

Hutt City Proposed District Plan

**Hearing Stream 3 – Rural Zones
(Hearing Stream 3)**

Hearing Summary Statement

Charles Horrell

1. My name is Charles Horrell. I am a Principal Planner at Boffa Miskell Limited. I have prepared the Statement of Evidence dated 15 June 2026 in relation to the Rural Zones topic on behalf of Hutt City Council. I understand that my evidence has been taken as read.
2. I have been engaged by Hutt City Council following the circulation of the Section 42A Report prepared by Mr Sean Bellamy. Since that time, I have worked closely with Mr Bellamy in preparing for this hearing and in reviewing and responding to the evidence filed by submitters.
3. Responsibility for the Rural Zones topic has been allocated between us. Mr Bellamy continues to address rezoning requests and quarry-related matters, while I address all other matters related to the General Rural Zone, Rural Lifestyle Zone and associated definitions.
4. To begin, I would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by Mr Bellamy in preparing the Section 42A Report and the considerable input of submitters and their experts throughout this process. Having reviewed the evidence filed by submitters, I note that there is broad support for many aspects of the recommended Rural Zones framework, with the remaining areas of disagreement generally relating to the extent of development opportunities that should be provided for within the General Rural Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone.
5. To assist the Hearing Panel, I will briefly outline provide an overview of the Rural Zone chapters, the matters raised through submissions, and the focus of my evidence.

Overview of the Rural Zones Topic

6. The Rural Zones establish the planning framework for Lower Hutt's rural environments. It comprises two zones: the General Rural Zone and the Rural Lifestyle Zone. In addition, the Quarry Zone Protection Overlay applies across parts of the Rural Zones. The Highly Productive Land Overlay was also notified as part of the Rural Zones topic but has since been withdrawn.
7. The chapters seek to address a number of key issues within the District's rural areas, including maintaining rural character and amenity values, providing for rural activities and activities that require a rural location, managing reverse sensitivity effects, and recognising infrastructure constraints in rural environments.
8. Lower Hutt's rural areas are characterised by a mix of primary production, forestry, rural lifestyle living and open space values, with generally low levels of built development and limited access to reticulated infrastructure. The Rural Zones chapter distinguishes between the General Rural Zone, which is primarily intended for rural production activities and generally seeks to maintain allotments of at least 15 hectares, and the Rural Lifestyle Zone, which provides for a greater degree of rural-residential living and generally seeks to maintain allotments of at least 1 hectare. Overall, the proposed chapters seek to strike an appropriate balance between enabling the ongoing use and development of rural land while protecting the character, function and productive capacity of those environments.
9. For context, **Appendix A** provides an overview of the spatial extent of the General Rural Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone within Lower Hutt. **Appendix B** provides information on the distribution and size of properties within those zones. **Appendix C** contains a high-level framework diagram illustrating how the key objectives, policies and rules within the Rural Zones chapter generally operate.

Submissions

10. 153 submission points and 41 further submission points were received on the Rural Zones topic. The principal matters raised through submissions include:
 - the purpose and character of the General Rural Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone;
 - opportunities for additional residential development within rural areas;

- The extent and operation of the Highly Productive Land Overlay;
- protection of existing quarrying activities through the Quarry Zone Protection Overlay;
- activity statuses and development standards applying to rural activities; and
- several site-specific rezoning requests.

11. Many submitters sought a more enabling framework for residential development, rural-based activities and other activities. Conversely, other submitters sought stronger protection of rural character, productive land resources, and the ongoing operation of existing activities, such as quarrying activities.

Withdrawal of Parts of the Rural Zone

12. Following notification of the Proposed District Plan, certain provisions within the Rural Zones topic were withdrawn as a consequence of the exemption granted under the Resource Management (Consenting and Other System Changes) Amendment Act 2025. These provisions included matters relating to Highly Productive Land and Natural Environment Values. Mr Bellamy has set out the specific provisions of the Rural Zones subject to that withdrawal in Paragraph 24 of the Section 42A Report.

13. As outlined in the Section 42A Report, those provisions are no longer part of the Proposed District Plan and are therefore outside the scope of this hearing.

My Evidence

14. In preparing my evidence, I have reviewed the relevant submissions and further submissions, the Section 42A Report, and the evidence filed by submitters.

15. As set out in Section 4 of my evidence, I generally support and adopt the recommendations contained within the Section 42A Report in relation to the matters allocated to me.

16. The focus of my evidence is therefore on responding to submitter evidence and identifying whether any refinements to the recommended provisions are warranted.

17. In general terms, I continue to support the overall direction of the Rural Zones chapter and consider it provides an appropriate framework for managing rural land use and development within Lower Hutt.
18. The principal matters where I have recommended amendments or further clarification to the Section 42A Report recommendations relate to:
 - refinements to the recommended amendments to Policy GRUZ-P3 relating to potentially incompatible activities and reverse sensitivity effects; and
 - a modified rule framework for intensive indoor and intensive outdoor primary production under GRUZ-R14.
19. Other than those matters, I support the recommendations contained within the Section 42A Report and the associated recommended provisions.
20. I have reviewed the tabled letter from Greater Wellington Regional Council (PDP452). I note the Regional Council supports the recommendations contained within the Section 42A Report as they relate to its submission points for the Rural Zones topic.
21. There have been no additional statements or legal submissions filed following the circulation of my evidence that are relevant to the submission points allocated to me.
22. I am happy to answer any questions the Hearing Panel may have in relation to my evidence.

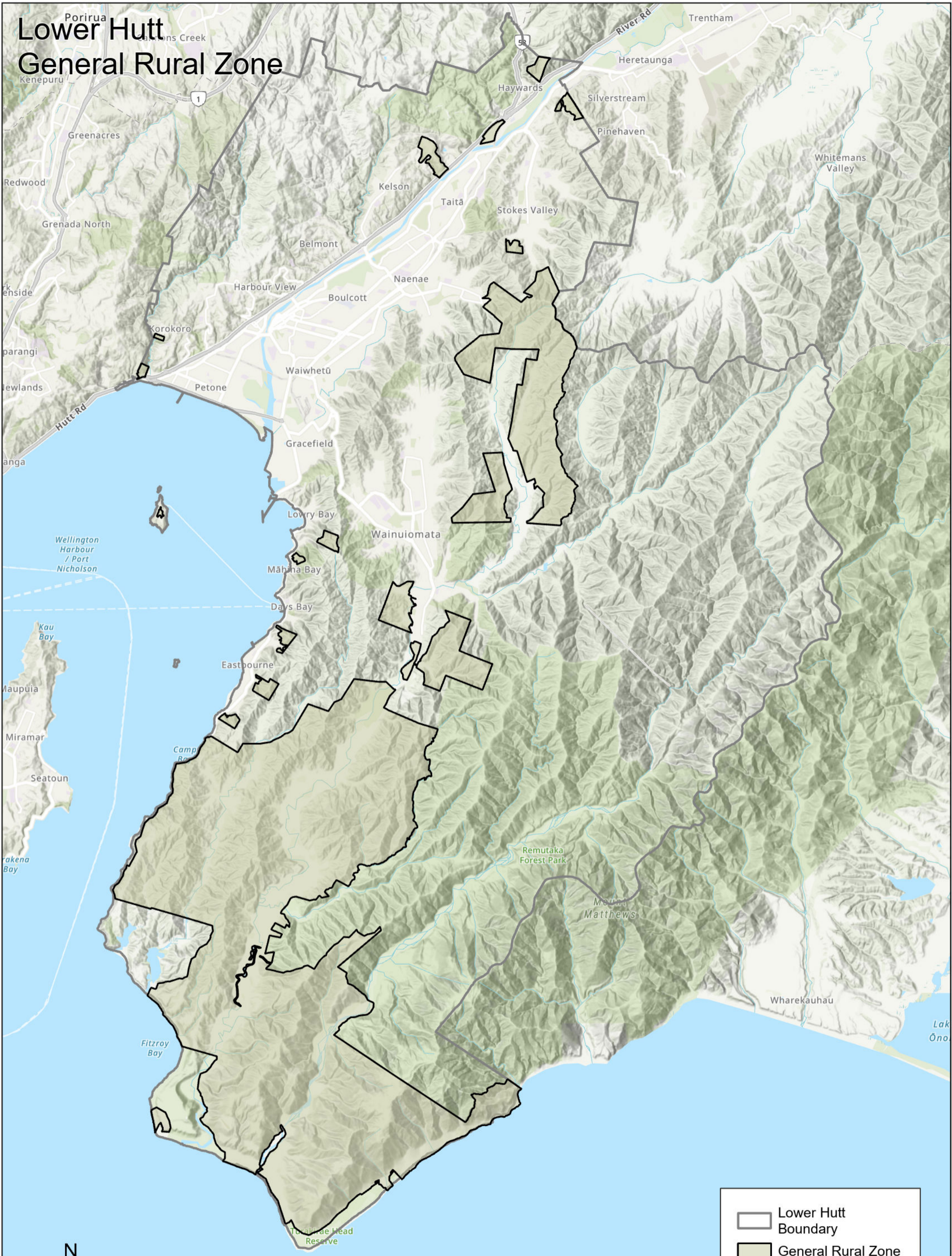


Charles Horrell

19 June 2026

Appendix A: Spatial Extent of General Rural Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone

Lower Hutt General Rural Zone

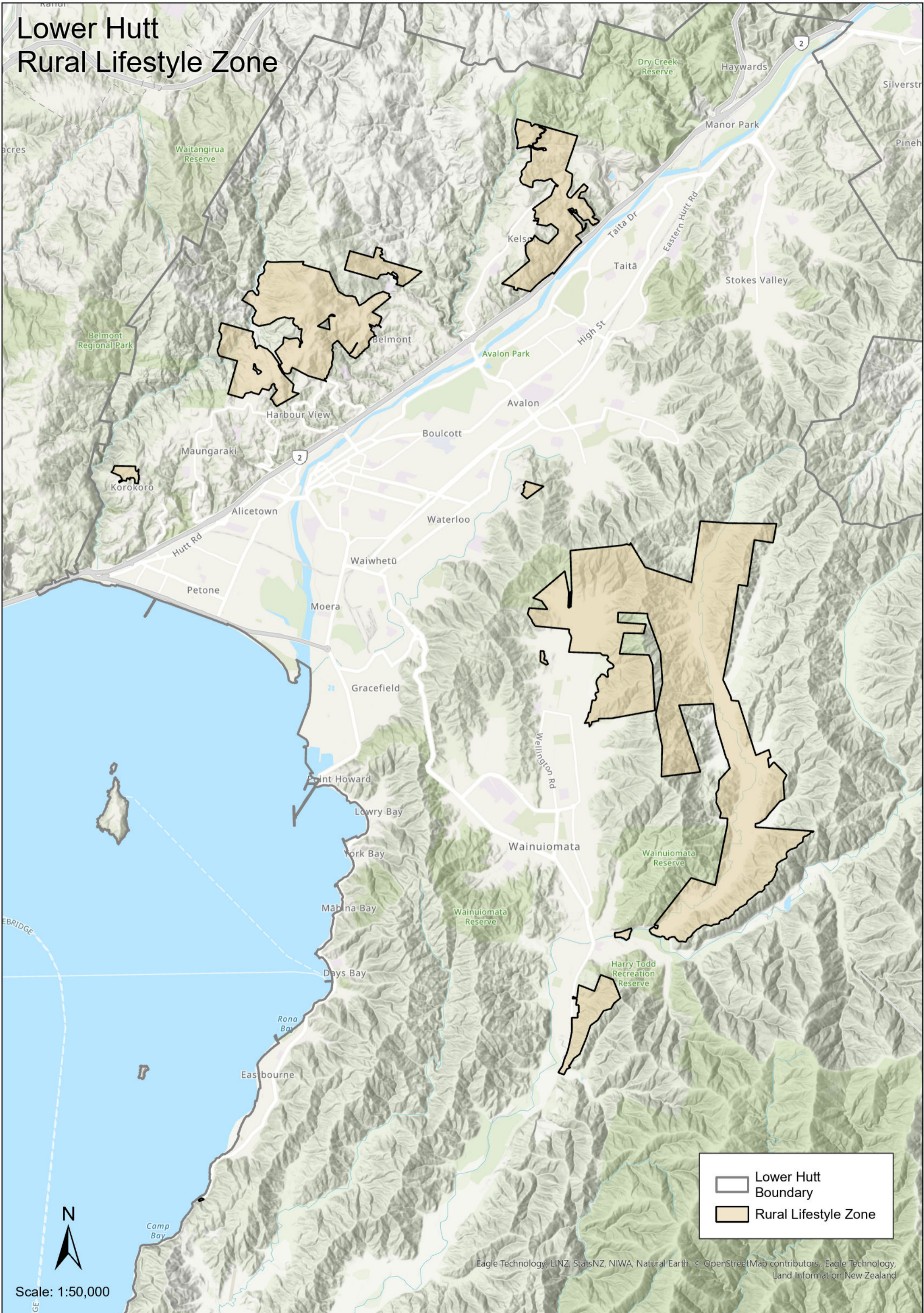


Lower Hutt Boundary
General Rural Zone



Scale: 1:90,000

Lower Hutt Rural Lifestyle Zone

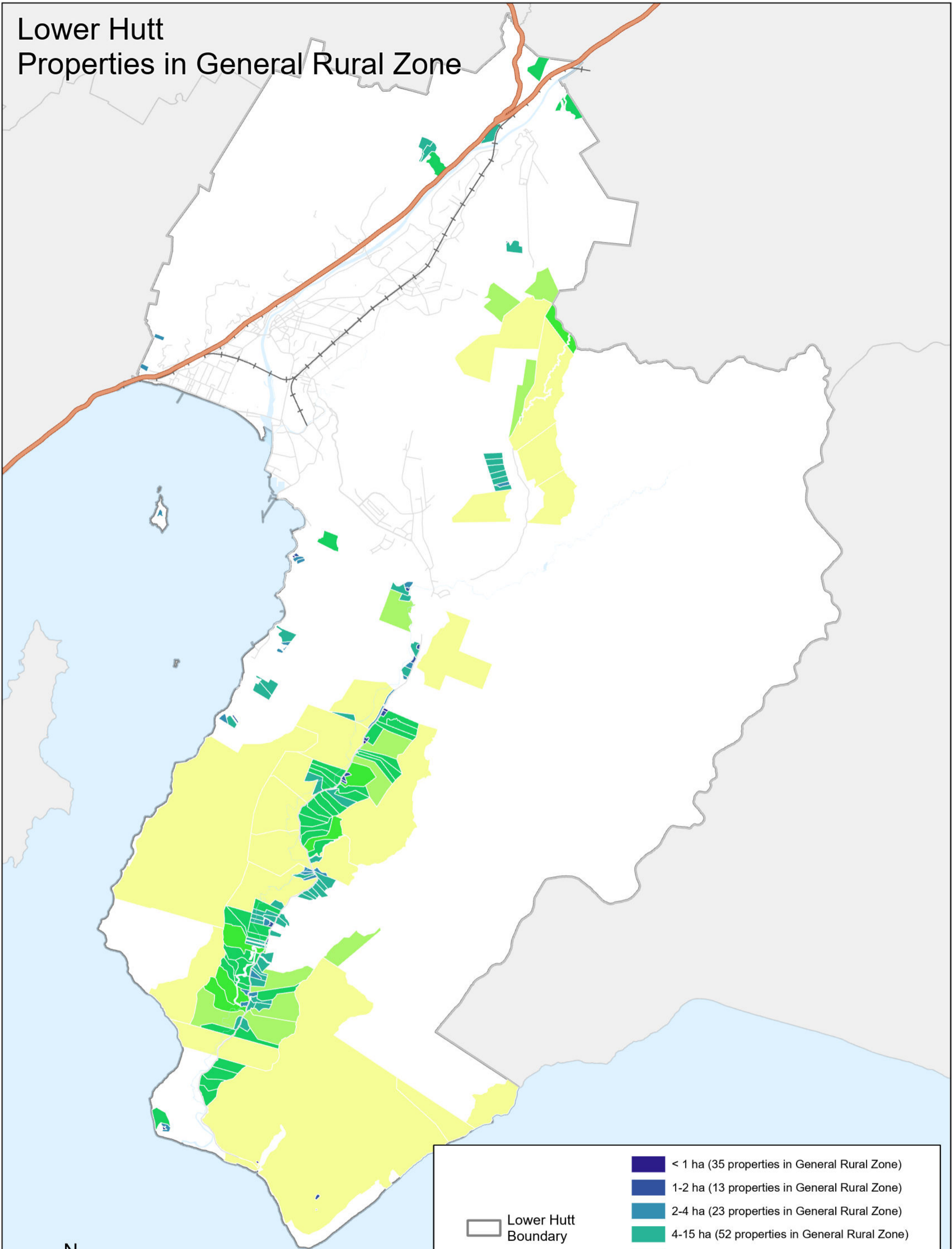


Lower Hutt Boundary
Rural Lifestyle Zone

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Scale: 1:50,000

Appendix B: Property distribution and size within the General Rural Zone and Rural Lifestyle Zone

Lower Hutt Properties in General Rural Zone

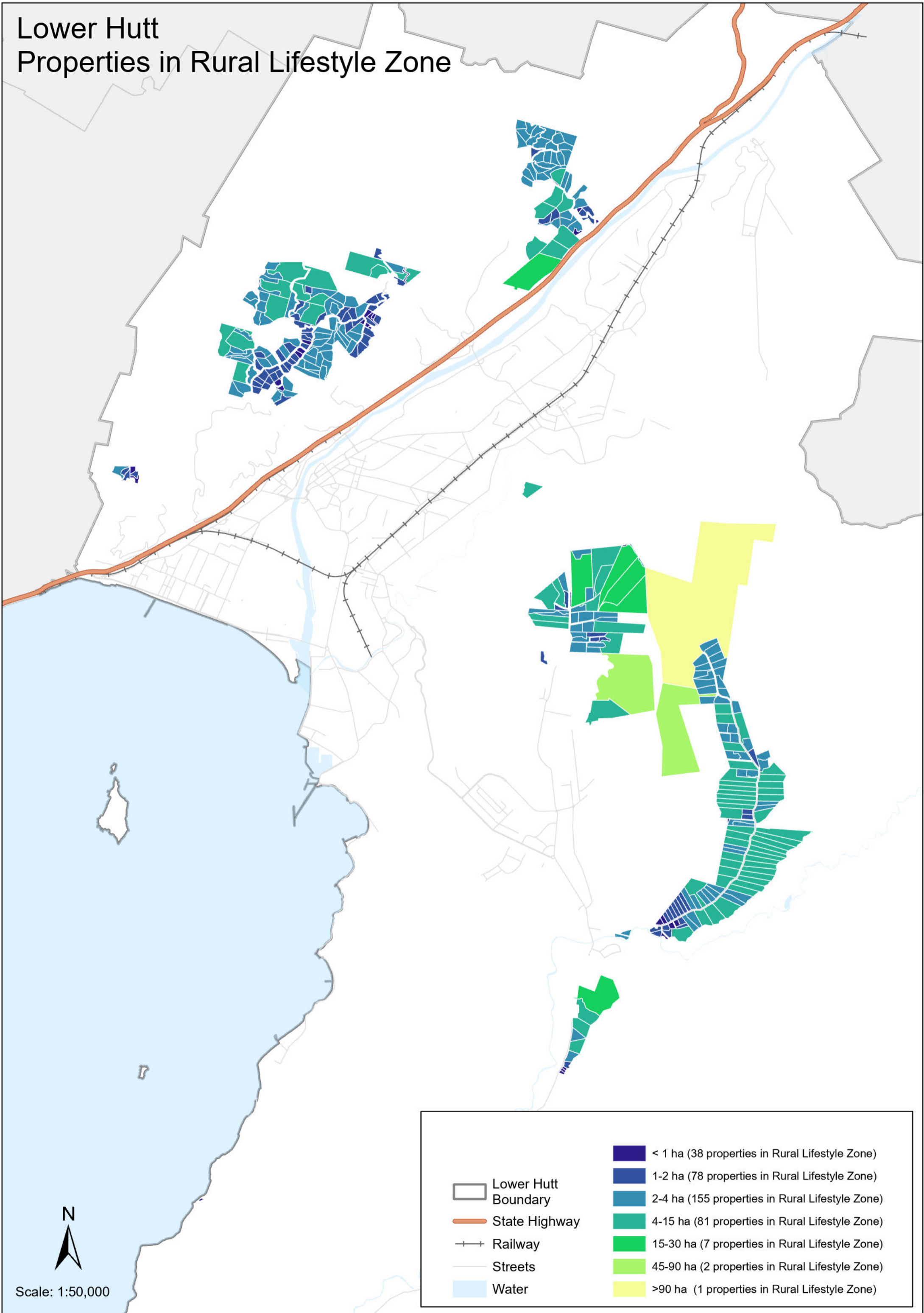


	Lower Hutt Boundary		< 1 ha (35 properties in General Rural Zone)
	State Highway		1-2 ha (13 properties in General Rural Zone)
	Railway		2-4 ha (23 properties in General Rural Zone)
	Streets		4-15 ha (52 properties in General Rural Zone)
	Water		15-30 ha (40 properties in General Rural Zone)
			30-45 ha (6 properties in General Rural Zone)
			45-90 ha (13 properties in General Rural Zone)
			>90 ha (22 properties in General Rural Zone)



Scale: 1:90,000

Lower Hutt Properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone



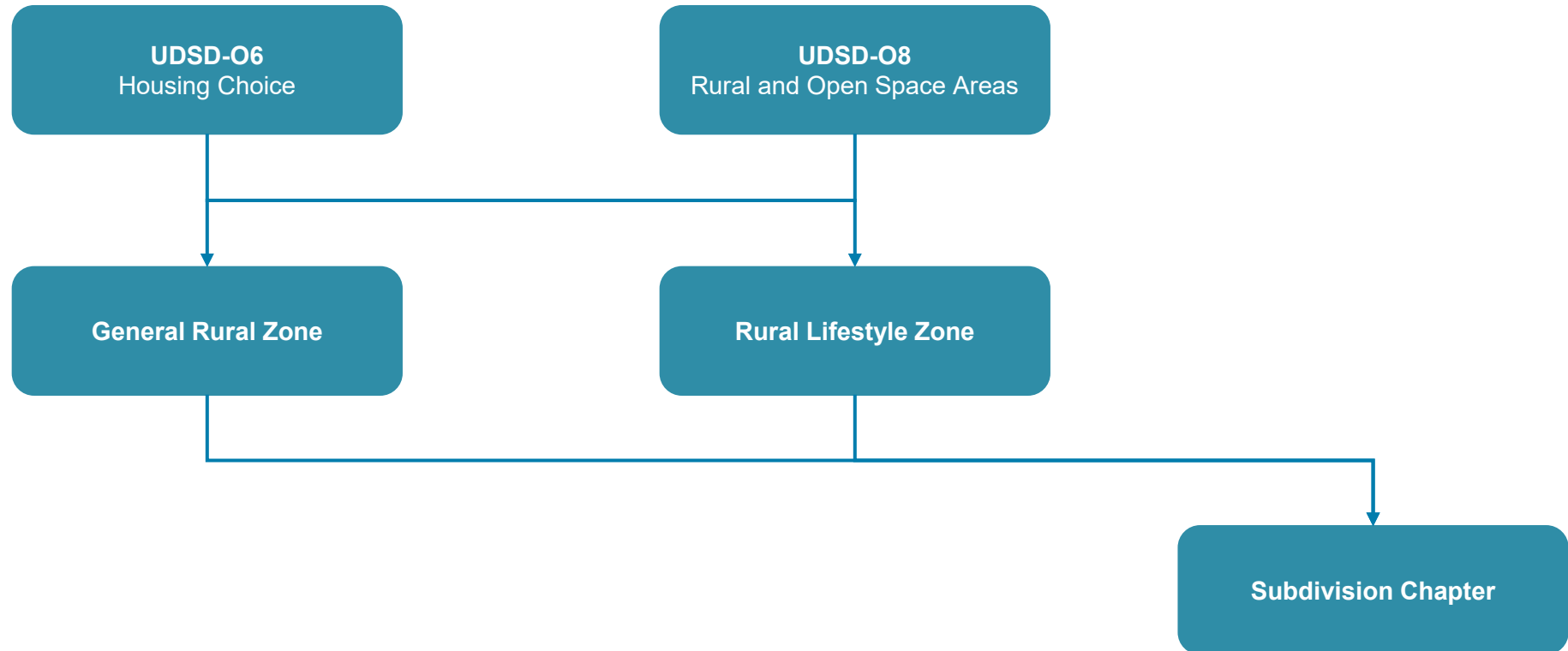
Lower Hutt Boundary	< 1 ha (38 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
State Highway	1-2 ha (78 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
Railway	2-4 ha (155 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
Streets	4-15 ha (81 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
Water	15-30 ha (7 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
	45-90 ha (2 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)
	>90 ha (1 properties in Rural Lifestyle Zone)



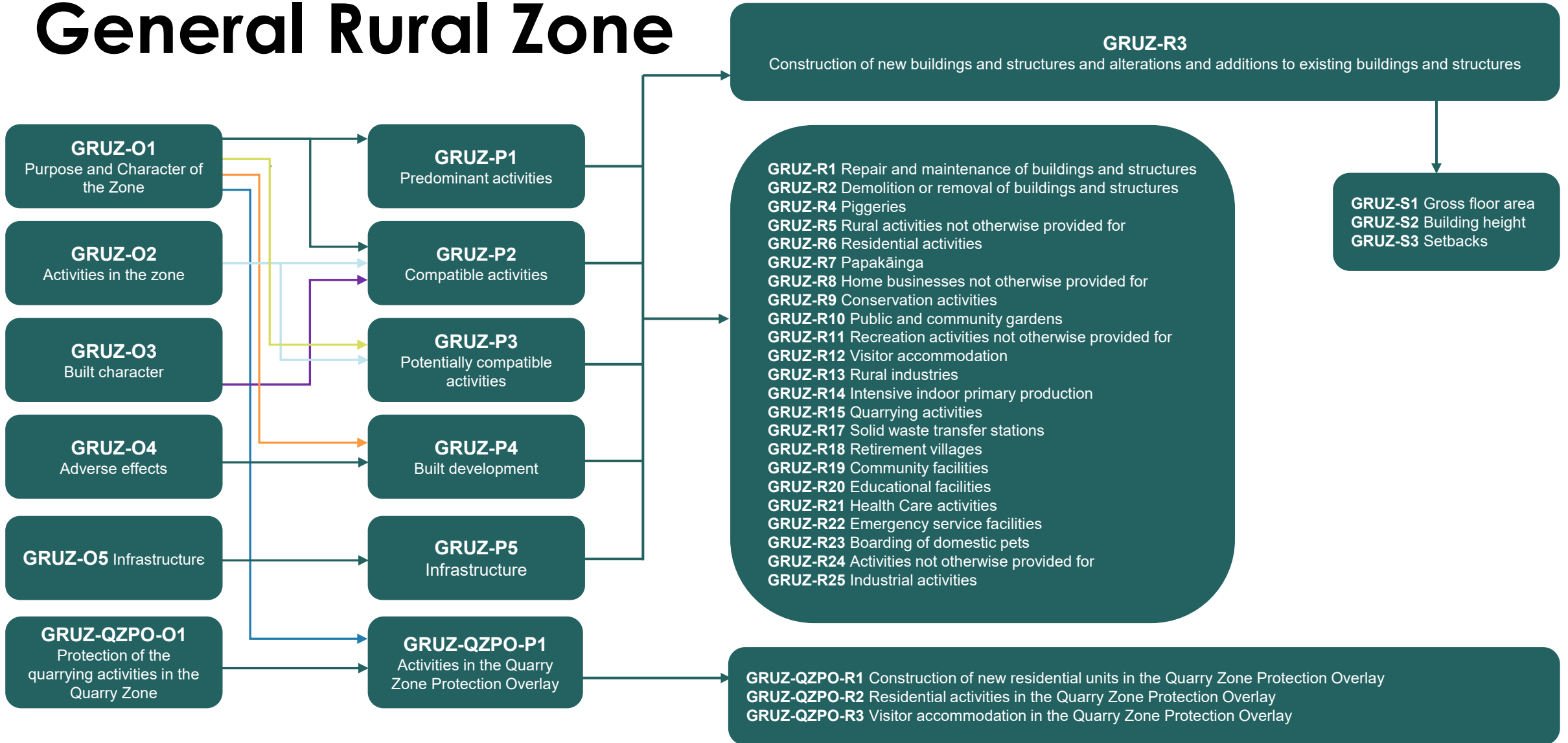
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Appendix C: Wiring diagrams of Rural objective, policy and rule framework

Strategic Direction and Rural Topic



General Rural Zone



Rural Lifestyle Zone

