

Maurice Newell 281.3

The problem started in the 1980s as a result of drought, very high interest

rates, as well as farmers needing to pay off debt. The minimum subdivision size at the time was I believe 50ha. Most of these blocks weren't added to neighbouring farms. They were bought by the early wave of lifestyle block owners and generally were never farmed to their potential. Subsequently these were allowed to be subdivided down to 4ha with proof that they would be farmed intensively. This was never monitored and I have yet to see any that would have made much more than enough to pay the rates. Around 20 years ago 4ha blocks were allowed, seemingly without control.

Some years ago two planners spoke to the staff at Property Brokers, where I asked about why there haven't been a lot more of what at the time were called Residential 4A and 4B. We were told that the planners had looked at demand for this lot size over the last 10 plus years and extrapolated the numbers for future growth. For the last 12 years I have been selling 4ha blocks to families who only want one hectare or less, so using previous sales as a guide to demand was idiotic. According to the stats I have seen, there are currently 5670 blocks, of less than 8ha. If these average 5ha and we assume half these owners would have been happy with 1ha, we may well have 11,340ha, still being farmed efficiently.

We were then told that the imposition of 20ha minimums was to protect good soils, but the proposed plan seems to allow 4ha block subdivision on the best soils in the district and much of the Lismore soil is in the 20ha minimum. I don't believe any rezoning has been on the basis of soils, rather access to services. At the moment a typical 4ha block would sell for around \$460,000 inclusive of GST near Oxford. A 20ha block would be twice that, with the result that buyers will see it as a land bank, with the opposite of the result you were expecting.

My proposal is the creation of satellite villages in the way the Mandeville subdivision has been done, with a range of section sizes, none bigger than 1ha, around a central hub. If one was centered in Eyrewell between the Waimakariri and South Eyre Road, it could have community water and sewer, with a development contribution going to a future bridge over the Waimakariri. The demand for a bridge is already high, with the potential fuel saving possibly making it attractive to central government. Much of this land is owned by Ngai Tahu and should not be used for dairying, so rezoning would make it economically viable to change from dairying. Similar subdivisions near Oxford and Cust as well as Fernside should reduce demand for larger blocks.

I have come across a perfect example of a property which should have been left in the 4ha zone, but in the proposed plan is now 20ha minimums. It is 128 Baynons Road and straddles Clarkville and East Eyreton. We have been told by Council staff that it is classified as soil importance 3, but most is straight shingle, so much so that Ready Mix were interested in it for shingle extraction. I had no involvement with this property when I made my submission, but was subsequently asked to sell it. Recently we asked two soil scientist to do a report on the soil, but one said she would not have been able to complete it in time. Another said he was doing reports for the WDC, so thought there would be a conflict of interest. I believed that there would not be a conflict as we wanted a report stating what the soil is, not an opinion on zoning.

One has emailed us (below in red) verifying our opinion. This property has been singled out for some reason, as it does not sit within the zone and is surrounded by 4ha blocks.

---

**From:** Katherine McCusker <Katherine.McCusker@pdp.co.nz>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 7, 2023 12:05 PM

**To:** Maurice Newell <mauricen@pb.co.nz>

**Subject:** RE: 128 Baynons Road, Clarkville

Hi Maurice

I have had a quick look at the soil maps and I agree the Rakaia soils appear to be very stoney for a LUC 3 soil and just as stoney as the soils on the Ngai Tahu farms that are Lismore 2a.1 which are LUC 4 and not considered to be versatile productive land.

It would be good to see your client's submission and what they are objecting to/any changes needed in the proposed district plan. The proposed District plan is not a quick easy read so I need to know which section they want changes to before I can work out how much time it would take to do this job.

Ngā mihi | Regards

**Katherine McCusker** | Farm Environment  
Consultant

**PATTLE DELAMORE PARTNERS LTD**

Mob - +64 22 0710255 | Office - +64 3 345 7169

Extract from the proposed plan

The submissions from Mr Waller [89.1] and Survus [205.1] are requesting applications, there is a potential that those who had previously been advised by Council not to apply for a subdivision consent because it would likely be declined, could feel aggrieved. For the above reasons I do not agree with the submission from John Waller and Survus. 895. The Eyrewell submissions [300.3] to [300.11] wanted the land under which the dairy farm is located to be zoned RLZ. The land has LUC class 4 soils, which have a very high drainage capacity due to their stony texture. The high drainage constraint is alleviated through irrigation, which potentially reduces the impact of the soil constraint enabling the land to be used for dairy production. Because of irrigation this land could be considered as being highly productive. I do not believe

that the land should be rezoned to RLZ on the basis that it is not perceived to be highly productive land.

This raises the question of whether the Council are actively supporting dairying on soils most likely to leach nitrates into groundwater.

R

Regarding my submission to allow all applications that were received by the Council prior to the District plan having immediate effect. An example of an application that was denied by Council when it should have been processed in the time available. (From the owner, in blue, below)

The application was lodged and payment made and acknowledged on 13/05/21

47 days later on 29/06/21 the council requested a geotechnical report provided for all proposed sections

On 27/07/21 the completed geotech report was sent to the council.

Then on 23/09/21, 58 days later we received notification of the changes to the district plan coming into immediate effect.

Many of these people have spent in excess of \$30,000, when the Council staff would have known that they should have refused to accept the application in the first place as acknowledged in the extract included.