

**Submission Porirua City Council Proposed District Plan  
Reference number 26 Jeremy Collyns**

Introduction - I am a rural landowner in Porirua City for 40 years , forestry owner , conservationist and carbon farmer .

I have worked for 33 years with Greater Wellington in there Parks Department, mostly being the Supervising Maintenance Ranger and before in DOC in native forest restoration.

I also hold a National Certificate in Horticulture specializing in native forest restoration . I have also have managed my own property native forest restoration and conservation efforts for over 40 years .

These qualifications and experiences gives me knowledge to comment on values and objectives outlined in the Natural Environment section in the Proposed District Plan

One of its failings is it being made to cover all the types of native forest land in the city , that is one size fits all .

There is a wide range of land making up the SNA land as described in the plan across the city .

These range from the small , one owner , urban section to the large landscape rural land under multiple owner ship .

To under take Protection and restoration initiatives as ECO-P7 , one needs to under stand the threats and to cover off these threats in the plan For the SNA forest rural land to protect and restore the native forest there is a need to make fencing compulsory and to undertake pest animal and weed control in a timely manner .

Our land is fenced with pest control under taken and has a healthy native covenanted forest removing these threats .

The need for fencing and pest control has been illustrated by the neighbouring land around our covenanted land .This neighbouring forest land has been included into the plan as SNA land . At present this land contains large numbers of pigs , goats and other pest animals and plants

The forested under story area has been reduced to a few native plants which are unpleasant to eat for the goats . The regeneration has been eaten with forest succession halted . The ground has been compacted with no leaf litter causing increased water runoff and erosion into the harbour . The forest canopy is dying with holes opening up allowing pest plants such as Old Mans Beard to grow . The rare and threatened native plants which makes our land a KNE have also been eaten and no longer existing

If left these surrounding native forest areas will disappear , the fact being there is nothing in the rules to stop landowners stocking there SNA land with pest animals to remove the native vegetation . The need for fencing out livestock in a farming area from a forest area goes without saying to protect its biodiversity

To meet the Draft National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity the statement was based around four criteria . One was to preserve the indigenous plants and habitats of the ecological district , includes diversity and pattern of the site , natural range of flora and fauna .

From this comes the Proposed District Plan and its Natural Environment Values .

Without fencing and pest control the native flora and fauna on private SNA land will disappear and this needs to be made compulsory to meet the above statement requirements'

There is also a need to separate out the different types of land into two groups . These being the small urban section and the rural land Each having different threats for there protection and restoration . These threats can then be addressed in objectives and outcomes . For the rural land stock prove fencing along with good pest control .

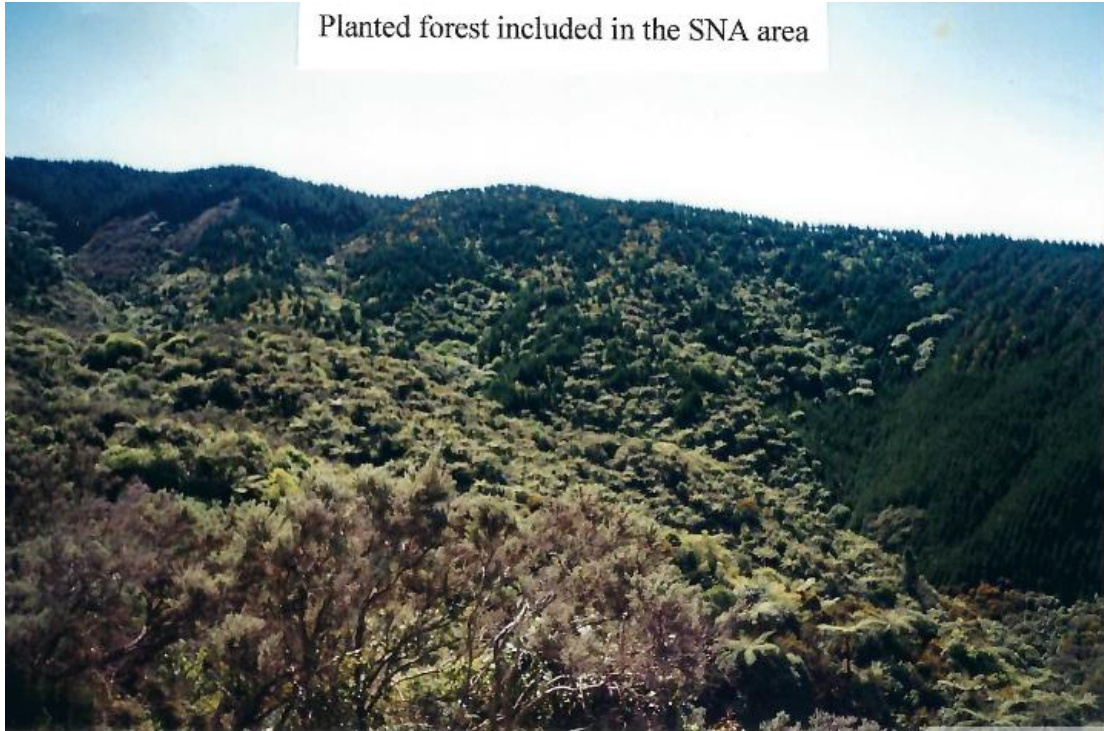
Again I refer back to the attached meeting notes and letter from 2000 council public consultation

This spelled a good way forward but were ignored by council when the objectives' were drafted in the present proposed District Plan .

Again the objectives fail to protect the indigenous vegetation as written in the proposed district plan without adding the need for fencing and good pest control

Thank you

Planted forest included in the SNA area



View of forest without pest control (unfenced)



View of forest with pest control (fenced)



In reply please quote: SP/10/5/2  
For enquires please contact: Matthew Trlin  
Extension: 8505 : MFT  
Direct Dial: (04) 237 1505

29 November 2000

Jeremy Collyns  
10 Bush Grove  
Trentham  
UPPER HUTT

Address  
correspondence to:

The Chief Executive  
Porirua City Council  
PO Box 50218  
Porirua City  
New Zealand  
Phone 64 4 237 508  
Fax 64 4 237 6384

Administration Bldg  
Cobham Court  
Porirua City

Dear Jeremy Collyns

### **ECOLOGICAL SITES SURVEY - MEETING WITH RURAL RESIDENTS**

I would like to thank you for attending the 2 November meeting at the Brady Room Whitby.

As you are well aware the Council's Ecological Sites Survey project is one of the most challenging environmental programmes that Council has initiated in recent years.

The Council is faced with trying to formulate a programme that will both:

- (a) appropriately address Council's responsibilities under the Resource Management Act 1991 relating to "recognising and providing for" the protection of significant ecological sites, and;
- (b) appropriately recognise and provide for competing interests associated with land "protection", such as recognition of property rights and the ability and expectation of land owners to be able to derive an economic return from privately owned land.

To say that this is not an easy task is somewhat of an understatement. As councils and landowners from elsewhere within the country can attest to (i.e. Hurinui), the balance is difficult to achieve. This has been particularly the case where landowners have not been actively engaged in such a process from the outset, and have subsequently found there has been little Council understanding of landowner concerns, aspirations and expectations.

Your presence and participation at the 2<sup>nd</sup> November meeting was therefore appreciated, and valued, in terms of enabling the Council to outline and present its ecological sites survey project. More importantly though it was important in terms of contributing to a landowner forum to discuss preliminary thoughts and concerns relating to the project itself. For myself the meeting has certainly reinforced our desired approach of proceeding with care and consideration when progressing this project beyond its "data gathering and field survey" stage.

Given that a range of issues and concerns were raised by a number of individuals at the meeting I have enclosed, for your information, the notes that we took from our discussions. Realising that we may not have captured the full essence of some of the issues that were raised (as a lot of discussion did occur), could I also invite you to provide any additional comments that you consider these notes should contain. Please also feel free to provide your own personal views on the project to this point in time. I realise that not all who attended the meeting may have felt fully comfortable in discussing their perspectives in front of the group that was present.

#### **Where to from here?**

As discussed at the meeting the Council has engaged consultants from Boffa Miskell to conduct field surveys of those sites that may be of ecological interest.

Paul Blaschke, the Team Leader for the project from Boffa Miskell, if he has not done so already, will contact you to discuss whether arrangements can be made for a member of his team to access your land to examine any sites of interest for this work. Access would greatly assist us in terms of being able to establish those sites that are unlikely to be of further interest, and of course those sites where further inspection work may be merited. As was also outlined at the meeting these visits will also benefit you, if you choose to subdivide your land in the future, by completing work (at Council's expense) that we would normally require you to do (at your expense) as part of a subdivision application.

We would also be very interested in being shown or informed of any additional sites that you might consider would be of interest to us. This would greatly assist us in extending our knowledge of the city, and would provide the benefit of Council assessing the site as part of this project. We may also be able to offer or direct you to assistance, if it is required, in managing some of these areas.

If you have any concerns associated with Paul or one of his team accessing your site, please feel free to contact us and we can discuss how or if it is appropriate to visit your site.

#### **Using the information we gather.**

Recognising the sensitivity that is associated with the development of an inventory of ecological sites, I can assure you that you and other landowners will have ample opportunity to discuss the survey work that is underway, and any subsequent assessment that is applied to sites within your property.

Opportunities will also be provided to specifically discuss issues, including site management concerns/ options / opportunities, that may arise from this work. This will include opportunities for one-on-one discussions.

It is also recognised that further discussion or feedback will be required to consider the range of management options that may be considered for use on some sites. Part of this process will involve determining what are appropriate management options for consideration and the conditions and constraints that may need to be applied to the application of some of these options. We will contact you with details of further meetings or workshops on this matter once we have completed the inventory of ecological sites, related fieldwork, and preliminary site assessments.

In the interim, please feel free to contact Matt Trlin, Manager Environmental Policy, telephone (04) 237 1505, or email [mtrlin@pcc.govt.nz](mailto:mtrlin@pcc.govt.nz), with any questions, concerns or thoughts that you may have relating to the project.

Yours sincerely

PP 

Sue Veart  
**GROUP MANAGER STRATEGIC POLICY GROUP**  
**for CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

## INVENTORY OF SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL SITES IN PORIRUA CITY

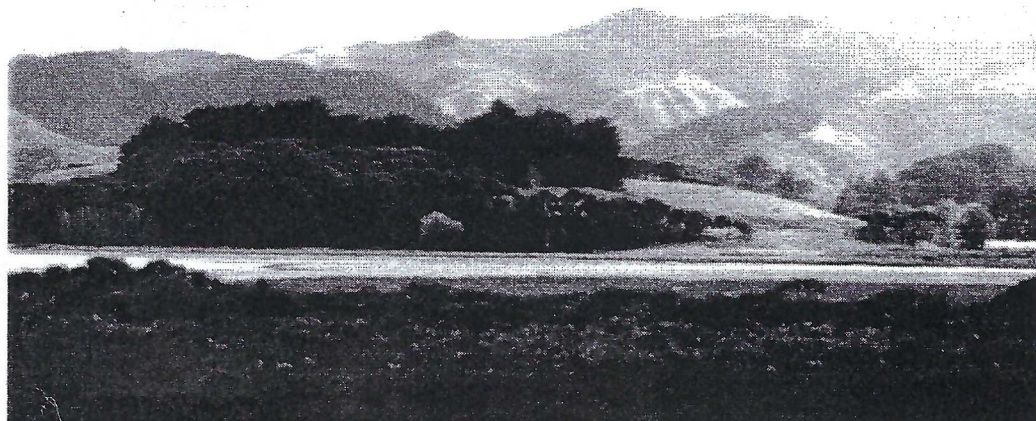
In May 2000 Porirua City Council initiated a project documenting ecological sites in Porirua City. The objectives of the project are:

- Identify and survey ecological sites within Porirua City.
- Assess the relative significance and importance of the ecological sites.
- Identify the range of threats to the on-going health and viability of the ecological sites.
- Identify a range of tools (both statutory and non-statutory) for the sustainable management and protection of the ecological sites.
- Review the provisions in the District Plan related to ecological sites as a result of the inventory of ecological sites and the review of tools available for sustainably managing and protecting the ecological sites.
- Develop a programme for monitoring the on-going health and viability of the ecological sites.

Boffa Miskell Ltd has been contracted to assist Porirua City Council with the following tasks:

- Obtain and collate all existing data of ecological sites in the City.
- Identify Ecodomains and pre-European vegetation associations.
- Undertake initial aerial photo analysis and reconnaissance.
- Communicate and discuss results of initial survey with public, and finalise significance criteria.
- Undertake field surveys of sites.
- Assess the relative significance of listed sites.
- Identify ecological issues and recommend management solutions.
- Advise on monitoring programme.

Work commenced in June 2000 on the first three tasks. Public discussion is taking place during October and November, at the same time that initial field work is being done in publicly-owned areas. It is hoped that all potentially significant ecological areas will be visited and assessed (provided that private owners give permission for access), in order to evaluate their ecological significance and recommend management and monitoring options for them.





## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE INITIAL "DESK-TOP" SURVEY

The project team has obtained all existing major sources of data on ecological sites in Porirua City, entered this information onto a database developed for the project, and drawn provisional boundaries onto recently-flown 1:7500 aerial photographs. Principal data sources drawn on for the desk-top survey were databases of areas and species held by the Department of Conservation, the Wellington Regional Council, and the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust.

### Number of ecological sites

The initial number of sites compiled onto the database was 109 (after reconciling considerable duplication in the records transferred). From an examination of the aerial photographs, in particular looking at areas that are not presently recorded but which look as though they have significant or potential ecological significance, we estimate that there will probably be about 20 - 30 new sites added. **So the final total may be 130 - 140 ecological sites in the City.**

### Size of ecological sites (based on provisional information)

Size (ha)	Number of sites	% of sites
>50	11	10 → includes DOC
10-50	22	20
5-10	19	17
2-5	32	29 → 3 less than 4 plus than
<2	25	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>



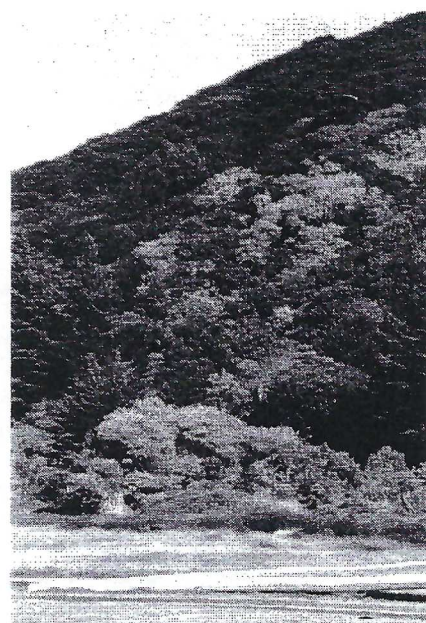
### Points to highlight:

- ❖ Total area of the sites = 2148ha (12% of the area of Porirua City).
- ❖ Average area of all sites is just under 20ha.
- ❖ About 70% of the sites are less than 10 ha in area.
- ❖ There are likely to be a lot of present sites which are too small to be viable in the long term.
- ❖ Many areas (perhaps about 10% of the sites) have shrunk significantly since earlier surveys.

### Land tenure of ecological sites (based on provisional information)

Tenure	Number of sites	% of sites
Private land	56	52
Private land covenanted	19	17
Crown reserve	9	8
Local authority reserve	18	17
Mixture private and public land	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100</b>

1/3 have covenanted protection



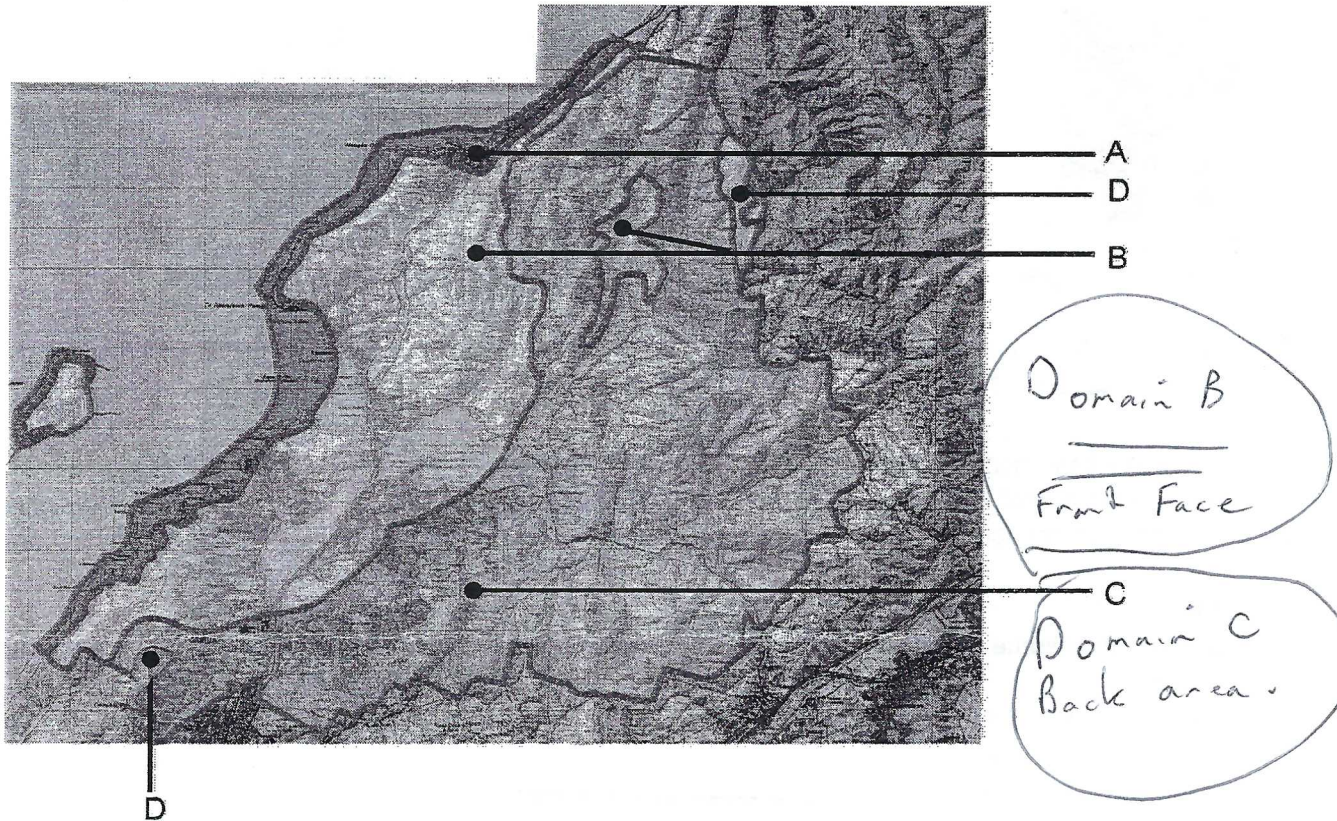
### Points to highlight:

- ❖ Just under half of the areas have some sort of formal legal protection.
- ❖ This is a relatively healthy position compared with comparable districts.
- ❖ More than one third of protected sites are private land covenant.
- ❖ There are many small public as well as private reserve areas

Survey mainly plants.

## ECODOMAINS: Understanding the local ecology

An area that shares a similar set of physical and climatic circumstances that in turn produces a predictable set of biological patterns, cycles and land-uses, is called an 'ecodomain'. The project team have recognised four ecodomains in Porirua City Council at a broad mapping scale of 1:50,000. At this mapping scale people can readily 'read' the character of an ecodomain in their neighbourhood landscape. These ecodomains will form the main basis for assessing the representativeness of ecological sites in Porirua City.



## Field survey and assessment of ecological sites

All sites will be surveyed first before their significance is assessed. The survey concentrates on gathering basic environmental information to augment what is already available from existing surveys. This includes information about plants and animals present, types of habitat, connections to other sites, and threats to the future viability of the site. Landowners and other local people can contribute greatly to our understanding of aspects of ecological sites not easily recognised in field surveys (such as seasonal or nocturnal wildlife patterns).

In assessing the ecological significance of the sites the following must be taken into account:

- *Vegetation and animals present*
- *Variety and integrity of physical habitats and natural processes*
- *Representativeness* - within Porirua City boundaries  
within successional or habitat characteristics of ecodomain
- *Rarity* - of plant and animal species  
of habitat
- *Ecological context* (relationship to other sites or ecosystems in the vicinity)
- *Condition and threats*
- *Viability*

### **The survey team**

The inventory project is being undertaken for the Council by Boffa Miskell Ltd, a leading New Zealand environmental consultancy firm specialising in landscape design, ecology and planning. The Boffa Miskell team doing the field survey are:



**Paul Blaschke**  
Team leader: ecologist



**Isobel Gabites**  
Landscape ecologist



**Tim Park**  
Field surveyor: ecologist

All landowners who own sites that may be of significance will be contacted by Paul or Isobel to request permission for access. Contact them on 04 385 9315 for matters relating to the field survey.

### **How will the inventory information be used?**

The identification of sites of ecological value will provide a database not only for the Council but will also be a valuable resource for landowners who may be looking to develop or subdivide their land.

Once sites are identified a separate dialogue needs to take place as to the management response. The Council does not assume regulation is the only response and is keen to work with landowners on a range of management options. Once the full scale of potential sites is known the Council, with the landowners, can develop arrangements to best meet the needs of the landowners and the legal responsibilities of the Council. The Council is well aware that the wider community cannot/should not impose unreasonable expectations on landowners. The Council is aware that elsewhere in the country farmers and others have felt that the public was placing an unreasonable burden onto the private landowner. Porirua is keen to avoid such tension.

Information gathered both from databases and from site inspections will be shared with the landowner for information and discussion or clarification.

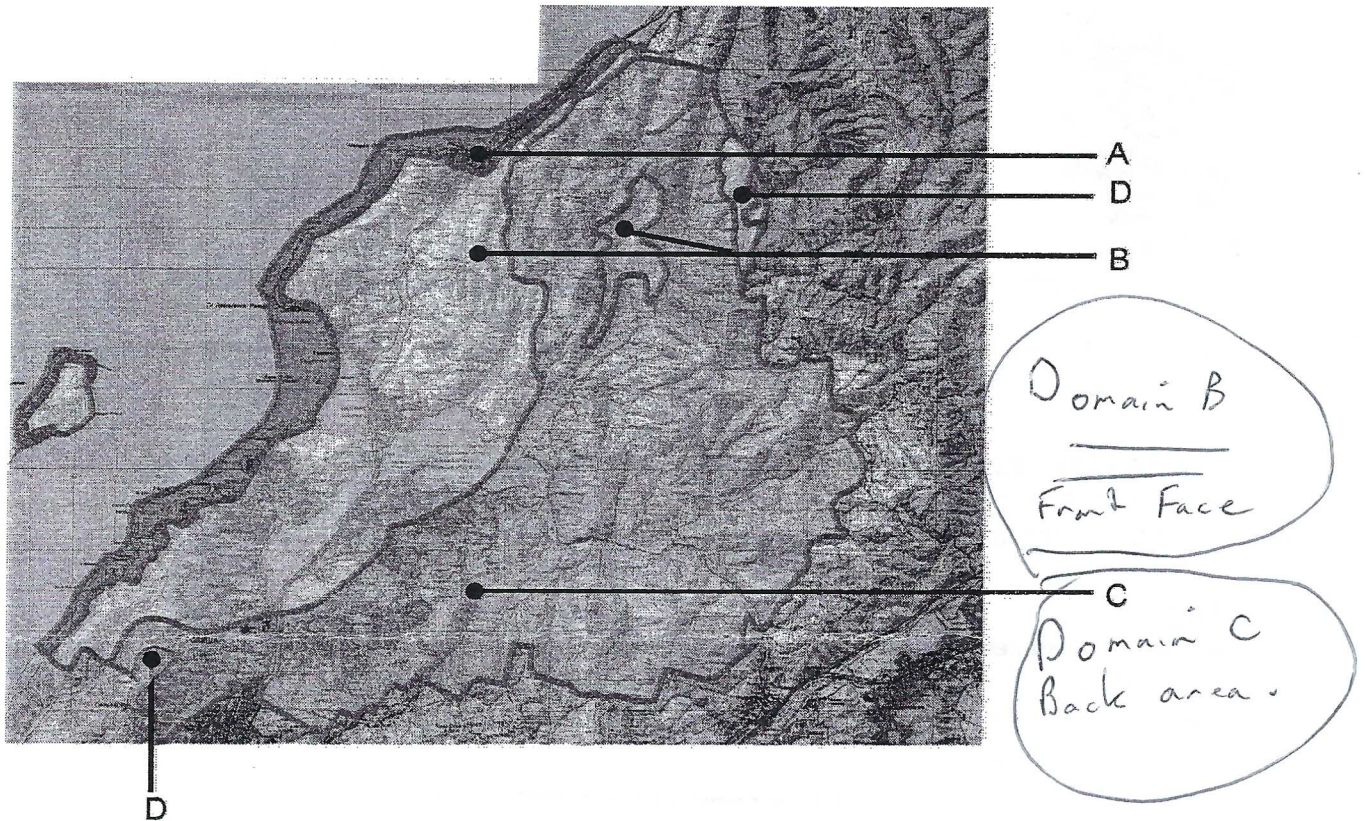
### **For further information**

Please contact Matthew Trlin or Sue Veart at Porirua City Council, phone 237 5089.



## ECODOMAINS: Understanding the local ecology

An area that shares a similar set of physical and climatic circumstances that in turn produces a predictable set of biological patterns, cycles and land-uses, is called an 'ecodomain'. The project team have recognised four ecodomains in Porirua City Council at a broad mapping scale of 1:50,000. At this mapping scale people can readily 'read' the character of an ecodomain in their neighbourhood landscape. These ecodomains will form the main basis for assessing the representativeness of ecological sites in Porirua City.



## Field survey and assessment of ecological sites

All sites will be surveyed first before their significance is assessed. The survey concentrates on gathering basic environmental information to augment what is already available from existing surveys. This includes information about plants and animals present, types of habitat, connections to other sites, and threats to the future viability of the site. Landowners and other local people can contribute greatly to our understanding of aspects of ecological sites not easily recognised in field surveys (such as seasonal or nocturnal wildlife patterns).

In assessing the ecological significance of the sites the following must be taken into account:

- *Vegetation and animals present*
- *Variety and integrity of physical habitats and natural processes*
- *Representativeness* - within Porirua City boundaries  
within successional or habitat characteristics of ecodomain
- *Rarity* - of plant and animal species  
of habitat
- *Ecological context* (relationship to other sites or ecosystems in the vicinity)
- *Condition and threats*
- *Viability*

## Ecological Sites Survey- Meeting with Rural Residents Thursday 2 November 2000.

---

### Parties Present:

#### ***Porirua City Council***

Sue Veart- Group Manager Strategic Policy Group  
Matt Trlin- Manager Environmental Policy

Paul Blaschke- Boffa Miskell  
Isobel Gabites- Boffa Miskell  
Tim Park - Boffa Miskell  
Robert Schofield- Boffa Miskell

#### ***Residents/ Landowners***

Donald Love  
Ian Benge  
Dan Stevensen  
Claire Gray  
James Gray  
John Carrad  
Joy Gray  
Wallace Thorneycroft  
Clare Ashton  
Christine Stanley  
Valma and Bob Gyton  
Jeremy Collyns  
Lynette Wharfe  
Mike Jacobson  
Dave Scafie  
Kevin Wharfe  
George Tripe

---

### Notes from Meeting:

Sue Veart introduced the Ecological Site Survey Project and the project team from Boffa Miskell.

Sue identified consultation and discussion with landowners as an integral part of the project, and that Council needed to work with landowners to complete survey and data gathering phase of the project. A key part of the contract with Boffa Miskell therefore related to a requirement for Boffa's to individually consult with each landowner, and for permission to be obtained from landowners prior to accessing land for the field survey component of the project. Landowners were invited to raise any problems or issues with the consultant, access arrangements or this process directly with Sue or Matt Trlin.

Once this stage of the project was complete Council would work with landowners, both collectively and at an individual level, to establish how to best deal with the information that had been gathered.

Key benefits associated with Council undertaking this work:

For landowners:

- Council funded assessment of potential ecological sites on their land, and the relative significance of any such site. Landowners choosing to subdivide their land at some later point in time would be able to use this information as part of any subdivision application (at no cost to the landowner).

For Council:

- Meeting RMA responsibilities, re monitoring for example.

Paul Blaschke outlined the scope of the initial desktop study (including analysis of aerial photographs) and presented highlights of this work, including details of:

- number of sites with ecological areas of potential interest;
- site sizes, including site size distribution and average site size;
- public/private ownership;
- existing use of protective covenants;
- evidence of shrinkage in areas of indigenous bush that had been previously documented

Concepts of site linkages and ecological viability were also discussed.

Isobel Gabites outlined the use of Ecodomains in the project, including the use of ecodomains to establish a context for sites that were to be examined. Examples and ideas were provided of what might have value.

---

**Questions raised by residents and landowners during the course of the meeting included:**

**Q: Proportion of identified sites that are privately owned?**

A. Approximately 50%

**Q: Identification of species- did the survey have a broad scope for the range of species that would be looked at?**

A. The scope of the survey did not enable a "fine" survey to be undertaken of animals.

**Q: Given that the Council was already surveying sites, to what extent was the Council then collecting information on animals ?**

A. Council was not doing an invertebrate or bird study. Sites would be largely examined in a one off site visit, which was far from ideal in terms of being to accurately document the range of species that might be present within the site. The survey work

was primarily focused on plants plus material was available from a range of other sources- including animal surveys.

**Q: Regenerating scrub – at what stage does this become significant? Is it related to when a site serves a linkage role?**

A. Isobel response- An interpretation will need to be made of each site and a determination made. Soil conditions could be real factor in terms of their ability to support successor species. Paul- Linkage is a factor, in addition to the presence of indicative species. Explained that we are dealing with a moving target and the assessment of a site may change in say 10 years time with further regeneration.

**Q: Forest owners- are pine forests to be excluded from ecological sites, even where bush regeneration is occurring beneath such stands?**

A. Council has to acknowledge that plantation forests are there as a commercial crop and will be harvested. Such sites would therefore be excluded from ecological site lists.

**Q: What is the incentive for a landowner to share information with the Council- e.g. glow worm sites that are hidden within the property and that are not readily visible?**

A. This rests largely with the landowner, however it was hoped that such information would be shared to contribute to local knowledge, and also to seek assistance in managing such areas. It was acknowledged that people wouldn't share unless they wanted to.

**Q: Rates Relief- is this something that would be looked at?**

A. Yes. Concepts of fencing assistance, pest management contributions and greater rates relief all appeal. These would be looked at in detail as the project unfolds. Opportunities exist to co-ordinate with the Regional Council on such initiatives.

**Q: How did DoC criteria compare to Ecosurvey criteria for evaluating areas?**

A. There are differences. Ecosurvey places an emphasis on habitat rarity as opposed to species rarity.

**Q: Ranking of surveyed sites and relative ranking of properties- will there be an opportunity to discuss?**

A. The range of assessment criteria outlined in the handout / pamphlet were highlighted. Landowners would have the opportunity to discuss rankings following the completion of survey work.

---

**Key concerns raised by residents and landowners included:**

- **The presence of invasive species** – gorse, bone seed,- and the spread of these species through the City particularly since the war.

- **Natives beneath commercial forests being subject to protection and preventing logging.**
- **Impact of walkways on private land.**
- **Council involvement in land protection and the perceived advantages of QEII covenants (remove Council from the equation).**
- **Ecodomain zones and the management of land within these zones.**
- **The ranking of sites following survey – what are the overall goals that we are trying to achieve? Some areas may be within or outside of long term desired corridors that may affect ranking.**