

# Memorandum



To Theresa Burkhardt  
Policy Planner - District Plan, FNDC

From Melean Absolum  
Landscape Architect, MALtd

Date 9 June 2025

Dear Theresa,

## **SUBMISSION 420, MURIWHENUA INCORPORATED**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

This memorandum records my initial advice prepared on behalf of Far North District Council (FNDC) in response to Submission 420 from Muriwhenua Incorporated (MI) on the Proposed District Plan (PDP) requesting a zone change for various parcels of land at Te Hāpua.

The submission seeks, amongst other matters, that thirteen identified parcels of land<sup>1</sup> along Te Hāpua Road, from its intersection with Spirits Bay Road south-eastwards, be rezoned from Maori Purpose - Rural to a new zone, Maori Purpose Rural Settlement.

I note that the Submitters evidence, should any be provided, was due on 12 May. As none has been forthcoming, I have relied on the following information in preparing this advice:

- MI submission number 420;
- PDP provisions as notified;
- PDP maps including zones and Natural Environment Overlays;
- Google maps including Street View.

No site visit has been made to the subject land.

### **ZONING SOUGHT**

Submission 420 does not include a set of new provisions for the zone sought. Instead, notified provisions in the Maori Purpose - Urban and Maori Purpose - Rural zones are referred to and requested to be included, or amended and included. In summary, the submission seeks a special zone which enables urban type development within a rural setting.

The submission provides an explanation for seeking this new zone and records the need to provide adequate housing for the iwi which is not at risk of long term sea level rise, and which enables appropriate support for the community in a village setting. They also seek the

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<sup>1</sup> Shown in Diagram 5 of the submission, page 12

ability to establish a variety of employment opportunities, including tourism, small commercial enterprises and aquaculture.

## ASSESSMENT

Firstly, I note that Diagram 5 in the submission makes reference to what appear to be four more detailed plans numbered:

- CO02 - Upper Area containing Areas 7, 8 and 9;
- CO03 - Lower Area containing Areas 1, 1A, 2 and 3;
- CO04 - Village Area containing Areas 4, 5 and 6; and
- CO05 - Central Area containing Areas 10, 11 and 12.

I cannot find these plans on the Council submissions website.

Having carefully reviewed the thirteen areas identified in Diagram 5 I note the following:

- Areas 1, 1a, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are all within the Coastal Environment (CE) but no other overlays;
- Areas 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 have no overlays;
- Areas 8, and 9 are close to Outstanding Natural Character area (ONC96/25<sup>2</sup>); and
- Areas 10 and 11 are close to the CE.

From my observations of the various land areas, obtained from Google maps and Google Street view, the more inland ones are largely covered in low growing native vegetation. Occasional tracks and clearings can be found adjacent to or within the majority of them, with the number and extent of clearances increasing from north-west to south-east. Areas 4, 5 and 6, the closest to the coast, are largely cleared of native vegetation and each contain a number of buildings.

The existing settlement pattern at Te Hāpua tends to be strung along the existing roads and tracks, as well as the coastal edge. The layout of the thirteen areas proposed to be rezoned do not appear to form a cohesive centre for the development of a village. They range in elevation from 20m (at Areas 5 and 6) to 100m above sea level (at Area 8) and span more than 3km from the north-west (at Area 8) to the south-east (at Area 5).

It may be that the missing drawings CO02 - CO05 provide more information on the mix of land-uses anticipated within the thirteen areas, but based on the information available, I consider there may well be both adverse landscape and visual effects from development of the type being sought, particularly on the more elevated and least cleared areas (Areas 7, 8 and 9).

Because of the low growing nature of much of the vegetative cover and the elevation of some of the sites, it is likely that new development, whether for residential, commercial or employment purposes, will be highly visible, especially on Sites 7, 8 and 9.

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<sup>2</sup> Salt marsh and wetlands in the upper reaches of the Parengarenga Harbour

From my observations, it appears additional development would be possible, particularly in Areas 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. However, without more information on what is proposed in each area, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions.



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