



# RURAL LAND



# Rural land: overview

Rural land is the predominant land type in Rotorua. The way that rural land is used and managed has a major impact on the community as a whole. Rural land encompasses a wide variety of social and economic functions including the traditional rural industries of agriculture, forestry and wood-processing, and supports many small rural communities.

Increasingly, with the growing popularity of 'lifestyle' properties, people who choose to live in rural areas do not necessarily work there. Rural places are also where well used public spaces are located, and where much recreational activity takes place. All these pressures need to be balanced against the visual and aesthetic importance of rural land, which provides the 'backdrop' to the city and to the lakes.

The rural land theme includes monitoring of one indicator addressing rural development.

## How are we going?

Rural residential lots were the most popular type of new lot created from 2002 to 2007. Most of these are located in two major subdivisions, Brunswick Park and Parklands Estate, established in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Excluding these subdivisions, the most popular type of lot created in the rural area from 2002 to 2006 were lifestyle lots (8001m<sup>2</sup>-6ha).


The most common types of consents in the rural area were for building closer to boundaries or building houses higher than 7.5 metres. Additional houses and subsidiary houses are the second most common activity type.

## What are we doing?

The majority of the district is zoned rural. Land use and subdivision is controlled by the district plan. Currently the district plan is under review and changes may have a significant bearing on rural areas.

Some of the major issues being considered in the review of the district plan are rural residential subdivision, maintenance of rural character, reverse sensitivity and land management practices, with particular regard to lake water quality solutions.

### Rural land indicator is:

Indicator	State
Rural development	





### Purpose of indicator

The rate of subdivision and development in rural areas can be an indicator of activity on rural land which is influenced by many factors such as economic profitability. Rural areas are where primary industries are located. A growing trend is for people to live in rural areas for its wide open spaces and rural character. However, clusters of rural residential development can become settlements and result in loss of rural character.

### Current information and trend

Table 6.1 shows a significant increase in rural residential lots. This can be attributed to two major subdivisions, Brunswick Park and Parklands Estate, established in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Although these subdivisions border the residential area they are zoned as rural land and are an example of the expanding urban footprint. Excluding these, the most popular type of lot created in the rural area from 2002 to 2006 were lifestyle lots (8001m<sup>2</sup>-6ha).



A general lot property must have 15 hectares or more of useable land, which must be able to be productive. The reason for this is to avoid fragmentation of land for flexibility of future land use options. For example, it is important that there is enough land for primary industries to grow food.



Environmental effects are not due to subdivision itself, but the land use change that is associated with it. In some cases land is subdivided but no land use change takes place, or the land use change could have a lag period. For example, land may be subdivided for development but no houses built for up to eight years after the subdivision has taken place. Subdivisions in the district for years 2003 to 2006 are shown in Figure 6.1.



Some interesting points emerge when land use consents are broken down into type (Table 6.2). A considerable proportion of consents are for building closer to boundaries or building houses higher than 7.5 metres. Additional and subsidiary houses are the second most common activity type followed

by farming and tourist activities. Both forestry and farming are provided for in the district plan, as most forestry and farming activities are permitted in the rural zones. No consents were needed for forestry activities from 2003-2006 (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.1 Additional lots 2002-2006**

Year	Rural residential lots (0-8000m <sup>2</sup> )	Lifestyle lots (8001m <sup>2</sup> -6ha)	General lots (15+ha)	Other lots (7ha-14ha)	Total
2002-2003	2	35	16	1	54
2003-2004	15	24	3	2	44
2004-2005	12	27	11	2	52
2005-2006	46	42	8	3	99
2006-2007	42	35	5	7	89
TOTAL	117	163	43	15	338

Source: Rotorua District Council, 2007

**Table 6.2 Land use activities in the rural areas 2003- 2006**

Type of activity	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2005/06	Total
Closer to neighbour/ building over height	29	29	31	37	126
Additional house	14	20	18	5	57
Subsidiary house	8	7	9	7	31
Farming	10	3	6	7	26
Commercial	3	2	2	1	8
Hazardous substances	0	0	1	1	2
Industrial	1	1	0	5	7
Lake structures	6	5	0	0	11
Reducing lake buffer	2	3	2	1	8
Tourist activities	9	5	3	8	25
Utilities	5	3	3	0	11
Other	7	6	8	4	25
Total land use consents	94	84	83	76	337

Source: Rotorua District Council, 2007

### What the community said

More rural residents (31%) than urban residents (23%) indicated that they were concerned about subdivision. Of the rural residents who were concerned, 27% identified loss of land for farming/forestry as their main reason for concern.

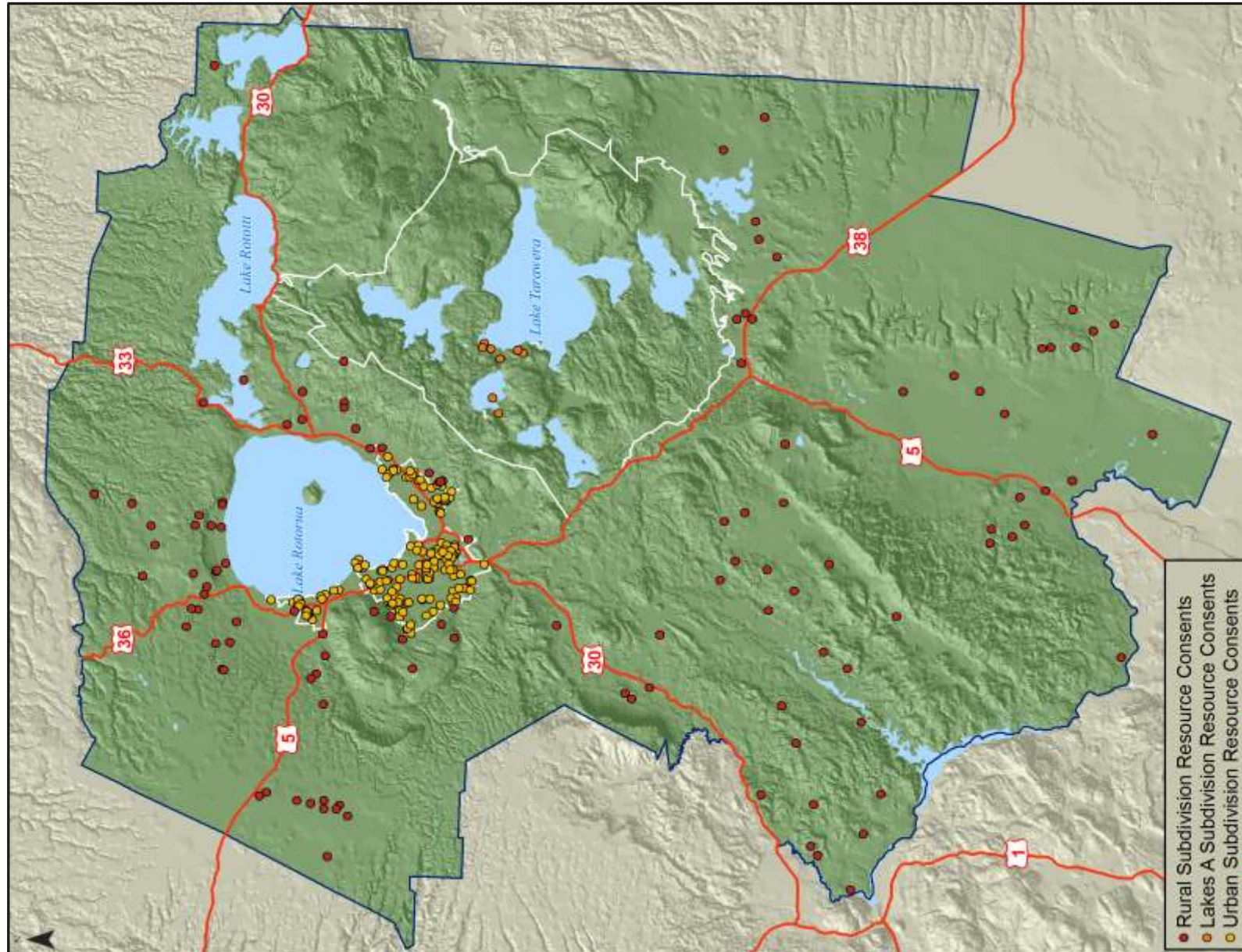
# Rural land: rural development



Indicator 6.1 Number and size of rural subdivisions

STEADY

Figure 6.1 Urban, rural and Lakes A subdivisions 2003 to 2006



Source: Rotorua District Council, 2006



## ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE



### In 15 minutes

- ✓ Let Council know what your thoughts and ideas are for the review of the district plan.
- ✓ Contact your regional council for information about funding options and Environmental Programmes.
- ✓ If you plan to move to a rural property or build in a rural area, keep in mind that it is a working environment and that measures need to be taken to accommodate for this.



### In 1 hour plus

- ✓ If you plan to develop rural land, talk to a consultant for advice on how to achieve good design so the character of the rural environment is maintained and environmental impacts are minimised to the best of your abilities.
- ✓ Management practices of rural land should have regard to lake water quality solutions.

## WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION AND IDEAS

Building, subdividing and land use in rural zones

Rotorua District Council  
[www.rdc.govt.nz](http://www.rdc.govt.nz)

District plan review  
[www.fresh-ideas.co.nz](http://www.fresh-ideas.co.nz)

Information about environmental issues in rural areas

Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry  
[www.maf.govt.nz](http://www.maf.govt.nz)

Environment Bay of Plenty  
[www.envbop.govt.nz](http://www.envbop.govt.nz)

Environment Waikato  
[www.ew.govt.nz](http://www.ew.govt.nz)