

25 July 2021

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Six Lot Subdivision

Pt Lot 1 DP8787 & Lot 1 DP 19869

6 & 42 Leith Road , Okato



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A world of difference

Client: Sim
Project: Six Lot Subdivision, Leith Road, Ōkato
Report: Landscape and Visual Effects
Status: Planner Review
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GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT (Print to A3)

Figure 1: Site Context

Figure 2: Proposed District Plan (PDP)

Figure 3: Operative District Plan (ODP)

Figure 4: Site Character and Viewing Audience

Figure 5: View towards Lot 1 from outside 94 Leith Road

Figure 6: View towards site from outside 6 Perth Road

Figure 7: View from outside Lot 3

Figure 8: View north towards site from SH45

Figure 9: View west into site from SH45

Figure 10: View towards Leith Road and neighbour opposite from midway along driveway on Lot 5

Figure 11: Subdivision Scheme Plan (Juffermans Surveyors)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report assesses the landscape and visual effects of a proposed six lot subdivision at 6 Leith Road, Ōkato (Pt Lot 1 DP8787 & Lot 1 DP 19869).
- 1.2. The Applicant and property owner has engaged Bluemarle to prepare this landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA).
- 1.3. The Subdivision Scheme Plan and Consent Application has been prepared by Juffermans Surveyors.
- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to identify and assess the significance of effects resulting from development on landscape character and people's visual amenity.
- 1.5. This report addresses matters pertaining to character and amenity as outlined in the New Plymouth District Plan.

Issue 4: Loss or reduction of rural amenity.

Resource Management Act (RMA).

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. This assessment is based the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) Draft Aotearoa Guidelines (*Te Tangi A Te Manu*) for assessment concepts and principles.
- 2.2. The following has been undertaken:
 - A visit to the site and surrounding area.
 - Desktop collation of the site and local area information.
 - Information from the Application.
 - Review of NPDC Operative District Plan provisions.
 - Review of NPDC Proposed District Plan provisions.
 - Assessment against Statutory provisions.
 - Recommended mitigation measures where effects are identified and amelioration is possible and appropriate.

- 2.1. Abbreviations used in the report.

NPDC	New Plymouth District Council
ODP	Operative District Plan
PDP	Proposed District Plan
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
TRC	Taranaki Regional Council
SNA	Significant Natural Area

SWB	Significant Waterbody as listed in the PDP
WB	Waterbody as listed in the PDO

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1. This assessment relies on the project description in the Application, but the following aspects are the most pertinent to potential landscape effects.
- 3.2. The proposal is to create a six titles from Pt Lot 1 DP8787 & Lot 1 DP 19869. The Application explains how this achieved through the creation of five lots (inclusive of a balance lot – Lot 6), by way of a single stage subdivision, and increasing the size of a sixth lot (Lot 5), by way of a boundary adjustment.
- 3.3. Lot 6 is large balance lot that will remain as-is, and Lots 4 & 5 contain an existing house and gardens. Therefore, this LVIA focuses on potential effects on Lots 1, 2 and 3 as their creation potentially enables the greatest landscape change.

Proposed Titles

Lot 1: 2.924 ha

Lot 2: 5555 m²

Lot 3: 5500 m²

Lot 4: 4271m² (existing dwelling)

Lot 5: 1.01 ha (existing dwelling)

Lot 6: 32.133 (farm)

- 3.4. The proposal is a **discretionary activity** under the ODP.
- 3.5. The **Graphic Supplement** of this report contains relevant ODP and PDP maps, as well as a Site photographs, which informs a number of the proposed mitigation measures.

4. STATUTORY PROVISIONS (LANDSCAPE & VISUAL)

- 4.1. Relevant statutory provisions to this assessment are listed in **Appendix iii**. The purpose of reviewing provisions is not to undertake a planning assessment, but to help frame the landscape assessment.
- 4.2. A summary of the most pertinent provisions follows.

[Operative New Plymouth District Plan Policies and Objectives](#)

- 4.1. In the rural environment the key objective is to ensure that subdivision, use and development of land maintains the elements of rural character. This is to be achieved through polices controlling density, scale, location and design of subdivision, activities and the habitable buildings.

- 4.2. Design of subdivision and development should be sensitive to the surrounding environment, and vegetation should be retained (particularly indigenous vegetation) and new vegetation used to mitigate effects.
- 4.3. Elements that help distinguish the differences between areas that are urban, from those that are rural:
- Spaciousness
 - Low Density
 - Vegetated
 - Production Oriented
 - Working Environment
 - Rural Based Industry
 - Rural Infrastructure

Operative New Plymouth District Plan (ODP) - Non Compliance

- 4.1. For this proposal the relevant ODP rules pertaining to landscape and visual matters are:

Rule	Parameter
Rur 78	Minimum allotment size

- 4.2. Archeological and Wāhi Tapu matters are undertaken by other experts and are addressed in the Application.

4.3. As a **Discretionary Activity (OL 78)**, the following ODP assessment criteria are relevant.

Rule	Assessment Criteria
Rur 78	<p>1) <i>The effects of the subdivision on the ability to maintain RURAL CHARACTER</i></p> <p>2) <i>Whether the environment is spacious and maintains a low density built form and results in a low intensity of use typical of rural areas.</i></p> <p>3) <i>If there is a large balance area and whether the balance area and/or the subdivided ALLOTMENTS ensures the continued production orientated nature of RURAL CHARACTER.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Consideration towards the number of ALLOTMENTS proposed and if they will lead to intensive land uses that are not typical of RURAL CHARACTER;</i></p> <p>5) <i>Whether the subdivision and resulting built form will be highly visible in the landscape or whether this can be avoided, remedied or mitigated by the placement of identified BUILDING platforms or other design and layout considerations.</i></p> <p>6) <i>Design and visual treatment of the subdivision and resulting development including consideration towards techniques such as softening with vegetation, screening, planting, boundary treatment and BUILDING and STRUCTURE design, and the use of materials, colour and reflectivity.</i></p> <p>7) <i>The subdivision and resulting BUILDING platforms do not require substantial EXCAVATION and FILLING and consideration towards reinstatement.</i></p> <p>8) <i>Whether INFRASTRUCTURE is small in scale and that the subdivision is generally un-serviced with a lack of urban INFRASTRUCTURE to an extent typical of the rural environment.</i></p> <p>9) <i>Whether there are significant community costs associated with upgrading INFRASTRUCTURE due to increased ALLOTMENTS.</i></p> <p>10) <i>The cumulative effects of the subdivision.</i></p> <p>11) <i>Whether alternatives to the subdivision have been considered including location, sizes and the number of ALLOTMENTS.</i></p> <p>12) <i>Whether appropriate vehicle access can be provided and consideration towards the location of DRIVEWAYS.</i></p> <p>18) <i>Effects of ALLOTMENT size and shape on the RURAL CHARACTER of the area, amenities of the neighbourhood and the potential efficiency and range of uses of the land.</i></p> <p>19) <i>Whether the subdivision will lead to increased land use conflicts and reverse sensitivity concerns.</i></p> <p>23) <i>Whether the size of the ALLOTMENTS enables use of them in compliance with the relevant rules of the plan for permitted activities or standards and terms for controlled activities (i.e. setback requirements, etc).</i></p> <p>30) <i>The extent to which public space areas for recreation, conservation, or pedestrian/cycle access purposes are provided for.</i></p>

Proposed New Plymouth District Plan (PDP)

- 4.4. Aspects of the site pertaining to landscape and visual matters that have legal effect under the PDP are:
- The site contains two unnamed tributaries of the Katikara Stream listed as a Waterbodies (WB) in the Proposed District Plan. The PDP requires that rule WB-R5 applies where subdivision of land contains or adjoins a Waterbody. This activity is assessed as **Controlled** where effects standard Subdivision s9 is achieved, and **Restricted Discretionary** where compliance is not achieved.

Statutory Acknowledgement Areas

- 4.5. The site is within a Statutory Acknowledgement Area for Taranaki iwi.
- 4.6. The Taranaki Iwi Environmental Management Plan **Taiao, Taiora** under issues 1.9 and 14 cover matters regarding potential impacts on iwi values from subdivision and development (see Appendix iii).
- 4.7. Te Kāhui o Taranaki are considered mana whenua.

5. EXISTING LANDSCAPE

Context and Situation

- 5.1. The Application describes the site and its context therefore the following description is a brief summary in the context of those elements that inform the assessment of landscape and visual effects.
- 5.2. The property is a dairy farm, with most of the paddock area, dairy shed and associated ancillary buildings located with proposed Lot 6.
- 5.3. There are two dwellings on-site, one is located within proposed Lot 5 (currently a 2459m² parcel) at 42 Leith Rd . This dwelling is setback 150m from the road boundary. The other dwelling, at 6 Leith Road, is located approximately 10m from the road boundary and will be included within proposed Lot 4. The existing group of farm buildings located adjacent to this house will be included within Lot 6 - the farm balance lot.
- 5.4. Topographically, the landscape is relatively flat within the purview of Leith Road, transitioning to an undulating gully system to the east of the farm race that runs parallel with the road. There are two

unnamed tributaries of the Katikara Stream that run north-south through the eastern half of the site. These features are shown on the **Graphic Supplement**.

- 5.5. The Application describes proposed planting of the waterbodies in conjunction with Te Kāhui o Taranaki.
- 5.6. The portion of the site subject to landscape change through this proposal, is the land adjacent to the Leith Road frontage. This land rises to high point in the vicinity of proposed Lot 2 and 3. The road elevation more or less mirrors this. There is no vegetation within lots 1, 2, or 3, except for a roadside boxthorn hedgerow. There is amenity vegetation around the existing dwellings on Lots 4 & 5.
- 5.7. While the Leith Road frontage of the site is spacious, on the opposite side of the road are three dwellings and a stand of protected bush. This creates a backdrop to the site when viewed from SH3 travelling south.
- 5.8. There are spectacular views of the Maunga Taranaki from this area, as illustrated in the photographs in the **Graphic Supplement**.
- 5.9. The defining aspects of the site (in the area of Lots 1-3) that contributes to its rural character are spaciousness and generally elevated outlook.

6. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Rural Character

- 6.1. Potential effects from the proposal primarily pertain to the creation of Lots 1,2 & 3, and are therefore the focus of this LVIA.
- 6.2. Lot 1 is located in the north western corner of the site and 'sits' lower than the other lots. It can be viewed both Leith and Perth Roads, although it contains a roadside hedge. A future dwelling on this lot will be visible but not prominent.
- 6.3. Lots 2 and 3 are located next to each other on the elevated part of site. This positioning is obvious, given the spectacular views available. Dwellings on these lots will be visible and relatively prominent.
- 6.4. Between Lots 1 and 5, Lot 6 narrows and extends to the road frontage. This is the most open part of the site, able to be viewed from Leith Road, particularly heading north.
- 6.5. Overall, the site's distinctive landscape pattern arises from its elevated parts of open pasture and roadside hedge.
- 6.6. The photographs in the **Graphic Supplement** illustrate this landscape pattern.
- 6.7. Opposite the site on Leith Road is three smaller properties, these being,

- 63 Leith Road- 8296m²
- 43 Leith Road- 3.2779m², noting that at least half of the site comprises protected native bush.
- 16 Leith Road - 7100m²

These properties are shown on **Figure 4** of the **Graphic Appendix**.

- 6.8. North of the site are two other dwellings in close proximity (94 Leith Road and 6 Perth Road).
- 6.9. The presence of other smaller properties provides context and illustrates landscape change. The proposal creates similar landscape change in both scale and extent. Subdivision of this type is ongoing and typical in the district's rural areas, with potential effects generally known and understood. Therefore, the type of change that will occur on these lots can be predicted with a high degree of certainty. The issue for this proposal is the specific potential effect on those who live nearby (addressed under visual effects), and potential effects on landform and character. Assessment of these aspects follows.

Effects on Landform

- 6.10. Lot 1 comprises flat land that will likely experience minimal earthworks to create a driveway and building platform, effects of which are assessed as very low.
- 6.11. Lot 2 and 3 includes the site's high point and may require earthworks to create driveways and building platforms that are noticeable. Such earthworks are unlikely to be extensive, however to mitigate potential adverse effects, measures are outlined in Chapter 7, Mitigation. **Figure 9** in the **Graphic Supplement** shows this high point as viewed from SH45.
- 6.12. Lots 4 and 5 contain existing dwellings and access ways. Earthworks of any kind are unlikely.
- 6.13. Lot 6 extends to Leith Road between Lot 1 and 2. If a dwelling was located in this area, noticeable landscape change could occur. The mitigation measures in Chapter 7 include setting any future dwelling within Lot 6 at least 180m from the road boundary.

Character

- 6.14. The proposal will create landscape change. Open space will transition from pasture to dwellings, outbuildings, access ways, and amenity vegetation. This commonly occurs and is a well understood type of change. With mitigation measures such as design controls on buildings and screening vegetation, the effect of change can be managed to maintain rural character.

Cumulative Effects

- 6.15. Cumulative effects are those that in conjunction with those of previous development 'tip' this environment to another character type. The ODP does not provide any benchmark by which to measure effects against, nor is there anything to suggest that this environment is at capacity.

6.16. While rural subdivision commonly occurs, in this area, the extent of subdivision is relatively low when compared to the peri-urban fringes of Oakura and New Plymouth. Therefore, the capacity for change is nowhere near a point whereby the essence of this areas' character is threatened.

Visual Effects

6.17. The visual catchment for this site is very small as there are few properties in the area that have views towards the site. However, the prominence of lots 2 and 3 means that that the proposal may be visible to parts of a wider area, in particularly from SH45.

6.18. The properties assessed as comprising the viewing audience are listed and located on **Figure 4** of the **Graphic Appendix**. Five properties are identified as containing dwellings and there is a property (farm) on the opposite side of that wraps around 19 and 43 Keith Road.

6.19. There are five properties that contain dwellings in the vicinity of Lots 1-3:

- 94 Leith Road
- 6 Perth Road
- 63 Leith Road
- 43 Leith Road
- 16 Leith Road

6.20. 94 Leith Road overlooks Lot 1 and will also see future dwellings on Lots 2 and 3. However, this outlook is tempered by the dwelling's orientation which is north - away from the site. The level of visual amenity effect for this property is assessed as low.

6.21. 6 Perth Road is a house tucked behind amenity vegetation by the intersection of Leith and Perth Road. This house is also located lower than the site. Visual effects from amenity areas are assessed as negligible, but they will likely see future dwellings on lot 1 and 2 as they leave their property and turn into Leith Road.

6.22. 63 Leith Road is set back from the road and is located within amenity vegetation. Visual effects from amenity areas are assessed as very low, but they will likely see future dwellings on lot 1 as they leave their property, and lots 2 and 3 as they turn into Leith Road.

6.23. 43 Leith Road is opposite Lot 5 and has an elevated position with views directly towards the site. The position and orientation of this dwelling can be seen in **Figure 10** of the **Graphic Supplement**. Given proximity and orientation, the level of effect on this property is assessed as moderate. Effects are reduced by intervening vegetation, with views really not available until the driveway exit. Effects can be reduced to a low level (minor) with mitigation.

6.24. 16 Leith Road is located opposite Lot 3 and is generally oriented towards it. However, this dwelling is screened to the north and east by extensive native plantings of pittosporum and griselinia. They will see the proposal when exiting their driveway, but the level of effect on visual amenity is assessed as very low.

- 6.25. For the rural property opposite the site (Lot 3 DP 482291), a future permitted dwelling could be located in an area that has views of the proposal. The northern part of this property is opposite Lot 6 and the southern part opposite Lot 4. There is a potentially open views towards the proposal, from either end depending on where a future dwelling is located. Taking context into consideration (neighbouring dealings and vegetation), effects without mitigation are assessed as low, and with mitigation very low.
- 6.26. Users of Leith Road, currently see little of the site because of roadside hedging. Therefore once buildings are constructed, the lower parts will not be visible, but roofs are likely to be visible above. Mitigation measures includes recommended protection of the hedges or replacement planting along the road boundary to screen views of future development.
- 6.27. Users of SH3 Road, will have peripheral views of the proposal, with these positions shown on **Figures 8 & 9** in the **Graphic Supplement**. As well as the views being peripheral, they are also distant. With design controls on building height, and light reflectivity, the effects will very low.
- 6.28. By way of summary, one property (43 Leith Road) is likely to experience visual effects greater than very low. Otherwise, the proposal will be most noticeable for users of the Leith Road, which will include roofs from the approaches.

Evaluation of Effects against Relevant provisions

- 6.29. The ODP assessment criteria for rural rule 78 is addressed through the scale and nature of the subdivision. The scale of this proposal is, in terms of effects, three lifestyle sized lots. The broader site will remain spacious.
- 6.30. Planting is included under mitigation (Chapter 7) and will enhance rural and local character by reducing the dominance of buildings through screening and softening.
- 6.31. Earthworks, both cutting and filling will be acceptable, so long a mitigation measures regarding cut and fill batters are adopted.
- 6.32. Design controls on buildings (habitable and non-habitable) particularly colour will reduce their visual impact. These measures are regularly applied in the district and their effectiveness is clearly evident. Avoiding highly visible buildings will maintain rural character and reduce prominence.
- 6.33. The proposal is consistent with the rural design guidelines (Appendix ii) in that the allotment sizes are rural in size, not urban. The prominent rise on Lot 2|3 is maintained through earthworks controls.
- 6.34. Pleasantness and coherence as per the definition of amenity in the RMA will be maintained through the small scale of the proposal in the context of the wider environment, and design controls and screening vegetation will maintain pleasantness for those within the viewing audience and use Leith Road and SH45. The quality of the environment will also be maintained and enhanced through these measures.

6.35. Consultation with mana whenua is included in the Application, which includes a partnership planting of the waterbodies.

7. MITIGATION

Purpose

- 7.1. The following mitigation measures aim to ensure the development can occur with acceptable effects and are consistent with assessment criteria under Rural Rule 78. These measures are informed by the site's rural character and viewing audience. These recommend measure are in addition to those in the Application.

Recommendations

Lots 1, 2, 3

- a) To maintain rural character by avoiding a building clutter, only one dwelling should be permitted on each of these lots while zoned rural.
- b) To maintain rural character, any fencing of new boundaries should consist of either post and rail, or wire post and batten fencing only.
- c) To maintain rural character all new buildings (habitable and non-habitable) roofs should be finished with materials that have a light reflectance value (LRV) of less than 20%.
- d) To maintain rural character all new buildings (habitable and non-habitable) should be finished with cladding materials (walls, gable ends) that have a light reflectance value (LRV) of less than 40%. This excludes glazing.
- e) To maintain rural character and avoid a dominance of built form, no habitable buildings should be higher than 6.0m above existing ground level.
- f) To avoid visual clutter, watertanks should be black in colour or screened with vegetation.
- g) To maintain night sky values, point sources of light should not be visible from outside the site. To this end all exterior lighting should all be 'hooded' so that viewers would see a glow rather than a bright light.
- h) To avoid adverse effects on topography, cutting or filling over 1.5m in height is prohibited, unless it is created at a batter of no steeper than 3 horizontal to 1 vertical. This includes driveway access. Any cuts and fills less than 1.5m high (and therefore allowed to be steeper than 2:1) should be grassed (eg hydroseeded).
- i) To protect the integrity of the knoll on Lot 2/3 as a geomorphological element, no building should be located within 5m of the highest point of the knoll.
- j) To screen and soften views of buildings from the roadside, the existing hedgerow should be retained. If/when the hedge is removed, the road boundaries for these lots should be planted with native vegetation using the performance criteria below. If the hedgerow is on road reserve, the above should apply but the new planting must be located within the subject site's boundary.

Performance Criteria

A minimum of two rows of native vegetation at 1m spacings capable of reaching a minimum height of 3m in six years. Species should be selected from the coastal zone list in the Taranaki Tree Trust publication "*Restoration Planting in Taranaki: A guide to the Egmont Ecological District*". This publication is available on the TRC website.

[Lot 4 & 5](#)

- a) To maintain rural character, only one dwelling should be permitted on this lot while zoned rural.
Note: There is an existing dwelling on this lot.
- b) To maintain rural character, any fencing of new boundaries should consist of either post and rail, or wire post and batten fencing only.
- c) Note: Roadside planting is not necessarily recommended for these two lots (as they are for Lots 1,2 & 3). These two lots are essential 'as-is', which includes a desirable degree of openness and speciousness across paddock areas.

[Lot 6](#)

- a) To maintain rural and character by avoiding an overly urbanised road frontage, no future dwelling on lot 6 should be located within 180m of the Leith Road boundary.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The subdivision will not alter the site's rural character beyond an unacceptable extent. Given that the proposal is discretionary, subdivision of this scale is anticipated in the ODP.
- 8.2. Rural character is mitigated through design controls and vegetation, and the protection of the roadside hedging, and or replacement planting.
- 8.3. With mitigation, adverse visual effects on users of Leith Road and SH45 will be very low. Effects on the visual amenity of the all properties within the viewing catchment is no greater than very low except for 43 Leith Road who is likely to experience visual effects that are low (minor).
- 8.4. With mitigation, the site's rural character values can remain.

9. APPENDICES

Appendix i

[Landscape & Visual Assessment Guidelines](#)

Appendix ii

[Definitions](#)

Appendix iii

[Statutory Provisions](#)

Appendix i

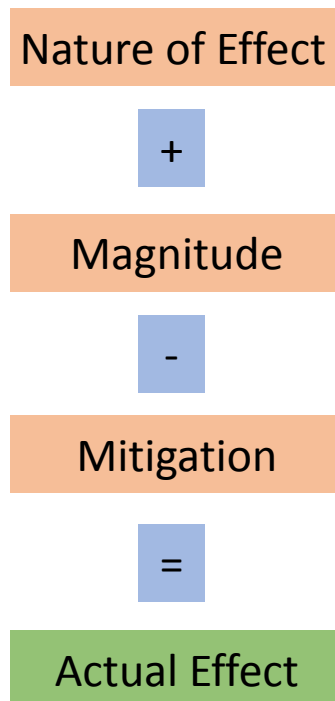
Landscape & Visual Assessment Guidelines

The methodology responds to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) as follows:

Assessment of effects on the physical landscape, Section 7 (c) the maintenance and enhancement amenity values and (f) maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment are referred to as landscape effects' within the report, which take into account:

- Landform effects, e.g. Earthworks including cut and fill
- Landcover effects, e.g. Loss of vegetation
- Land use effects, e.g. Change from pastoral use to urban use.

Assessment of effects on landscape amenity, Section 7 (c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and (f) maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment are referred to as 'visual effects within the report, which take into account:



- The 'fit' within the existing landscape character and patterns
- The ability of the landscape to absorb change
- Visual amenity in relation to the appearance of structures
- Effects on views from dwellings and private property
- The ability to mitigate effects and actual effects after mitigation has been established

The following seven point scale (over) is based on the *NZILA Landscape Assessment & Sustainable Management Best Practice Note 10.1*.

The effect of the specific change to the environment in relation to the subject site will be quantified by predicting the magnitude of positive or negative change in relation to the existing character of the area. Effects may be potential and actual, positive or adverse, temporary, permanent or cumulative. The rating is utilised to determine the need for and then the degree and extent of landscape mitigation measures. The Assessment does not attempt to predict the visual effects of seasonal changes throughout the year, but describes the 'worst case' position in terms of the character types or views of receptors.

Rating	Indicative Examples
Negligible	The proposal will have no discernible change or have a neutral effect on the existing landscape character or viewer.
Very Low	The proposal may have slightly discernible or the distance of the viewer from the proposal is such that it is difficult to discern the proposal and consequently has little overall effect.
Low (Minor*)	The proposal may be discernible within the landscape, but will not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the landscape or affect the viewer. The proposal will have a small effect or change.
Moderate	The proposal will form a visible and recognisable new element within the landscape and would be discernible and have a noticeable effect on the overall quality of the landscape and/or affect to the viewer.
High	The proposal will form a significant and new element within the landscape and will affect the overall landscape character and/or affect to the viewer. Existing views are materially changed.
Very High	The proposal will result in a visible and immediately apparent element within the landscape and will result in a permanent change to the overall landscape character and/or affect to the viewer. Primary views are restricted.
Extreme	The proposal will result in the loss of key attributes thereby creating a significant change in landscape character and the proposal becomes the overwhelmingly dominant feature and may obscure primary views.
Effects can be adverse or beneficial	
<p>*Determination of Minor</p> <p>A consent can be publicly notified if is the decision maker considers that the activity will have or is likely to have adverse effects that are more than minor. Where public notification is not required, limited notification must be given to those who are affected in a minor or more than minor way (but not less than minor). In relation to this assessment 'Low' would generally equate to 'minor'.</p>	

Appendix ii

Definitions

Key Definitions used in this report:

Landscape:

Embodies the relationships between people and places: It is an area's collective physical attributes, how they are perceived, and what they mean for people.

Landscape character:

Each landscape's distinctive combination of physical, associative, and perceptual attributes

Landscape attributes:

Tangible and intangible characteristics and qualities that contribute collectively to landscape character.

Landscape Value

The relative regard (quality, meaning, importance, merit, worth) with which a landscape is held.

Landscape Values

The reasons a landscape is valued, embodied in its valued attributes

Landscape Unit

A distinct part of a landscape based on aspects such as landform or land use.

Landscape character area

A group of contiguous landscapes sharing similar specific character. For example, the Taranaki Ring Plain

Landscape character type:

A category of landscapes – not necessarily contiguous – sharing similar generic characteristics. For example, 'rural character'

Natural features and landscapes

Features and landscapes that are characterised by natural elements (indigenous or exotic) and are relatively uncluttered by human structures such as buildings and roads.

Natural character

The specific combination of natural characteristics and qualities – including degree of naturalness – of places within the coastal environment, wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins.

Outstanding natural features and landscapes

Natural features and natural landscapes that are of outstanding value because of their physical, perceptual and/or associative values in the context of their district or region.

Appendix iii

Statutory Provisions

Operative New Plymouth District Plan Policies and Objectives

The ODP sets out objectives and policies that form part of the criteria for assessment relevant to subdivision within the rural environment. These elements are identified below.

Objective 4: *To ensure that subdivision, use and development of land maintains the elements of rural character.*

Policy 4.1: *Control the density and scale of subdivision by providing for one small allotment where there is a large balance area, that promotes spaciousness and a low density, production oriented environment.*

Policy 4.2: *Control the density, scale, location and design of subdivision by providing limited opportunities for small allotment subdivision.*

Policy 4.3: *Control the density, scale, location (including on-site location) and design of activities.*

Policy 4.4: *Control the density, height and on-site location of habitable buildings.*

Policy 4.5: *Ensure the design of the subdivision and development is sensitive to the surrounding environment.*

Policy 4.6: *Retain vegetation, particularly indigenous vegetation and require the planting of new vegetation to mitigate the effects of activities.*

Policy 4.7: *Buildings, plantation forests and shelter belts should not adversely affect adjoining properties by shading.*

Policy 4.8: *Activities within the rural environment should not generate traffic effects that will adversely affect rural character and the intensity of traffic generation should be of a scale that maintains rural character.*

Further to the objectives and policies above, the ODP identifies issues that should be considered. Issue 4: Loss or Reduction of Rural Amenity and Character notes: "rural character is a broad concept, defined by the various elements that make up the rural environment." Furthermore, "these elements help to distinguish the differences between those areas that are urban, from those that are rural." These elements that define issue 4 are identified below.

Spaciousness: *Areas of open space used for grazing or growing crops. Although there are a variety of landscapes and uses in the rural area, it has an overall feeling of spaciousness.*

Low Density: *Widely spaced built form with dwellings dispersed in the wider landscape and some limited lifestyle opportunities. Historical clusters of development either as small towns or isolated developments.*

Vegetated: *Areas of vegetation (in a natural state or managed, indigenous and/or exotic) such as pasture, crops, forest and scrub, riparian margins, lakes and wetlands, stands of trees, shelter-belts or gardens.*

Production Oriented: *Land uses of a predominantly 'production' orientated nature such as farming and related farm storage sheds, stock yards, farm animals and houses supporting the principal productive land use. These include intensive farming activities.*

Working Environment: *A generally highly modified and managed landscape including the widespread use of machinery and chemicals to control and enhance plant and animal growth and production resulting in 'rural noises' and 'rural smells'.*

Rural Based Industry: *Associated with the land or its associated natural assets. Incl: sawmills, quarries, agricultural manufacture, transport yards, bulk stores, airports, pipelines, petroleum industry activities, and exploration.*

Rural Infrastructure: *Generally has a lack of urban infrastructure such as reticulated water and wastewater...a road transportation network of many narrow roads with low traffic volumes, un-kerbed, without footpaths and urban structures such as street lighting.*

The ODP states that the threats to rural character are “the use of the land for intensive rural-residential development, for intensive commercial or industrial use and for activities that have not always located in the rural environment. Such development could result in a loss of “spaciousness, alter the built environment, reduce pleasantness through, for example, increased noise levels and have implications for infrastructure, servicing and pleasantness”. The ODP also recognises that visual amenity can also be adversely affected by changes in infrastructure, facilities, excavation and filling and loss of vegetation.

The ODP states that one way such intensive development can occur is through the fragmentation of ‘the generally large allotments found in the rural sector.’ It recognises that traditional rural practices have historically required large areas of land compared with ‘non-rural’ residential, business, or small industrial sites. It suggests, that it is these ‘large’ allotments and their legacy of facilitating the dominance of open space or ‘spaciousness’ over built form which provides the basis for rural amenity.

However, the ODP also recognises that as with other environment areas, change is constant in the rural environment and states: “Beyond the annual cycle of the seasons, regional, national and international forces act on the rural economy, and land uses frequently change as a result. Different crops, different management regimes, and different lifestyles bring change to the rural landscape and to the people who live there” (P26a).

Proposed District Plan

The Proposed New Plymouth District Plan (PDP) was notified on 23 September 2019 with the submission period closing on 22 November 2019.

In the interests of brevity, policies objectives and rules pertaining to Waterbodies are not fully reproduced. Relevant Objectives are WB-01 to 04, Polices P1-P8, and Rule WB-R5.

Objective and Policies relevant to this proposal are covered under *Rural Production Zone, Subdivision* and the *Coastal Environment*. The relevant objective and polices for each are listed below:

Objectives and Policies - Rural Production Zone

Objectives

RPROZ - 01 *Productive land and resources support a range of production oriented and resource dependent activities which are innovative and efficient.*

RPROZ - 02 *The Rural Production Zone is predominantly used for primary production.*

RPROZ - 03 *The role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone is not compromised by incompatible activities.*

RPROZ - 04 *The predominant character and amenity of the Rural Production Zone is maintained, which includes:*

1. *extensive areas of vegetation of varying types (for example, pasture for grazing, crops, forestry and indigenous vegetation and habitat) and the presence of large numbers of farmed animals;*
2. *low density built form with open space between buildings that are predominantly used for agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activities (for example, barns and sheds), low density rural living (for example, farm houses and worker's cottages) and community activities (for example, rural halls, domains and schools);*
3. *a range of noises, smells, light overspill and traffic, often on a cyclic and seasonable basis, generated from the production, manufacture, processing and/or transportation of raw materials derived from primary production;*
4. *interspersed existing rural industry facilities associated with the use of the land for intensive indoor farming, quarrying, oil and gas activities and cleanfills; and*
5. *the presence of rural infrastructure, including rural roads, and the on-site disposal of waste, and a general lack of urban infrastructure, including street lighting, solid fences and footpaths.*

RPROZ - 05 *The Rural Production Zone is a functional, production and extraction orientated working environment where primary production and rural industry activities are able to operate effectively and efficiently, while ensuring that:*

1. *the adverse effects generated by primary production and rural industry activities are appropriately managed; and*
2. *primary production and rural industry activities are not limited, restricted or compromised by incompatible activities and/or reverse sensitivity effects.*

RPROZ - 06 *Natural features, soil productivity, versatility of land and rural character and/or amenity are not compromised by adverse changes to landform, intensification of land use and/or built form, or urbanisation.*

RPROZ - 07 *Sensitive activities are designed and located to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse reverse sensitivity effects and/or conflict with primary production.*

Policies

RPROZ - P1 *Allow activities that are compatible with the role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone, while ensuring their design, scale and intensity is appropriate, including:*

1. *agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activities;*
2. *residential activities;*
3. *Māori purpose activities;*
4. *rural produce retail; and*
5. *petroleum prospecting.*

RPROZ - P2 *Manage activities that are potentially compatible with the role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone and ensure it is appropriate for such activities to establish in the Rural Production Zone, having regard to whether:*

1. *the activity is compatible with the character and the amenity of the rural area;*
2. *the activity will limit or constrain the establishment and operation of agricultural, pastoral and horticultural activities;*
3. *the activity will reduce the potential for versatile land to be used for productive purposes and in a sustainable manner;*
4. *adequate on-site infrastructure and services are available and/or can be provided to service the activity's needs;*
5. *adverse effects can be internalised within the activity's site; and*
6. *the activity will not result in conflict at zone interfaces.*

RPROZ - P3 *Avoid activities that are incompatible with role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone and/or activities that will result in:*

1. *reverse sensitivity effects and/or conflict with permitted activities in the zone; or*
2. *adverse effects, which cannot be avoided, or appropriately remedied or mitigated, on:
rural character and amenity values;
the productive potential of highly productive soils and versatile rural land.*

RPROZ - P4 *Maintain the role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone by controlling the effects of:*

1. *building height, bulk and location;*
2. *setback from boundaries and boundary treatments; and*
3. *earthworks and subdivision.*

RPROZ - P5 *Require the effects generated by activities to be of a type, scale and level that is appropriate in the Rural Production Zone and that will maintain rural character and amenity, including by:*

1. *managing noise and light emissions to an acceptable level, particularly around sensitive activities; and*
2. *managing high traffic generation activities that compromise the safe and efficient use of the transport network*

RPROZ - P6 *Ensure large-scale primary production and rural industry are designed and located appropriately, having regard to:*

1. *the duration or permanency of the activity;*
2. *whether the primary access is located on an arterial or collector road or a road designed to provide for anticipated traffic generation;*
3. *sufficient separation from sensitive activities by distance and/or topography to avoid risk to people, property and the environment;*
4. *whether the activity may compromise cultural, spiritual and/or historic values and interests or associations of importance to tangata whenua, and if so, the outcomes of any consultation with tangata whenua as kaitiaki and mana whenua, including with respect to mitigation options;*
5. *the extent of rehabilitation proposed and whether it will result in a net environmental benefit for the immediate area or community and/or establish land use appropriate to the area;*
6. *methods for avoiding adverse effects on identified features, including archaeological sites and sites and areas of significance to Māori; and*
7. *minimisation of adverse visual effects through screen planting, building design, siting, and the retention of existing vegetation.*

RPROZ - P7 *Require sensitive activities to be appropriately located and designed to minimise any reverse sensitivity effects, risks to people, property and the environment and/or conflict with activities permitted in the Rural Production Zone, including by:*

1. *ensuring sufficient separation by distance and/or topography between sensitive activities and zone boundaries, transport networks, primary production, significant hazardous facilities and rural industry;*
2. *adopting appropriate design measures to minimise the impact of off-site effects of rural industry that cannot be internalised within the rural industry activity's site; and*
3. *utilising landscaping, screen planting or existing topography to minimise the visual impact of rural industry.*

RPROZ - P8 *Require that buildings and structures associated with large scale activities maintain rural character and visual amenity by:*

1. *locating buildings away from prominent ridgelines and providing separation between buildings;*
 2. *requiring buildings to be designed to a form and scale that is in keeping with the rural landscape of the area;*
 3. *softening with vegetation related to the area and using appropriate boundary treatments; and*
 4. *minimising adverse visual effects through use of appropriate materials and recessive colours.*
-

Objectives and Policies - Subdivision

Objectives

SUB - 01 *Subdivision results in the efficient use of land and achieves patterns of development which deliver good quality community environments that are compatible with the role, function and predominant character of each zone.*

- SUB - 02** *Subdivision is designed to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment and occurs in a sequenced and coherent manner that:*
1. *responds positively to the site's physical characteristics and context;*
 2. *is accessible, connected and integrated with the surrounding neighbourhoods;*
 3. *contributes to the local character and sense of place;*
 4. *recognises the value of natural systems in sustainable stormwater management and water sensitive design; and*
 5. *protects or enhances natural features and landforms, waterbodies, indigenous vegetation, historic heritage, sites of significance to tangata whenua, and/or identified features; and*
 6. *provides accessible and well-designed open space areas for various forms of recreation, including sport and active recreation, for the health and wellbeing of communities.*
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- SUB - 03** *Infrastructure is planned to service proposed subdivision and development and to connect with the wider infrastructure network in an integrated, efficient, coordinated and future-proofed manner and is provided at the time of subdivision.*
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Policies
All Subdivision

- SUB -P1** *Allow subdivision that results in the efficient use of land, provides for the needs of the community and supports the policies of the District Plan for the applicable zones, where subdivision design:*
1. *reflects patterns of development that are compatible with, and reinforce the role, function and predominant character of the zone;*
 2. *maintains the integrity of the zone with lot sizes sufficient to accommodate intended land uses;*
 3. *in the City Centre, Town Centre and Local Centre zones, minimises proliferation of vehicle crossings that could restrict the ability of pedestrians to move safely and efficiently along the street and within public places and/or reduces the presence of retail activity at the ground floor;*
 4. *in the Mixed Use and General Industrial zones, incorporates sufficient setbacks at residential zone interfaces (where subdivision adjoins such a zone) to provide sufficient space for planting and/or landscaping;*
 5. *in the Large Format Retail Zone, avoids the fragmentation of land and/or creation of small allotments that would limit or constrain the ability to use land for large format retail activities; and*
 6. *in the General Industrial, Large Format Retail, Residential and Rural zones, incorporates sufficient space for on-site stormwater disposal including the use of water sensitive and low-impact design solutions.*
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- SUB -P2** *Manage subdivision of land containing significant natural features and landforms, waterbodies, indigenous vegetation, historic heritage, sites of significance to tangata whenua and/or other identified features to ensure their protection or enhancement.*
-
- SUB -P3** *Manage significant risks from natural hazards by restricting subdivision that:*
1. *creates new or exacerbates existing natural hazards including coastal hazards, erosion, slippage, subsidence, falling debris or flooding; or*
 2. *results in adverse effects on the stability of land and buildings; and*
 3. *does not provide safe, flood free and stable building platforms at the time of subdivision.*
-
- SUB -P4** *Require infrastructure to be provided in an integrated and comprehensive manner by:*
1. *demonstrating that the subdivision will be appropriately serviced and integrated with existing and planned infrastructure; and*
 2. *ensuring that the appropriate infrastructure for the subsequent use of the land is in place at the time of subdivision or development; and*
 3. *requiring connections to Council's reticulated systems in urban areas; or*
 4. *requiring appropriate on-site infrastructure to be provided at the time of subdivision.*
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- SUB -P5** *Require efficient and sustainable stormwater control and disposal systems to be designed and installed at the time of subdivision that:*
- 1. incorporates water sensitive and low impact design principles, that are sufficient for the amount and rate of anticipated runoff, in accordance with Council's Land Development and Subdivision Infrastructure Standard Local Amendments Version 3.*
 - 2. mitigates the effects of development on-site using stormwater management areas to avoid inundation within the subdivision or on adjoining land, especially if sufficient infrastructure capacity is not available;*
 - 3. where feasible, utilises stormwater management areas for multiple uses, while ensuring they have a high quality interface with residential activities or commercial activities;*
 - 4. avoids and increase in sediment and/or contaminants entering waterbodies or downstream effects as a result of stormwater disposal; and*
 - 5. considers the outcomes of any consultation with tangata whenua where it is proposed to dispose of stormwater to a waterbody that has cultural, spiritual and/or historic values and interests or associations of importance to tangata whenua, including with respect to mitigation measures and opportunities to incorporate mātauranga Māori principles into the disposal method.*

Policies
Rural Subdivision

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- SUB -P10** *Manage the scale, design and intensity of subdivision in the Rural Production Zone by:*
- 1. allowing one small allotment only where there is a large balance area, and where the subdivision design reinforces the role, function and predominant character of the zone;*
 - 2. managing subdivision that involves multiple small allotments with a large balance area; and*
 - 3. avoiding subdivision that would compromise the role, function and predominant character of the Rural Production Zone, or is more typical of patterns of development in urban areas.*
-
- SUB -P11** *Manage the scale, design and intensity of subdivision in the Rural Lifestyle Zone by:*
- 1. allowing up to four small allotments only where there are corresponding larger lots, and the subdivision design reinforces and is compatible with the role, function and predominant character of the zone;*
 - 2. managing subdivision that involves multiple small allotments; and*
 - 3. avoiding subdivision that would compromise the role, function and predominant character of the Rural Lifestyle Zone, or is more typical of patterns of development in urban areas.*
-
- SUB -P12** *Ensure that that subdivision in the Rural Zones results in lot sizes and lot configurations that:*
- 1. are appropriate for the development and land use intended by the zone;*
 - 2. are compatible with the role, function and predominant character of the zone;*
 - 3. maintain rural character and amenity; and*
 - 4. are consistent with the quality and types of development envisaged by the zone objectives and policies, including by minimising any reverse sensitivity effects and/or conflict with activities permitted in the zones.*
-

SUB -P13 *Require subdivision design and layout in the Rural Zones to respond positively to, and be integrated with the surrounding rural or rural lifestyle context, including by:*

1. *incorporating physical site characteristics, constraints and opportunities into subdivision design;*
2. *minimising earthworks and land disturbance by designing building platforms that integrate into the natural landform;*
3. *avoiding inappropriately located buildings and associated access points including prominent locations as viewed from public places;*
4. *incorporating sufficient separation from zone boundaries, transport networks, rural activities and rural industry to minimise potential for reverse sensitivity conflicts;*
5. *incorporating sufficient separation between building platforms and identified features to minimise potential adverse effects on those features;*
6. *considering whether a subdivision has the potential to compromise cultural, spiritual and/or historic values and interests or associations of importance to tangata whenua, and if so, also considering the outcomes of any consultation with and/or cultural advice provided by tangata whenua and:*
 - a. *opportunities to incorporate mātauranga Māori principles into the design and/or development of the subdivision;*
 - b. *opportunities for tangata whenua's relationship with ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga to be maintained or strengthened; and*
 - c. *options to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects;*
7. *promoting sustainable stormwater management through water sensitive design solutions; and*
8. *in the Rural Lifestyle Zone, achieving patterns of development and allotment sizes that provide opportunities for rural lifestyle living.*

SUB -P14 *Ensure that rural subdivision in the Rural Lifestyle or Rural Production Zones maintains or enhances the attributes that contribute to rural character and amenity values, including:*

1. *varying forms, scales, spaciousness and separation of buildings and structures associated with the use of the land;*
 2. *maintaining prominent ridgelines, natural features and landforms, and predominant vegetation of varying types;*
 3. *low population density and scale of development relative to urban areas;*
 4. *on-site servicing and a lack of urban infrastructure; and*
 5. *in the Rural Production Zone, the continued and efficient operation of rural activities and productive working landscapes.*
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Resource Management Act 1991

Further to the ODP Objectives and Policies, Section 7 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) sets out matters which the Council must have particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

These include:

(c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values, and

(f) Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.

The changing use of land frequently creates effects that cross property boundaries. These effects may be beneficial, or detract from the use and enjoyment (amenity) of neighbouring properties. Common cross-boundary amenity effects include changes to privacy, outlook, views, landscape character, landscape coherence and spaciousness.

The RMA defines amenity values as:

“...those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to the people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes”.

The following assessment of both landscape and visual effects, informs the overarching assessment of the effects of the proposal on amenity values.

Tangata Whenua Matters

Taiao Taiora -Taranaki Iwi Management Plan

The Taranaki Iwi Environmental Management Plan Taiao, Taiora was launched in July 2018 as *an empowering document, which supports the vision of Taranaki Iwi to guide and inform decision making by empowering marae/pā, hapū and whānau as kaitiaki of their rohe.*¹

Ngā Take Matua

Ngā Take - Issues

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- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | <i>Human actions have and are degrading the mouri of Papatūānuku in the Taranaki Iwi rohe;</i> |
| 9 | <i>Poorly designed subdivision and development can lead to unsustainable and inefficient land use, destruction of wāhi tapu and other important sites, loss of access to areas, an increase in pests, and more pressure on water resources through abstraction and direct and indirect discharges;</i> |
| 14 | <i>Taranaki Iwi will not support:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>i. Any action or activities that will result in the degradation of the mouri of Papatūānuku;</i><i>ii. New structures being built in undeveloped areas of the coastal margin;</i><i>iii. Subdivision and associated land uses that cannot demonstrate that they will not adversely affect Ranginui, Papatūānuku, Taranaki Mounga, Tāne, Tangaroa-ki-Tai and Tangaroa-ki-Uta;</i><i>vii. Any subdivision or land use that will result in the loss or restriction of access to sites of significance (including wāhi tapu), on Taranaki Iwi;</i><i>viii. Any subdivision and development that adversely impacts the important cultural values associated with landscapes of importance to Taranaki Iwi (hapū, marae/pā);</i> |
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¹ Taiao Taiora – An Iwi Environmental Management Plan for the Taranaki Iwi Rohe page 4

The Rural Subdivision & Development Design Guidelines 2012

Developed in 2012 by NPDC as a companion to the rural review and subsequent rule changes. These guidelines cover a range of factors that owners of rural land should consider when considering subdivision. These factors include design & layout, building location, landscape and vegetation, servicing and building appearance.

Rural Design Considerations and Key Elements as outlined within the NPDC Rural Design Guide (Simplified)	
Design and Layout:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Survey • Working with the landscape • Allotment Placement • Boundary Alignment • Allotment Size • Neighbours • Sensitive Landscapes • Cultural features • Heritage Features • Natural Features
Building Location:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Effects • Open Character • Earthworks • Building Setback • Building Scale • Existing Vegetation • Eco-Efficiency
Landscaping and Vegetation :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Retain Existing Vegetation • Planting with Land contours • Screening and Privacy • Fencing and Signage • Landscape surrounds and boundaries
Servicing :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient Servicing • Access ways • Access way Design • Shared Entrances • Lo-Impact Design for rural infrastructure • Riparian Management • Efficient resource use • Connectivity
Building Appearance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Scale • Building consistency • Building colours • Building style • Sustainable building