

## Executive Summary

Opoutere Tree Farm Ltd (OTF) is located at 62 Wahitapu Lane, Opoutere. The site is one of a row of 4 hectare blocks adjoining the reserve managed by DoC which in turn fronts Opoutere Beach.

Resource consent is sought to use the eastern half the site for private camping. The activity falls under the District Plan definition of *temporary living places* (TLP), which are a Discretionary Activity within the Coastal Zone (Outside All Policy Areas) under Rule 522.4.1.

The use would be restricted to the shareholders of the site and will predominantly take place in the summer season around the Christmas and New Year period. Although camping for short periods may occur, for example, at Easter or other long weekend holidays. The site has been used by shareholders for informal camping since it was acquired by OTF in 1986. The scale and intensity of built form sought to be consented on the site is a reduction from what was informally on the site prior to this application.

The application seeks approval for 11 campsites. The proposal would be in accordance with the TLP provisions of the District Plan which restrict the purpose of camping for periods not exceeding 50 days in any continuous term of occupancy. A maximum of 66 people would be permitted to camp on the site overnight.

Generally, each site may comprise:

- one TLP vehicle (eg caravan, motorhome) and tents as required
- a shade structure
- provision for drainage connection
- barbeque or bench structure for food preparation.

It is proposed to install a specifically designed drainage system for the location and campsite use. The design loading of the system caters for up to 6 people on each site, exceeding the minimum 3.5 people required by the Campground Regulations. The system would comprise three enhanced wastewater systems directly servicing each campsite. Treated effluent would then be dispersed via surface irrigated dripper networks. Environment Waikato regulations require a minimum land area of 2500m<sup>2</sup> per disposal field. The site comprises 40,000m<sup>2</sup>, more than exceeding this requirement. The system will therefore comply with Environment Waikato permitted activity rules and the Campground Regulations.

A Management Plan is proposed to control the structures and appearance of the site. This would control the size, height and design of the types of accommodation acceptable on each campsite and maintain a uniform colour scheme to present a cohesive appearance across the site. Managed planting around each site would further screen the activity.

The application site is located within the Coastal Zone. The District Plan's objectives and policies for this zone are to preserve the character and visual amenity values of the coastal area.

Stephen Brown Environments Ltd has prepared a report assessing the sensitivity of the surrounding landscape. Their report notes the coastal margins of the Coromandel

include examples of high quality, natural, coastal environments, while other areas have been modified through human activity and development over time. The Landscape Assessment concludes that the surrounding area is highly modified by forestry, rural subdivision and farming practices that have reduced the amenity value and result in a low quality landscape. The exceptions are Opoutere beach and Wharekawa harbour, both assessed as not being adversely affected by the proposal by reason of distance and intervening screening. The Landscape Assessment concludes that there are no views of the proposed camping ground from Opoutere Beach or Wahitapu Road and only limited views from the DoC Reserve and adjoining properties, which can be appropriately screened.

The proposal has the potential to adversely effect the safe and efficient operation of both the private right of way (Wahitapu Lane) and the public road (Ohui Road) through traffic generation. Wahitapu Lane is a 3.5m wide metal road which currently serves 19 properties.

A Traffic Report has assessed the access and notes that for most of the time the vehicle movements on Wahitapu Lane are probably less than 24vpd and accordingly the road has been operating satisfactorily for some considerable time despite its current construction being below the District Plan standard for serving 19 properties.

The 'Guide to Traffic Generating Developments' published by the Road Transport Association in Australia indicates a typical generation of 3vpd per unit for casual accommodation. On this basis the proposed campsite at full capacity could be expected to generate up to 33vpd in the summer period, although outside this period this would be significantly less or nil.

In terms of an operational and safety point of view, the report considers Wahitapu Lane is adequate but recommends some widening of the metalled road surface in order for the carriageway to operate safely and efficiently. Subject to these minor works, the Traffic Report concludes the formation of Wahitapu Lane is acceptable to continue serving the campsite use. Little if any increase in traffic flow is expected as the site has been used for informal camping since 1986 and any minor increase on Ohui Road and Opoutere Road will have a less than minor effect on the continuing safe and efficient operation of these roads.

An assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on ecology both within the site and on the path through the reserve to the beach has been completed. It is noted that the temporary nature of the proposed activity limits the potential impact and that the site has already been highly modified; being largely cleared and planted with pine trees.

The path is an informal route and not constructed with any permanent materials. This area is outside the application site and is zoned as a recreation reserve with public access legally provided along it. The report concludes the effect of the proposal will be less than minor.

Overall, the assessment within this application concludes the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the environment and would not be incompatible with the existing landscape character.