

Rural Zones

We are reviewing and updating our current District Plan – looking ahead to the next 10 to 15 years. The Kaipara District Plan is essentially the ‘rule book’, which is applied to manage development, activities and the environment within the district.

The District Plan influences the future shape and feel of our district, which is why it’s important for Kaipara communities to be informed and get involved. Its purpose is to protect our environment, historic locations and cultural tāonga for future generations, through sustainable management of our resources, while supporting our communities to develop and grow.

We’re seeking input on our initial draft ahead of the statutory process, scheduled to commence in mid-2023. This Draft District Plan does not have any ‘legal weight’ and the Operative District Plan must continue to be relied upon.

The Kaipara district is predominantly a rural district, with around 90% of the land currently zoned Rural in the Operative Kaipara District Plan 2013.



The rural environment is valuable to the people of Kaipara. It provides a local source of food, employment, and income supporting the district’s rural and coastal settlements. It has natural character values and is a desirable place for people to live and work.

Council has responsibilities to protect highly versatile soils and ensure the land remains available for primary production activities. The Kaipara District Spatial Plans and the Kaipara Kai initiative found that there is a strong desire to increase and diversify food production and protect the productive rural land resource for current and future generations.

The current urban growth in areas such as Mangawhai and the demand for rural lifestyle development conflicts with the goals of the productive rural environment and has resulted in ongoing fragmentation of highly productive land.

What are we proposing?

The Draft District Plan proposes three rural zones:

- Rural Production Zone (containing the most productive land in the district)
- General Rural zone (the balance of rural land)
- Rural Lifestyle zone (1-2ha sized lifestyle lots).

There will also be a settlement zone (covering small rural and coastal settlements across the district).

The key driver for the three rural zones is to direct activities to where they are most appropriately located and to enable greater productivity within the rural environment. In particular, the proposed approach seeks to:

- Prioritise the Rural Production Zone for farming activities that rely on the productive potential of the soil.
- Direct rural lifestyle development to appropriate locations next to settlements and urban areas (e.g. Mangawhai and Dargaville) as a transition from rural to urban.
- Ensure activities in the Rural Production Zone and General Rural Zone are used predominately for primary production.
- Support well-functioning rural and coastal settlements that provide for the well-being and needs of local communities.

How much is changing?



NOT MUCH

A LOT



How will I know which rural zones my property is in?

Areas of rural zones are mapped in the Draft District Plan. When you search for your property in the e-plan map, it will tell you which of the rural zones is applicable to your land.

If you are in a smaller coastal or rural settlement, then your property is most likely zoned as settlement zone.

Can I still subdivide off a rural lifestyle sized (12ha) lot?

There are opportunities to subdivide a rural lifestyle sized lot (1-2ha) in the three rural zones.

However, this is primarily encouraged in the rural lifestyle zone where you will be able to subdivide 1-2ha lots (minimum 2ha on average) as a controlled activity.

If you are in a rural production or general rural zone, you will only be able to subdivide a rural lifestyle lot where there is an 'environment benefit.' For example, if you protect an area of bush or wetland. The settlement zone provides for subdivision with minimum lot sizes ranging from 1,000-3,000m², in size depending on the availability of infrastructure services (wastewater and water supply).

Can I subdivide my rural property, and if so, to what size?

Yes, we are proposing a package of subdivision provisions across the rural zones which includes general subdivision, minor boundary adjustments, boundary relocations, environmental benefits, reserve, and esplanade incentive subdivision options.

In the rural production zone, the minimum lot size for subdivision as a controlled activity is 20ha, dropping down to 10ha as a discretionary activity.

In the general rural zone, the minimum lot size is 20ha as a controlled discretionary activity.

Environmental benefit subdivision can be undertaken in both rural zones and has a minimum lot size of 1ha, provided a 20ha balance is provided.

An incentive lot subdivision to create a reserve is also available in the general rural and rural production zones.

What kind of housing can I put on my rural property?

All lots in the rural environment may contain a single residential dwelling.

Larger lots, over 40ha, in the general rural and rural production zones may have multiple dwellings to provide for worker's accommodation, a rental income, or allow multiple generations to live on the farm.

In addition, all lots in the rural production, general rural and rural lifestyle zones may have a minor residential unit of 90m² excluding decks and garages.

Lots in the settlement zone may have a minor residential unit provided they are over 1,000m².

Why are the settlements not split into residential and commercial zones?

There are a range of settlements in Kaipara that have been given a settlement zoning, ranging from large settlements such as Paparoa, to smaller clusters of housing such as Kaihu and small coastal settlements such as Omamari and Glinks Gully. The settlement zone is intended to recognise the distinctive character and function of the settlement and enable an appropriate mix of residential, community and small-scale commercial activities to occur. Limits have been placed on the scale of commercial activities to ensure they are in keeping with the existing character of settlements and to protect the amenity that local residents enjoy.

Summary

- We need to protect valuable versatile soils, better support primary production activities and ensure rural lifestyle development occurs in the right places.
- The Draft District Plan aligns with Kaipara Kai and the desire from the community to ensure Kaipara makes the most of its productive land resource.
- Using three rural zones and a settlement zone means that the right activities end up in the right parts of the rural environment and it provides for a range of living options.