

8. REQUEST FOR VARIATION TO THE PROPOSED CITY PLAN

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Regulatory and Consents Committee of a recent request from the Heathcote Valley Community Association regarding the rezoning of the Malt works site for living purposes.

BACKGROUND

The City Plan Team has received a request from the Heathcote Valley Community Association for a Variation to the Christchurch Proposed City Plan to rezone the Malt Works site located at 64 Port Hills Road (Planning Map 55A attached) from Business 4 to Living. The Heathcote Valley Community Association has canvassed local residents, who appear to support a living zoning for the site.

The Malt Works site was zoned Industrial 1 in the Heathcote Section of the Transitional Plan. In the Proposed Plan as notified in 1995 the site was zoned Business 5 (General Industrial), allowing for a diverse range of both light and heavy industrial and service activities with relatively high building densities.

The Christchurch City Council lodged a submission (S2036) to the Proposed Plan requesting that the site be re-zoned Business 4 (Suburban Industrial). The Business 4 zone provides for predominantly light industry, warehousing, service industries and commercial activities, and acknowledges the need to control the effects of activities on adjoining living environments. The Heathcote Valley Community Association lodged a further submission in support of the Council's request. As a result Council Decision 86 rezoned the site from Business 5 to Business 4 recognising Business 4 as a more appropriate zoning for the site considering the surrounding living environments

As you are more than likely aware the site has not been fully utilised for Malt Works activities for a few years.

ISSUES WITH THE PROPOSED VARIATION

The previous Resource Management Committee had indicated that further variations will only be supported if they are non-controversial and necessary to assist with progressing the Proposed Plan to an operative stage.

It has become apparent that the current owner of the Malt Works site is not in support of a Living zoning option at this time. The Heathcote Valley Community Association were of the view that the site had changed hands and that the new owner was interested in considering a living zoning for the site. Since discovering that the sale has not yet occurred I have discussed the matter with a representative of Heathcote Property Holdings (the current legal owner) who indicated that due to uncertainties regarding the future of the property they are reluctant to support a living zoning at this time. However, there is a possibility that they may investigate the appropriateness of converting the site to residential use in the future. Considering the current lack of landowner support Council staff do not see it as appropriate to become extensively involved in a Variation at this time.

If a Variation were to proceed in the future, more extensive investigations will be required into the merits of the proposal, including potential issues relating to transport and heritage concerns. In addition to this, further work will be required to assess the viability of re-zoning the site to a living zoning, considering the site development and clean-up costs involved. The Council will also need to ensure that the site is suitable for residential use from a health and safety perspective. Investigations into these issues have not yet been undertaken.

CONCLUSION

Considering the above issues and the fact that landowner support is crucial to the progression of a non-controversial Variation, council staff have indicated to the Heathcote Valley Community Association that the Council will further consider the issue once there is clear landowner support and buy-in into the process. This is considered a more efficient use of staff resources considering the commitments of the City Plan Team, which are focused primarily on dealing with references to the Proposed Plan.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Recommendation from Chair: That this matter not be considered until after the City Plan is operative and there is clear landowner support.