

Orangefields by Quirino Ltd

482 to 484A Kerikeri Rd

The Northland region while culturally diverse, well endowed with resources and historically of great importance in New Zealand's development, no longer lives up to the economic promise of 100 years ago.

Housing shortages, inefficient use of resources, low productivity and reliance on inadequate transport infrastructure inevitably contributes to higher costs of living, lack of capital investment and continued poor economic growth in Northland.

Blessed with a sub-tropical climate, reasonable rainfall and productive soils, the Kerikeri region, once known for its production of oranges no longer produces any citrus fruit in significant quantities.

The owners of the historic citrus orchard at 482 to 484A advised the council of the economic non viability of the orchard, as far back as the 1980s, supplementing the orchard revenue with careers off-site to live.

The orchard has a total site area of 4.3 hectares, approximately 2.83 ha of this, largely to the west of the property, is classified as non-highly productive soil (*Soil and Resource Report Ian Hanmore 2022*).

The Orangefields development makes meaningful use of the land, by maximising the use of both the productive and non-productive soil. The proposal establishes a residential community, of 12 houses, in the non-productive area, while the focus on the productive soil remains on increased citrus productivity, with distribution locally via an on-site Farm Store.

While a small development on a national scale, on a regional scale the addition of 12 houses to the Northland region is significant.

Of greater significance, is the intelligent ecological style of the development providing a self-supporting model, which doesn't rely on the trucking of food from our region to large centres, then back again, over poor roading infrastructure, to be distributed back in our region by nationally operated supermarkets.

The development features houses which are clustered close together on land whilst sharing a common area for community, well-being and some growing. This is achieved by pooling site allocations, normally planted as lawns and flower gardens, into a commonly owned area.

The development features an ecological design which:

- a. avoids repeated instances of infrastructure, by combining sewage and stormwater disposal into shared infrastructure.

- b. promotes the re-use of waste as far as possible via the collection of waste-water, reconstituting it and using for irrigation.
- c. touches the land as lightly as possible, by using least invasive methods of building houses and infrastructure.
- d. promotes the use of solar energy.
- e. lessens spaces taken by motor vehicles, both to store and to drive, including the promotion of walking tracks.
- f. promotes the use of ecologically positive building materials
- g. references the cultural history of our region through the choice of materials used and thoughtful design

In 2020 a Farm Store was established on the Kerikeri Rd boundary to sell the fresh produce. Now well known for its spray-free focus, Keri Berries has become popular for its fresh fruit ice-creams and as an alternative for supermarket shoppers seeking curated and local products. Tourists and visitors, as well as families, enjoy leisure time amongst the orange trees of a traditional Kerikeri citrus orchard.

Approval is sought for the development of 12 houses as well as an increase in size for the Farm Store.

The vision is a unique response to a set of environmental disadvantages while at the same time seeking to maximise the advantages also presented.

Captured and brought to fruition by respected New Zealand architect Grant Harris and his team of architects and consultants, the vision is also supported by well-known New Zealand architect Ken Crosson.

The answers to our regional problems cannot always be found by big bang approaches and centralised funding.

In this case the team has developed a model of living, if, which repeated across our region, could provide smarter solutions to the problems faced by Northland.