

**GENTRAL COAST COUNCIL**

Division .....

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A submission to the Central Coast Council to support re-zoning of Land at Howth

The General Manager Central Coast Council

#### Response to the Local Provisions Schedule (LPS)

This is a submission to ask the Central Coast Council to support the change of proposed zoning of land owned by Desmond Hiscutt (Property Title Reference 17369/1). Areas of this parcel of land are comprised of shallow top soil of various fertility that in the main has a gravel base. The main of the title is heavy black clay with poor drainage. It is described historically as land you can get bogged on coming down hill in the winter and spring. The land above the part of the title already proposed as Rural zoning is a recognized slip area. This is almost vertical land with large exposed slip areas from recent years. A narrow strip of red krasnozem soil extends down the Eastern Edge of the title until it meets with a proposed Conservation area on the title to the Northeast. A small area of mature eucalyptus trees occupies an area on the Western side of the boundary which is the Nine Mile Road. These areas will be identified on a supplied aerial photograph.

The proposal for the land to be zoned Agricultural is inconsistent with the historic usage of the property as a rural enterprise. The property was predominantly utilised for sheep wool and meat production. This usage changed, due to economic pressures, to cattle grazing in the nineteen eighties. Sporadic use of small parcels for early potato production on long rotations has occurred at the Southern end of the title. This small area is the only part of the title not prone to waterlogging. At the time of the aerial photograph it should be noted that none of the title is ploughed for agricultural use.

At two public meetings the council officers suggested that land that could be proven to not meet the criteria for Agricultural use and adjacent to recognised Rural land would be supported. Not only is the title inconsistent with land it shares common boundaries with, it also has split zoning on the same title. The land at the Northern perimeter of the title is proposed Rural. Land to the East of the title is proposed to be Conservation Reserve. Other titles that boarder with the title are small holdings many with rural residences.

The title has gravity fed water for livestock supplied from the title to the West by easement. This water is only available in the flat areas of the title at the Northern end. There is nil reticulated water on the higher elevated areas so stock have to walk long distances back to water. While the title has a 10 megalitre connection to the Blythe Dial water scheme, its intended purpose is to supplement stock water. It was only utilised this year for the first time since connection to irrigate a small area leased for potatoes.

The large flatter area of the title, on the Southeast section, is heavy clay soil with poor drainage. Even with the instillation of subterranean drainage, over thirty years ago it is limited to grazing and conserved fodder production. Any continued cropping would result in horrendous erosion. Utility of this area for cropping is negated by the risk of excessive Summer rain which would damage cropping output. There are two large Bluestone outcrops at the North-western corner of the title and most of the title has a heavy stone load.

The proposed Conservation Area on the neighbouring title has in the past proved problematic with native animal numbers impossible to control. This area is connected to extensive forested Crown Land further to the East. Fencing is futile as debris from the forested area sheds large branches over a long steep shared boundary with the title to the North-east. One photograph supplied clearly outlines the unsettled nature of almost all the title in question. This area was a recently constructed drain made in the upgrading of the Nine Mile Road. The Nine Mile Road is the frontage on the whole of the Western side of the title. Other areas of un-stoned drains are showing similar signs of erosion.

Evidence Supplied

List Aerial Photograph Land types

Photo (1) Erosion evidence

This evidence should assist the Council to convince the Planning Commission that this title contains minimal Class 1,2,3, or 4 land and should be rezoned as Rural.

Report Prepared for Desmond Hiscutt by

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PHOTO (1)

