

TOPIC – Coastal Tasman Area	TRMP Chapter 7 (Section 7.3)
<b>INTRODUCTION TO COASTAL TASMAN AREA</b>	
<p>The Coastal Tasman Area (“CTA”) is an area of land between Motueka and the Waimea Plains and is adjacent to the coast. It was created in 2003 in response to strong development pressures on the more productive Rural 1 land.</p> <p>The CTA is remarkable in the Tasman District for its landscape, rural and coastal amenity, and its planning regime. The CTA includes a number of zones, but most notably the majority Rural 3 Zone (3,629 hectares – 60.7%).</p>	
<b>VISION AND INTENTIONS FOR THE CTA</b>	
<p>For the Rural 3 Zone, the intention was to retain an overtly rural character, but to integrate more rural lifestyle living in appropriate locations. Important outcomes were: the protection of land of high productive value, the protection of rural character and rural landscape values, enhancement of ecological values and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>It was originally intended to provide full water and wastewater servicing, but this was later withdrawn in favour of on-site wastewater treatment and disposal, and on-site water storage.</p> <p>Arguably (because it is not explicitly stated) the Rural 3 concept had three principle objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide more rural living opportunities;</li> <li>2. To retain the best land of high productive value, and opportunities for its use; and</li> <li>3. To retain rural character, amenities, and rural landscapes, as well as the progressive development of natural character and ecological outcomes.</li> </ol> <p>The CTA also contains Rural Residential zones (although these are legacy zones that predate the CTA) which are more overtly for rural residential living purposes.</p> <p>The CTA also contains Rural 1 and Rural 2 Zone locations where development is generally discouraged.</p>	
<b>OUTCOMES</b>	
<p>Since 2005 the Rural 3 Zone has achieved a range of positive outcomes, but also has not satisfactorily achieved some of the outcomes that were intended.</p> <p><b>Rural Lifestyle Living:</b> The combined yield of lots in the Rural 3 and Rural Residential Zones is approximately 700 which is approximately half of the yield that was projected over 20 years (currently at year 17 since 2003). The Coastal Tasman lifestyle living properties that have been created are very high quality and provide an exceptional standard of living to residents. The pattern of development in the Rural 3 Zone has mainly been to create rural residential style lots. Higher densities have only been achieved in two developments – where wastewater reticulation has been provided. The Rural Residential Zones invariably produce low density lots.</p> <p><b>Retention of Productive Land:</b> Rural 3 Zone is comprised of Class B and Class E land. Most new residential and rural-residential scale lots have been established on Class E land. New lots on Class B land are typically smaller subdivisions producing fewer new allotments. The exception is Tasman Bay Estates (formerly Harakeke) which is on Class B land.</p> <p><b>Land Values:</b> Development opportunities are likely to have increased land values. Indirectly, this places increased pressure on primary producers by increasing rates, and making acquisition of land for production more expensive. More residents also increases the potential for cross-boundary effects and constraints on producers.</p> <p><b>Rural Character and Amenity:</b> Rural character remains relatively high, but principally because a low number of developments have been undertaken. Where Rural 3 developments have occurred, rural character appears not to have been adequately maintained. Nevertheless, high levels of visual amenity (as distinct from rural character) have been maintained. In other words, once developed, Rural 3 development areas remain looking attractive, but have not remained strongly “rural”.</p> <p><b>Public Access and Natural Values:</b> The ongoing development of the public access network is a strong positive outcome. Some natural character and biodiversity outcomes have been achieved, but, with a lesser number of developments and a pattern of lower density rural residential and less common land, the outcomes are less that was anticipated.</p>	

**Cultural Heritage:** Some subdivision applications have considered cultural heritage considerations. A Pā site was returned to Manawhenua Iwi. Te Tauihu Iwi are increasingly requiring cultural monitors to be on-site during earthworks. Accidental discovery protocols are typically in place.

**Water Quality:** Each lot in the CTA (except around Mapua) requires an on-site wastewater system. In some catchments there are many tens or even hundreds of on-site wastewater systems. High treatment standards are required. Some water bodies are degraded, but this is more likely due to failing pre-CTA systems.

**Sediment:** Erosion of sediment into streams and rivers from development sites has been a significant problem, and is very hard to control. Fine sediment smothers life in freshwater streams and estuaries, and reduces clarity. Historic forestry, and now residential development, has caused significant sedimentation in water bodies.

## MANDATORY STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

**Proposed National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land, 2019 (NPS-HPL):** This NPS is expected to take effect mid 2020. It is unclear to what extent land within the CTA may qualify as Highly Productive Land. CTA provisions may need to be reviewed to ensure alignment with the final NPS-HPL.

**National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health, 2011 (NES-CS):** This NES requires that land affected by contaminants in soil is identified, assessed and, if necessary, remediated to make it safe for proposed use. This affects land in the CTA.

## ISSUES

The CTA, and the Rural 3 Zone in particular, were ambitious, novel and relatively sophisticated. There are great challenges in the task of trying to meld such a range of outcomes into a vision and planning framework. The CTA has achieved many excellent outcomes, but here the difficulties are discussed:

### Planning and Development

There are a number of key difficulties with the planning and policy framework for the CTA. (Circumstances that result in these difficulties are fully explained in the full report.)

First, there are no explicit objectives for the CTA, resulting in uncertainty as to exactly what is intended to be achieved. The policies are very broad, and many compete with one another. Assessment and decision-making is highly uncertain and challenging for applicants and planning practitioners. This is a disincentive to pursuing development proposals by applicants, and encourages Council staff to take a risk-averse assessment approach.

The Chapter 7 policy framework and the CTA Design Guide (CTADG) are inconsistent. The CTADG establishes a high expectation of development potential that is not backed up by the policies. Further, there are inconsistencies within the CTADG itself.

Abandonment of wastewater servicing has shifted the pattern of development towards lower density and a more rural residential character, rather than clustered residential as the CTADG promotes. Lower housing density and planning uncertainty has made developments financially very difficult.

As a result, there has been a considerable level of waste in Rural 3 processes to date.

### Reduced Viability for Developments

The removal of wastewater servicing has (1) increased the costs for developers and purchasers (2) reduced the density (3) changed the character to more rural-residential (less rural character), and (4) reduced the financial viability due to the lower lot yield. The cost:risk ratio is often prohibitive for truly innovative proposals.

Because the policy framework was not updated following the removal of the servicing, there is now a disconnect between the policy and what can be achieved.

### Challenges from Residents

New residents, themselves often the beneficiaries of Rural 3 subdivisions, are often very resistant to further development and can make ongoing Rural 3 development increasingly difficult, uncertain, drawn-out and expensive. The process has a high level of discretion and any aspect can be challenged.

### **Suitability of the Rural 3 Product**

The CTA has produced a reasonable number of high-quality living environments that are desirable and sought-after. However, a common criticism is that the Rural 3 model promotes a pattern of development that has little social cohesion, and that residents are entirely car-dependent. The lack of policy support for any commercial or community activities limits the ability to create a “heart” or a community node.

The CTA land is resilient to natural hazards, and provides the ability to build upon existing population centres and high quality living opportunities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is important to note that this evaluation has been backward-looking – investigating what has occurred to date in the CTA. Staff are not yet in a position to give strong recommendations in terms of the direction that the CTA and the Rural 3 Zone should be taken into the future. That will depend on future research, and public consultation and feedback.

However, broadly speaking, the options that could be considered at this stage and which we would recommend consulting on during the public consultation phase of the plan review are:

1. Try to achieve the original R3 vision of strong clustering, extensive development, and a rural character
2. Stick with the status quo R3 – how it’s been implemented since 2003 – but with some improvements
3. Turn it into (more or less) one big Rural Residential Zone
4. Call it off – Revert to R1/R2

These are the broad areas of consideration for the CTA and particularly the Rural 3 Zone based on the evaluation to date.

A brief set of recommendations is provided here for each of the main zones and geographic areas.

#### **The Coastal Tasman Area**

- It is recommended that the CTA be retained as there is still value in the concept.
- Changes should be made to the boundary in order to:
  - Remove Māpua and the rural residential areas of Seaton Valley and Ruby Bay.
  - Consider amendments around the settlements of Tasman Village and Mahana.

#### **Rural 3 Zone**

Provisionally, it is recommended that development in the Rural 3 Zone should be allowed to continue in a generally similar way to which it has been occurring to date. But in addition it is recommended to:

- Provide greater clarity and/or simplicity around development opportunities. This can be achieved in a number of ways including:
  - Use of Zones; and/or
  - Use of information overlays and/or development opportunity overlays; and/or
  - Use of policy/outcome hierarchies.
- Be more explicit about the outcomes sought.
- Direct development to more sustainable and self-contained community structures by promoting appropriate locations, and to promote consolidation of existing settlement areas.

**Māpua Village and Māpua Rural Residential**

- Māpua village and the Māpua Rural Residential Area (possibly excluding the area to the north of Pomona Road) should be excluded from the CTA.
- Reconsider zoning and policy guidance of these (particularly the Seaton Valley area) in light of Future Development Strategy.

**Waimea Inlet Rural Residential**

- Reconsider the boundaries and whether more or less development should be enabled.

**Northern Rural 1 / Rural 2**

- Continue with a strong restriction on development in the existing R1 and R2 zones along the Mariri Coast.

**Kina Peninsula**

- Undertake a thorough review of zones and outcomes.
- Consider enabling further development in locations where there is walking and cycling connectivity to Tasman Village.
- Take a conservative (i.e. restrictive) view of further development on the peninsula, particularly north of Kina Beach Road, due to significant values.

**Tasman Village**

- Give greater recognition to the village, as it contains desirable community foundations (e.g. shop, schools, home businesses, strong community).
- Consider providing for an appropriate level of growth that retains the character of the township, but greater resilience from sea level rise.
- Support any growth with community wastewater servicing and hazard mitigation.

**Tasman Great Taste Trail**

- Develop a policy framework for the TGTT. There is a need for policy as to how key activities (e.g. accommodation, services, and attractions) are regulated.

**Rules**

- Review rule framework to ensure that appropriate activities and levels of built development are provided for.
- Simplify the consent status for boundary adjustments.

**Infrastructure**

- Consider whether Council could provide cluster wastewater systems to enable more compact communities, reduced costs for home-owners, and reduced change of pollution of land and water from large numbers of on-site systems.
- Council to develop better systems to take and use development contributions to upgrade roads in the CTA in order to facilitate development.