

**QUIRINO LTD., ORANGEFIELDS,
484 Kerikeri Road, Kerikeri**

Proposed subdivision

Landscape Assessment

May 2024

23102_01

FINAL



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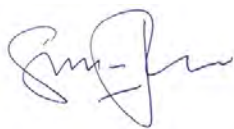
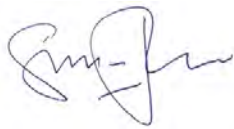
Bibliographic reference for citation: Simon Cocker Landscape Architecture Limited. 2024. QUIRINO LTD., ORANGEFIELDS, 484 Kerikeri Road, Kerikeri - <i>Landscape Assessment</i> .		
Prepared by	Simon Cocker Landscape Architect Principal SCLA	
Reviewed by	Simon Cocker Landscape Architect Principal SCLA	
Ref.	23102_01	
Status. [FINAL]	Revision / version -	Issue Date: 03 May 2024
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kerikeri Eco-Community (the “Applicant”) seeks resource consent to construct 12 additional residential units and associated accessways, walkways and offsite parking facilities within two existing allotments on a 4.3ha property. The subject site is a horticultural growing unit best described as an orchard, currently with a variety of fruit-producing trees including mandarin (*Citrus reticulata*), lemon (*Citrus × limon*), avocado (*Persea americana*) and macadamia (*Macadamia integrifolia*).

The location of the Site is shown in [Figure 1](#) in [Appendix 1](#). The property is located within the rural production zone. The application will not comply with 8.6.5.1.1, 8.6.5.1.2, 8.6.5.1.10, 8.6.5.1.4, 8.6.5.1.10, 12.4.6.1.2, and 13.7.1.1, and is and is therefore the status of the activity is non-complying under the Far North District Plan Operative Version.

The assessment has been prepared by a Registered Landscape Architect with reference to the Te Tangi a Te Manu (Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Guidelines)¹. The assessment methodology is detailed in [Appendix 2](#). In addition, this report has been prepared in accordance with the NZILA (New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects) Code of Conduct².

Effects Ratings and Definitions

The significance of effects identified in this assessment are based on a seven-point scale which includes very low; low; moderate-low; moderate, moderate-high, high, and very high. For the purpose of this assessment, low-moderate equates to minor in RMA terminology.

Desktop study and site visits

In conducting this assessment, a desktop study was completed which included a review of the relevant information relating to the landscape and visual aspects of the project. This information included:

- Northland Regional Policy Statement (2016);
- The Operative Far North District Plan;
- The Proposed Far North District Plan
- Plan set prepared by HB Architecture, titled *Kerikeri Eco Community* dated 23/04/24;
- Scheme plan prepared by Reyburn and Bryant Ltd. Rev C;
- AEE and Statutory analysis prepared by B&A Ltd. dated 03/05/24;
- LDE Ltd., *Geotechnical Suitability Report for Proposed Residential Development*. 29 April 2024;
- Rural Design Ltd. *Ecological Assessment*. April 2024
- Geometria. *Desktop Archaeological Assessment of the Proposed Kerikeri Eco Community*. 8 February 2024;
- Linda Conning and Nigel Miller. *Natural areas of Kerikeri Ecological District : reconnaissance survey report for the Protected Natural Areas Programme*. Dept. of Conservation, Northland Conservancy, 1999;
- GNS Science Geology Web Map Client;
- Aerial photography, Far North District Council GIS mapping, and Google Earth.

A visit was undertaken on the late afternoon of 2 December 2023. The weather conditions during the visit were bright with sunny intervals and light to moderate winds.

¹ https://nzila.co.nz/media/uploads/2022_09/Te_Tangi_a_te_Manu_Version_01_2022_.pdf

² Contained in Appendix 1 of: http://www.nzila.co.nz/media/50906/registered_membership_guide_final.pdf

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is described in the AEE and illustrated on Figures 2a – 2e.

The applicant proposes the creation of an Eco-village within the western half of the subject Site. This will comprise Lots 1 – 20. Lots 21 and 22 will occupy the eastern half, with Lot 22 taking up the Kerikeri Road-side strip and containing the existing (and proposed) retained development). Lot 21 – 1.8ha in area will remain predominantly unchanged with a single residential unit and the balance in horticultural production.

Within the western half of the Site – Lots 1 – 20, it is intended that the future occupants of the village share a vision for a more sustainable lifestyle. To this end, each dwelling will be located on a unit title with the balance (Lot 20, 1.83ha in area) held in communal ownership, and managed on a communal basis for productive and amenity purposes.

In addition, It is proposed to expand the existing retail activity located within the site enable a wider range of produce sales, and associated food and beverage activity to be established within proposed lot 22 following the subdivision. The commercial building will be 291m² in area with outdoor seating and a playground. This element of the proposal will include parking for 13 vehicles.

At present, the property is used for the production of a variety of citrus and other horticultural crops. Contained by exotic shelterbelts, the Site has an enclosed and sub-tropical character. Lot 1 DP 154181 contains a house, a small cottage and a shed/packhouse. These structures will be removed. The existing dwelling on Pt. Lot 6 DP25904 will be retained.

Figure C03 Rev A in the LDE civils plan set illustrates the proposed bulk earthworks. In total it is anticipated that the earthworks will comprise some 3,193m³ of cut and fill over an area of 7,606m².

A total of 12 comprehensively designed dwellings will be constructed as two clusters within the western end of the Site. The western-most cluster, situated in the north western corner of the Site will comprise three three-bed dwellings (Type C - 150m²) and a larger three-bed dwelling (Type A - 244m²).

Separated from the former cluster by a planted swale / overland flood path, the eastern cluster will be more dispersed and will be located on the subtle spur that projects to the south west from the northern Site boundary. This cluster will comprise three three-bed dwellings (Type C - 150m²), three two-bed dwellings (Type D – 135m²), a single three-bed dwelling (Type A - 244m²), and a single two storey three bed-dwelling (Type B - 236m²). In addition, located to the south west will be three small temporary accommodation units (Type E - 36m²).

The building plans are contained within the architectural plans prepared by HB Architecture. The residential buildings will be single level with a height above floor level of around 5m. They will be partially constructed with masonry foundation walls, and partly on piles to accommodate changes in level and to minimise ground modification. Designed with a view to minimising energy consumption through maximising solar gain and storage, the residential buildings will be clad with natural plaster, and Abobo thermally modified timber cladding. The roofs will be clad with dark coloured profiled metal trough section roofing.

Primary access will be facilitated via a road 6.0m wide, and sealed, with flush kerbs and swales), which will approximately trace the alignment of the existing access, and extend to the west along the northern boundary. Each dwelling will include garaging for two vehicles. Visitor parking (for three vehicles) will be located immediately on the road to the north east of the eastern built cluster.

The intent is to promote a sense of integration and vegetated openness between the buildings, with only low and visually permeable fences providing spatial containment. Where possible, the existing orchard trees will be retained, as will

existing amenity trees of value due to their stature and / or visual interest. This reflects the intent that the development will seek to have a 'light' footprint on the land, whereby the development will work with the landform and existing vegetation of value (be it exotic or native), and integrate these existing features into the landscape framework for the proposed development. To this end, in addition to the existing, retained citrus, infill citrus trees will be planted to extend the orchard 'between' the proposed buildings so that the dwellings appear 'set' within the orchard.

It is proposed that the primary landscape structure – utilising existing features where these exist – will comprise native vegetation. The Ecological Assessment describes a permanent stream system which runs along the site's southwestern boundary. It is fed via a small, spring-filled pond. The report states that this feature holds the majority of the significant ecological values on the subject site, though is exceptionally inundated with a surplus of different pest plant species and it recommends that ongoing pest plant and pest animal control be conducted alongside native revegetation planting.

The existing bamboo shelterbelt along this boundary shall be removed and replaced with native revegetation / riparian planting³.

Adjoining this area, a detention pond is proposed which will receive the stormwater flow from the Site, and slow the discharge into the existing stream. It is proposed that the margins of the pond be planted with native wetland and riparian species so that it 'merges with' and is integrated with the streamside riparian plantings.

The Ecological Assessment identifies this area as the 'ecological protection area' (with an area of 3,406m²), and recommends that it be protected via a consent notice on the title. The proposed planting within this area will encompass some 964m². [Figure 2d](#) illustrates the extent of the proposed revegetation. The proposed species mix within this area will seek to replicate the ecosystem forest type appropriate to the area; this being taraire, tawa, podocarp forest (WF9). The edges of the water course and pond will be planted with locally appropriate riparian species, including *Carex lessonii*, *Carex virgata*, *Machaerina articulata* and *Typha orientalis*.

Whilst much of the proposed ecological protection area, and other native planted areas within the Site will comprise new planting, the areas of existing native vegetation (which include species such as karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*), kohekohe (*Didymocheton spectabilis*) manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) and mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*)), will be managed to control weed species and enhanced with infill planting.

The detention pond will be fed by a swale / overland flow path which extends to the north from the pond will be densely planted with native species including harakeke (*Phormium tenax*), ti kouka (*Cordyline australis*), pukio (*Carex virgata*), *Carex lessonii*, *Machaerina articulata*, kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydiodes*), putaputaweta (*Carpodetus serratus*) and titoki (*Alectryon excelsus*).

Within this native vegetation framework, the unbuilt areas will be developed and maintained as amenity and productive 'edible' gardens and will include fruit trees and other native and exotic vegetation. A location for a community vegetable garden has been identified for the use of residents.

The Site will be threaded by pedestrian footpaths that will be used for both recreation and management of the amenity and productive 'edible' gardens. The footpaths will link these features, and provide access to grassed areas, in which seating will be provided for the use of residents.

[Figure 2e](#) includes a number of 'look and feel' images that provide an indication of the proposed landscape character of the development.

³ Shelterbelts enclosing the other boundaries will be retained and managed to maintain their existing height.

3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

The subject Site is located on the western side of Kerikeri Road approximately 1km to the north east of its junction with State Highway 10. Kerikeri Road is the main road into Kerikeri Township and forms part of the Twin Coast Discovery Highway (refer to [Figures 1 and 3](#)).

The Site forms part of a mixed use environment which has evolved, to some degree away from the primarily horticultural land use that was prevalent in previous decades⁴. To the south, between the roundabout and the Site entrance, Kerikeri Road has a character which is strongly influenced by the enclosure afforded by horticultural shelterbelts and other boundary and amenity-type plantings. The vegetated edge is punctuated by a mix of land uses including cafes, restaurants, motels, businesses and markets. The frontage of the Site is dominated by a linear gravel parking, contained on its roadside edge by a low hedge, and on its western side by low 'shed-like' retain buildings (refer to [photo 1](#)). To the south, the Packhouse Markets and associated car parking occupy the eastern edge of the road, whilst the Makana Chocolate Factory occupies its western edge. These activities impart a built and commercial character to the stretch of Kerikeri Road in the vicinity of the road edge of the Site.

Notwithstanding the intermittent presence of built form, the prevailing character along prolonged stretches of the road corridor is horticultural, with glimpsed orchard trees, or horticultural shelter structures glimpsed over the roadside vegetation.

A similar character is evident to the north of the Site (refer to [photo 2](#)), with the exception that, rather than the road corridor being intermittently enclosed by tall exotic shelterbelts, lower hedges and amenity planting predominate.

Geology, topography and hydrology

The prevailing horticultural land use is derived from the volcanic soils associated with the basaltic plateau on which the Kerikeri township occupies the eastern edge. The New Zealand Geology Web Map by GNS2 Science identifies the Site as being underlain by 'Kerikeri Volcanic Group Late Miocene basalt of Kaikohe - Bay of Islands Volcanic Field' described as 'Basalt lava, volcanic plugs and minor tuff.'

The Landcare Research Soils Map Viewer identifies the soils as Orthic Oxidic. These soils are a type of clayey soils that have formed as a result of weathering over extensive periods of time in volcanic ash or dark volcanic rock.

As can be seen from [Plate 1](#) below, the basaltic plateau is incised by watercourses which meander to the north east and drain into the Kerikeri River.

Whilst these incised watercourses are often vegetated with riparian native vegetation, they also accommodate large and mature eucalyptus. [Figure 4](#) illustrates how the subject Site adjoins, on its western side, the vegetated gully which accommodates a tributary of the Puketotara Stream. A shallow gully which contains a pond and a spring fed watercourse which drains into the aforementioned tributary defines the southern Site boundary. The north east – south westerly fall across the Site, which becomes more pronounced within the south western corner of the Site is a consequence of these hydrological features.

⁴ Rural Design. Ecological Assessment. Figures 9 and 10.



Plate 1: Geology

Landscape character

The Far North District Landscape Assessment (FNDLA) identifies the volcanic plateau as Unit T30 (Kerikeri Horticultural Area). It is described as reflecting the distribution of high quality soils and is manifest by the presence of a horticultural land use. The FNDLA notes that a combination of factors contribute to the clearly defined character of the unit. These include the ordered and rectilinear framework of shelterbelts which divide the rolling landform into grids, and within these grids that the precise lines of crop trees march across the terrain. The lush, glossy foliage of citrus is dominant amongst the crops and provides a rather tropical atmosphere to the area. The formality of the shelterbelts grids is countered by vegetation associated with the more informal and meandering watercourses.

The shelterbelt 'grids' assist with the integration of built form, and the FNDLA notes that '*....built development is not as intrusive as might be expected*'.

Despite the intensity of horticultural activity in the unit, built development is often not as intrusive as might be expected. A number of facets contribute including a tendency to site houses and implement sheds in the centre of properties, the relatively low profile of most buildings, extensive screening by shelterbelts, and amenity planting, and rolling terrain which provides opportunity to integrate built development more readily. Photos 3 and 4 illustrate how, within the subject Site, the individual is only occasionally aware of the presence of built form within adjoining properties. This enclosure is, in part a function of the near continuous shelterbelts that define the Site's boundaries.

Commercial activity along the main roadsides is perhaps the most prominent detracting element in this landscape, and one which seems to be escalating. A combination of more extensive roadside retail facilities (largely for selling produce) and more emphatic signs are primarily to blame

As is evident from Figures 1 and 3, the cadastral pattern reflects the rectilinear patterning imposed by shelter belt and other boundary plantings. In recent years, the size of land holdings has reduced such that pockets of settlement have developed that have assumed a grain similar to that derived from the vegetative patterns.

Immediately to the south of the subject Site, a cluster of smaller lots has established on the road frontage of between 2,000m² – 7,000m². To the north, along Maraenui Drive and Access Road, residential lots are between 3,000m² – 4,000m² in area. Whilst the latter forms a relatively isolated island of settlement within surrounding larger productive lots, the former extends as a more or less continuous landscape of rural residential settlement (with lots sizes predominantly between 2,000m² – 6,000m²) to the north west as far as Blue Gum Lane.

Cultural and associative

The archaeological assessment reveals that the first named inhabitants of the land around Kerikeri and Waipapa were Ngati Awa and Ngati Miru, whose lands extended from Te Waimate to the south to Rangitane to the north, and out to the coast, including Kerikeri itself. The traditional histories state that Ngati Miru and Te Wahinenui had four principal pa around Waimate, while Nga Puhi were concentrated southwest of Kaikohe around Pakinga Pa.

Battles at Rangitane and Te Ti saw Ngati Miru crushed and the hapu of Nga Puhi extend their domain into the northern Bay of Islands while the scattered remnants of Ngati Miru fled further afield to Matauri Bay, Whangaroa, the Hokianga and Waimamaku.

In the intervening years between the Nga Puhi conquest of the land around Kerikeri, and the arrival of the Anglican missionaries in 1819, Kororipo had become an important location, commanding the main route between the Bay of Islands and the interior, and in particular the large pa Okuratope near Waimate, which had also been taken from Ngati Miru.

The other major settlements in the area were up the Wairoa Stream and Okura River, east of Kerikeri-Kororipo. The village of Okouto is recorded on several maps and plans at the time, being located approximately three kilometres up the Wairoa Stream.

When Samuel Marsden arrived on-leave from Port Jackson with the aim of finding a more suitable location for New Zealand's second mission settlement, Kerikeri seemed perfect but after an initial period of importance, the centre of religious, economic and political gravity had shifted, first to Kororareka-Russell, and then to Auckland, and only James Kemp remained at the mission station by the 1850s. Nevertheless, the CMS missionary families had also purchased large land holdings in the area, including what would become the subject property but although the property is connected with landholdings of Church Mission Society families including the Williams, King and Bedgegoods, the focus of their occupation was well to the southwest at the Springbank homestead.

By 1895 most of the other land along the upper reaches of the Kerikeri and Puketotara Rivers had been sold to logging contractors Christie, Hows and Faithful. At this time, bullock teams were dragging logs from Pungaere, Puketotara and Okauhau to the north side of the Kerikeri Basin, to be rolled off the steep banks, although some were winched into the water beside the Stone Store. Subsequently, parts of what had been the Kemp family holdings along with other missionary and Crown Land was purchased by Thomas Williams and became part of the 10,000 acre Manako Estate. The notable exception was the Bedgegood/Springbank property surrounded on three sides by the southern extent of Manako.

The Site

As is typical of the landscape locally, the subject Site – as can be seen from [Figure 4](#) – is rectangular in shape. Although the landform is relatively level on the adjoining property to the north east, the terrain within the Site slopes to the south west and south, and toward a watercourse which is aligned parallel to the southern boundary.

The property is bisected by a south westerly trending spur, the crest of which is occupied by an existing dwelling and shed (within Lot 1 DP 154181 – refer to [photo 4](#)). To the east of the spur, the terrain has a gentle to moderate southerly gradient whilst to the west the gradient is steeper. Within this western portion, a shallow gully cuts to the south west and a combination of the landform and enclosing shelterbelt vegetation lends the landscape a fine grained, enclosed and isolated character (refer to [photos 6 and 7](#)). The existing dense shelterbelt on the southern Site boundary separates the viewer from the watercourse and pond beyond.

With the exception of the lawn and gardens on the slopes of the spur to the south of the existing dwelling, the Site is used for productive purposes, and is planted with a variety of citrus and other fruit trees. The roadside edge of the eastern ‘half’ is defined by a car park which serves an existing retail outlet, which sells produce from the property and other vegetable and fruit products (refer to [photo 1](#)).

The eastern half of the property also accommodates an existing dwelling approximately within its centre.

Within the more topographically varied western half, the horticultural plantings are separated by a steep slope on the south western flank of the spur which has been vegetated with a mix of native species and exotic weed species.

The Ecological Assessment describes the Site as being modified from its original ecosystem type. Originally the site would have likely been dominated by an ecosystem type representative of coastal taraire, tawa podocarp forest. It notes that very little indigenous vegetation remains on site and the boundaries are defined by shelterbelts made up of poplar (*Populus spp.*), gumtree (*Eucalyptus spp.*), bamboo, Japanese cedar, and sheoak. It also reports that exotic weed species including wild ginger (*Hedychium gardnerianum*), bangalow palm (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*), brush wattle (*Paraserianthes lophantha*), and monkey apple (*Syzygium smithii*) are scattered throughout the site, but with large concentrations existed just south of the southern bamboo shelterbelt, near the pond and stream system.

In addition to the weed species, some indigenous vegetation exists around the southwestern pond and stream system. This consists of scattered remnant stands of karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*), kohekohe (*Didymocheton spectabilis*) manuka and mahoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*), some sparse mamaku (*Cyathea medullaris*) and cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*) with some kawakawa (*Macropiper excelsum*), and kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*). Swamp sedge (*Carex virgata*) and cutty grass (*Carex lessoniana*) are present within the riparian margins of the stream system.

3.1 Statutory Matters

Northland Regional Policy Statement (2016)

The Northland Regional Policy Statement

The Northland Regional Policy Statement (NRPS) contains relevant objectives and policies in relation to the protection of natural features and landscapes. The site does not fall within the Outstanding Natural Landscape classification under the NRPS.

Natural Character – where it relates to the margins of its watercourses – is discussed further below.

The Far North District Plan (Operative Version)

The subject site is zoned Rural Production Zone under the Far North District Plan, the relevant objectives and policies related to landscape matters are outlined below:



Plate 2: ODP zoning. The pale green wash represents Rural production.

8.3.3 Objectives

- 8.3.3 *To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse and cumulative effects of activities on the rural environment.*
- 8.3.4 *To protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.*
- 8.3.5 *To protect outstanding natural features and landscapes.*
- 8.3.6 *To avoid actual and potential conflicts between land use activities in the rural environment.*
- 8.3.7 *To promote the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values of the rural environment to a level that is consistent with the productive intent of the zone.*
- 8.3.8
- 8.3.9
- 8.3.10 *To enable the activities compatible with the amenity values of rural areas and rural production activities to establish in the rural environment.*

8.8.4 Policies

- 8.1.1

- 8.1.2 *That activities be allowed to establish within the rural environment to the extent that any adverse effects of these activities are able to be avoided, remedied or mitigated and as a result the life supporting capacity of soils and ecosystems is safeguarded and rural productive activities are able to continue.*
- 8.1.3 *That any new infrastructure for development in rural areas be designed and operated in a way that safeguards the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems while protecting areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna, outstanding natural features and landscapes*
- 8.1.4 *That development which will maintain or enhance the amenity value of the rural environment and outstanding natural features and outstanding landscapes be enabled to locate in the rural environment.*
- 8.1.5 *.....*
- 8.1.6 *That areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna habitat be protected as an integral part of managing the use, development and protection of the natural and physical resources of the rural environment.*
- 8.1.7 *.....*
- 8.1.8 *That, when considering subdivision, use and development in the rural environment, the Council will have particular regard to ensuring that its intensity, scale and type is controlled to ensure that adverse effects on habitats (including freshwater habitats), outstanding natural features and landscapes on the amenity value of the rural environment, and where appropriate on natural character of the coastal environment, are avoided, remedied or mitigated. Consideration will further be given to the functional need for the activity to be within rural environment and the potential cumulative effects of non-farming activities*

The following rules are of relevance to this assessment:

8.6.5.1.1 Residential Intensity

Residential development shall be limited to one unit per 12ha of land

8.6.5.1.2 Sunlight

No part of any building shall project beyond a 45-degree recession plane as measured inwards from any point 2m vertically above ground level on any site boundary

8.6.5.1.4 Setback from boundaries

No building shall be erected within 10m of any site boundary

12.4.6.1.2 Fire risk to residential units

(a) Residential units shall be located at least 20m away from the drip line of any trees in a naturally occurring or deliberately planted area of scrub or shrubland, woodlot or forest;

(b) Any trees in a deliberately planted woodlot or forest shall be planted at least 20m away from any urban environment zone, Russell Township or Coastal Residential Zone boundary, excluding the replanting of plantation forests existing at July 2003

13.7.1.1 Minimum lot sizes

The Far North District Plan (Proposed Notified Version)

The subject site is zoned Horticultural Zone under the Far North District Plan. The relevant objectives and policies related to landscape matters are outlined below.

HZ Objectives

HZ-02 *The Horticulture zone enables horticultural and ancillary activities, while managing adverse environmental effects on site.*

HZ-03 *Land use and subdivision in the Horticulture zone:*

- a. *avoids land sterilisation that reduces the potential for highly productive land to be used for a horticulture activity;*
- b. *avoids land fragmentation that comprises the use of land for horticultural activities;*
- c. *avoids any reverse sensitivity effects that may constrain the effective and efficient operation of primary production activities;*
- d. *does not exacerbate any natural hazards;*
- e. *maintains the rural character and amenity of the zone*
- f. *is able to be serviced by on-site infrastructure.*

HZ Policies

HZ-P4 *Ensure residential activities are designed and located to avoid, or otherwise mitigate, reverse sensitivity effects on horticulture activities, including adverse effects associated with dust, noise, spray drift and potable water collection.*

HZ-P5 *Manage the subdivision of land in the Horticulture zone to:*

- avoid fragmentation that results in loss of highly productive land for use by horticulture and other farming activities;*
- b. *ensure the long-term viability of the highly productive land resource to undertake a range of horticulture uses;*
- c. *enable a suitable building platform for a future residential unit; and ensure there is provision of appropriate onsite infrastructure.*

HZ-P7 *Manage land use and subdivision to address the effects of the activity requiring resource consent, including (but not limited to) consideration of the following matters where relevant to the application:*

- a.;
- b.;
- c. *consistency with the scale and character of the rural environment;*
- d. *location, scale and design of buildings or structures;*
- e. *for subdivision or non-primary production activities:*
 - i. *scale and compatibility with rural activities;*
 - ii.;
 - iii.
- f. *at zone interfaces:*
 - i. *any setbacks, fencing, screening or landscaping required to address potential conflicts;*
 - ii. *the extent to which adverse effects on adjoining or surrounding sites are mitigated and internalised within the site as far as practicable;*
- g.;
- h.;
- i. *Any adverse effects on historic heritage and cultural values, natural features and landscapes or indigenous biodiversity;*
- j. *Any historical, spiritual, or cultural association held by tangata whenua, with regard to the matters set out in Policy TW-P6.*

3.2 Visual catchment

As previously described, the shelterbelt grid that defines the landscape structure of the Site and its context tends to limit expansive views across the landscape. Thus, when travelling along Kerikeri Road, the individual’s attention is contained within the road. Occasionally, glimpse views are facilitated through entrances into properties adjoining the road. Longer views are only possible where changes in level afford views over the containing vegetation. Thus, by virtue of the existing shelterbelts, the Site is visually contained along its northern, and western boundaries, and the bamboo shelterbelt and other vegetation on the southern boundary at its eastern end, but the falling contour within the south western portion of the Site affords some limited views from properties to the south (refer to photos 8, 9, 10 and 11) including from a dwelling within numbers 494A and buildings within 494B. The latter property contains the Kerikeri Park Lodge (refer to photos 3 and 4), which offers visitor accommodation⁵.



Plate 4. Kerikeri Park Lodge (red roofed building) and its relationship to the Site. The Site occupies mid-left of the image.

Views of the existing commercial premises on the Kerikeri Road frontage of the Site are possible from the road corridor.

4.0 IDENTIFIED LANDSCAPE VALUES

Landscape (experiential and shared and recognised) values

The Site is not identified as displaying elevated landscape or ecological values in the statutory documents but is imbued with a character that is values by the local community.

⁵ <https://www.kerikeriparklodge.com/gallery/>
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Identified in the Far North District Landscape Assessment as being within the Kerikeri Horticultural Area (Unit T30)⁶. The assessment lists a number of attributes which contribute to what it identifies as its ‘significance’. These are as follows:

- The strong spatial framework and backdrop provided by groves of eucalyptus through the unit;
- The orderly hierarchy of trimmed shelterbelts and rows of citrus crops in the landscape, and the contrast between these and the informality of the areas of eucalyptus, and;
- The relative inconspicuous presence of built development within the setting;

Natural character values

The ecological report concludes that the subject site contains a series of aquatic habitats that have likely been historically anthropogenically modified and states that while the site would have originally contained some natural drainage patterns these have been heavily, artificially manipulated through anthropogenic actions associated with the management of an intensive horticultural production operation. It determines that the ecological value for the onsite waterbodies present is considered to be low.

With respect to native vegetation, the report determines that native vegetation onsite is sparse and significantly inundated with pest weed species.

With respect to native avifauna, native herpetofauna and chiroptera it determines that the Site has a low ecological value.

Cultural and archaeological values

The Archeological Assessment comprised a desktop assessment and this determined that a field assessment was not warranted. It states that there are no archaeological sites or features in the project area and it is unlikely that unrecorded sites are present and would be affected by the proposal. As described previously, the property is connected with landholdings of Church Mission Society families including the Williams, King and Bedgegoods, but the focus of their occupation was well to the southwest at the Springbank homestead.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Landscape effects are described in the methodology, contained in [Appendix 2](#). In summary, landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape and includes visual amenity effects under the ambit of ‘experiential attributes’.

Change in a landscape does not, of itself, necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or natural character effect. Landscape is dynamic and is constantly changing over time in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways, these changes are both natural and human induced. What is important in managing landscape change is that adverse effects are avoided or sufficiently mitigated to ameliorate the effects of the change in land use. The aim is to provide a high amenity environment through appropriate design outcomes, including planting that can provide an adequate substitution for the currently experienced amenity.

Sections 5.1 – 5.4 below describe the anticipated change in each of the attributes that make up the concept of ‘landscape’. In section 5.5, the changes identified for each of the various attributes are considered as a whole, and the potential effect on landscape is assessed.

⁶ Although this coast isn’t identified as Outstanding landscape in the Operative Far North District Plan

5.1 Biophysical abiotic attributes

The key abiotic attributes of the site include its geology, topography and hydrology. The proposal seeks to minimise the changes to the topography and hydrology of the Site. To this end, the legibility of the spur and shallow gully landform will be retained. Earthworks will be necessitated for the construction of a detention pond within the south western corner of the Site, but earthworks for the construction of the proposed buildings and accesses will be minimal. In total it is anticipated that the earthworks will comprise some 3,193m³ of cut and fill over an area of 7,606m².

The existing watercourse and pond located on the southern boundary of the Site will not be affected by the proposal. Conversely, these features will be retained and enhanced (with respect to their biotic values).

Overall, it is considered that the abiotic attributes of the Site will be affected to a very small degree.

5.2 Biophysical biotic attributes

The biotic attributes of the Site are the living organisms which shape an ecosystem. The biotic attributes of the Site have been significantly modified as a result of clearance of the original native vegetation cover, the development of the Site for productive purposes, and the infestation of the non-production areas of the Site (boundaries, stream corridor and pond margins, and steep vegetated areas) with noxious weeds.

The works facilitated by the consent will result in a reduction of the vegetated area of the Site, but only with respect to the orchard vegetation. Overall, the proposal will result in an enhancement of the biotic values of the Site; including the control of noxious plant pests, the revegetation of the riparian margins and the creation of a framework of native vegetation.

Given the existing modification of the biotic attributes of the Site, the degraded ecological values, and the proposed enhancement measures, it is considered that the degree of change in the biotic values will be positive.

5.3 Experiential attributes

Experiential attributes comprise the interpretation of human experience of the landscape. This includes visible changes in the character of the landscape – its naturalness as well as its sense of wildness and remoteness including effects on natural darkness of the night sky.

The subject Site occupies a receiving environment that, whilst predominant horticultural in character, is also influenced by other land uses and elements.

Along Kerikeri Road enclosure is afforded by horticultural shelterbelts and other boundary and amenity-type plantings however, the vegetated edge is punctuated by a mix of land uses including cafes, restaurants, motels, businesses and markets. The frontage of the Site is dominated by a linear gravel parking, contained on its roadside edge by a low hedge, and on its western side by low 'shed-like' retain buildings. To the south, the Packhouse Markets and associated car parking occupy the eastern edge of the road, whilst the Makana Chocolate Factory occupies its western edge. These activities impart a strong built and commercial character to the section of Kerikeri Road associated with the road edge of the Site.

Notwithstanding the built character of the road frontage, the ordered and rectilinear framework of shelterbelts which divide the rolling landform into grids imparts the strongest influence on the landscape character, and within these grids the lush, glossy foliage of citrus provides a rather tropical atmosphere to the area.

There is some variation in this horticultural landscape character. Some 200m to the south, visitor accommodation is set

within a spacious – to some degree – manicured landscape, and to the south east, separated by some 200 – 300m, a cluster of residential lots, some 2,000m² in area contain dwellings set within established gardens.

Notwithstanding this variation in character, occupants of dwellings, and other observers who are afforded glimpse views into, or (by virtue of the rolling terrain), over the shelterbelt grid are afforded hints of built form, sorted by or integrated within the vegetation. The viewer is therefore aware of the presence of built form within adjoining properties and within the wider landscape but whilst there is an awareness of (sometimes proximate) built form, there is a sense of separation and privacy imparted by vegetation.

The proposal will facilitate the construction of twelve additional modestly sized dwellings within the subject Site. The built form will be of restricted height, and will have recessive and natural finishes to their external surfaces. Enclosure afforded by the boundary shelterbelt vegetation, and vegetation within the boundaries will ensure that only very restricted views will be possible into the Site, and limited views from the neighbouring properties situated some 200m to the south from the location of the proposed buildings.

Whilst photos 3 and 4 show the view from the eastern and western ‘clusters’ of built development toward these neighbours, the screening offered by the existing bamboo shelterbelt will be reduced under the proposal, with this feature being removed and replaced with native riparian revegetation. In addition, native riparian and tree planting is proposed around the margins of the proposed detention pond.

Photos 8 – 11 show the existing view from the Kerikeri Park Lodge to the Site and illustrate how, from some locations, the existing dwelling within Lot 1 DP 154181 is visible within the subject property.

A key difference between this application and a conventional subdivision is that – rather than the land being cut into regular sized lots, and each of those lots developed such that they assume a residential / gardenesque character – the proposal will result in the maintenance of a predominantly productive and unbuilt character. The proposed residences will be set within a vegetated framework of native and horticultural plantings. These will assist with the maintenance and strengthening of a visual buffer when viewed from the above mentioned neighbouring properties to the south, but will also serve to ensure that the unbuilt and productive character of the landscape is largely retained.

Although the increase in the presence of built elements within the Site will be evident from the neighbouring properties to the south, the outcome will be consistent with the existing landscape character whereby glimpses of buildings are a part of that character, when the buildings in question are spatially separated and softened by vegetation, and when those buildings do not detract from the sense of privacy.

For the above reasons it is considered that the change in the experiential attributes of the Site will be relatively small.

5.4 Landscape effects – Social, cultural and associative attributes

Social, cultural and associative values are linked with individual’s relationship with the landscape, their memories, the way they interact with and use the landscape and the historical evidence of that relationship.

It is understood that the proposed Site does not affect any specific archaeological sites. In addition, it is understood that consultation with Ngāti Rehia has commenced but is ongoing.

It is considered that the social, cultural, archaeological and associative attributes of the landscape of the Site will not be affected.

5.5 Summary of landscape effects

In summary, any landscape effects would be limited to an existing area that has been previously modified and these changes have resulted in a lowering of the sensitivity of the Site in terms of its abiotic, and biotic attributes. The proposal will result a negligible change in the abiotic attributes and a positive change in the biotic attributes.

The social, cultural, archaeological and associative attributes of the landscape of the Site will not be affected, and it is considered that the experiential attributes will only be affected to a small degree.

It is the opinion of the author that the proposal will not detract from the existing landscape character, rather it will maintain and in some respects enhance that character. The proposal will introduce a greater density of built form into the Site, but the built form will be integrated with a robust vegetative framework and will be largely screened from external locations.

Overall it is the opinion of the author that the potential adverse landscape effects will be low.

5.6 Visual amenity effects

The various individuals within the catchment have been identified above, and potentially affected groups are as follows⁷:

- Users of Kerikeri Road;
- Occupants of, or visitors to buildings in the adjoining properties to the south (Lots 1 DP 139481 and Lot 2 DP 418861);

Users of Kerikeri Road currently experience a varied landscape character when travelling along the road corridor. This includes sections where the corridor is largely enclosed by shelterbelts with limited views of built form, and other sections – such as that associated with the Site frontage – where the corridor is dominated by buildings of a commercial character.

The proposal will not result in a change in the built character of the road frontage. The existing retail building will be upgraded and extended, and views into the Site will be limited to the eastern half which will retain a horticultural character. The proposed design for the retail building is illustrated in the Architectural plans. The building will have a ‘clean’ and modern appearance, but will reference a rural vernacular, with materials such as cedar cladding, stone and rock gabion walls. The exterior will have a natural and muted character, and will be sympathetic to the mixed character of the road corridor, but allied to the character of the nearby Packhouse Markets.

Although the proposed building will represent a change with regard to the built character of the road corridor in the immediate vicinity of the Site, it is the opinion of the author that the potential adverse visual amenity effect experienced by these individuals will be neutral, and that the proposal will be consistent with the existing character of the road corridor.

The second viewer group – being occupants of, or visitors to buildings in the adjoining properties to the south (Lots 1 and 2 DP 139481) – are currently afforded glimpses into the Site over the existing vegetation, including the existing bamboo shelterbelt. These individuals are separated from the proposed building locations by some 200 – 300m.

⁷ The determination of the level of effect takes into account the sensitivity of different ‘types’ of receptor. Users of the road, or occupants of boats on the Inlet or on the Bay are transient viewers and have a lower sensitivity than occupants of dwellings.

The removal of the bamboo shelterbelt will increase the opportunity to gain views into the Site from these neighbouring properties, whilst the remaining existing vegetation, the proposed riparian and other plantings within the Site will maintain a vegetated fore and midground to these views.

The members of the viewer group will recognise that an increase in the presence of built elements within the Site has increased – with the existing dwelling within Lot 1 DP 154181 being replaced, and a twelve residential buildings being constructed, but the setting within which these buildings are integrated will have a vegetated character that is akin to the existing horticultural and subtropical vegetated character. Over time, the riparian and other plantings will develop so that the views into the Site will be gradually screened.

As described above, the outcome will be consistent with the existing landscape character whereby glimpses of buildings are a part of that character, when the buildings in question are spatially separated and softened by vegetation, and when those buildings do not detract from the sense of privacy. For this reason, and by virtue of the separation distance between these individuals and the proposed building locations it is the opinion of the author that the potential adverse visual amenity effect experienced by these individuals will be low, diminishing to neutral over a period of some 5 – 8 years.

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS

Appendix 1 of the Northland Regional Policy Statement lists natural character attributes as follows:

- a) Natural elements, processes and patterns;
- b) Biophysical, ecological and geomorphological aspects;
- c) Natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks;
- d) The natural movement of water and sediment;
- e) The natural darkness of the night sky;
- f) Places or areas that are wild or scenic; and
- g) Experiential attributes, including the sounds and smell of the sea; and their context or setting.

Of the above, natural elements, processes and patterns, biophysical, ecological and geomorphological aspects, natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks and the natural movement of water and sediment fall into the previously discussed biophysical (biotic and abiotic) categories.

The natural darkness of the night sky, places or areas that are wild or scenic and experiential attributes, and their context or setting have been previously addressed under experiential attributes.

In summary therefore, the proposal will result a small change in the abiotic and a positive change in the biotic attributes. It has been established that the subject Site has been significantly modified from its natural state.

The change facilitated by the application will be visually screened from all but neighbouring properties to the south.

Overall it is considered that the adverse natural character effects of the proposal will be slightly positive in the local context given the proposed weed control and the enhancement of the riparian margins of the watercourse.

7.0 AFFECT ON THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The objectives and policies of the Regional Policy Statement focus on the protection and enhancement of landscape and natural character values. These cascade down to the Rural Production Zone.

The objectives and policies for this latter Zone seek to avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse and cumulative effects of activities on the rural environment and to protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna. They also seek to promote the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values of the rural environment to a level that is consistent with the productive intent of the zone and to enable the activities compatible with the amenity values of rural areas and rural production activities to establish in the rural environment.

The proposal seeks to provide for the construction of twelve additional residential units within the Site, and two clusters, whilst the balance of the Site is maintained and managed to enhance its natural and ecological values, and for productive purposes. Although the north western part of the Site will assume a built and residential character, this will be integrated and contained by the vegetated / productive balance area. The design and exterior finishes of the proposed buildings are detailed in the Architectural plans, and the design reflects the 'green design' ethos underpinning the development. The exterior finishes for the buildings will be recessive and natural in appearance.

The visibility of the development will be largely internalized, with views only possible from neighbouring properties to the south. Viewed from these locations, the elements of the development will be visible but will be integrated into the vegetated setting such that the Site will present a vegetated character that is akin to the existing horticultural and subtropical vegetated character. Over time, the riparian and other plantings will develop so that the views into the Site will be gradually screened.

Whilst noting that the Site does not contain any areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna, the proposal will include weed control and the enhancement of a pond and watercourse on the southern Site boundary. This will benefit the ecological and landscape values of the Site.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal will promote the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values of the rural environment to a level that is consistent with the productive intent of the zone and to enable the activities compatible with the amenity values of rural areas and rural production activities to establish in the rural environment.

The status of the application is assessed as being a non-complying activity under the ODP, since it does not comply with the following rules:

8.6.5.1.1 Residential Intensity

Residential development shall be limited to one unit per 12ha of land

8.6.5.1.2 Sunlight

No part of any building shall project beyond a 45-degree recession plane as measured inwards from any point 2m vertically above ground level on any site boundary

8.6.5.1.4 Setback from boundaries

No building shall be erected within 10m of any site boundary

12.4.6.1.2 Fire risk to residential units

(a) Residential units shall be located at least 20m away from the drip line of any trees in a naturally occurring or deliberately planted area of scrub or shrubland, woodlot or forest;

(b) Any trees in a deliberately planted woodlot or forest shall be planted at least 20m away from any urban environment zone, Russell Township or Coastal Residential Zone boundary, excluding the replanting of plantation forests existing at July 2003

13.7.1.1 Minimum lot sizes

The proposed subdivision will be a comprehensively designed development which will be integrated into a working orchard. The scale, typology and exterior finishes of the future buildings will be of a rural character, and will be recessive within the landscape. Further, the buildings will be set 'within' the orchard, and so will be visually contained.

The proposal differs from a 'standard' subdivision with respect to its treatment of the building curtilages and landscape setting. The proposal will create a landscape setting that – rather than comprising a collection of disparate and individual lots, each treated differently and therefore imparting the impression of fragmentation – will be comprehensively designed such that it will unify the development and mitigate the effects arising from non-compliance with 8.6.5.1.1 Residential Intensity, and 13.7.1.1 Minimum lot sizes.

With regard to 8.6.5.1.2 Sunlight and 8.6.5.1.4 Setback from boundaries, the development, where it adjoins those boundaries where the rules are not met, is visually contained by vegetation with no views or potential for shading on neighbouring properties.

Turning to 12.4.6.1.2 Fire risk to residential units, the vegetation that will be in close proximity to the proposed dwellings will be – primarily – orchard trees. As 'specimen' trees planted in maintained grass areas, this vegetation will have a low fire risk due to the lack of ground level combustible material. In addition, water storage tanks are proposed for firefighting purposes.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Kerikeri Eco-Community seeks resource consent to construct 12 additional residential units and associated accessways, walkways and offsite parking facilities within two existing allotments on a 4.3ha property. The subject site is a horticultural growing unit best described as an orchard. The property is located within the rural production zone.

The Site forms part of a mixed use environment which has evolved, to some degree away from the primarily horticultural land use that was prevalent in previous decades. To the south, between the roundabout and the Site entrance, Kerikeri Road has a character which is strongly influenced by the enclosure afforded by horticultural shelterbelts and other boundary and amenity-type plantings. The vegetated edge is punctuated by a mix of land uses including cafes, restaurants, motels, businesses and markets. The frontage of the Site is dominated by a linear gravel parking, contained on its roadside edge by a low hedge, and on its western side by low 'shed-like' retain buildings. Across the road to the south east, the Packhouse Markets and associated car parking occupy the eastern edge of the road, whilst the Makana Chocolate Factory occupies its western edge. These activities impart a built and commercial character to the stretch of Kerikeri Road in the vicinity of the road edge of the Site.

Notwithstanding the intermittent presence of built form, the prevailing character along prolonged stretches of the road corridor is horticultural, with glimpsed orchard trees, or horticultural shelter structures glimpsed over the roadside vegetation.

The Site is largely enclosed by vegetation – principally shelter belts on its northern, western and southern boundaries.

The proposal will facilitate the construction of twelve additional modestly sized dwellings within the subject Site. The built form will be of restricted height, and will have recessive and natural finishes to their external surfaces. Enclosure afforded by the boundary shelterbelt vegetation, and vegetation within the boundaries will ensure that only very restricted views will be possible into the Site, and limited views from the neighbouring properties situated some 200m to the south from the location of the proposed buildings.

It is the opinion of the author that the resulting landscape and natural character effect of the proposal will be low adverse,

and no greater than the level of effect generated by the existing situation. The potential adverse visual amenity effect will be (at most) low for all individuals.

The proposal will not non comply with a number of the ODP rules where they are of relevance to this assessment however, the unique character of the proposal will ensure that the intent of the rules is complied with. Similarly, the proposal will – by virtue of its comprehensive approach to subdivision – be consistent with the direction and intent of the relevant objectives and policies of the statutory instruments where they apply to the scope of this report, and the proposal is considered to be appropriate from a landscape and visual perspective.

Simon Cocker



APPENDIX 1: Figures

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)

s 9(2)(a)