

Project: ROTOKAURI NORTH PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE (PC7) **Memo:** One **Page:** 1 of 27

Topic: Landscape and Visual Effects – Technical Review & Reporting

Date: 30 August 2021

Attention: Jamie Sirl / Craig Sharman - Hamilton City Council

From: Dave Mansergh

INTRODUCTION

Mansergh Graham Landscape Architects Ltd (MGLA) have been engaged by Hamilton City Council to provide expert landscape (peer review) advice on the proposed Rotokauri North Private Plan Change (PC7). The purpose of PC7 is to rezone an area, in the northwest of the City, from *Future Urban Zone* to a Medium Residential Zone, with some Business 6 Zoning.

The scope of this report is limited to:

- a. Review of the landscape and visual assessment reporting accompanying the plan change application documentation;
- b. Identification of the key issues relating to landscape and amenity;
- c. Providing a precis of the existing planning context (landscape and amenity);
- d. Providing a precis of the proposed planning provisions (landscape and amenity);
- e. Review of the recommendations by Hamilton City Council staff to include provision for an ecological rehabilitation plan and landscape concept plan; and
- f. Review of the submissions received relating to landscape and amenity.

SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The land subject to PC7 is located in the north-western part of Hamilton City, bounding by Exelby Road to the west, SH39A (Te Kowhai Road) to the north and SH1 to the east. The proposed plan change area is identified in blue in figure 1 (below).

Existing Landscape Character

The land subject to PC7 is currently rural, with some lifestyle blocks and scattered dwellings. Landcover is mainly pasture, with a scattering of mature trees (both native and exotic), shelterbelts and hedgerows. These can be seen in figure 3 below.

The landscape is predominantly flat, rising gently to low spur at the northern end of the main Rotokauri Ridge. This can be seen in figure 4 below.

PROJECT MEMORANDUM

mansergh graham
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

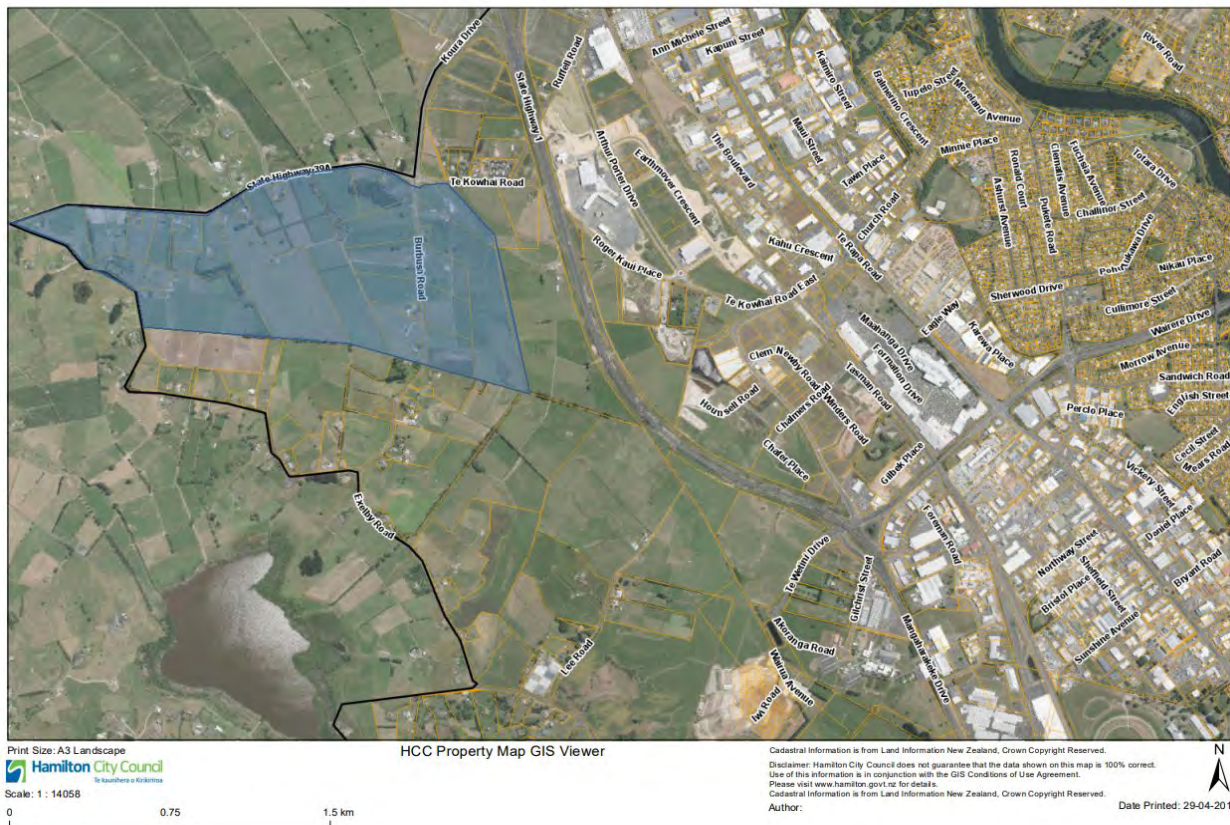
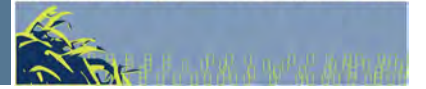


Figure 1: Proposed Rotokauri North Private Plan Change Area (PC7)



Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the land subject to PC7.



Figure 3: Hillshade image showing subtle landform variation, the major ridgelines, and areas of existing vegetation within the land subject to PC7.

The general characteristics of the Rotokauri North landscape can be seen within the following photographs:



Figure 2: Eastern part of the PC7 area, including the ridgeline, from Burbush Road, looking North East (towards Te Rapa).



Figure 3: Kereru Reserve from Te Kowhai Road



Figure 4: Northern basin and flats, looking west from Burwood Road.

Rotokauri Structure Plan

The proposed plan change area is located within the Rotokauri Structure Plan (RSP). A copy of the RSP is attached to this report.

The RSP is informed by the recommendations contained within the *Rotokauri Western Hill Landscape Study*, prepared by Boffa Miskell Ltd in 2007.

The RSP forms part of the Operative District Plan (ODP) (Fig 2-8) and signals the Council's intent in terms of land use (including the provision for landscape and amenity management within the Ridgeline Character Area) for the area. The RCA addresses Objective 3.6.1.1, which requires the preservation of key natural features and topography that are characteristic of Rotokauri through the inclusion of a *Ridgeline Character Area* (RCA).

The landscape within the PC7 area is described in *Rotokauri Western Hill Landscape Study* (RW HLS), undertaken in 2007 by Boffa Miskell Ltd in support of the preparation of the Rotokauri Structure Plan (RSP). The RW HLS classifies the landscape within the PC7 area as including:

- a. Western Hills - Ridge and spur (A);
- b. Northern terrace flats (B1);
- c. Northern basin (B2);
- d. Northeastern flats (C1); and
- e. Northeastern basin (C2).

This is shown in the following figure:

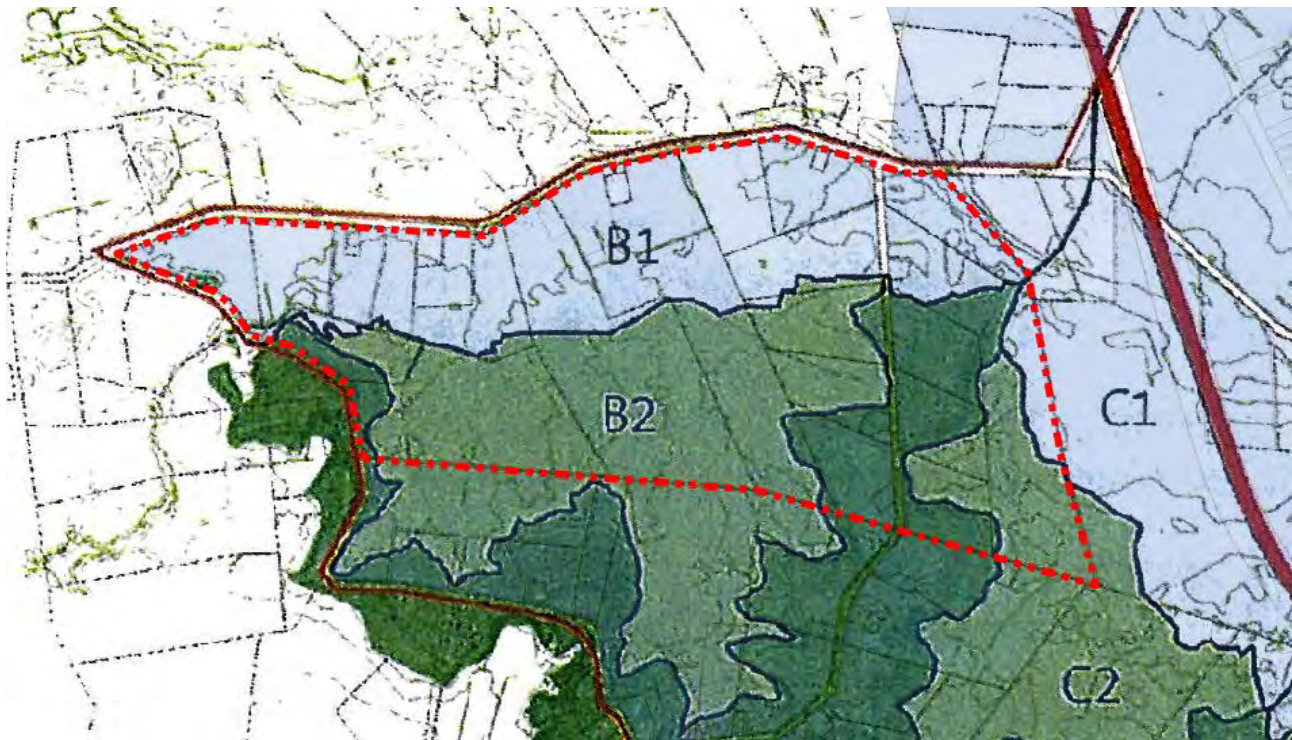


Figure 5: Landscape Character Areas identified in figure 3 of the *Rotokauri Western Hills Landscape Study* 2007 with the PC7 boundary overlaid (shown in red).

The RW HLS identifies the landscape character areas as being based on the analysis of major topographic patterns and characteristics. The hill country is identified as the definable extent of the rolling topography/elevated terrain, while

the exact boundaries between the low-lying terraces and basin flats are more arbitrary and largely defined by existing infrastructure (roads etc).¹

The study goes on to note that the key topographical features are:

- a. The continuity of the primary ridge (running along the western boundary of the PC7 area) that physically and visually defines the western boundary of the Rotokauri Structure Plan (RSP) area, separating it from the rural land surrounding Lake Rotokauri:
- b. The secondary ridgelines and spurs, which extend east (of which the northernmost ridgeline extends into the PC7 area).
- c. The resultant visual contribution that the Western Hills, as a whole and integral landscape feature, contributes to the backdrop to the views from the lower-lying basins and terrace flat landscape character areas.

REVIEW OF THE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORTING ACCOMPANYING THE PLAN CHANGE APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

The effects of the proposed plan change on wider landscape character and visual amenity has been assessed as part of the plan change application. The following section reviews the landscape reports accompanying the application.

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to determine the following:

- a. If sufficient information is contained within relevant parts of the plan change documentation and AEE reporting to allow a potentially affected person and/or the decision-maker to gain a clear and concise understanding of the nature and extent of effects that development (resulting from the proposed plan change) is likely to have on the landscape and visual amenity within and adjacent to the plan change area; and
- b. If the application documentation and AEE reports fulfil the requirements of the relevant planning instruments.

In my opinion, it is important that the AEE documentation (landscape and visual assessment) contains sufficient information and supporting analysis to allow the reviewer (through the methodological framework applied) to understand how the conclusions of the assessment, and any recommendation proposed, were reached.

Review Approach

My review was carried out within the context of the requirements of the RMA, the findings and recommendations of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) "best practice" notes and guides² and the Quality Planning website. I have considered the following factors:

- a. Whether the assessment methodology used is consistent with the current best practice approach to landscape and visual assessment and has been applied consistently.
- b. Whether the characteristics and amenity values of the existing environment have been described in enough detail to allow others to clearly understand the natural character, landscape and amenity baseline

¹ P11, Rotokauri Structure Plan Western Hills Study. Boffa Miskell Ltd 2007.

² NZILA Best Practice Note: Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management 10.1 & NZILA Best Practice Guide: Visual Simulations BPG 10.2. While this document was superseded by the newer 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines' in May 2021, because the application precedes this date, the old guidelines will be used.

- against which the assessment is undertaken. This should include any differences that exist between the existing physical environment, the consented environment and the permitted baseline (where applicable).
- c. Whether the proposal has been described in enough detail to allow others to understand how the proposal will alter the existing natural character, landscape and visual amenity (as appropriate).
 - d. Whether the effects of the proposal on existing natural character, landscape and visual amenity, have been described and rated consistently.
 - e. The usefulness and correctness of any attached plans, maps, graphics and montages.
 - f. Whether the relevant statutory matters and documents have been identified and addressed.
 - g. The extent to which any proposed mitigation approach avoids, remedies and/or mitigates any unacceptable adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity values within an acceptable time frame?
 - h. Whether the conclusions and recommendations reflect the findings of the assessment.

The purpose of my review is to identify whether the landscape and visual assessment reach a set of clear and concise conclusions, supported by an appropriate methodological framework within the context of the relevant planning instruments.

Review of the Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment Report

The following documents associated with the proposed plan change have been reviewed within the context of the relevant background documentation listed below:

- a. *Rotokauri North – Private Plan Change Request - Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment*. LA4 Landscape Architects Ltd. Final 17/4/2019.
- b. *Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area Assessment – Rotokauri north Special Housing Area*. LA4 Landscape Architects. August 2018.

The above documents were reviewed within the context of the following documents:

- a. *Rotokauri Western Hills Landscape Study*. Boffa Miskell Ltd. October 2007.
- b. Relevant sections of the Operative Hamilton City Plan.
- c. Master Plan (MP). Green Seed Consultants Ltd. August 2018. (Note: This is not presently included in the proposed private plan change).
- d. The proposed amendments to Chapters 3, 4 and 23 of the Hamilton City Plan.
- e. The proposed Structure Plan. McKenzie & Co. 15/12/2018.
- f. *Sub-Catchment Integrated Catchment Management Plan*. Tollemache Consultants Ltd. June 2021.
- g. *Rotokauri North Sub-catchment ICMP Stormwater System Report*. Bloxam Burnett & Olliver. June 2021
- h. Updated Structure Plan (Revision C).

Review of the Rotokauri North Private Plan Change Request - Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment.

In my opinion, the *Rotokauri North – Private Plan Change Request Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment* (LVA report) identifies and addresses the effects of the proposed plan change at a high level (commensurate with a level predictable by the structure plan). This analysis is supported by the earlier *Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area Assessment* (CAA report) which addresses the value and status of the western hill country (including the *Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area* (RRCA) identified in the Rotokauri Structure Plan).

The LVA focuses on the identification of existing landscape and natural character and the change that is likely to occur in terms of effects on natural character, landscape character and visual *character*/amenity. It does not address specific and foreseeable effects including:

- a) The extent to which earthworks will affect the appearance of the existing natural ridgeline (identified as the Ridgeline Character Area (RRCA) in the existing structure plan);
- b) Potential effects on the landscape and visual amenity associated with the identified significant natural area.
- c) The consequences of the proposed Medium Density Overlay Area A on landscape and visual amenity.

In my opinion, the correct landscape context (spatial extent) has been identified for the assessment (the extent of the potentially affected landscape). Effects on adjoining properties, the surrounding road network and the wider area are assessed.

The relevant physical attributes and elements of the landscape have been identified and described briefly in terms of landform and catchment, land use, streams and watercourses, vegetation and soils. The wider landscape context is identified and discussed in terms of existing zoning and the extent of the RRCA is identified.

Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area

In terms of landscape values and management, the LVA does not support the inclusion of the RRCA in the PPC area, citing that the ridge is not a prominent landscape feature, and that typical residential development is likely to obstruct views of these hills, given their low elevation (within the PPC boundary). The RRCA is included in the existing Rotokauri Structure Plan and is supported by the Rotokauri Western Hills Study, a technical report commissioned by Council in association with its preparation.

The RRCA is also supported by the following provisions within the ODP:

Objective 3.6.1.1

Preservation of key natural features and topography that are characteristic of Rotokauri.

Policy 3.6.1.1a

Development shall maintain the natural ridgelines.

The policy does not provide any specific direction as to how this is to be achieved other than through the explanation that states:

The ridgelines of Rotokauri contribute significantly to local character and identity. The relationship of the elevated areas to the flat land containing Lake Waiwhakereke is particularly strong.

The LVA does not assess the effects of the proposed PPC on the elevated ridgelines in detail. Paragraph 5.15 of the LVA states:

I do not consider that the Western Hills represent a significant landscape feature within the local landscape or citywide context. The hills rise to a maximum height of approximately 55m ASL above the surrounding flats at approximately 30m ASL – representing an elevation of 25m. This height and characteristic of the landscape feature cannot be considered significant by any degree. Given the low elevation of the hills, typical residential development on the lower slopes and terrace flats is likely to obstruct views to the underlying landform in any case.

The *Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area Assessment* (CAA) concludes that the ridgeline contained within the RRCA is not a significant landscape. The report states:

The Western Hills are not visually distinctive or diverse, both compositionally and geo-physically. They do not display a continuity of key statements, patterns themes and accents that give the landscape character and a sense of unity. The hills do not demonstrate their formative processes and are typical of landforms within the surrounding area and wider Waikato environment.

While I concur that the various landscape attributes that contribute to the character of the ridgeline do not display the values required to attain higher level protection (such as ONFL status under s6a of the RMA), within the context of the surrounding landscape and its juxtaposition against the adjacent flat lands, I consider that the ridge still has a role to play in its contribution to local character and amenity.

Neither the CAA nor LVA reports offer a strong supporting analysis as to why the ridgeline areas should be excluded from the RRCA, other than that they are relatively low in elevation, and have not been identified in the RSP (Rotokauri structure plan) process as being worthy of protection to the level that would preclude development.

While I agree with the statement that the views of the hill are likely to be screened by development when seen from within the plan change area (due to their low elevation), the potential adverse effects associated with development seen along these ridgelines from surrounding rural locations is not assessed. Nor is the extent to which the ridgeline provides an amenity to surrounding areas outside the site.

Paragraph 5.22 of the LVA states:

The imposition of the RRCA to cover the primary and secondary ridgelines with associated planning provisions to provide for lower suburban density based around a minimum lot size of 600m² with an average of 800m² will not in my opinion reinforce the key qualities and characteristics of the underlying landscape to any greater degree than higher density development.

While I concur with this statement, the introduction of the *Medium Density Overlay A* zone will potentially affect ridgeline character and amenity beyond that envisioned by the RSP.

The *Rotokauri Ridgeline Character Area Assessment* report, which addresses the significance of the Western Hills, states:

In my opinion, the most effective means to protect the significance of the Western Hills is, as outlined in the Boffa Miskell [sic] report, through defining and reinforcing the Exelby and Burbush Road roading pattern that extends along the primary and secondary ridgelines with significant street tree plantings that will preserve the legibility of the ridgeline features in views from outlying areas, provide a backdrop to future dwellings and heighten awareness of the hill landform for future residents.

The proposed structure plan (as contained in the LVA) includes the above recommendations. It is therefore unclear as to whether this would be implemented if the RRCA was removed.

It is unclear in the LVA if the assessment of the RRCA is limited to that part of the RRCA within the area subject to PC7, or the entire RRCA. The issue of how the RRCA terminates at the southern boundary of the PPC, in a way that appropriately responds to the underlying landform, is not addressed.

Structure Plan and Master Plan

The main elements of the proposed plan change (with the potential to affect visual and landscape amenity) have been identified at a high (structure plan) level as including a mixture of:

- a. 137.6 Ha of Medium Density Residential Zone (MDRZ);
- b. 1.2 Ha Business 6 Zone (B6Z);
- c. A planting landscape buffer along Te Kauri Road; and
- d. Retention of the existing SNA.

A new structure plan and associated rules would be introduced as part of the plan change. The LVA identifies that a Master Plan (MP) has been produced that demonstrates that the land can be subdivided in a manner that will support a high-quality neighbourhood and remain compatible with the existing (Council) structure plan³. While the MP is referenced within the report, a copy of the plan is not included; and does not form part of the Plan Change 7 (PC7) application. It is therefore difficult to reconcile the analysis of the effects against the changes likely to occur. In my opinion, the inclusion of the MP in the LVA is required to make sense of the analysis and findings of the LVA.

Since the LVA was prepared, the proposed structure plan has been amended in response to the integrated catchment management plan (ICMP). An updated structure (revision C) has resulted in a significant increase in the area of “green spine” shown within the land subject to PC7. From a landscape perspective, this is a positive change in that it provides a greater level of guidance around the extent of reserve required for catchment management purposes, and as such provides an indication of open space requirements along the Ohote Stream and Te Otamanui Stream corridors. The increased width also provides an increased surety that sufficient space will be retained during subdivision for the restoration of the stream channels, riparian planting and public access.

Paragraph 9 of the letter to Council from BerrySimons Environmental Law dated 27 August 2021 states:

For ease of reference, we confirm Green Seed is not updating any of the other technical reports submitted in support of PC7, other than those identified in paragraph 6 above. The basis for that position is Green Seed’s assessment that no such updates are required as a result of the amended ICMP, Structure Plan maps or updated transport modelling/ITA, irrespective of when the other reports were prepared.

Relevant sections of the table contained in paragraph 10 are as follow:

10.	Urban Design	Ian Munro has confirmed that while the updated Structure Plan maps would require some consequential amendments to his technical assessment, they do not change the overall conclusions or outcomes of that assessment.
12.	Landscape and Visual	Rob Pryor has confirmed that while the updated Structure Plan maps would require some consequential amendments to his technical assessment, they do not change the overall conclusions or outcomes of that assessment.

³ While several master plan options are included in the Urban Design Report (Munro), these are not included in PC7 and would therefore have no status if the plan change was adopted.

Landscape Effects

Paragraph 4.7 of the LVA report states that:

Development enabled by the PPC will inevitably transform the local character to that of mixed urban which will also have an influence on the surrounding area.

I concur with this statement. In general, any large-scale land use or zoning change will inevitably result in a significant change in existing landscape character and the loss of aspects of visual amenity that are derived from that landscape. In other words, amenity value derived from views over the rural landscape will be lost. This may (or may not) be partially compensated for by amenity values derived from views over the new landscape (particularly along the widened “green spine”).

I also concur with the LVA where paragraph 4.11 states:

The establishment and enhancement of the green network, including the provision for associated open space with extensive planting, will have beneficial landscape effects including the enhancement of amenity and habitat values, and the establishment of ecological linkages.

I note however that the report does not identify how this will occur or if the above represents an appropriate response for the loss of rural character for those affected by the proposed plan change. An indication of how the green spines will be treated is contained in the ICMP and accompanying *Rotokauri North Sub-catchment ICMP Stormwater System Report*.

Visual Effects

The LVA adequately identifies the visual catchment and potential viewing audience. Representative view locations are used as the basis of analysis of the visual effects expected to arise from the proposed plan change.

Paragraph 4.23 identifies that the assessment of visual effects has been carried out using a Visual Effects Matrix to ensure consistency in analysis. While a methodology statement is provided, it is unclear how the findings and ratings have been reached as the assessment matrix is not included in the report. While key assessment criteria are identified in paragraph 4.28 and Appendix A, the descriptive analysis contained in the body of the report does not consistently address the various assessment criteria identified. In addition, ratings are only given from some locations.

The LVA describes the generic changes that will occur from several view locations including adjoining properties, the surrounding road network and the wider area. Due to the nature of the plan change, specific detail (as would be provided in a resource consent application) has not (and cannot) be provided.

The LVA identifies that the viewing audience, most likely to be affected by PC7, will be those in locations adjoining the site, including existing rural residential properties along Te Kowhai Road and Exelby Road. Effects ratings for viewers on the surrounding road network are not given, however, these are identified as being less significant.

Policy 3.3.5a requires:

3.3.5a Adverse effects of activities near zone boundaries are managed through setbacks, building design, and landscaping.

The proposed structure plan includes a landscape buffer along the northern boundary of the PC7 area (SH39). The effects on surrounding zones along the eastern, western and southern boundaries are not addressed, by the proposed provisions, which only require the buffer to be located against SH39.

The LVA identified the visual effects on neighbouring properties as *moderate to high*. This is a *more than minor* effect in terms of the RMA.

Relevant Planning Provisions

The LVA identifies that the proposed PPC is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies (landscape and amenity) in the Operative District Plan and explains how each will be met.

While Policy 3.3.5a is not specifically addressed in the planning section of the LVA report, the issue of setback is addressed through the landscape buffer discussed previously.

Policy 3.3.5a requires:

3.3.5a Adverse effects of activities near zone boundaries are managed through setbacks, building design, and landscaping

Conclusions of the LVA

The LVA report assesses and rates the effects of visual amenity as follows:

- a. Adjoining properties - *Moderate to High*
- b. The surrounding road network – No rating provided
- c. The wider area – *Low to Negligible*

While the effects on visual amenity for adjoining properties are above the minor threshold of the RMA, this is not unexpected given the magnitude of the change in existing landscape character that will occur.

The LVA reaches the following conclusions (paraphrased):

- a. That the land subject to PC7 does not display a high degree of “ruralness” due to its peri-urban location and has relatively low landscape value.
- b. That the landscape character will change significantly and that this change is anticipated by relevant planning strategies for the area (i.e. urbanisation).
- c. That a change from rural land use to medium-density residential will have an “impact” on the rural qualities of the surrounding areas.
- d. That, rather than attempting to buffer the PC7 area, good urban design principles should be applied to create a high standard of urban amenity.
- e. That a planted buffer will separate the PC7 area from adjacent rural land.
- f. That the identified Significant Natural Area (Kereru Reserve SNA) will be protected and that overall, adverse effects on natural character will be *Low*.
- g. That the establishment and enhancement of the green network and open space network, as shown in the indicative masterplan, will have a beneficial landscape effect.

The LVA concludes:

The PPC proposal is consistent with regional growth strategies for the area and will result in a high quality urban development with a range of positive landscape and environmental outcomes.

Because the effects on landscape and visual amenity have only be identified at a level of detail commensurate with the structure plan, the findings of the LVA cannot be extrapolated to represent the level of effect that may occur with a greater level of design. To achieve a greater understanding of the likely effects on surrounding rural areas, the analysis would need to be undertaken at a more refined level of detail.

Review Findings

While I consider that the LVA and CAA reports provide a reasonable level of analysis of the effects of generic urbanisation within the proposed plan change area, and adequately identify the changes to the landscape and visual character that will occur at a broad level, they do not provide enough detail to understand how the change in landscape character will affect the amenity of the adjacent rural area or the nature of the change likely to occur.

Analysis of the effects associated with the removal of the RRCA overlay is limited. It is unclear how the removal of the overlay would affect landscape and visual amenity from surrounding areas or how the transition should occur from the RRCA to the underlying zone if the landform (contour) is not used as the basis of delineation.

While the report addresses the effects at a level commensurate with the proposed structure plan, it also references a Master Plan, which is not included in the PC7 documentation or the LVA report. The authors of the LVA appear to have relied upon the particular configuration of the Master Plan in reaching their conclusions relating to landscape and visual effects.

To provide an increased understanding of the effects on landscape and visual amenity, a significant quantum of work would be required to be undertaken, including the development of a “master plan” for the land affected by PC7. While short on detail in some areas, the level of analysis contained within the LVA is sufficient to gain an understanding of the broad changes that will occur, and the key issues involved.

Given that the key natural features within the application site have been identified as SNA’s on structure plan and will be protected, the only outstanding issue is whether PC7 should address the RRCA. At present, there is insufficient detail in the VLA to support the premise that the relevant provisions should not apply.

In my opinion, this issue can be addressed by the inclusion of a set of district planning provisions that seek to bridge the gap between the proposed structure plan and the level of detail that would normally be contained within a master plan, by providing a greater level of guidance around how development within the proposed structure plan area should occur.

This is discussed further, later in this report.

PRECIS OF THE EXISTING PLANNING CONTEXT (LANDSCAPE AND AMENITY)

Resource Management Act

In terms of section 6a of the RMA (natural character), the proposed plan change area and the surrounding landscape is a highly modified environment.

In terms of section 6b (outstanding natural features and landscapes), the land subject to the proposed plan change area is not located within, or adjacent to, an outstanding natural feature of the landscape.

In terms of section 7(c), the adverse effects of the proposed plan change on existing landscape character and visual amenity are identified in the LVA report prepared by the applicant and range between *Negligible* and *High*.

Waikato Regional Policy Statement

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS) contains a suite of objectives and policies for the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes (Objective 3.20), amenity (Objective 3.21) and natural character (Objective 3.22).

The proposed plan change area is not located within or adjacent to an ONFL under the WRPS.

Operative Hamilton City Plan

The Operative Hamilton City plan contains several higher-order objectives and policies relating to character and amenity values. These focus on urban amenity and character. Little guidance is provided within the District Plan around the protection of the key landscape features at the objective and policy level, other than those contained within the Rotokauri Structure Plan, which identify the Rotokauri Ridgeline Character areas as areas to be managed to protect its landscape and amenity values.

A copy of the higher-order provisions (Objectives and Policies) relevant to the proposed plan change (landscape and visual amenity) are attached to this report.

The existing Future Urban Zone contains provisions that direct the maintenance of existing rural character within the zone until rezoning occurs for development purposes (Policy 14.2.1f). This provides a strong signal that existing rural character and associated rural amenity will be lost following rezoning.

KEY ISSUES RELATING TO LANDSCAPE AND AMENITY

The key issues relating to landscape and amenity effects are:

- a. Management of landscape features and landscape amenity across the plan change area.
- b. Consistency in approach to the management of contiguous landscape features (mainly the ridgelines and spurs) between the Rotokauri North Plan change area and the Rotokauri Structure Plan area.

PRECIS OF THE PROPOSED PLANNING PROVISIONS (LANDSCAPE AND AMENITY)

This section of the report addresses the proposed planning provisions as they relate to landscape and amenity. Only the higher-order landscape and amenity matters, such as those that influence wider landscape character and open space design, have been addressed.

Analysis of the various provisions that affect landscape and amenity at the urban design level are not considered in this report, except where they potentially affect wider landscape amenity, such as the protection of existing landscape features, the provision of a connected parks and reserve network and the restoration of existing degraded landscape features (streams and wetlands).

The key changes within PC7, with the potential to affect the existing landscape and visual amenity, include:

- a. The rezoning of land from *Future Urban* to *Medium Density Residential* and a small pocket of *Business 6*, allowing for more intensive urbanisation of the existing landscape.

- b. The replacement of the RSP with the RNSP, which would result in the removal of the Rotokauri Ridgeline Character area, Objective 3.6.1.1 relating to the preservation of natural features and topography (such as the ridgeline character areas) and Policy 3.6.1.1a relating to the maintenance of the natural ridgelines.

Other changes introduced through PC7 focus on the provision of urban amenity through the provision of the open space network shown in the structure plan (PC7 3.6A.1.3). The following key components are identified:

- a. The Kereru Reserve SNA
- b. 3 x neighbourhood reserves
- c. The stream and stormwater network.

The proposed changes to chapter three of the ODP do not include any objectives or policies that provide direction around the preservation of existing natural features or topography (other than the SNA).

Recommendations by Hamilton City Council Staff to Include Provision for an Ecological Rehabilitation Plan and Landscape Concept Plan

The *Report on Technical Planning and Infrastructure Matters Relevant to Hamilton City Council* (the HCC technical report) identifies the Hamilton City Council staff concerns about the Rotokauri North Private Plan Change.

Extracts from the HCC technical report is shown in *italics*. The proposed amendments (recommended by Council Staff) are shown in *red*. Proposed amendments recommended by this report are shown in *blue italics*.

Paragraph 16.10 of the HCC technical report recommends the introduction of a new rule to provide certainty around the provisioning of the neighbourhood parks.

16.10 New Rules 23.7.8 f and 23.7.8 g – Neighbourhood parks

To provide clarity and certainty, it is recommended the following new rule be included in PC7:

23.7.8

- f) Where the Rotokauri North Structure Plan (Figure 2-8A) requires a neighbourhood park, each neighbourhood park shall:
 - i. Have a minimum area of 5,000m²;*
 - ii. Have transport corridor frontage along at least 50% of the total neighbourhood park boundary;*
 - iii. Be located on land that is generally flat; and*
 - iv. Accommodate a flat, square area 30m x 30m.**
- h) Neighbourhood parks shall be dispersed within Rotokauri North so that no residential unit is more than 500m walking distance from a neighbourhood park.*

I support the proposed amendments to rule 27.7.8 as this provides some certainty around the purpose and minimum sizes for the identified neighbourhood parks. The adoption of this rule would likely require the location of the neighbourhood parks shown on the proposed structure plan to be reconsidered as their present location would make it difficult to meet the 500m walking distance provisions.

The three yellow dots in the following figure shows where neighbourhood parks would need to be located to best achieve this rule if only 3 parks are to be provided for. The dashed blue circles represent a 500m (Euclidean) distance from each potential neighbourhood park location (proposed).

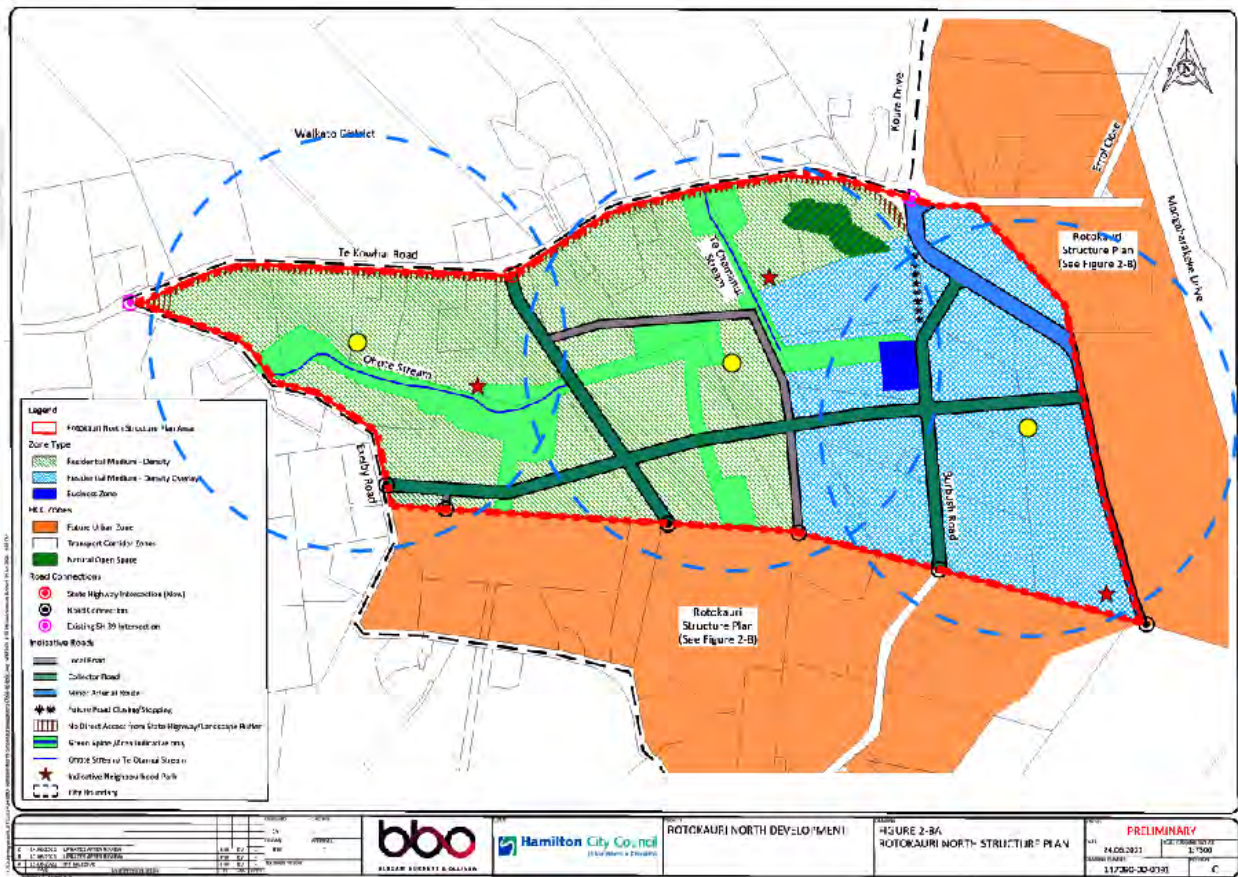
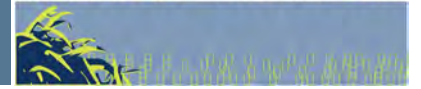


Figure 6: Neighbourhood Park Location - Optimised (500m distance (Euclidean))

The HCC technical report identifies that the proposed plan change does not include rules to implement the relevant objectives and policies relating to the Waikato River, tangata whenua, the protection, health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and Hamilton's identity, character, and heritage. The report introduces the following recommended rules, information requirements and assessment criteria.

23.7.8 Rotorokauri North ~~Structure Plan Area~~

....

- h) An application for subdivision in Rotorokauri North shall be accompanied by:
 - i. An Ecological Rehabilitation Management Plan (ERMP) in accordance with Appendix 1.2.2.24 d; and
 - ii. A Landscape Concept Plan in accordance with Appendix 1.2.2.24 e.

....

1.2 Information Requirements

....

1.2.2.24 Rotorokauri North

....

- d) Rotorokauri North Ecological Rehabilitation Management Plan (ERMP)
 - i. The objective of the ERMP is to enhance aquatic and terrestrial ecological values within Rotorokauri North.
 - ii. As a minimum, the ERMP is to include the following and the methods to implement them:
 - A. An indigenous fish management plan, including a summary of fish habitat and species present, a summary of planned works, permitting requirements, procedures for dealing with pest fish, biosecurity protocols, timing of works, procedures for recovering indigenous fish prior to and during works, roles and responsibilities of parties, reporting requirements and any specific mitigation measures.

- B. *Planting of trees for bat habitat, including tall tree species such as Kahikatea and Totara, in areas where bat habitat utilisation is likely to be high.*
 - C. *Lighting design that is sensitive to bat habitat including minimal lighting in areas close to the Waikato River, avoidance of upward-facing lighting and UV lighting, and avoidance of lighting in wetland and riparian margin areas.*
 - D. *A specific ecological rehabilitation plan to restore, protect and enhance, as a minimum, the modified watercourses within Rotokauri North identified in Figure 2-9D. The plan shall incorporate as a minimum:*
 - 1. *Ensuring new stream habitat mimics natural systems.*
 - 2. *Provision of passage for indigenous fish while, if practicable, excluding exotic pest fish species.*
 - 3. *Creation of a diverse and variable habitat and channel complexity over time to allow for differences in flow velocities.*
 - 4. *A meandering channel.*
 - 5. *Creation of pool-riffle-run sequences.*
 - 6. *Avoidance of instream works during peak fish migration periods (August – December).*
 - 7. *Restoration planting, including wetland restoration, habitat enhancement and riparian buffer zones.*
 - 8. *Provision of vegetative cover, woody debris or other instream structures.*
 - 9. *Proposals for ongoing maintenance and management.*
 - E. *The establishment or enhancement of ecological corridors.*
 - F. *Evidence of engagement with tangata whenua during preparation of the ERMP including how the matters tangata whenua raised in that engagement have been addressed.*
- e) *Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan*
- i. *The objectives of the Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan are to protect or enhance the natural character and cultural, heritage and amenity values of Rotokauri North's open spaces, to recognise and provide for tangata whenua values and relationships with Rotokauri North, and their aspirations for the area, and to reflect the area's character and heritage.*
 - ii. *The Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan shall include:*
 - A. *A landscape concept for any areas of open space, including details of landscape treatment for neighbourhood parks, special purpose reserves, streets, footpaths, cycleways, stormwater swales, wetlands, detention basins, streams, riparian margins and the landscape buffer adjacent to State Highway 39.*
 - B. *Use of indigenous species and landscape design that reflect tangata whenua cultural perspectives including species that are valued as customary food or for traditional uses, and those that support indigenous biodiversity and provide habitat for mahinga kai, native birds and lizards.*
 - C. *Details of plant species and sizes at time of planting, including eco-sourcing of plants from within the Hamilton Ecological District and choice of species that reflect the history of the area.*
 - D. *Details of ongoing maintenance to ensure the planting achieves the best possible growth rates. E. Details of any sites of significance for tangata whenua and how they will be protected, enhanced or commemorated.*
 - F. *Details of how the landscape plan will support cultural harvest.*
 - G. *Details of any proposed sites for water-related activities and proposed public access to them and to and alongside waterways and wetlands.*
 - H. *Details of any interpretation materials communicating the history and significance of places and resources and any tangata whenua inspired artwork or structures.*
 - I. *A list of traditional names suggested by tangata whenua for sites, developments, streets, neighbourhoods or subcatchments in Rotokauri North.*
 - J. *Details of any cultural protocols to be followed during the development process, including, but not confined to, protocols following accidental discovery of archaeological materials or sites. For clarity, this applies to the whole of Rotokauri North, not just to areas of open space.*
 - K. *Evidence of engagement with tangata whenua in preparation of the landscape plan, including how the matters tangata whenua raised in that engagement have been addressed.*
 - L. *Evidence of consistency with the Ecological Rehabilitation and Management Plan required by Rule 23.7.8h.*

Criteria

....

O6	<i>For any subdivision or development, the extent to which the proposal:</i>	
	a)	<i>Provides for, is consistent with, or could prejudice or foreclose options for, future development of the Structure Plan components described in 3.6A.1.</i>
	b)	<i>Restores, protects and enhances aquatic and terrestrial ecological values associated with springs, streams, waterways, wetlands and their margins in Rotokauri North.</i>
	c)	<i>Protects or enhances the natural character and ecological, cultural, heritage and amenity values of Rotokauri North's open spaces.</i>
	d)	<i>Provides sites for water-related activities and public access to them and to and alongside waterways and wetlands.</i>
	e)	<i>Recognises and provides for tangata whenua values and relationships with Rotokauri North and their aspirations for the area, including provision for cultural harvest, interpretation of the landscape's significance, protection, enhancement and commemoration of sites of significance, use of traditional tangata whenua names for sites, developments, streets, neighbourhoods and sub-catchments, and application of cultural protocols during the development process.</i>
	f)	<i>Reflects the area's character and heritage.</i>
	g)	<i>Has been planned with the active involvement of tangata whenua.</i>

The above set of provisions would require all applications for subdivision to be accompanied by an *Ecological Rehabilitation Management Plan* (ERMP) and *Landscape Concept Plan*, regardless of the size of the application. In my opinion, this may impose an onerous requirement on smaller developments within the plan change area, particularly those that are not located within or adjacent to the green spine, neighbourhood park or the SNA.

In my opinion, the above requirements relate more to the district plan's biodiversity, tangata whenua value and urban amenity requirements, than landscape character and amenity. Except for the existing hill country overlays identified in the Rotokauri Structure Plan (to be removed) and the identified SNA, the proposed plan area does not contain any valued landscapes that would require a higher level of protection.

While I support the proposed rule to the extent that it requires the consideration of a range of ecological, cultural and urban amenity factors which are not addressed in the proposed plan change, I consider that the level of information to be provided with each subdivision application could be integrated and refined.

The proposed information requirements are likely to result in considerable overlap in the information to be provided. This is because the opportunities for landscape development and ecological restoration are effectively limited to the "green spine" and neighbourhood reserve areas identified in the proposed structure plan, and as such I recommend that proposed provisions contained in the HCC technical report recommendations are further refined along the lines of the following:

23.7.8 Rotokauri North ~~Structure Plan Area~~

....

- h) *An application for subdivision over 2 ha in Rotokauri North shall be accompanied by an integrated landscape development plan that shows the following:*
 - i. *Open space, neighbourhood parks and reserves; ~~An Ecological Rehabilitation Management Plan (ERMP) in accordance with Appendix 1.2.2.24 d; and~~*
 - ii. *The protection of the existing SNA and the identification of areas of ecological restoration and enhancement ~~A Landscape Concept Plan in accordance with Appendix 1.2.2.24 e.~~*
 - iii. *The treatment of all streams, wetland, and riparian areas, including areas required for catchment management purposes.*
 - iv. *Consistency with the Rotokauri North Structure Plan.*
 - v. *Consistency with the Integrated Catchment Management Plan.*
 - vi. *Significant trees to be retained.*
 - vii. *The Kereru Reserve SNA.*
 - viii. *Integration with the Rotokauri Structure Plan.*

- X) *The objectives of the integrated landscape development plan are:*
- i *To enhance aquatic and terrestrial ecological values within Rotokauri North.*
 - ii *To protect or enhance the natural character and cultural, heritage and amenity values of Rotokauri North's open spaces.*
 - iii *To recognise and provide for tangata whenua values and relationships with Rotokauri North, and their aspirations for the area, and to reflect the area's character and heritage.*
 - iv *To provide for the recreational needs of the community through the provision of public parks and reserves.*
- X) *The integrated landscape development plan shall be accompanied by the following information:*
- ~~d) Rotokauri North Ecological Rehabilitation Management Plan (ERMP)~~
- ~~i. The objective of the ERMP is to enhance aquatic and terrestrial ecological values within Rotokauri North.~~
 - ii. *As a minimum, the ERMP is to include the following and the methods to implement them:*
 - A. *An indigenous fish management plan, including a summary of fish habitat and species present, a summary of planned works, permitting requirements, procedures for dealing with pest fish, biosecurity protocols, timing of works, procedures for recovering indigenous fish prior to and during works, roles and responsibilities of parties, reporting requirements and any specific mitigation measures.*
 - B. *Planting of trees for bat habitat, including tall tree species such as Kahikatea and Totara, in areas where bat habitat utilisation is likely to be high.*
 - C. *Lighting design that is sensitive to bat habitat including minimal lighting in areas close to the Waikato River, avoidance of upward-facing lighting and UV lighting, and avoidance of lighting in wetland and riparian margin areas.*
 - D. *A specific ecological rehabilitation plan to restore, protect and enhance, as a minimum, the modified watercourses within Rotokauri North identified in Figure 2-9D. The plan shall incorporate as a minimum:*
 - 1. *Ensuring new stream habitat mimics natural systems.*
 - 2. *Provision of passage for indigenous fish while, if practicable, excluding exotic pest fish species.*
 - 3. *Creation of a diverse and variable habitat and channel complexity over time to allow for differences in flow velocities.*
 - 4. *A meandering channel.*
 - 5. *Creation of pool-riffle-run sequences.*
 - 6. *Avoidance of instream works during peak fish migration periods (August – December).*
 - 7. *Restoration planting, including wetland restoration, habitat enhancement and riparian buffer zones.*
 - 8. *Provision of vegetative cover, woody debris or other instream structures.*
 - 9. *Proposals for ongoing maintenance and management.*
 - E. *The establishment or enhancement of ecological corridors.*
 - F. *Evidence of engagement with tangata whenua during preparation of the ERMP including how the matters tangata whenua raised in that engagement have been addressed.*
- ~~e) Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan~~
- ~~i. The objectives of the Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan are to protect or enhance the natural character and cultural, heritage and amenity values of Rotokauri North's open spaces, to recognise and provide for tangata whenua values and relationships with Rotokauri North, and their aspirations for the area, and to reflect the area's character and heritage.~~
 - ii. *The Rotokauri North Landscape Concept Plan shall include:*
 - A. *A landscape concept for any areas of open space, including details of landscape treatment for neighbourhood parks, special purpose reserves, streets, footpaths, cycleways, stormwater swales, wetlands, detention basins, streams, riparian margins and the landscape buffer adjacent to State Highway 39.*
 - B. *Use of indigenous species and landscape design that reflect tangata whenua cultural perspectives including species that are valued as customary food or for traditional uses, and those that support indigenous biodiversity and provide habitat for mahinga kai, native birds and lizards.*
 - C. *Details of plant species and sizes at time of planting, including eco-sourcing of plants from within the Hamilton Ecological District and choice of species that reflect the history of the area.*
 - D. *Details of ongoing maintenance to ensure the planting achieves the best possible growth rates.*

- E. Details of any sites of significance for tangata whenua and how they will be protected, enhanced or commemorated.*
- F. Details of how the landscape plan will support cultural harvest.*
- G. Details of any proposed sites for water-related activities and proposed public access to them and to and alongside waterways and wetlands.*
- H. Details of any interpretation materials communicating the history and significance of places and resources and any tangata whenua inspired artwork or structures.*
- I. A list of traditional names suggested by tangata whenua for sites, developments, streets, neighbourhoods or subcatchments in Rotokauri North.*
- J. Details of any cultural protocols to be followed during the development process, including, but not confined to, protocols following accidental discovery of archaeological materials or sites. For clarity, this applies to the whole of Rotokauri North, not just to areas of open space.*
- K. Evidence of engagement with tangata whenua in preparation of the landscape plan, including how the matters tangata whenua raised in that engagement have been addressed.*
- L. ~~of consistency with the Ecological Rehabilitation and Management Plan required by Rule 23.7.8h.~~ Evidence of consistency with any existing landscape development plan that has been prepared for a different subdivision within Rotokauri North.*
- M. Pedestrian and cycle connections between and within reserves.*
- N. Tree plantings that define and reinforces the Exelby and Burbush Road roading pattern along the ridgelines with significant to preserve the legibility of the ridgeline when viewed from outlying areas.*

It is accepted that further amendment to the above-recommended provisions may be required to ensure integration into the District Plan.

REVIEW OF THE SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED RELATING TO LANDSCAPE AND AMENITY

A summary of the key landscape and amenity issues identified in the submissions received is found in the following table:

No.	Submitter	Support/Oppose	Issue	Relief Sought
1	G. Martin/M. Leet	Oppose	Loss of Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development is consistent with Objective 23.22. Maintain and enhance existing amenity values. Protection of significant trees. 25m setback from Te Kowhai Road reserved as a buffer.
3	Ministry of Education	Neutral	Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of walking and cycling connections
14	J. McKenzie / E. Drysdale	Oppose	Loss of rural character	
15	Rotokauri North Tangata Whenua Working Group.	Support	Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of indigenous species in riparian restoration, streets trees, in open space and reserves. Landscape design that reflects cultural perspectives, ideas and materials. Eco sourcing of plant material Green space to be developed to provide a buffer between areas of development Integration of the landscape into the esplanade reserve
79	Te Whakatitenga Waikato Incorporated			
34	R. Ruske	Neutral	The RNSP does not identify the future reserve shown in the RSP. This area straddles the subject site and therefore places uncertainty over the future boundary conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity is sought on the interface of the proposed zoning and whether PC7 enables or precludes this future reserve area.

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74	K. & J. Patterson	Support	It is difficult to maintain the land as a rural unit close to the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezone to avoid fragmentation
75	E. Robertson, J. Marsh, J. Patterson			
2	G. Martin / M. Leet	Oppose	Not consistent with the requirements of the District Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
3	Orient Europharma (NZ) Co Ltd	Support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of SNA in a co-ordinated development which allows for better planning of landscaping and waterways
6	Bo Ram Yu	Support/Opposes	<p>Opposes NZTA sub requiring cycle track along SH39 (outside road reserve).</p> <p>The landscape buffer on RNSP adjacent to SH 39 / Rotokauri Road potentially affects future development and access to submitters property.</p> <p>Ambiguities in the land size of future reserves for parks and playgrounds in RNSP compared to RSP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycleways and reserves developed within road reserve (outside submitters property).

Few of the 80 submissions received (including late submissions) or the 8 further submissions raise issues relating to existing landscape character and visual amenity. These include submissions 1 (Martin/Leet), 15 and 79 (Rotokauri North Tangata Whenua Working Group & Te Whakatitenga Waikato Incorporated). Submission 34 (Ruske) raises concern around integration with the Rotokauri Structure Plan.

In my opinion, it is not possible to retain existing (landscape) amenity values (as sought by the Martin/Leet submission as any amenity associated with existing rural character and expansive views over the wider open landscape will be lost at the time of urbanisation. It is possible however to ensure that any development is undertaken in a manner that provides for the recreational and amenity needs of the residents of the area through the provision of an integrated landscape design approach that addresses these issues through good urban design practices.

The limited number of concerns raised about the loss of wider landscape and visual amenity suggests either a general acceptance that change is likely to occur within the plan change area or knowledge of likely future change. This is likely because of the underlying Future Urban Zoning (FUZ) and the Rotokauri Structure Plan.

The issues raised appear to focus on the provision of amenities at a local or site-specific level, with many of the issues potentially addressed through the development of an integrated landscape development plan.

In terms of the relief sought by submitters, I consider that the amended provisions (above) provided will reasonably address the issues raised.

OVERALL FINDINGS

The LVA and CAA reports, provided in support of the proposed PC7, assess the effects of urbanisation on the existing landscape and visual amenity. The reports provide sufficient information at a broad level to understand that the plan change will result in a loss of existing rural character within the RNSP area and that the change will have a high level of effect on the landscape and visual amenity of neighbouring property as the development of the zone occurs. The nature of these effects however is not detailed. The consequences of removing the RCA overlay from ridgelines within PC7, and on the integrity of the balance of the RSP are unclear.

While there are some limitations in the reporting, I am in general agreement with the overall conclusions reached in the VLA, namely:

The proposed urbanisation of the PPC area will significantly change its current open rural landscape character. The development will however be consistent with the FUZ zoning of the site, with urban expansion envisaged under the HCDP, RPS and Future Proof Framework...

While the subject site includes land used for farming and agricultural purposes, it is a significantly modified degraded site with relatively low landscape values (except for the existing protected SNA).

The proposed urbanisation of the land will inevitably result in the transformation of the site from a rural area to a mixed density urban residential area. This will have implications on the surrounding rural and rural-residential land, with the urban development impacting on the rural qualities of these areas. Nevertheless, this is an area identified for urban expansion in the RSP. Consequently, it is only the timing of that change from rural to urban which is different from the current timeframes outlined in Chapter 3 of the HCDP.⁴

I generally concur that the adverse effect (landscape and visual amenity) on adjoining properties will likely be *Moderate to High*, reducing to *Low to Negligible* in surrounding areas.

The ODP is largely silent on city-wide landscape character and visual amenity, with few provisions addressing these issues directly, including the various provisions relating to Hamilton's identity, heritage values and cultural (landscape) values (including Objectives 2.2.11 & 2.2.12). The plan does however provide more guidance at the urban design level, with several objectives and policies relating to the provision of open space, neighbourhood reserves and the protection of ecological areas (SNA), including Objective 2.2.3.

Only two submissions raise concerns about the loss of existing landscape and visual amenity. This indicates that there is either general acceptance that change is likely to occur within the plan change area or that issues around landscape character (including the preservation of the topography characteristic to Rotokauri) are not of concern. This may be because character change within the future urban zone is signalled within the ODP.

Other submissions raise issues relating to amenity at the local or neighbourhood level. In my opinion, these are addressed by either the existing amenity provisions within the ODP, the proposed provisions in PC7 or through the introduction of the amended provisions contained in this report (with preference given to the recommended provisions in this report). Collectively, these will help provide greater certainty around the development of the open space network within the RNSP. In my opinion, this will help ensure consistency with the various objectives and policies contained in the plan that either directly affects or influences landscape (and urban) amenity⁵.

I consider that with the inclusion of a set of provisions that provides a greater level of certainty around the development of the parks and reserve network, the proposed plan change is capable of managing the potential landscape and wider scale amenity effects through the implementation of the proposed structure plan. While there are some uncertainties around how such development may proceed and the "flavour" of the expected enhancements on landscape and urban amenity (at a development level), I consider that this can be adequately managed by requiring the development of an integrated landscape development plan at the time of subdivision.

⁴ Page 17. Rotokauri North – Private Plan Change Request Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment. LA4. 17/4/2019.

⁵ Refer attached table.

PROJECT MEMORANDUM

mansergh graham
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

Dave Mansergh

Dip P&RM(Dist), BLA(Hons), MLA, Registered ANZILA
Director

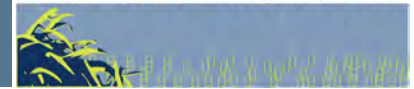
ATTACHMENT 1

Key Objective and Policies contained in the Operative District Plan, against which the proposed plan change have been considered (landscape and Visual Amenity only) include:

Objective	Policies
2.2.3 Promote safe, compact, sustainable, good quality urban environments that respond positively to their local context.	2.2.3c Development enhances civic, natural heritage, cultural, ecology and surrounding public space networks.
2.2.11 Hamilton's unique character, heritage and identity are reflected in its built environment.	2.2.11c Development is sensitive to and protects Hamilton's archaeological and cultural heritage sites, structures, areas, landscapes and places.
2.2.12 Protect and enhance natural character, natural features and landscapes, ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity.	2.2.12a Land use and development protects natural character, natural features and landscapes and ecosystems and promotes positive outcomes for indigenous biodiversity in the Waikato region. 2.2.12b Land use and development maintains the extent and, where possible, enhances ecological corridors.
3.6.1.1 Preservation of key natural features and topography that are characteristic of Rotokauri.	3.6.1.1a Development shall maintain the natural ridgelines. 3.6.1.1b The central green corridor shall function as the principal stormwater drainage channel and a recreational and transportation corridor connecting the wider network of open spaces and natural features. <u>Explanation:</u> The ridgelines of Rotokauri contribute significantly to local character and identity. The relationship of the elevated areas to the flat land containing Lake Waiwhakereke is particularly strong.
4.2.4 The development contributes to good neighbourhood amenity as the area matures.	4.2.4b Buildings should be designed so they do not physically dominate or adversely affect the residential character of the neighbourhood. 4.2.4c Significant vegetation and trees should be preserved wherever possible
14.2.1 Subdivision, activities and development are compatible with the existing rural character and amenity, which is: i. Open pasture. ii. Pockets of vegetation. iii. Low-density development. iv. Predominantly farming activities.	14.2.1a Buildings, subdivision and activities on site shall be of a scale and character compatible with existing rural character and amenity. 14.2.1f Rural character and amenity shall be retained until rezoning for urban development purposes occurs, as supported by a structure plan for the area.
20.2.1 Significant Natural Areas are protected, maintained, restored and enhanced.	20.2.1a The values and characteristics that define the City's Significant Natural Areas shall be identified. 20.2.1b Areas of indigenous vegetation, biodiversity and habitats of indigenous fauna shall be scheduled as Significant Natural Areas. 20.2.1c The particular values and characteristics that make an area a Significant Natural Area shall be protected from adverse effects by having regard to: i. The character and degree of modification, damage, loss or destruction that will result from the activity. ii. The duration and frequency of effect (e.g. long-term or recurring effects).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. The magnitude or scale of effect, including effects on ecological processes supporting or provided by the Significant Natural Area. iv. The irreversibility of effect. v. The resilience of the area to assimilate change. vi. The opportunities to minimise pre-existing or potential adverse effects (e.g. restoration or enhancement), where avoidance is not practicable. vii. The probability of effect. viii. Cumulative effects. ix. Need for, or purpose of, the works. <p>20.2.1d Adverse effects of development on the City's Significant Natural Areas shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1e The reduction, fragmentation and isolation of indigenous ecosystems and habitats shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1f The loss or disruption of corridors or connections linking indigenous ecosystems and habitat fragments shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1g The loss or disruption to migratory pathways in water, land or air shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1h Adverse effects on ecosystems resulting from changes to hydrological flows, water levels and water quality shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1i The loss or disruption of protective buffering of indigenous ecosystems shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1j The loss of ecosystem services shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1k The loss, damage or disruption to ecological processes, functions and ecological integrity shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1l The loss or reduction of the cultural and spiritual association with indigenous biodiversity which are held by tangata whenua shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1m Non-native pest species within Significant Natural Areas shall be controlled.</p> <p>20.2.1n The loss of habitat that supports indigenous species classified as at risk or threatened shall be avoided.</p> <p>20.2.1o Significant Natural Areas shall be restored and enhanced to meet at least the 10% threshold for habitat sustainability.</p> <p>20.2.1p Develop a local indigenous biodiversity strategy to identify opportunities to restore and enhance biodiversity in Hamilton City.</p>
<p>23.2.2 Subdivision contributes to the achievement of functional, attractive, sustainable, safe and well designed environments.</p>	<p>23.2.2a Subdivision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Is in general accordance with Subdivision Design Assessment Criteria to achieve good amenity and design outcomes. ii. Is in general accordance with any relevant Structure Plan. iii. Is in general accordance with any relevant Integrated Catchment Management Plan. iv. Maintains and, where possible, enhances existing amenity values.
<p>23.2.3 Medium-Density Residential Zone and Rototuna Town Centre Zone areas are developed comprehensively</p>	<p>23.2.3a Subdivision that creates additional allotments in the Medium-Density Residential Zone or the Rototuna Town Centre Zone does not occur without an approved Comprehensive Development Plan or Land Development Consents for Ruakura and Te Awa Lakes.</p>

<p>25.2.2.1 Minimise the adverse effects of earthworks and vegetation removal on people, property, and the environment.</p>	<p>25.2.2.1a Earthworks and vegetation removal shall occur in a way that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Minimises adverse effects on existing landforms, natural features and significant vegetation. ii. Maintains natural processes and features including natural drainage patterns and streams. iii. Does not create new, or exacerbate existing natural hazards. iv. Minimises adverse effects on land and water, especially effects such as erosion and sedimentation. v. Creates practicable building sites, efficient use of land and infrastructure, ensures effective stormwater flow paths, and a safe living and working environment. vi. Minimises dust, noise, and runoff. vii. Adopts a precautionary approach towards decisions that may result in significant adverse effects on the Waikato River and, in particular, those effects that threaten serious or irreversible damage to the Waikato River. viii. Maintains or enhances riparian vegetation on the margins of natural watercourses and wetlands
<p>25.5.2.1 To maintain and enhance amenity values within and around development, while contributing to local ecology and cultural connection where possible.</p>	<p>25.5.2.1a Minimise visual impacts of developments in part by providing appropriate screening and planting around activities and between zones.</p> <p>25.5.2.1b Encourage the planting of native species where appropriate</p>
<p>25.5.2.1 To maintain and enhance amenity values within and around development, while contributing to local ecology and cultural connection where possible.</p>	<p>25.5.2.1a Minimise visual impacts of developments in part by providing appropriate screening and planting around activities and between zones.</p> <p>25.5.2.1b Encourage the planting of native species where appropriate.</p>



Attachment 2: Rotokauri Structure Plan

Figure 2-8: Rotokauri Structure Plan – Land Use

