably be expected to be realised” given that:
- (a) GDP is a Pukekohe based development company which has a signed agreement to purchase the subject site from the Aarts.
 - (b) GDP is ready to progress the development of the site as soon as an appropriate residential zone is in place. This is quite a different situation to the majority of sites in Tuakau which are owner/occupied with no immediate intention to develop;
 - (c) There are no significant impediments to development given that:
 - The majority of the land has a relatively regular contour which has enabled a very straight forward road network and a logical and consistent lot layout. This means that the development will have a high level of efficiency and the land will be well utilised;
 - A specialist report has confirmed that there are no wetlands on the site;
 - The site is not subject to the National Policy Statement on Highly Productive Land due to the fact that the site is identified in a growth strategy for residential development in the next 10 years;
 - The separation from the motorcross track will ensure that reverse sensitivity effects will not be generated.
9. It should be noted that a large number of the sites proposed to be rezoned in Tuakau are not “feasible” and able to be “reasonably expected to be realised” given constraints such as a steep contour or the fact that they are already developed for an urban purpose and, therefore, are unlikely to be redeveloped in the near future.

Well Functioning Urban Environment

10. Objective MRZ2-O2 seeks to ensure that intensification occurs in the context of a well-functioning urban environment. This means that an area such as Tuakau should be developed in a way which is logical, efficient and ensures that residents have a high level of amenity. Rezoning the subject site will achieve these criteria as:
- It is logical to rezone the subject land residential as it is only some 900m from the town centre and therefore will form a “walkable catchment” where residents live in close proximity to retail, transport and other services. It is also located just below the Harrisville School, meaning future residents will not only have easy access to the school, but that the school will effectively become a “book end” to the Tuakau settlement.

- It is efficient to develop the subject land, given that it adjoins existing residential development and therefore has ready access to infrastructure and amenities such a footpath. Furthermore, the relatively regular shape of the site and the easy contour means that the site can be used efficiently and thereby create a reasonable yield of new consistently shaped residential sections.
- Future residents on the subject land will have a high level of amenity, derived from the easy access to the school and the amenities within the town centre, but also due to the on-site amenity that will be provided through the pocket park, streetscapes and the relatively spacious sections.

11. The adjoining sites which are accessed off Percy Graham Drive and Gordon Paul Place are currently zoned General Residential. If the subject land was rezoned to MDR2, then these sites could also be rezoned MDR2 so as to achieve a consistent zoning pattern, which retains a reasonable walking distance to the centre. These sites are shown in yellow below:



12. It is acknowledged that the subject site is on the urban fringe of Tuakau and that WDC has identified the urban fringe as a qualifying matter. Should the urban fringe qualifying matter be retained following decisions on submissions, then by way of alternative, but less preferred relief, seeks that the General Residential zone be applied in the alternative to the MDR2 zone.

Credibility

13. Both the former Franklin District Council and the Waikato District Council have identified the subject site as being suitable and necessary, for residential development in their growth strategies. These strategies include the Tuakau Structure Plan, the Future Proof Strategy and Waikato 2070. All of these strategies involved significant public consultation, workshops and were adopted by the Council.
14. Given this long-established position that the subject land should be zoned for residential development, it is not appropriate to preclude the site from a variation which is actively rezoning land for housing supply.. This is not only contrary to the relevant sections of the RMA which require district councils to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement (which includes a requirement to implement the Future Proof Strategy) but also detracts from the Council’s credibility, as the District Plan would be contradictory to Council’s own strategies.
15. This inconsistency is exacerbated by the Government’s release of the NPS-HPL, which confirmed a national policy direction that land identified for growth – such as the subject site - is not to be protected for productive uses.

DECISIONS SOUGHT

16. GDP seeks that Variation 3 to the PWDP – Decisions Version is approved subject to the following amendments:
 - (a) The Planning Map entitled “Proposed Zoning Detail – Tuakau” is amended to rezone the land at 111 Harrisville Road, Tuakau is from General Rural to MDR2 or, in the less preferred alternative, to General Residential;
 - (b) The Planning Map entitled “Proposed Zoning Detail – Tuakau” is amended to rezone the existing sites accessed off Percy Graham Drive and Gordon Paul Place from General Residential zone to MDR2;
 - (c) Any consequential amendments to the text of the PWDP – Decisions Version that are required to give effect to (a) and (b) above.
17. GDP wishes to be heard in support of its submission.

27 September 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Nairn". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

SARAH NAIRN

Senior Planner

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