

**Before the New Plymouth District Council**

**Independent Hearing Commissioners**

**PPC18/00048**

**Under** the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

**In the matter of** an application by Oakura Farm Park Limited to vary or cancel Condition 4 of Consent Notice Instrument No. 9696907.4 on Lot 29 DP 497629

**And**

**In the matter of** Proposed Private Plan Change 48 to the New Plymouth District Plan requested by Oakura Farm Park Limited for the proposed rezoning of land at Wairau Road, Oākura

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**Statement of Evidence of Peter Kensington – HIGHLIGHTS  
(Landscape and Visual Effects)**

on behalf of:

Matthew Peacock; Richard Shearer; Steven Looney; and Wayne Looker

~~23~~ **July 2019**

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1. My name is Peter Kensington. I hold the qualifications and have the experience described in my Primary Statement of Evidence dated 25 June 2019. I have continued to comply with the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in preparing these highlights.
2. As directed by the Commissioners, I attended expert conferencing with landscape architects<sup>1</sup> Emma McRae and Richard Bain and I am a signatory to the Joint Witness Statement dated 10 July 2019.
3. While there are some areas of agreement, it is clear to me that my expert opinions, and those of Ms McRae, differ from Mr Bain's in relation to fundamental matters which relate to an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposals to, firstly, vary or cancel the consent notice and, secondly, rezone land from rural to urban.
4. In my opinion, the consent notice plays a critical role in offsetting the adverse landscape and visual effects of *'The Paddocks'* development which has eroded rural character of the landscape in upper Wairau Road. It is my understanding that both Ms McRae and Mr Bain agree, that the consent notice assists with the maintenance of rural spaciousness and character and in preserving the views of the foreground and setting of the Kaitake Range Outstanding Landscape, particularly when viewed from South Road (SH45).
5. I do not agree that it is appropriate to vary or cancel the consent notice. However, if that outcome was determined, it is my opinion that the extent of the land proposed to be rezoned from rural to urban and the proposed design, layout and District Plan provisions being promoted, will not mitigate the significant adverse landscape and visual effects that will arise. As such, in my opinion, the subdivision and development enabled by the proposed rezoning would be inappropriate and not achieve the purpose of the RMA nor give effect to the relevant landscape protection RPS or District Plan provisions.
6. Key concerns that I have with the proposed rezoning include:

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<sup>1</sup> On behalf of the New Plymouth District Council and Oakura Farm Park Limited

- a. Lack of integration with the existing Oākura landscape and with anticipated potential future urban development;
  - b. No analysis of the site's opportunities and constraints has been undertaken in order to inform the proposal and to ensure that adverse effects can be avoided or remedied by design and/or through proposed planning provisions;
  - c. Severance of important landscape features, being the gully tributaries of the Wairau Stream – including the public access esplanade strip and a Key Native Ecosystem area that also relates to the contiguous McKie QEII Covenant;
  - d. The adverse landscape and visual effects which will arise from large scale civil earthworks / streamworks, the acoustic bund, the SH45 underpass and the proposed roundabout;
  - e. Lack of a clearly defensible rural-urban interface (using a natural landform constraint) at the south-western boundary and the proposed provision of lot sizes that will be too small to maintain any legible rural character or spaciousness;
  - f. The considerable community opposition to the proposed rezoning and the adverse visual and association effects on people's clear appreciation of the site's relationship with the Kaitake Range Outstanding Landscape, typifying the essence of the Oākura and Taranaki rural landscape and which contribute to the localised sense of place; and
  - g. The clear adverse visual effects that will be experienced by people viewing the landscape change from proximate private properties, including those people viewing the outlook from within *'The Paddocks'* properties.
7. Our 10 July 2019 Joint Witness Statement reiterates the above and I confirm the conclusions of my Primary Statement of Evidence.

**Peter Kensington**

23 July 2019



