

# PRESS CUTTING

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## Consents sought for possible development



The marina-side property that has been providing "less than satisfactory value for ratepayers."

IMAGES / FNHL

Far North Holdings has filed a resource consent application with the Far North District Council to develop and subdivide 17 residential sites off Franklin, Baffin and Kellet streets in Opuia. An application has also been filed with the Northland Regional Council for an earthworks consent.

The district council-owned company says no decisions have yet been taken to build anything on the sites, or who the properties would be marketed to.

"At this stage we are simply securing a development option for this piece of land, which has long been vacant and providing less than satisfactory value for Far North ratepayers," chief executive Andy Nock said.

"We are ascertaining what may be acceptable going forward."

The potential development would help address growing

demand for good-quality housing in the Bay of Islands and projected population growth in Opuia, however, and Mr Nock invited Opuia residents to review the plans submitted to the council and to let him know if there were any concerns at this early stage.

"We could have sought a higher, apartment-style development, but we did not feel it was in keeping with Opuia," he said.

"Instead the plans are for a low-density residential scheme, in line with the approved district plan, within an established residential area. It is entirely within consent parameters, and we don't anticipate any formal requirement for public notification or consultation.

"However, as a council-owned company we are aware of an expectation that we listen to the views of the communities in which we operate, and keep



An artist's impression of the homes FNHL may build at Opuia.

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FNHL chief executive Andy Nock

them informed of what we plan to do there."

The land was currently vacant but had in the past been used for Harbour Board housing.

The plans used the land's contours and reflected existing Opuia housing and lot sizes, while the proposed units were modest in scale and reflected the multi-storey development in the area.

The sites ranged in size from 445m<sup>2</sup> to 5790m<sup>2</sup>, the provisional plan being to build 15 three-bedroom units, one on each of the subdivided sites. The units were currently all depicted as the same design, although a mix of designs might ultimately be used, featuring two car parks and storage within the ground floor, three bedrooms on the first floor, and kitchen, living and dining on the second floor.

Each unit would have a footprint of around 80m<sup>2</sup>.

The largest site, which occu-

pled a significant portion of the area, would be set aside as a green reserve in the middle of the development, including a fitness trail that was being planned and project-managed by a group of parents associated with Opuia School, and which FNHL would help create once plans were ready.

It was envisaged that another site would be used in the future for an as yet undefined 'cultural unit' to meet local community needs.

The units would connect to the reticulated wastewater treatment system, and vehicle access would be off the extension of Kellet St. FNHL did not expect that parking and traffic circulation at the nearby school to be affected.