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Newstead

Hamilton

**My Submission is Opposing Tainui's Submission for Re-zoning of 82 Hectares of Land located on the eastern side of the Waikato Expressway which bounds Ruakura and Davison Roads, from Rural Zoning to Industrial Zoning.**

I have focused my opposing submission on the following subjects,

- **Rural Activity**
- **Land Connectivity**
- **Traffic Modelling**
- **Quality Soils**

### **Rural Activity.**

The subject land is currently zoned rural. The Newstead community has always been of the understanding from WDC that the land on the eastern side of the then Proposed Waikato Expressway would remain rural zoned. The Waikato Expressway is a fiscal boundary as such offers control of any urban and commercial creep into a rural environment. Knowing this has allowed confidence from local residents to establish several small family oriented businesses on uneconomic smaller land areas which has enriched the local community.

Apart from the long established LIC farm and in recent years two primary industry farms such as Lye Farm and Scott Farm. The smaller businesses that I refer to a smaller horticultural blocks, two pre-school Child Care Centres, Riding for the Disabled Centre, Zenders Café and Function facility, Willowbrook Bed & Breakfast and Function facility and Camarosa Café, Restaurant and Horticultural products, I am sure there are other small family enterprises.

On hearing of the Tainui Group Holdings submission, I contacted 19 neighbours living close to the subject property inviting them to a meeting to discuss the submission which was to be held at Zenders Café the following day.

It was staggering how word of the meeting spread so quickly. In attendance at this meeting was the Eureka WDC councillor who will confirm that 92 Newstead residents signed the attendance register and I know of 17 residents who did not sign the register. Not one person spoke in support of Tainui Group Holdings submission.

### **Land Connectivity.**

It is noted in Tainui Group Holdings submission that the subject land is virtually connected to the land on the Western side of the Waikato Expressway. What a lot of nonsense. It's like stating that you are nearly pregnant.

In fact the narrowest distance measured between the Western side and the Eastern side of Tainui Group Holdings land is 115 meters which is beside the Expressway railway over bridge. Most of the land is separated by the Waikato Expressway by a distance of at least 160 meters.

The distance from the eastern boundary of the subject land to my property on Ruakura Road is 22 meters and the distance from my properties eastern boundary which spans Kiwi Rail's Hautapu Branch line to LIC's 260 hectare farm is also 22 meters.

Should the "TGH" submission be approved then I would suggest the lid on Pandora's Box is wide open for other local land owners who's land is currently zoned rural to have a strong case to claim for a zone change.

Tainui Group Holdings also own 257.26 hectares on the northern side of the Hamilton – Tauranga railway line, as this land is already on the western side of the Waikato Expressway this land should obviously be the submitter's first choice for Industrial zoning.

### **Traffic Modelling.**

As part of Tainui Group Holdings submission for the (Hearing's) process to change the land zoning on the western side of the Waikato Expressway to allow for an Inland Port they were required to provide several technical reports to support their submission. One of these reports was a Traffic Modelling Report which I am sure will be publicly available. My copy of this report has been loaned to a Planner for reference purposes.

However, I clearly remember that the reports traffic modelling stated the number of yearly traffic movements along Ruakura Road when the Inland Port was operating as predicted. This huge number of vehicle movements when divided up to per day and per hour resulted in a staggering vehicle movement every 34 seconds of the day, seven days a week, fifty two weeks of the year along the existing Ruakura Road. Many of these movements being heavy vehicles. In fact it states in their models that staff employed at LIC will need to queue up on leaving their premises.

If the subject land of 82 hectares should ever be rezoned Industrial and each tenanted building occupied 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of land and after deducting internal roads there could be approx. 120 premises each with a staff level of least 15 people who would own vehicles adds a further 1,800 twice daily (3,600) traffic movements plus additional service, delivery vehicles, each premises with 15 movements in and out would add a further 3,600 traffic movements per day.

As the newly built extension of Ruakura Road will be classified as SHWY 26, this road connects to the Waikato Expressway and is three to six metres higher than the subject lands ground level. All the above estimated traffic movements added to the Traffic Modelling predicted vehicle movements of one vehicle movement every 34 seconds will create a massive logistical and safety problem for all road uses.

Connections to the existing roads, being Davison and Ruakura Roads and the new aligned Ruakura Road have not been designed for such connecting traffic or the volumes as mentioned above and will not be able to absorb such a huge increase in the traffic movements.

## Quality Soils.

The 82 hectares are recognised as quality horticultural soils and should not be used for any other purposes and subsequently be lost forever under tar-seal and concrete when they are capable of providing food for the local NZ population and export markets.

As evidence of the quality of these soils I have attached details referenced from the Hamilton Public Library in the following publications. NZ Soil Bureau. Soil Survey Report 31 Hamilton. Soils of Ruakura. Window of the Waikato. Summary of soils occurring on the Ruakura Agricultural Centre. S.J. Franklin. MAF Qual Hamilton and P.L. Singleton. DSIR. Land Resources.

The soils on the subject land are classified as (1A) & (1B) which are described as Soils of high actual or potential value for food production. Soils classified as (1A) as soils of high actual value for food production and (1B) as soils of high potential value for food production. Local soils in the Newstead area have a very long history of producing many edible food crops, however, unfortunately lifestyle subdivision has reduced the area required for viably horticultural enterprises to succeed.

It is rare today to have the likes of 82 hectares of prime horticultural land which is uninterrupted with houses, buildings and gully's remaining in such a prime location close to a major city which obviously offers employment, close to major transport routes for distribution, soils that do not require high inputs of fertilisers which result in leaching and very minimal use of irrigation water to grow successful crops. Areas like Newstead are naturally sheltered from most of the notorious elements of the weather.

There have been several recent news items regarding the loss of such prime horticultural land in recent years due to the encroachment of new housing estates, lifestyle subdivision and commercial enterprises, this loss is estimated at being 65% of the elite soils throughout NZ, all being in close proximity to major cities. I have included as a reference as to what Horticultural NZ and the Minister of the Environment, the Right Honourable David Parker have finally realised and are now determined to introduce appropriate legislation to protect such productive soils which are located on the fringe of NZ larger cities.

I have included a map of properties that surround the 82 hectares in question, six properties have been or still remain producing horticultural crops on a commercial basis since my 46 years of residing in Newstead.

You will note the variety of economic crops grown and the land size of each such commercial horticultural venture.

Marked A	Percival Road	11.20 ha of Apples
Marked B	Ryburn Road	4 ha of Blueberries
Marked C	Ruakura Road	9.88 of Apples
Marked D	Davison Road	4 ha Includes Raspberries, Blueberries and Strawberries
Marked E	Davison Road	4 ha Asparagus
Marked F	Davison Road	5.9 ha Apples

The above six neighbouring properties have a combined land holding of nearly half of the 82 ha which is the subject of my submission.

Within another 2 km circumference of the subject land there has been and still remains many smaller sized commercial plantations of Blueberries, Kiwifruit, Strawberries, Pumpkins, Floricultural and vegetables such as Brassicas and Root crops.

Since residing in the Newstead area I have witnessed the closure of (approximately) a 15 hectares a Pip & Stone fruit orchard on Silverdale Road due to the creep of the Waikato University. Recent history in the area of 56 hectares growing potatoes and approximately 60 hectares growing maize for NZ Distillery's for the production of gin.

Sadly, the relaxation of subdivision rules has been the demise of many of the above named horticultural properties, losing a further 82 hectares of productive soils is not a positive outcome for the requirements of future generations.

In closing, you can appreciate that local Newstead soils are designated quality horticultural soils which have a proven history of growing a diverse variety of crops of sustainable food for all New Zealanders. This still applies today, however in a much reduced scale due to the reasons mentioned earlier.

**IN SUMMARY.**

Either of the four topics I that oppose the RE-ZONING submission on in its self should be sufficient evidence to decline the current submission and any future attempt of re-zoning under the banner of the likes of FUTURE PROOF.



DSIR  
Land  
Resources



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# Views of Ruakura— A Window on the Waikato

P.L. Singleton

DSIR Land Resources Scientific Report No.5



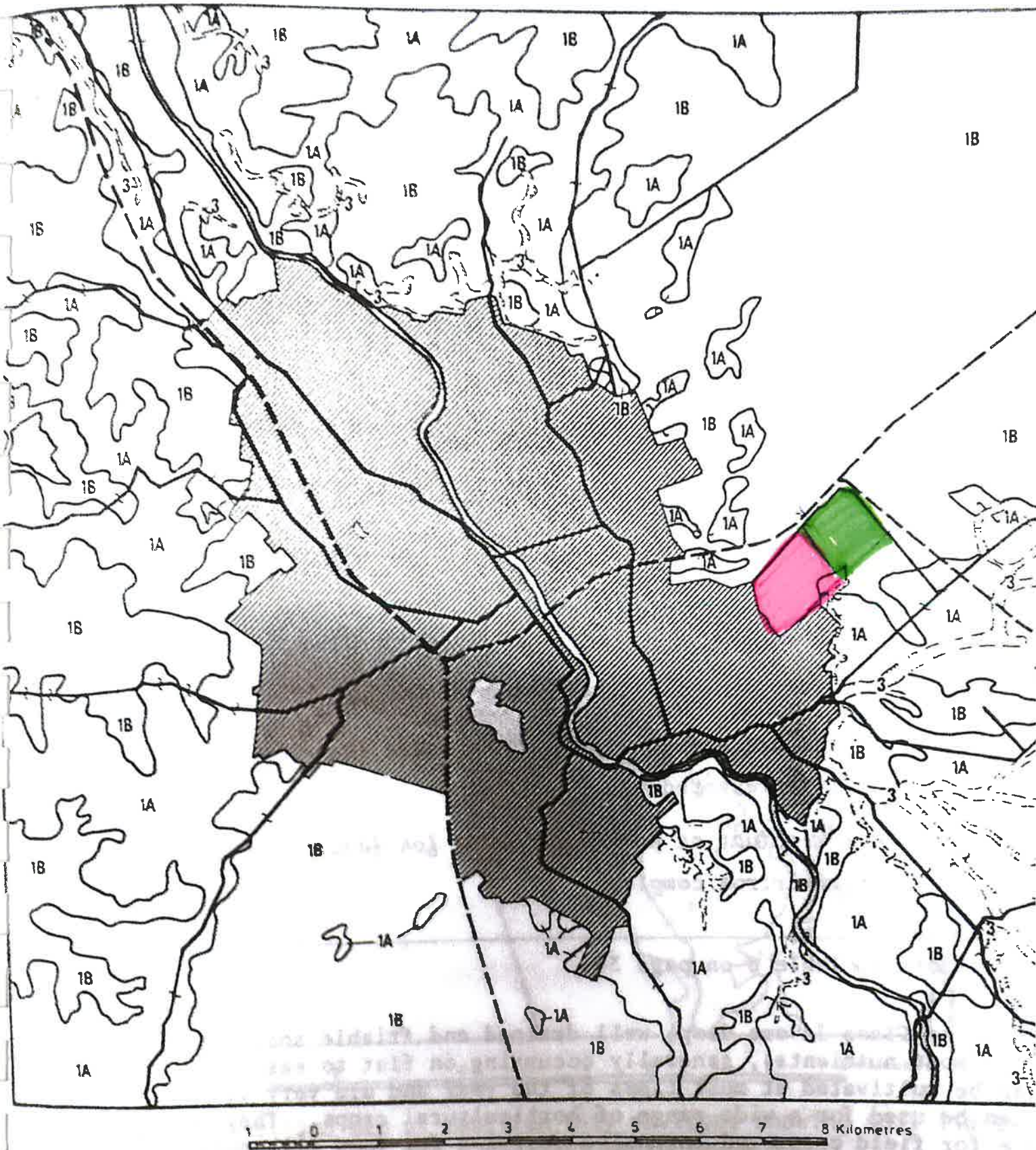


Figure 4 Generalised map of Hamilton City environs showing value of soils for food production. (Classes as in Table 7)

Soils of high actual value for food production

1A

Soils of high potential value for food production

1B

Soils of low actual or potential value for food production

3

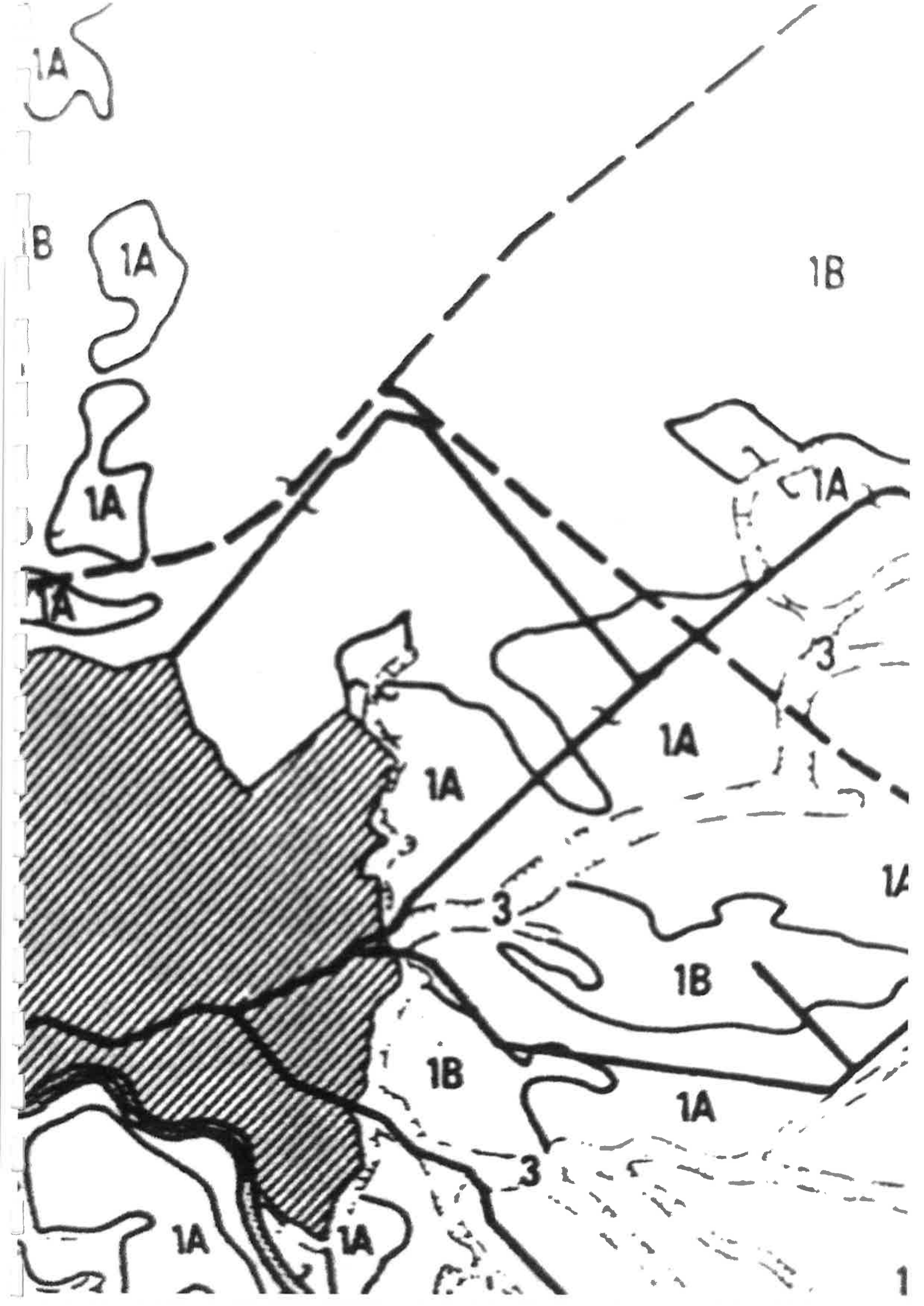




Table 7 Classification of soils of Hamilton City environs according to their actual or potential value for food production

- 1 Soils of high actual or potential value for food production
  - 1A Soils of high actual value for food production
    - Horotiu soils
    - Kainui soils
    - Hamilton soils
    - (Chaupo soils) not shown on map
  - 1B Soils of high potential value for food production
    - Rotokauri soils
    - Te Kowhai soils
    - Te Rapa soils
    - Kaipaki soils
    - Rukuhia soils
    - Waikato soils
    - (Whatawhata soils) not shown on map
- 2 Soils of moderate actual or potential value for food production
 

Not represented
- 3 Soils of low actual or potential value for food production
 

Kirikiriroa complex\*

\* footnote to Table 6 on page 34.

Soils of Class 1A are deep, well drained and friable soils (with high content of most nutrients), generally occurring on flat to easy rolling topography. They can be cultivated at most times of the year and are very versatile for field crops and intensive dairying for town milk supply.

Soils of Class 1B, generally occurring on flat to easy rolling topography, are characterized by a combination of imperfect to poor natural drainage. This limits the crops which can be grown, affects yields, and affects the quality of the produce. This limits the





# Horticulture welcomes call for protection of versatile land

An environmental report released in April has backed up Horticulture New Zealand's concerns about ongoing urban and lifestyle block expansion into prime growing land.

The Environment Aotearoa 2019 report, released by the Ministry for the Environment and Stats NZ, shows that the growth of urban centres threatens the limited versatile land surrounding regional centres such as Auckland, Waikato, and Canterbury.

The report also identifies lifestyle blocks as a threat to versatile land near urban centres, with an average of 5800 new blocks a year since 1998, many of which encroach upon prime growing soils. This loss of versatile land can force growers onto less naturally productive land, or out of production entirely.

Horticulture New Zealand natural resources and environment manager Michelle Sands welcomes the report, and says New Zealand can't afford to keep losing high-quality soils.

"Some of this soil is unique, for example the volcanic soils around Pukekohe, where vegetables can be grown year-round," said Sands.

"All land is not created

equally important if New Zealand is to diversify its agriculture and transition to a low emissions economy. We support the acknowledgment of this issue in the Environment Aotearoa report, and look forward to working with the Government to ensure we don't lose more valuable growing land, as well as improve environmental outcomes within horticulture.

"New Zealand has a growing population, and they need healthy fruit and vegetables, we cannot feed more people with less land."





# High-value soils under pressure

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**V**ALUING high-quality soils as a resource of national significance is a step closer as the Government considers submissions coming weeks on a national policy statement to protect them.

Horticulture New Zealand manager Michelle Sands is reasonably optimistic about what the final version of the statement will look like and the protection it is likely to offer soils of high productive value.

The statement was first raised by Environment Minister David Parker last year as a result of concern over the amount of quality soils lost to urban development in the past generation.

The statement is intended to target the high value classes 1 and 2 soils that account for 5% of NZ's soil profile but almost 85% of its high-value crop production.

Between 2002 and 2016 NZ has

been losing just over 100,000ha a year of growing land to urban development or lifestyle blocks that have been growing at a rate of 5800 a year.

Auckland has allowed 10,500ha of high-quality soils in the past 35 years as it supports an average annual population growth rate of 3%. That loss area alone is sufficient to supply most of the North Island with vegetables.

Auckland's highly valuable volcanic soils used for over 100 years to grow crops supplying the city and much of the North Island. Only 3000ha of this soil is protected by the Unitary Plan, less than half what many want to see protected.

Sands is also encouraged by the statement possibly containing a provision that councils avoid inappropriate development on

need for a domestic food supply policy.

"While we have a lot of good quality soil, that is only one factor in growing things like vegetables. They also require certain climate conditions to be productive."

HortNZ chief executive Mike Chapman said food security requires a plan unlikely to be covered in the statement.

"The soils protection is really only one leg in the trilecta

"The concept of food security is quite foreign in NZ. It has tended to be left to commercial forces in the past."

Sands said continued conversion of land to high-value vegetable growing is challenging in most parts of the country, given regional plans prevent changes in land use on grounds of nutrient losses.

Both Chapman and Sands maintain it is not too late to stop the slide in NZ's productive soil loss. They look to Melbourne as an example of leaving it too late.

With a population similar to NZ's, Melbourne provides 85% of its own fruit and greens but based



**PRESERVE THEM: High-value soils are a resource that once built over are lost for good, says Mike Chapman.**

on continuing land loss that is expected to fall to only 20% by 2050, entirely because of urban development.

A report commissioned by Auckland City in 2017 predicted Auckland, too, was losing a similar amount of soils should growth continue uninterrupted for the next 50 years.