

**UNDER**

The Resource Management Act 1991

**IN THE MATTER OF**

SUB21/47781 being an application for  
a 6-lot subdivision consent at 6 and  
42 Leith Road, Okato

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**PRELIMINARY EXPERT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS  
WITNESS CONFERENCING STATEMENT**

**RICHARD BAIN**

**ERIN GRIFFITH**

**MARTHA DRAVITZKI**

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**1<sup>st</sup> of June 2022**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1 This signed Joint Witness Statement (**JWS**) is written in response to a request from the Commissioner dated 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022 to clarify points of agreement and disagreement relating to landscape matters.
- 1.2 Conferencing was held on at the New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) offices on Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2022.
- 1.3 The participants were (in alphabetical order):
  - a. Richard Bain, Landscape Architect, Blue Marble, engaged by Juffermans Surveyors on behalf of the applicant.
  - b. Marth Dravitzki, Landscape Architect, Juffermans Surveyors Limited, on behalf of the applicant.
  - c. Erin Griffith, Landscape & Urban Design, Natural Capital, engaged by New Plymouth District Council.
  - d. Richard Watkins, Principal Planner for NPDC whose role was to facilitate and chair the conferencing meeting;
- 1.4 The experts have read and agree to abide by the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as specified in the Environment Court's Consolidated Practice Note 2014.
- 1.5 This Statement is based on notes documented throughout the conference by Richard Watkins which were subsequently circulated to all parties for acceptance of its true and accurate reflection of the discussion. These notes are included at the close of this document as reference and form the bulk of this JWS.
- 1.6 The landscape evidence highlights that there are a limited number of matters which remain in contention between the landscape experts but these matters impact on the final landscaping conclusions.
- 1.7 The matters addressed below follow the focus of discussions at conferencing and include;
  - a. Discussion of the existing environment;
  - b. Effects of the Proposal

- i. Areas of agreement;
- ii. Areas of disagreement;
- c. Mitigation;
- d. Outstanding Matters.

## 2. DISCUSSION OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

### 2.1 The **experts agree** on the following aspects of the receiving environment:

- a. The site has a high degree of openness & spaciousness.
- b. The spaciousness is achieved by a pastoral landscape noting there are two dwellings within the site.
- c. The dwellings are well separated.
- d. There is a degree of lifestyle development on the opposite side of Leith Road.
- e. The site does not contain a significant landscape.
- f. There are other landforms in the broader receiving environment that hold greater sensitivity to change (eg: remnant pa sites on the ring road of Leith/Perth road) however, with the exception of the vegetated Puketi Pa, these are not visible in the context of the subject site.

## 3. DISCUSSION OF THE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

### 3.1 The **experts agree** on the following aspects of the receiving environment:

- a. There will be a change to the environment as a result of the proposal.
- b. The most obvious changes will be associated with the future dwellings and accessory buildings on proposed Lots 1 – 3.
- c. The future buildings on Lots 2 & 3 will be visible from South Road but this will be a peripheral view.
- d. The future buildings on Lots 2 & 3 will be visible from Leith Road.
- e. Landscape effects are distinct from visual effects.
- f. The future dwelling on proposed Lot 2 would be approximately 1 – 2m higher than the hillock.

### 3.2 The **experts disagree** on the following aspects of the proposal:

- a. The level of cumulative effects associated with the creation of proposed Lots 2 & 3.
- b. The level of distinctiveness of the hillock.

- c. Whether the effects of activities on Lot 3 on the hillock will be avoided by the currently proposed mitigation measures.
- d. Whether planting mitigation along the southern side Boundary of proposed Lot 3 is required to manage the effects of the proposal.
- e. Whether the number of users of Leith Road influences the degree of visual effects.

#### 4. MITIGATION

##### 4.1 The **experts agree** on the following detail with respect to mitigation:

- a. Any planting mitigation needs to be of mixed native species which relates to the surrounding environment. This needs to convey a contextual relationship including recognition of the nearby historic pa site.
- b. Planting on the southern boundary of Lot 3 would screen buildings on Lots 2 & 3 as long as it was of an appropriate height and density. Such planting will direct receiver's eyes (on Leith Road) towards the more open components of the site.
- c. Planting on the Leith Road boundary and the southern boundary of Lot 3 would compartmentalise the effects and intensify views towards the rest of the site. The loss of speciousness from such mitigation will be relatively small and the effects on openness would be acceptable.
- d. Additional planting mitigation is limited to managing the effects of activities on proposed lots 2 & 3. The existing vegetation (pre house removal) on proposed Lot 5 is sufficient to manage effects on rural character. Information regarding the current level of remaining vegetation on the site post dwelling removal was not available at the conferencing.
- e. The inclusion of the proposed design controls and planting on the Road Boundary are sufficient to manage the effects of development on proposed Lot 1.
- f. If planting was to be required along the southern boundary of proposed Lot 3, such planting would need to be 1 – 2 Litre size at time of planting and capable

of achieving a minimum mature height of 3m.

- g. The existing road side barberry hedging along Lots 2 & 3 can be retained post the additional planting 'inside' the barberry hedge of Lots 2 & 3.

**5. OUTSTANDING MATTERS**




- 5.1 The effects on the landform of the establishment of the vehicle crossing locations for Lots 2 & 3 needs to be better understood. In addition whether the driveway within Lot 3 will be able to be established clear of the hillock.

**6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 It is noted that the main matter of disagreement remains the level of effects of the subdivision on rural character and amenity, particularly by Lot 3 and its relationship with/on the raised landform in that area.

**Report Prepared by Erin Griffith from notes collated by Richard Watkins with review and edits by Richard Bain and Martha Dravitzki.**

Signed on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2022 by:

 ..... <b>Erin Griffith</b>	 ..... <b>Richard Bain</b>	 ..... <b>Martha Dravitzki</b>
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**Pre-Hearing Conferencing by Landscape Architects for SUB21/47781  
Application for resource consent for B, M and R Sim for a 6 lot subdivision at 6  
and 42 Leith Road, Okato, New Plymouth.**

***Held***

At the offices of the New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) on 26 May 2022 from 10am – 11:20am.

***In attendance***

Erin Griffith (Landscape & Urban Design) for NPDC  
Richard Bain (Landscape Architect) for the applicant  
Martha Dravitzki (Landscape Architect) for the applicant  
Richard Watkins (Facilitator)

***Commissioner Minute/Direction***

Item 10 of Mr Mark St Clair (Independent Commissioner) has requested that that all parties (the NPDC reporting officer, B, M and R Sim as the applicant, and any of the submitters) calling expert witnesses liaise amongst themselves in order to facilitate their respective experts conferencing on matters relevant to their specific areas of expertise prior to the preparation of their reports or evidence (including any applicable conditions of consent) and through to the commencement of the hearing. **The aim of the conferencing should be to identify areas of agreement and disagreement which can then be noted in the reports and evidence** (Environment Court Practice Note 2014, Appendix 3). The Commissioner will attempt to focus on the issues of contention during the hearing and in deliberations thereafter and so the assistance of the parties to clearly identify areas of expert agreement and disagreement in this manner will be greatly appreciated.

***Areas of Agreement***

Existing Environment

The site has a high degree of openness & spaciousness

The spaciousness is achieved by a pastoral landscape noting there are two dwellings within the site.

The dwellings are well separated.

There is a degree of lifestyle development on the opposite side of Leith Road.

The site does not contain a significant landscape.

Effects of Proposal

There will be a change to the environment as a result of the proposal.

The most obvious changes will be associated with the future dwellings and accessory buildings on proposed Lots 1 – 3.

The future buildings on Lots 2 & 3 will be visible from South Road but this will be a peripheral view.

The future buildings on Lots 2 & 3 will be visible from Leith Road.

Landscape effects are distinct from visual effects.

The future dwelling on proposed Lot 2 would be approximately 1 – 2m higher than the hillock.

Mitigation Planting

Any planting mitigation needs to be of mixed native species which relates to the surrounding environment. This needs to convey a contextual relationship including recognition of the nearby historic pa site.

Planting on the southern boundary of Lot 3 would screen buildings on Lots 2 & 3. Such planting will direct receiver's eyes (on Leith Road) towards the more open components of the site.

Planting on the Road Boundary and the southern boundary of Lot 3 would compartmentalise the effects and intensify views towards the rest of the site. The loss of spaciousness from such mitigation will be relatively small and the effects on openness would be acceptable. Any additional planting mitigation is limited to managing the effects of activities on proposed lots 2 & 3. The existing vegetation of proposed Lot 5 is sufficient to manage effects on rural character.

The inclusion of the proposed design controls and planting on the Road Boundary are sufficient to manage the effects of development on proposed Lot 1.

If such planting was to be required along the southern boundary of proposed Lot 3, such planting would need to be 1 – 2 Litre size at time of planting and capable of achieving a minimum mature height of 3m.

The existing hedging in front of Lot 2 & 3 can be retained post the additional planting in the front of Lots 2 & 3.

The effects on the landform of the establishment of the vehicle crossing locations for Lots 2 & 3 needs to be better understood. In addition whether the driveway within Lot 3 will be able to be established clear of the hillock.

### ***Areas of Disagreement***

The level of cumulative effects associated with the creation of proposed Lots 2 & 3.

The level of distinctiveness of the hillock.

Whether the effects of activities on Lot 3 on the hillock will be avoided by the currently proposed mitigation measures.

Whether planting mitigation along the southern side Boundary of proposed Lot 3 is required to manage the effects of the proposal.

Whether the number of users of Leith road influences the degree of visual effects.

### ***Other Matters***

The location of the vehicle crossings(s) for Lots 2 & 3 needs to be confirmed to assist the assessment and consideration of the proposal by the Landscape Architects.