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Hutt City opposes Upper Hutt greenfield development

 Nicholas Boyack | The Post

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Screenshots from Silverstream Forest of what houses on the Upper Hutt subdivision might look like.
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The Hutt City Council has thrown another spanner in the works of a [planned greenfield development in neighbouring Upper Hutt](#). Guildford Timber hoped to [build up to 1600 houses](#) and approached the Government to fast track plans to build a development in Silverstream Forest known as Silverstream Spur. The forest sits between Pinehaven and the [Silverstream Landfill](#), which is run by the Hutt City Council but serves the entire region. Hutt City opposes houses being built next to the landfill, fearing neighbours would complain and oppose the consents it needs to keep the landfill operating.

“To protect the interests of the landfill, council has submitted against any rezoning of the neighbouring land to prevent any residential development being undertaken on it.”

The existing forest creates a buffer, which mitigates the impact of odour, he said.

“It is not in the interest of council to allow this to be compromised through residential development within this buffer zone.”

Silverstream is the only Class 1 landfill in the region. It takes material that other landfills cannot take, including dried sludge from the Seaview Wastewater Treatment Plant. The waste creates gas, and odour that can be smelled beyond the boundary of the landfill, which operates a power plant and flare to deal with the gas.

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On Wednesday Upper Hutt City councillors supported a recommendation by independent commissioners to rezone the [Silverstream Spur land](#).

The council owns the spur but with the change of zoning from residential to open space, the developers would have to find another way to access the land.

A representative of the family which owns the forest, Craig Martell, said the commissioners’ report was “deeply flawed” and undermined the council’s long term plan to identify areas for new housing in Upper Hutt.



Silverstream Forest could one day be developed for 1600 houses.
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He said it was a good example of why planning laws need changing.

Planning and consultation had taken “almost 20 years” and Silverstream Forest is one of the last large potential greenfield developments in the region.

The development would be a major boost to the Upper Hutt economy and provide much needed affordable housing.

“In a region that is struggling economically these types of decisions are blind to the needs of the wider community and reflect a regulatory environment that appears not to be fit for purpose,” he said.

Silver Stream Rail spokesperson Jason Durry said he was pleased with the decision.

“It was a good outcome, a brilliant outcome, from our point of view and now we just have to wait and see.”

Environmentalist Mary Beth Taylor told Upper Hutt councillors that it had been a long process but the commissioners had got it right.

“It has cost council and ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay for our city planners, legal counsel, and ecologists to research and produce material ...That is money we really could not afford to spend but money that had to be spent in order to protect our precious community land.”

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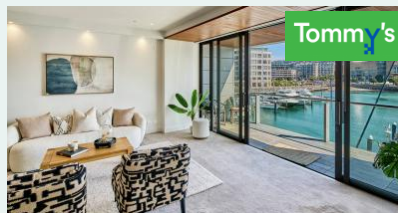


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