IRONGATE INDUSTRIAL REZONING AREA

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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FOR

HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL

FINAL DRAFT

May 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

This assessment of landscape and visual effects relates to a proposed rezoning of approximately 85 ha from Plains Zone to Industrial 2.

This report does not consider matters other than those relating to landscape. Specifically geotechnical, archaeological, ecological, cultural, engineering and planning issues are considered separately

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of undertaking this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is to:

- identify and describe the existing landscape character of the area surrounding the proposed Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area;
- investigate the likely changes to the character or quality of the surrounding landscape / visual catchment area, and
- discuss resultant changes in visual amenity for viewers as a result of the proposed rezoning

The nature and extent of these effects will be influenced by the context within which the proposal is viewed, landscape changes within the catchment area (pattern and scale, landform, landcover, natural features), amenity values of the new landscape and visibility of the proposal from the surrounding visual catchment.

1.3 Background of Visual Assessment

Hastings District Council proposes to rezone an area of land located on Maraekakaho and Irongate Roads from Plains Zone to Industrial 2. The Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area (IIRA) was identified by Hastings District Council in 2003 as a suitable area of land capable of satisfying an increasing demand for industrial land within the Hastings area. Over the last 5 years the application site has been further developed into the proposal presented in this report.

In 2004 a landscape strategy was commissioned to address landscape amenity issues for three proposed future industrial zones within the Hastings District. It should be noted that the layout of the Irongate Rezoning Area upon which this report was based has evolved since it was written in 2004, and now incorporates a much larger land area. Council sought to develop these industrial areas to a higher level of amenity by means of well planned, Council maintained landscaping and design features.

The Landscape Strategy Report recommended key boundary treatments and possible internal landscape treatments for three industrial areas, including the Irongate Industrial Zone. Specific consideration was given to Maraekakaho Road as it was identified as being an important transit route into, and out of, the city of Hastings. The objective of these treatments was to retain the overall character of the roadway as a key link into and out of Hastings.

Maraekakaho Road was also identified in a separate Council document (prepared by the Landmarks Commission) entitled 'Hastings and Surrounds Master plan'. This master plan identifies Maraekakaho Road as an important traffic route into, and out of, the city of Hastings.

2.0 LANDSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

For the purpose of undertaking a visibility survey a simple site assessment and photographic survey was undertaken in May 2008 from various vantage points around the application site. The camera used for this visibility survey was a Sony Handycam (Model DCR-PC109E Pal). Features include 'Mega Pixel' capacity, and 'Super Steady Shot'. Maximum digital zoom on this camera is 120 x.

The visibility survey forms the basis of this assessment and assesses the likely visual effects of proposed buildings, structures, and associated industrial activity within the IIRA on the existing landscape character.

This survey involved visiting the subject site, and driving around the visual catchment area - the area immediately surrounding the subject from which views of the proposed development can be obtained. Given the flat topography and good visibility across the

application site, a site walkover was not considered necessary at this stage. Publicly accessible locations included vantage points along Maraekakaho Road, Irongate Road, Stock Road, and York Road.

Photos were taken from two adjacent properties (Van den Berk Property to the north and Grant Property to the south of the site). In order to verify the findings of this report, two additional site visits were undertaken within 7 days of the initial visit.

2.1 Landscape Description

The assessment and evaluation of visual effects is a two part process. The first stage involves describing the landscape character - where 'character' refers to a combination of traits that distinguish any particular area of land. Describing 'landscape character' is essentially objective, in that it describes the inter relationship of landscape elements as they occur in a particular place. The definition of some key terms have been provided as these form the basis for the assessment methodology:

- Naturalness - the degree to which the landscape reflects the pre human ecosystem, biodiversity, vitality of habitat, and landform
- Coherence - visual and aesthetic coherence is the degree to which the landuse and development patterns relate to the underlying landform, natural drainage systems and vegetation patterns
- Uniqueness - this is the rarity value or dramatic expression of a specific landscape, pattern or feature. Outstanding landscapes have a high degree of one or all of the above.

2.2 Landscape Evaluation and Interpretation

The assessment of visual effects involves identifying and evaluating the visual impact of a development on the surrounding 'visual catchment area'. This stage analyses the inherent characteristics of the site and evaluates the relative importance of particular landscape qualities, features, patterns and processes. The evaluation and landscape interpretation process is largely subjective and embodies contemplative values such as amenity values / aesthetics, memorability, and so on.

2.3 Definition of "Landscape"

'Landscape' is the visible expression of physical, biological, and cultural processes and reflects the cumulative effects of these processes as they occur in a particular place. The significance of the physical landscape is how it is perceived and what it means to people. The definition of landscape is further expanded upon in the 1994 Planning Tribunal decision (*N. W114/94*), where the Judge wrote:

> *"So landscape is not restricted to the visual resource. It is both physical and perceptual. The physical resource in any area is expressed in the landscape. In addition, each area is perceived and experienced. The values people place on these areas are subjective, although many are widely shared, supported by research or already formally recognised by the community … Landscape as a human experience combines both aesthetic values and other values which humans attribute to landscape. Used in this sense landscape is not only the physical appearance of land, but also the subjective baggage each person carries with them – what they know, what they imagine and how they are disposed"*

It is on these definitions of "landscape" that the following Landscape Visual Impact Assessment is based.

2.4 Natural Character[1]

Under the RMA, 'natural character' is a phrase specific to section 6(a), which has not been defined in legislation but has been interpreted in case law over the years. Although s.6 (a) applies specifically to the coastal, lake and river environment, the term is also used and accepted in terms of landscapes generally.

'Natural character' differs from rural character. It is the expression of natural processes, and covers the full range from pristine natural landscapes to highly modified landscapes that still contain some natural features and processes. For a landscape to have a high degree of natural character, natural elements and patterns must predominate. Rural landscapes are *inhabited landscapes* – not to be confused with

[1] *'The Impact of Rural Subdivision on Landscape Values' Ministry for the Environment, 2000*

wilderness or natural landscapes (where human presence is minimally present or absent).

The area within which the application site is located is considered to be a production landscape which is more natural when compared to the built form, but is not an area which exhibits any of the characteristics required of sites deemed to have high natural character.

Rural landscapes are, by their nature, strongly influenced by the type of rural activity and the intensity of associated settlement. Natural elements generally remain strongly evident but are overlaid by patterns and processes of human activity. Although much of the IIRA and surrounding landscape has been modified by human patterns and processes, natural elements such as the Irongate Stream do exist within this area, and should be preserved and enhanced wherever possible.

Amenity values can potentially be adversely affected by a new development when there is disharmony between what currently exists and what is being proposed. This mindset is usually assessed in terms of:

- **contrast** between the visual structure of the existing landscape and that of the proposed development - often described in terms of form, Linearity, mass / density, colour / reflectivity, and so on; and / or
- the **negative visual impact**, if any, that the proposed development will have on its surroundings.

This Landscape Evaluation has been undertaken using the following criteria:

1. Natural Elements
2. Landuse Patterns
3. Visibility and Visual Absorption Capacity

Visibility is a measure of how widely a place or feature can be seen from its surroundings. A secluded, rarely visited valley system would have low visibility, whereas a prominent bluff face close to town and major transport routes would have very high visibility.

Visual absorption capacity (VAC) is a more complex concept determined by combining landscape character and human perception. It addresses the capability an area, or landscape, has for absorbing change without significantly altering its existing positive visual qualities.

Most new development introduces artificial Lines, patterns, textures, and colours into the landscape. These are likely to contrast with soft organic / natural patterns or areas of little development. Consequently a highly modified landscape will usually have a higher capacity for visually absorbing further development than a natural landscape.

Elements which contribute to Visual Absorption Capacity include vegetation distribution within the viewshed; existing houses, buildings and structures, and visual clutter generated by contrasting and competing elements within the surrounding area

2.5 Site Description and Statutory Context

The Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area (IIRA) is situated 1.5 kilometers north of the Longlands Road / Maraekakaho Road roundabout, and encompasses 85 hectares of mixed use rural and 'dry' industrial land. This land is located within the 'Plains Zone', however within the proposed application site there are a number of existing rural based manufacturing and commercial operations.

The application site straddles an existing Industrial 6 (I.6) Zone, which is located at the heart of the rezoning area. It is not yet confirmed whether the proposed IIRA will incorporate the existing I.6 zone as part of the rezoning proposal. Industrial activities within this zone include Tumu Timber processing merchants, Farmers Transport, Walmsley's and Greenways Landscape and Building Supplies.

The land proposed for industrial rezoning is bisected by Maraekakaho Road, a main arterial route which runs the entire length of the application site. A second major transport route is also proposed for this area. Transit New Zealand has recently lodged an application to extend the expressway from the end of York Road to the Maraekakaho / Longlands Road roundabout. The proposed alignment of this extension bounds the

western perimeter of the proposed IIRA and will provide additional viewing opportunities into the IIRA.

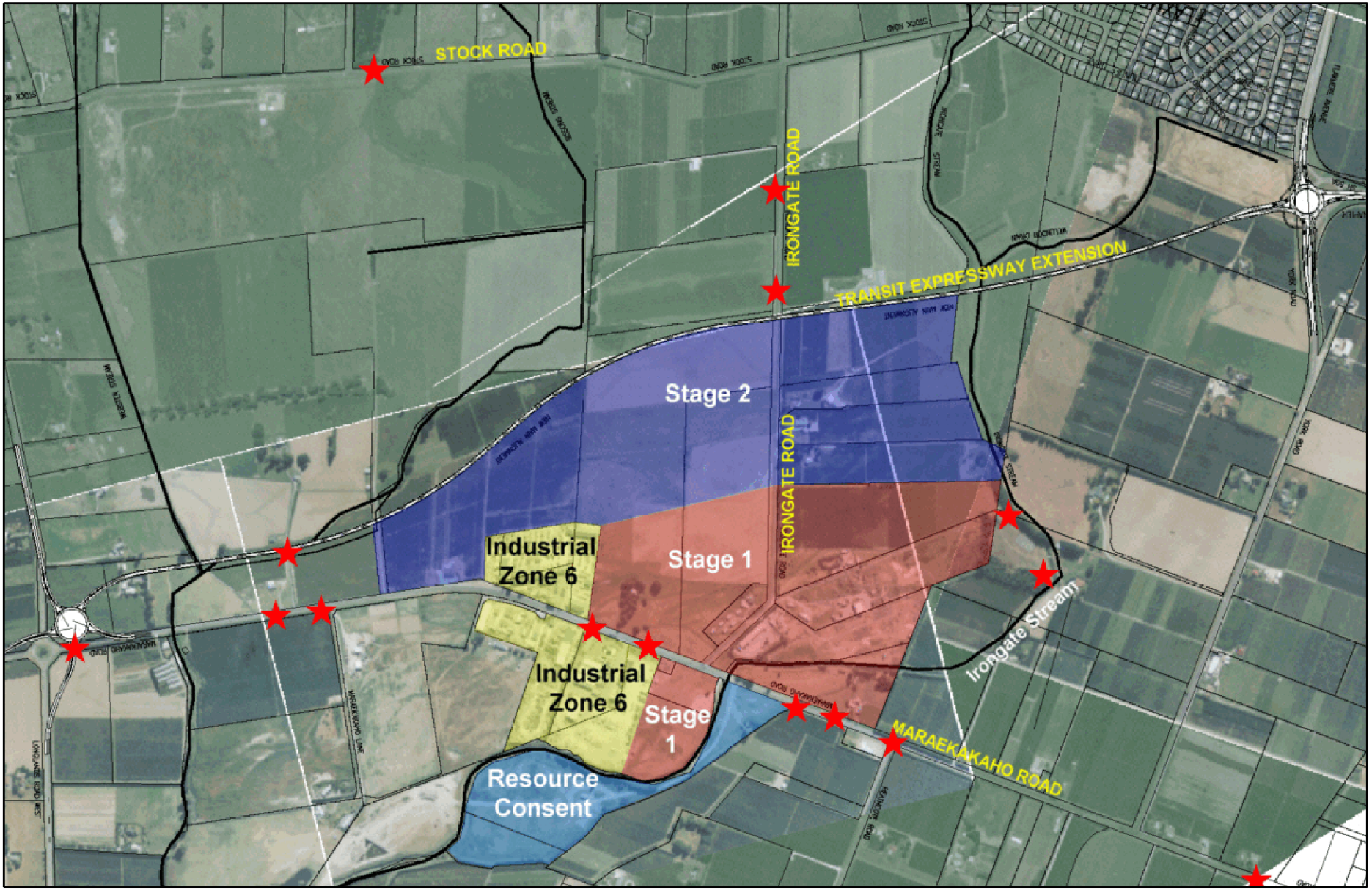
The expressway is designed to divert heavy vehicles away from the centre of town, and will effectively become a bypass for traffic between CHB and Napier City.

Maraekakaho Road provides a link between Central Hawke's Bay (CHB) and Stortford Lodge / the Hawke's Bay Hospital, as well as the Omahu Road industrial sector and Napier. Because of its location through the centre of the site, Maraekakaho Road is considered to be one of the key viewing audiences of the IIRA.

Development of the proposed IIRA is to be undertaken in two stages. Stage One (40 hectares) is situated immediately to the north and northwest of the existing I.6 zone. Already present within the proposed boundaries of stage one are a number of existing commercial and industrial operations. These operations are within the existing Plains zone but have resource consent approval. They include Stephenson's Transport, Total Span Trucking Depot, an engineering operation, a firewood storage operation, and a timber joinery business.

Within the 40 hectare area of Stage One is a smaller 4 hectare block, located on the opposite side of Maraekakaho Road. This part of the application site is bound by existing industrial activity (to the south), and by land which has recently been approved Resource Consent for future specific industrial activities (to the north), including Ballance Fertiliser storage, a Lifestyle Cottages operation, and sale yards.

Stage Two (45 hectares) is situated to the northwest of Stage One and extends to meet the proposed Transit Expressway Extension - earmarked for construction within the next 5 years. Stage Two comprises predominantly rural land, with little existing commercial activity within it.



Irongate Industrial Rezone Area (Vantage Point Locations, Adjacent Roads and Irongate Stream)

2.6 The Proposed Development

The proposal seeks approval to rezone approximately 85 ha from Plains Zone to Industrial 2 (I.2). I.2 zones are the District's general industrial zone. This zoning is applied to all major industrial nodes within the District, such as Tomoana, Whakatu, Omahu Road, and in the King Street / Nelson Street areas.

The purpose of the Plan Change is to provide a resource management framework of controls for the development of the land for dry industrial activities.

The detail and layout of the proposed new zoning has not yet been determined, however this assessment identifies a number of matters which should be considered.

3.0 LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

The land proposed for the industrial rezoning is an 85 hectare area (including stages one and two). It is located at the interface between urban / commercial and rural activities. Human induced patterns and processes are key components underpinning the character of this landscape.

The landscape unit within which the proposed IIRA is located is deemed to be a 'peri-urban' landscape. 'Peri-urban' is used to describe areas that are in transition between strictly rural and urban landscapes. These areas are often the immediate urban : rural interface, and are places where people are key components of the environment. The majority of these areas are on the fringe of established urban areas[2], as is the case with the Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area (IIRA).

3.1 Landuse Patterns

The predominantly flat nature of the application site and surrounding landscape means that it is suitable for a wide range of rural and commercial based activities. Existing landuse patterns reflect this opportunity.

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[2] *"Managing Change in Paradise - Sustainable Development in Peri-urban Areas" Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. 2001*

The proposed IIRA straddles an existing Industrial 6 Zone (I.6) which is currently bound by predominantly rural activity. The I.6 zone sits astride a section of Maraekakaho Road. Existing landuses within this zone include rural based manufacturing industry and various transport operations.

Much of the surrounding landscape is overlaid with patterns typical of rural landuse activities - sheep farming, stock fences, fruit orchards, packhouses, shelter belts, and 'lifestyle blocks'. The culmination of these activities creates a compartmentalized, strongly patterned landscape.

Although designated 'Plains' zone, there are a number of existing manufacturing and rural industrial based operations within the proposed IIRA. These include a firewood storage operation, various transport operations, a timber joinery business, a cottage manufacturer, a kitset garage business, as well as other smaller commercial businesses.

There are a number of dwellings located in the wider landscape area, all of which are some distance away from the application site. The Grant property, an historic sheep farming operation, is situated to the southwest of the application site. This comprises a number of attractive farm buildings, as well as some mature stands of large scale trees. The quaint farm cottage set up on an old river terrace, the historic woolshed and the adjacent sheep yards form a quintessential Hawkes Bay rural landscape, and it is considered vital that the picturesque quality of this property be preserved.

Two additional dwellings are located within the immediate vicinity of the IIRA, to the north. Both are rural in character and have established woodlot or shelter belt plantings between the dwellings and the application site.

3.2 Natural Character

The natural character of this area is described in relation to the broader landscape within which the application site is located, and to the site itself.

The application site is located on the south western extremity of the Hastings city limits, within the expansive plains of the "Heretaunga Basin". The Heretaunga Basin was formed by the Ngaruroro River, which over time created a series of river terraces

Key landscape features surrounding this basin are Te Mata Peak and Mt Erin to the east, and the distant peaks of the Ruahine Ranges, to the west. The old river terraces are still evident in some parts of the plains zone - although the overall impression of this landscape is one of flat, open plains, with expansive rural outlooks across adjacent farmland.

The topography of the site and surrounding area is slightly undulating in parts, with occasional depressions and changes in contour throughout the area. Existing watercourses, such as the Sisson and Irongate Streams, run through this landscape. Natural elements within this area remain evident, however these are overlaid and modified by patterns and processes of human activity.

The application site is not a landscape considered to be unique, particularly in the context of the broader area.

3.2.1 Vegetation Patterns

Vegetation in the broader landscape is generally limited to shelter and woodlot plantings (predominantly Eucalyptus, pine and poplar species), as well as amenity plantings of varying ages clustered along boundary lines and existing dwellings. A significant stand of mature gum trees is situated on the western side of the Grant Homestead. These trees have a prominent visual presence in this predominantly flat landscape, particularly from locations to the west of the application site.

Other than the Grant gum trees, the landscape is essentially devoid of significant tracts of vegetation. The IIRA site itself does not contain any natural vegetation systems representative of pre human ecosystems, although it does contain some perimeter shelter plantings along existing cadastral boundaries which are typical of vegetation patterns in the broader landscape.

4.0 SITE VISIBILITY - VISUAL CATCHMENT AREA AND VIEWING AUDIENCES

In order for change to be recognised within a landscape, the development must be visible from publicly accessible vantage-points. To determine visibility matters it is necessary to undertake a vantage point assessment which is based on key viewing audiences. When assessing the visibility of a site it is important to note whether the primary viewing audience/s will be transient (that is from a vehicle) or stationary (such as from an adjacent property).

Key viewing audiences exposed to views of the application site are predominantly transient. These considered to be are:

- Travelers on Maraekakaho Road
- Travelers on Irongate Road (west)
- Travelers on the proposed Transit Expressway Extension
- Travelers on Stock Road, and
- Neighbouring properties (stationary)

4.1 Subject Site Visual Catchment Area

A 'visual catchment' is the area within which views of the application site can be obtained. A vantage point assessment was conducted from a number of viewpoints around the IIRA to assess both the visibility of the site from surrounding areas, and the likely visual impact of the proposed buildings on the existing landscape character.

Because of the flat topography of the landscape, views into the application site from properties outside of the IIRA are often obstructed by foreground activity, namely shelter belts, woodlot and amenity plantings. This assists in limiting the visibility of the development from more distant locations.

The site is especially visible from two existing locations, Maraekakaho Road and the eastern end of Irongate Road. It is proposed that the eastern end Irongate Road will become part of the rezoned area, and as such no specific vantage point assessment was undertaken from this end of Irongate Road.

Additional publicly accessible viewing opportunities are from Stock Road (to the west of the IIRA) and from the western end of Irongate Road. These viewsheds are likely to change somewhat with the introduction of the expressway extension into this landscape, which because of this introduction of built elements associated with the expressway increase the visual absorption capacity of the wider landscape, and subsequently the application site.

The rezoning of the Irongate application site into Industrial 2 is a two stage process. It is recommended that interim planting of shelterbelts be undertaken on the western boundary of Stage 1 so as to screen internal buildings and structures from adjacent landowners, travelers on Stock Road and Irongate Road.

When commencing development within Stage 2 of the IIRA, it is recommended that a 20m landscape setback be provided along the western 'outer perimeter' boundary. Landscape plantings within this setback should reflect those recommended by OPUS International, for alongside the Sisson Drain (to the south of this area), as well as the surrounding area. It is recommended that Eucalyptus trees be incorporated as one of the specimen trees within the setback planting, to provide the necessary scale for this area and as a visual connection with the existing stand of mature gums behind the Grant Homestead.

4.1.1 The Expressway Extension

The visibility of the IIRA from the expressway extension will be considerable, due to its location immediately adjacent to the application site. Vehicles traveling along this new roadway will be exposed to the entire western boundary of stage 2 of the IIRA. However, the 20 meter landscape setback proposed as part of this report will considerably reduce the visibility of the IIRA from this roadway, while enhancing the amenity of this transport corridor.

4.1.2 Irongate and Stock Roads

Irongate and Stock Roads provide viewing opportunities of the application site, from the west. Irongate Road is an existing 'through road' which links Maraekakaho Road and

Stock Road. Stock Road itself provides an alternative route between Flaxmere and Bridge Pa / State Highway 50. If the proposed expressway extension alignment is approved, the eastern end of Irongate Road will become a 'no exit' service road within the IIRA, while the western end will remain a rural road.

This viewshed, along Stock Road and Irongate Road, will be considerably modified from that currently experienced following the construction of the expressway extension. The proposed road corridor will introduce a strong urban element into the landscape, thereby increasing the visual absorption capacity of the foreground of the viewshed.

Te Mata Peak and Mt Erin form the backdrop for this viewshed, and provide necessary scale against which to view the proposed IIRA buildings and structures. This backdrop increases the visual absorption capacity of the viewshed by providing a dark mass against which the large scale buildings will be situated.

Existing large scale trees (Oak trees, Poplars, Gums) and rural shelter belts in the foreground of this viewshed also help to reduce the visibility of future large scale buildings, by flanking the IIRA and providing strong vertical elements of similar scale within an otherwise flat landscape.

4.1.3 Other Locations

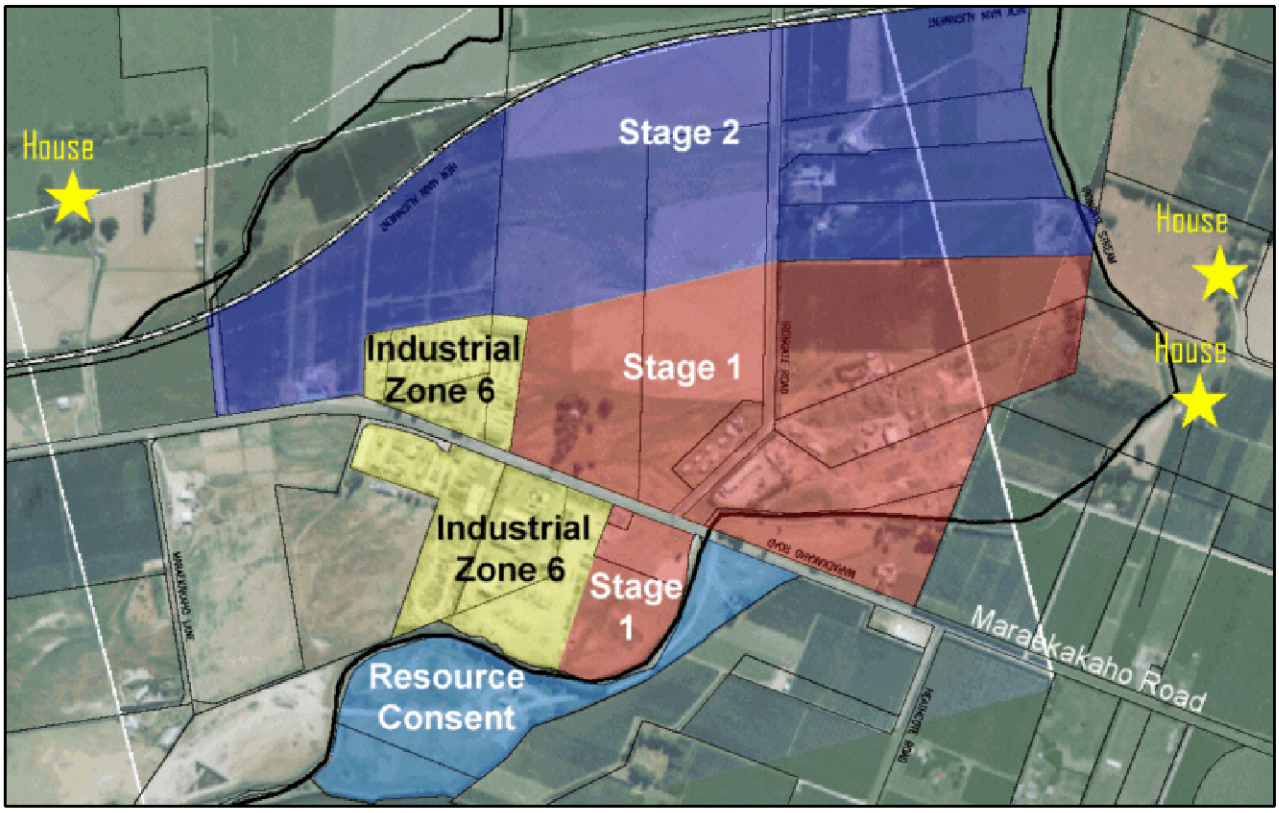
Views to the IIRA from locations west of the site will be across the proposed expressway extension and somewhat distant. Because of the application sites proximity to other light industrial activities, and the solid backdrop of Te Mata Peak and Mt Erin, the VAC of this landscape viewshed is considered to be moderate.

View of proposed IIRA from Stock Road, with Te Mata Peak and Mt Erin Behind

View of proposed IIRA from Mid Way along Irongate Road

The introduction of additional warehouses, industrial buildings and associated structures into this landscape will be visible, however their existence is not considered out of character of the existing landscape, and are not considered to greatly alter the positive visual qualities of this location.

4.1.4 Adjacent Landowners



Location of Adjacent Dwellings

Three dwellings are considered to be potentially effected by the rezoning of the IIRA site. These are the Van den Berk and the Nairn properties (to the north of the application site), and the Grant property (located on the southern side of the application site).

It is recommended that shelterbelts consistent with those already present in this landscape, be planted along the northern and southern perimeter boundary of the IIRA. These would screen adjacent properties (specifically the Nairn, Van Den Berk and Grant

View from Van den Berk Property to New Warehouse on Adjacent Land

Panoramic View of Existing Curved Shelter Belt between the Nairn House and IIRA

properties) from future development within the IIRA site, while retaining the rural qualities of this landscape unit. (See Appendix 2 for location of shelterbelt treatments).

4.1.4.1 Van den Berk & Nairn Properties

Both of these properties are located on the northern side of the application site, with access from York Road. In each case the dwellings are located on the opposite side of the Irongate Stream, and are primarily orientated towards the north / northwest.

Both the Van den Berk property and the Nairn property have mature plantings of woodlot or shelterbelt plantings, respectively, between the dwellings and the IIRA site. This existing vegetation will assist in reducing the visibility of the application site from these locations.

A new finger jointing timber warehouse is currently under construction within the proposed IIRA site. This is on private land and follows resource consent approval. The scale and visibility of this building gives a good indication as to what will be visible from properties located on the northern side of the IIRA - namely buildings / warehouses situated along the northern boundaries of the proposed industrial zone.

4.1.4.2 Grant Property

This property is located to the south of the IIRA, with access off Maraekakaho Road.

View from Grant driveway across their paddock to the existing I.6 zone

Views to the application site from the Grant property are across their own farm paddocks and are subsequently somewhat distant from internal dwellings and buildings. The flat topography of this landscape, however, means that future buildings within the IIRA site will be visible from this vantage point.

View from Southern end of Maraekakaho Road (between IIRA and Longlands / Maraekakaho Road Roundabout)

The proposed shelterbelt treatmetn along the southern periemter of the IIRA would reduce the visibility of the majority of internal buildings from this location, and reflect the rural context of the surrounding landscape.

4.2 Identification and Evaluation of Landscape Units

Maraekakaho Road contains four specific 'landscape units' (LU). A landscape unit is a landscape area that displays a 'sameness' and consistent landscape character. This character is derived from the combination of land uses, vegetation cover, and topography.

A. Stortford Lodge - This landscape unit comprises medium density commercial and residential activity. It is characterised by a combination of large scale commercial buildings and offices, medium density residential housing, street trees, residential footpaths, and overhead power Lines.

The amenity of this landscape unit relies on the single row of street trees planted on the western side of the roadway, which counter balance the height of the 33 kV overhead power Lines on the opposite side of the road.

Stortford Lodge / Commercial Sector


Residential End of Landscape LU. A

(Strong visual elements are street trees and power lines)

B. **The Rural / Roadside Stall Area** - LU.B is distinguished by a number of small scale, rural activities such as orchards, commercial vegetable growing operations, roadside stalls, along with some rural residential properties.

Residential meets Rural at the beginning of LU. B

Typical landscape Elements of LU. B

(shelter belts, roadside stalls, power lines)

Landuse and intensity of development in this unit is typical of a peri-urban area, and provides a buffer between existing residential / commercial activity at Stortford Lodge and the industrial activity operating within the I.6 zone.

The amenity of this landscape unit is greatly influenced by the presence of cultural elements within the viewshed, such as the quaint roadside stalls and their associated signage. The linearity and scale of various shelterbelts, and the diverse collection of smaller scale lifestyle blocks is also characteristic of this unit.

It is only possible to see the proposed IIRA from the southern end of this landscape unit. Future streetscape treatments within the IIRA would enhance the amenity of this landscape unit.

C. The Existing Industrial 6 Zone. This landscape unit is located between the southern boundary of the existing I.6 zone and the intersection of Heathcote and Maraekakaho Road to the north. The RSPCA buildings mark the transition between rural and commercial / industrial landuses in this locality. This landscape unit is characterised by comparatively tall warehouses and large scale buildings, as well as areas of open space containing stockpiles of timber pallets, freight containers, truck depots and carparks.

RSPCA at the transition between LU.B and LU.C)

The existing Industrial 6 zone provides a 'natural area of progression' for future rezoning or resource consent approval for landuse changes, for land to the north of the I.6 zone. The application site encompasses land immediately north and west of the existing I6 area which, for the most part, represents this 'natural area of progression'.

When traveling through this landscape unit the overall impression is that of a diverse commercial and industrial landscape. However, also within this unit there are areas which provide potential for amenity enhancements.

4.2.1 Key Landscape Issues

A distinguishing natural characteristic of this landscape is the Irongate Stream. This watercourse follows a good portion of the northeastern boundary of the IIRA site. There is a small pocket of land to the north of the stream, bounding Maraekakaho Road, which is being used for firewood storage. This land is currently located within the proposed boundaries of the rezoned area. It is understood that the suggested boundaries of the

Existing Firewood Operation and Proposed Limit to IIRA (view from mid way along southern property boundary)

Existing Firewood Operation and Proposed Limit to IIRA (view from dwelling)

IIRA are based primarily on cadastral boundaries. However, it is recommended that these be reviewed and that consideration be given to excluding this pocket of land from the proposed industrial zone to provide a more sympathetic response to existing landscape features and visual amenity.

Irongate Stream would then provide a logical boundary to the proposed rezoning while providing considerable opportunity for ecological enhancements. Appropriate plantings within the stream corridor would further contribute to enhancing the visual amenity of the greater area and assist in better defining of the IIRA boundaries.

It is recommended that future development of this land (the land currently being used for firewood storage) be carefully screened by Council through the resource consent process, so as to preserve it as a 'buffer' between existing rural landuse (to the north) and the proposed IIRA activity. This is considered an important approach for both this site, and the block of land recently approved for the Lifestyle Cottages operation, ensuring that they are retained for low density, rural based businesses (such as those currently operating).

The current boundaries of the proposed IIRA also include a block of land on the southwestern side of Maraekakaho Road, which extends further south of the existing I.6 zone limits. It is recommended that this boundary also be revised so that a more site responsive solution can be met (See aerial photo in Section 4.2.2).

View of existing southern extent of I.6 zone, and the change in landscape character between LU.C and LU.D

This photograph demonstrates the strong visual cue currently defining the interface between landscape units C and D. Extending the industrial rezoning passed this point would blur this interface between rural and industrial landuse, resulting in a more staggered and somewhat illogical perimeter to the IIRA. A more sympathetic solution would be to terminate the IIRA at the existing I.6 limits, thereby clustering future industrial activity around the existing built environment of LU.C.

4.2.2 Streetscape Enhancement

4.2.2.1 Planting

The amenity that exists within this landscape unit is functional but minimal. There is a lack of coherent streetscape along Maraekakaho Road, including the treatment of the road reserve, and the treatment of boundaries adjoining the main road, within private land. Coherent treatment of these areas, using large scale specimen trees and consistent landscape treatments within carparks and along boundaries, would greatly assist in increasing the amenity of this landscape unit.

It is important that the trees selected for the streetscape enhancement be of a scale appropriate to this rural / industrial landscape. Recommended tree species include the upright columnar Oak (Quercus robur 'Fastigiata' or Quercus rubra 'Akatere'), Turkey Oak (Quercus cerris), or the Plane tree (Platanus acerifolia or P. orientalis).

4.2.2.2 *Overhead Powerlines*

A key visual element within the Maraekakaho Road streetscape is the myriad of overhead power lines (33kV) and cables, primarily along the eastern side of Maraekakaho Road. Ideally these would be put underground, however it is understood that Unison do not currently have plans to do this. Unison clearance requirements for trees or structures under power lines mean that only small scale tree species can be planted under the 33kV lines.

Looking North towards Irongate Road Intersection

In order to mitigate the visual effect of the power lines, and as a means of reducing the visual impact of future buildings within the IIRA on the streetscape, it is recommended that trees be planted within the Maraekakaho Road road reserve. Ideally this treatment would be an avenue of trees either side of Maraekakaho Road, however existing services (ie. overhead power lines, underground services, etc) may prohibit this. It is recommended that this streetscape enhancement for Maraekakaho Road be adopted within the limits of the proposed IIRA, however extending this north and south of the IIRA would further enhance the overall amenity of the area and provide coherence to the length of Maraekakaho Road.

Given the vast scale of the surrounding landscape, and of the prospective built environment within this area, smaller tree varieties (such as crabapples or olive trees) are considered inappropriate for this location as they would have little visual 'presence' within the roadway.

4.2.2.3 Street Planting Options

Two layout options are considered suitable for street tree planting along Maraekakaho Road. These options are explored further in the Landscape Strategy Report (May 2008):

1. An avenue of tall, columnar trees either side of the roadway. Because of the location of the Unison power lines within the road reserve, it would be necessary to plant the trees on the eastern side of the road within private land. This would require Council to purchase this strip of land from existing businesses within the I.6 zone so as to ensure ongoing access and maintenance of these trees, or

2. A single line of large scale tree species within the road reserve, on the western side of the road. Depending on the space available within the road reserve, it would be possible to use either a canopy tree or an upright, columnar tree for this scenario.

4.2.3 Building Heights, Scale of Buildings, Ancillary Structures, and Colour

A key mechanism for reducing the visual scale and mass of buildings within an industrial zone, on the surrounding landscape, is to cluster large scale, or taller buildings towards the centre of the site. This allows for less intensive, more human scale activities to be sited around the perimeter of the site (such as carparks, single storey offices, low rise pallet storage, showrooms, etc).

The existing maximum height for warehouses and buildings within the Plains zone is 15 meters. It is recommended that this height restriction be mimicked within the proposed IIRA, ensuring that the mass and form of future buildings within the IIRA reflect the scale and character of surrounding rural activities. It is possible to increase this maximum height, however, by clustering buildings away from perimeter boundaries thereby reducing their overall visibility and dominance of the surrounding landscape (referred to in the following section).

Restricting the range of colours of buildings and warehouses within the development to more subdued, darker hues (such as charcoal, medium grey, etc) would further assist in integrating the built form into the landscape.

Ancillary structures, such as air vents, chimneys, ventilation systems, etc, can have a significant visual impact on the surrounding landscape. It is recommended that such structures be sited away from rooflines wherever possible, but if deemed necessary then these should be painted to either match the roofing material or in a non-reflective shade of grey so as to be less obvious when viewed against the skyline.

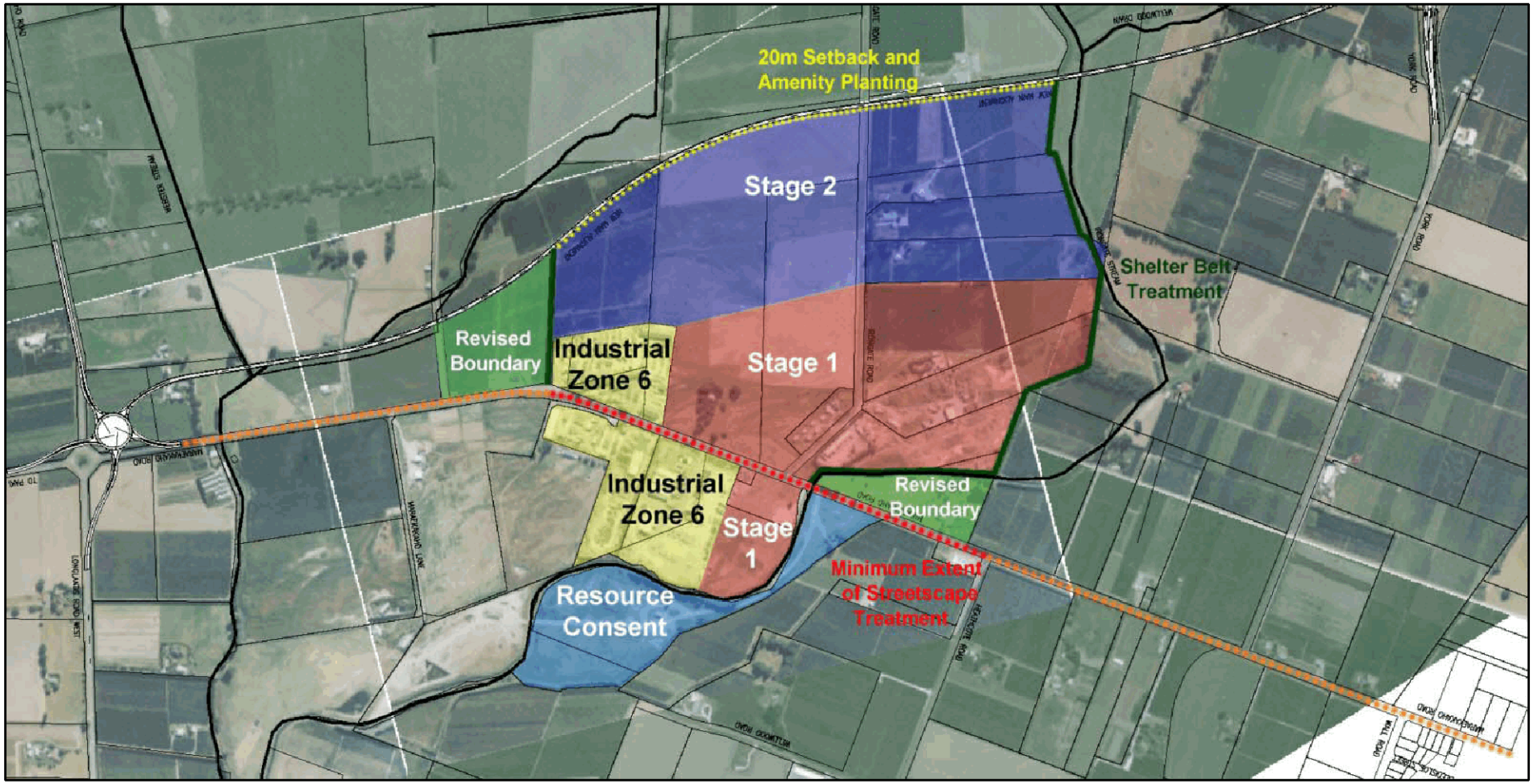
4.2.4 Building Setbacks and Internal Clustering

Tumu Timber Merchants are a Key Industry within the Industrial 6 Zone and LU.C

Planting is not the only contributor to amenity. Setbacks from boundaries, clustering of large scale buildings away from external boundaries, building modulation and building design, carpark design and locations, signage, overhead power Lines, entrance appearance and road layout can all contribute to the amenity of an industrial area.

It is recommended that smaller, more 'human scale' buildings and features (such as showrooms, offices, and carparks) be sited towards the outer boundary areas of the IIRA so as to provide a more attractive streetscape appearance. Carparks and storage depot's should be designed with trees and landscaping so as to reduce the visual expanse of these hard surface areas.

It is also recommended that larger warehouses and industrial buildings be clustered towards the centre of the development area, away from the outer perimeter of the site.



Recommended Landscape Treatments and Mitigation Measures for IIRA

Having the larger scale and / or taller buildings situated towards the interior of the site reduces the visual dominance of the built environment, and enhances the overall amenity of the area. An advantage of clustering large scale buildings away from the external edges of the site is that the maximum height can be increased, because their visibility from adjacent properties and roadways is reduced. The maximum height considered possible for buildings clustered to the centre of the application site is 20m.

View from Maraekakaho Road Heading South

D. The Southern End of Maraekakaho Road (between Industrial 6 zone and southern roundabout). This stretch of road is predominantly rural in character, and offers expansive, largely uninterrupted views across farmland to the Ruahine Ranges (west) and Te Mata Peak and Mt Erin (east).

Historic Woolshed and Cottage on Maraekakaho

Key elements within this landscape unit include a mixture of open viewshafts across farmland, tall shelter belts lining paddocks and bounding roadways, and occasional large scale, low density farm buildings - such as the historic Grant woolshed adjacent to the proposed IIRA.

View of Interface between Landscape Unit C and D

As previously noted, the southern extent of the

IIRA will be visible from this landscape unit. It is recommended that the proposed boundaries for rezoning be modified so that the intrinsic rural character of this landscape unit is not jeopardised by the extention of industrial activity into this area.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed industrial rezoning is considered to be appropriate in this location. The topography of the site is generally flat and as such visibility is restricted to a limited number of dwellings within close proximity to the site, and adjacent roadways.

The surrounding landuse of this landscape, which is currently reasonably diverse - containing a mixture of rural residential and commercial / industrial activities - is becoming increasingly industrialized through the resource consents process. Transit New Zealand propose to continue the expressway into this landscape, which will further urbanise the existing landscape character of this area.

There are a number of mechanisms which can be used to ensure that industrial zones are appropriately integrated into the landscape, and to achieve a high level of amenity within the site itself. These are considered to be:

- Shelterbelt plantings along northern and southern boundaries
- 20m Setback and amenity plantings along western boundary
- Streetscape enhancement (Maraekakaho Road and Irongate Road)
- Modification of northern and southern IIRA perimeters to be more sympathetic to existing landscape features and visual cues
- Building design and location (clustering large scale / taller buildings away from perimeter boundaries, etc).

KING CONSULTANTS LTD
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Landscape Architecture Architectural Design Consulting Engineers

Tim Grace
Team Leader - Planning and Environmental Science
MWH Hastings

10 February, 2009

Dear Tim –

I have reviewed the Resource Consent Area (RCA) at Irongate regarding whether this should be included as part of the Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area. As discussed in our meeting last Tuesday, this is not a "cut and dry" case, and I believe it is dependent of several factors, including site coverage, building setbacks, building heights, and the presence of natural and cultural landscape features.

This letter endeavours to assess the likely change in landscape and visual characteristics between the current 'on site' activity, the existing consented activity on the site, and the potential impacts should the site be rezoned as Industrial 2.

In its current state the Resource Consent Area comprises three separate titles. Existing onsite activities include a Lifestyle Cottages business situated immediately adjacent to Maraekakaho Road; a Balance Fertiliser storage facility; and a consented, but as yet, unrealised Stock Yard facility all of which are situated on the eastern side of the Irongate Stream and therefore physically separate from the original I2 rezoning area.

The RCA is within the Plains Zone and as such has a maximum building height restriction of 15m. Maximum site coverage for this land (based on processing, storage and packaging activity) is 2500 sq.m, and minimum building setbacks are 15m from all boundaries for industrial, commercial and winery buildings. It should also be noted that there is a proposed amendment to the site coverage for buildings within the Plains Zone of 35%.

Existing buildings on site within the RCA include a large storage warehouse (2500 sq.m) on the Balance Fertiliser land (15m tall), a number of smaller scale cottage showrooms situated on the 'Lifestyle Cottages' land adjacent to Maraekakaho Road, and an office building within the Roil property.

The landscape character of the RCA land is rural, although the density of development is somewhat greater than that of adjacent properties to the east and south. As such the RCA land provides something of a transition zone between existing, less intensively developed rural activities and the adjacent Industrial 6 Zone activity immediately across the Irongate Stream. This buffer zone of activity is considered to be key to integrating the proposed I2 rezoning into the area without compromising the existing positive landscape and visual qualities of the existing rural activity / Plains Zone.

The land situated on the eastern most side of the RCA is currently consented for stock yards. This resource consent allows for 1ha of covered sheep yards (on the eastern

side of the property), a 240 sq.m administration building, as well as significant hard surfaced cattle yards, truck turning area and general parking facilities. Although a maximum height for the proposed covered sheep yards has not been provided, it has been assumed that this structure will be approximately 10m in height, based on the type of activity such buildings fall into under the District Plan.

Although the scope of this consented activity is substantially different than the existing landuse, the underlying quality of the proposed development will retain a strong rural focus and is subsequently considered to be rural in character, albeit somewhat more intensive than adjacent rural activities.

As mentioned previously, the RCA is situated on the opposite side of the Irongate Stream from the remaining 85 hectares of the proposed Industrial 2 Zone. Although this is a modified waterway and is considered to have only limited ecological value in its current state, the Irongate Stream is a natural feature and still largely follows its natural course (as can be seen by its cadastral boundaries).

The Irongate Stream bounds part of the proposed Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area and provides a natural extent to development for the zone. The redefinition of the I2 boundaries to include the RCA land disregards this existing landscape cue / natural feature, and effectively creates an arbitrary boundary to the rezoning area.

The initial landscape assessment recognised the Irongate Stream as being the sole natural landscape feature within the rezoning area, and recommended that Council, and / or other regulatory authorities enhance the waterway as part of a local environmental initiative as part of the proposed rezoning process. It is recognised that such an undertaking may not be essential to the success of the Irongate Rezoning Project, however it is considered to be a positive environmental outcome associated with the proposed rezoning.

Given the existing landuses within the RCA, and the potential consented activity proposed for the Roil property, it is my opinion that the RCA should not be included within the I2 rezoning area. This land is deemed an important 'transition' zone between strictly rural activities (to the east and south), and the proposed I2 activity on the opposite side of the Irongate Stream.

If the Council wishes to review the boundaries of the proposed I2 area, then it is my view that this review should include more than just consented activities to also reflect landscape considerations in the wider area.

I will wait to hear from you regarding this matter before making any amendments to the draft Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Report.

Kind Regards,

Georgina Thow

TERRA · forme
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE
and
VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Summary Report

Irongate Industrial Plan Change

Prepared for the Hastings District Council

Final – June 2009

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Appendix A

King Consultants Ltd, May 2008 - Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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1.0 General

This Landscape Summary Report relates to a rezoning proposed by the Hastings District Council of approximately 110ha from Plains Zone to Industrial 2 (Irongate Industrial Area). The site is located on and accessed from both Maraekakaho Road and Irongate Road along one of the southern entrances to Hastings City.

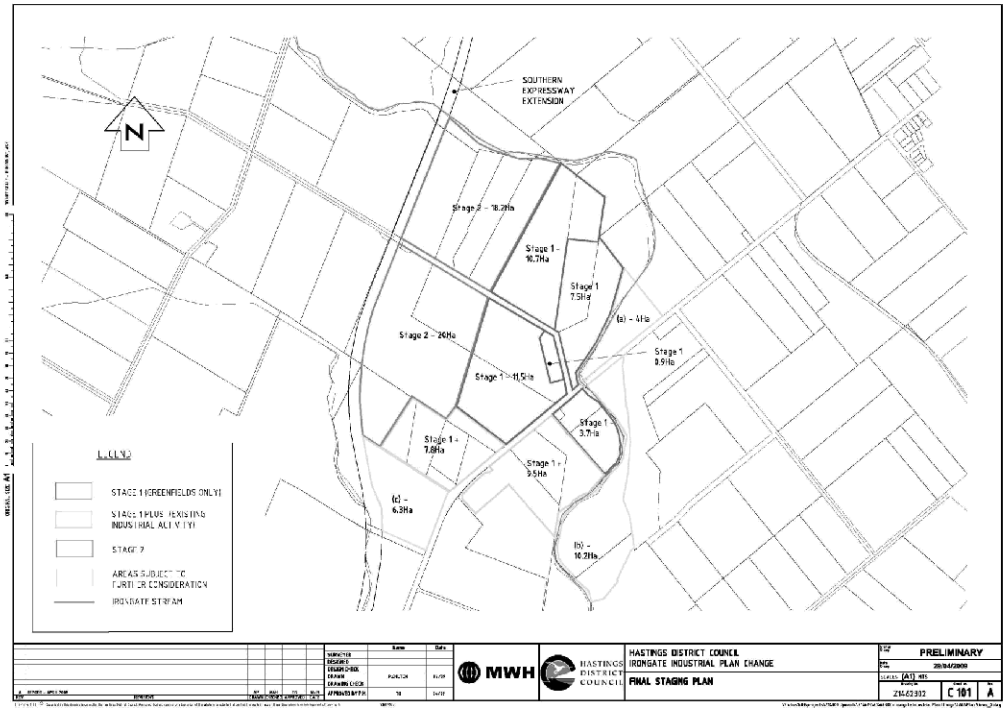

Figure 1 – Irongate Industrial Rezoning Final Staging Plan

The rezoning of this land has been under consideration since 2002 and background work has been undertaken with respect to landscape issues associated with the site.

This includes three reports prepared by King Consultants Ltd Landscape Architects –

- Landscape Strategy Report (2004)
- Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (May 2008) (Appendix A to this report)
- Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area – Landscape Strategy Report (May 2008)

The site is not an Outstanding Natural Feature or Significant Landscape Character Area and is not included in any other landscape notations in the District Plan. It is

the opinion of the writer that the site is not considered to be particularly sensitive to change in landscape terms.

2.0 Previous Reports

The purpose of the **Landscape Strategy Report (2004)** was to "provide recommendations for enhancing the visual amenity of three proposed industrial areas, while simultaneously integrating them into their respective landscapes". The Landscape Strategy Report 2004 discussed the following themes –

1. Working within the existing city fabric
2. Streetscape enhancements (Maraekakaho Road and Irongate Road)
3. Shelterbelt treatments (for boundaries bordering private land)
4. Recommendations for maintenance of landscape treatments (irrigation, pruning, etc)

The themes for the early landscape strategy are continued through both the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2008) and the Landscape Strategy Report (2008).

The purpose of the **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** (2008) was to identify and describe the existing landscape character of the area; investigate the likely changes to the character and quality of the surrounding landscape/visual catchment area and discuss the resultant changes in the visual amenity for viewers as a result of the proposed rezoning.

The purpose of the **Landscape Strategy Report** (2008) was to provide direction which ensured an integrated approach was taken to enhance the amenity and design quality of the Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area.

The purpose of this report – **The Landscape Summary Report** (2009) is to summarise the findings of the previous three reports; review any new information that has become available since the previous reports were prepared; and make specific recommendations relating to landscape measures required for mitigation and landscape measures that could be considered to provide enhancement of the amenity values in the proposed new industrial area.

The Landscape Summary Report does not revisit the findings of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. It is the opinion of the writer that the methodology and findings of the earlier Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment are appropriate.

3.0 Methodology

For the purpose of preparing this report a site review has been undertaken. This has included a review of aerial photography, review of previous reports and including liaison with King Consultants, attendance at a Council Workshop in May 2009, and an assessment of the site from public locations in May /June 2009.

4.0 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Summary

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by King Consultants concludes the following –

"The proposed industrial rezoning is considered to be appropriate in this location. The topography of the site is generally flat and as such visibility is restricted to a limited number of dwellings within close proximity to the site and adjacent roadways.

The surrounding landuse of this landscape, which is currently reasonably diverse – containing a mixture of rural and commercial/industrial activities, is becoming increasingly industrialised through the resource consents process. Transit New Zealand are proposing to continue the expressway into this landscape, which will further urbanise the existing landscape character of the area.

There are a number of mechanisms which can be used to ensure that industrial zones are appropriately integrated into the landscape, and to achieve a high level of amenity within the site itself. These are considered to be :

- *Shelterbelt plantings along the northern and southern boundaries*
- *20m setback and amenity plantings along the western boundary*
- *Streetscape enhancement (Maraekakaho Road and Irongate Road)*
- *Modification of the northern and southern IIRA perimeters to be more sympathetic to existing landscape features and visual cues*
- *Building design and location (clustering large scale/taller buildings away from perimeter boundaries*

The conclusion of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment identifies mechanisms to ensure that the zone is "appropriately integrated" and to "achieve a high level of amenity".

For the purposes of the Plan Change it is important to differentiate what is required to ensure the effects of the proposed rezoning are able to be adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated, and those additional mechanisms that could enhance the amenity of the area and within the proposed new zone.

5.0 Issue Summary and Conclusions

The following is a summary of key landscape issues and conclusions that have been identified as part of this report and the earlier reports -

- Maraekakaho Road which is straddled by the proposed rezoning area is an important transit route into the city at the Stortford Lodge.
- The Southern Expressway Extension is essentially a bypass and defines the western extent of the area proposed to be rezoned.
- The Irongate Stream is one of the most defining natural characteristics associated with the area proposed to be rezoned and has the potential to influence the boundaries and provides opportunity for ecological enhancement.
- There are no residential dwellings within close proximity to the site and screening of the proposed activity from residents is not considered to be an issue. There are several dwellings within the proposed new industrial zone and whilst it is possible to achieve screening through planting the 10 year deferred zoning timeframe for stage 2 of the proposed new industrial area would make it difficult to achieve anything meaningful. In addition there is existing planting on the northern boundary of stage 2 that provides some mitigation in this location.
- The area proposed to be rezoned is an extension of a relatively well defined "landscape unit" associated with Maraekakaho Road related to the existing Industrial 6 Zone. The existing Industrial 6 Zone influences the character of the area significantly.
- Cadastral boundaries do not necessarily reflect important landscape and visual characteristics. Landscape and visual characteristics may be better mechanisms for determining zone boundaries.
- The site is not significant or outstanding and is not included in any landscape notations in the District Plan.
- The soil characteristics and landform are important landscape characteristics that should be considered when determining zone boundaries.

- Whilst the site presents considerable opportunity for enhancement of amenity values it is important to make the distinction between these and what is required to mitigate any adverse effects.

6.0 Issue Discussion and Recommendations

Where the issues and conclusions identified in 5.0 above require further consideration in respect of mitigating potential adverse effects or providing opportunity for enhancement they are discussed below.

6.1 Maraekakaho Road

Maraekakaho Road is identified in both the earlier Landscape Strategy and the Landmarks Development Plan as being an important route into the city. The proposed rezoning straddles a stretch of this road on the outskirts of the city at a transition point between the rural landscape and a more urban fabric.

Maraekakaho Road is for a significant part of the area associated with the rezoning already affected by the Industrial 6 Zoning and does not have high amenity values. These areas whilst they include some planting do not portray any consistency in the treatment. The frontages most affected by proposed new zoning are in Stage 1 where it adjoins Maraekakaho Road.

It is understood that the 20m road reserve associated with Maraekakaho Road, which has formed the basis of the recommendations in the earlier reports, will be compromised to the extent by servicing issues that there will be insufficient room to include the large scale trees proposed as part of the earlier assessment.

Whilst consistency in species selection is important to achieve integration this does not mean all species should be the same. It is important however that trees planted are good specimens and are maintained true to form and type.

Recommendation

That large scale trees be planted within the property boundaries adjacent to Maraekakaho Road with a minimum of one tree every 8m. Tree species should be selected from species identified in the Landscape Strategy - *Quercus robur fastigata; Plantanus orientalis "Autumn Glory"; and Platanus orientalis.*

That detailed establishment and maintenance documentation be prepared and monitored to ensure that tree plantings achieve the desired objectives.

6.2 The Southern Expressway Extension

Where the site adjoins the Southern Expressway Extension, arguably the expressway provides for sufficient separation between land uses and visual characteristics. The Expressway is identified as a bypass and whilst it will form part of the roading network in and out of the city it is not identified as an important entry point. However, it will be important to ensure a reasonable level of amenity when the proposed new zoning adjoins the road.

The western boundary is logically, and in landscape terms, defined by the Southern Expressway Extension. Whilst this may not be the best location for the boundary in terms of the productive capacity of the soil it is a well defined and definite boundary.

Recommendation

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment recommends a 20m planted setback along the western boundary. This would enhance the amenity of this area significantly however it is my view that the effects of the proposed rezoning could be adequately mitigated through shelter plantings. It is acknowledged that shelterbelts can be difficult to maintain in a consistent manner. It is recommended that shelter planting 5m from the boundary be undertaken and maintained to a maximum height of 9m along the western boundary adjacent to the Southern Expressway Extension.

It is not considered necessary to undertake any mitigation along the boundary between Stage 1 and Stage 2 because there is considered to be sufficient separation between Stage 1 and the proposed Southern Expressway Extension prior to Stage 2 proceeding. In addition while it is possible to achieve planting along this boundary the 10 year timeframe does limit the ability to achieve anything meaningful over the shorter term. It is noted that there is some planting along the northern boundary of Stage 2 which provides mitigation.

Should further enhancement be considered desirable, then in accordance with the original assessment, it is recommended that this be consistent with the landscape works proposed by Opus (as part of the Southern Expressway Extension) and reflect the enhancement recommended for the Sisson Drain.

6.3 The Irongate Stream

There are two landscape aspects associated with the Irongate stream which are relevant to the proposed rezoning –

1. The influence the stream and associated landforms have on determination of the boundaries

The original Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers the following in relation to the importance of the stream and recommends that boundaries of the area proposed to be rezoned reflect the stream boundaries as it is the most obvious defining boundary in the area.

"A distinguishing natural characteristic of this landscape is the Irongate Stream. This watercourse follows a good portion of the northeastern boundary of the IIRA site." Page 22

"Irongate Stream would then provide a logical boundary to the proposed rezoning while providing considerable opportunity for ecological enhancements."[1]

This review also considers that the Irongate Stream would be an appropriate feature to base the boundary of the zoning on because it would provide a good separation between activities.

The terrace associated with the Irongate Stream is also an important and defining natural characteristic and could also be considered as an appropriate point at which to finish the proposed rezoning. This change in landform also has the potential to provide a sense of separation between landuse activities. The appropriateness of the Irongate Stream forming the boundary of the proposed new zone on the eastern side of Maraekakaho Road is specifically considered in a letter from King Consultants Ltd, dated 10 February 2009 (attached as ***Appendix B***), which refers directly to the area granted resource consent for stock yards and associated facilities, and area encompassing the Balance Fertiliser buildings.

The letter includes the following –

"The Irongate Stream bounds part of the proposed Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area and provides a natural extent to development for the zone. The redefinition of the I2 boundaries to include the RCA land disregards this existing landscape cue/natural feature, and effectively creates an arbitrary boundary to the rezoning area."

[1] Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, King Consultants Ltd – pages 22 and 24

It is the opinion of the writer of this report that whilst the Irongate Stream is undoubtedly an important landscape feature, which could be used to define the boundary to the proposed new zoning, this would require the stream being used for this purpose throughout the proposed rezoning area. In addition, it is considered that the stream as a potential defining boundary should be considered in conjunction with other parameters associated with the proposed plan change. This should also be the case if consideration were to be given to extending the zoning beyond the stream (i.e. alternative landscape cues should be investigated along with the other parameters such as engineering, servicing, industrial site demand, and control of urban 'sprawl').

2. What opportunities the stream presents for environmental enhancement associated with the proposed rezoning area

An Ecological Valuation Assessment of the Irongate Stream has been undertaken (MWH, November 2008). This report, in point 6 of the conclusion notes the following:

– *"When compared to the original conditions, the integrity of ecological functions operating at the site are substantially impaired. However, the plan change process can provide opportunities to protect, and enhance the remaining values."*[2]

It is the view of the author of this report and the earlier assessment that the Irongate Stream would benefit considerably from some form of enhancement. While this may not be specifically required to mitigate potential adverse effects or provide separation between activities (because the stream by its very nature achieves partially this) it would undoubtedly be a positive environmental outcome.

If the proposed rezoning stops at the stream then only one side of the stream would be able to restored/enhanced. If the zone boundaries extend beyond the stream then both of the sides of the stream would present an opportunity for enhancement.

It is noted that the proposed rezoning does not bound the stream for its entire length and it will not be possible to achieve an entire length of enhanced stream.

[2] Irongate Industrial Plan Change Stream Ecological Valuation Assessment, MWH, November 2008 page 19

An Assessment of the Effects on the Irongate Stream has been undertaken by MWH (June 2009).

This report makes the following recommendations in relation to "enhancement of the riparian zone" associated with the stream and which are supported on landscape grounds.

" An appropriate riparian zone stream enhancement option would consist of a 15m wide riparian buffer area established along those parts of the proposed new industrial zone that abut the Irongate Stream. This would include a 15m x 440m buffer along the northern perimeter (true left bank only), a 15m x 416m buffer area along the eastern perimeter (true left and true right banks), and a 15m x 400m buffer area where the stream abuts the southern extent of the proposed new zone. Collectively these areas comprise a total riparian buffer area of approximately 2.508ha. Refer Figure 5-1: Schematic showing proposed riparian planting 'zones'."

The 15m setback proposed in the ecology report is supported where the proposed new industrial zone bounds the stream. This will provide for sufficient room for the planting proposed (Figure 5-1 – Ecological Valuation Assessment) and allow for the stream to be adequately maintained. Without the planting as proposed, 15m is considered to be an appropriate setback and will ensure buildings, carparks, storage areas, etc are located an appropriate distance from the stream. Providing for the 15m setback will also ensure that riparian planting initiatives that may be progressed in the future are not compromised as a result of industrial development along the stream.

In conclusion this report states the following –

"Riparian zone enhancement in those areas where the proposed new industrial zone abuts the Irongate Stream has the potential to restore some of the ecological functions of the stream within that reach, provided it is undertaken in concert with other restoration initiatives identified by the Regional Council, which apply to the lower stream and wider catchment. On its own riparian planting beside the proposed new industrial zone has limited potential for restoring ecological functions of the Irongate Stream, but would provide other benefits such as enhanced amenity values."

Recommendations

It is recommended that a setback of 15m be provided adjacent to the Irongate Stream and that industrial users be encouraged to revegetate this area in accordance with the Riparian Planting Schedule as proposed in the ecological report (MWH, June 2009).

6.4 Northern and Southern Boundary Treatment

There are portions of the northern boundary where it does not adjoin the Irongate Stream and therefore the 15m setback and suggested planting are not an appropriate mechanism for preserving amenity and mitigating any potential adverse effects of the proposed new zone.

The proposed new zone will be separated from the stream by an area of horticultural land which does not currently contain dwellings.

Similarly there is a short stretch of the southern boundary which does not adjoin the existing Industrial 6 Zone.

In this location the proposed new zone adjoins rural land which does not contain a residential dwelling although it does contain a commercial area fronting Maraekakaho Road. It is noted that residential dwellings are a permitted activity in the Plains Zone.

The shelter and amenity plantings recommended as part of this report are considered to be adequate to address potential effects on new residences.

Recommendations

That shelter planting be undertaken along these boundaries in accordance with the existing Plains Zone rules - that is 5m set back from the boundary and keep trees to a height of 9m – 13m.

6.5 Irongate Road

The proposed new zone will straddle a stretch of Irongate Road between Maraekakaho Road and the Southern Expressway Extension.

For almost its entire length this stretch of Irongate Road is rural in character. The character of this stretch of road will be altered significantly as a result of the proposed new zoning with significant numbers of large buildings becoming a dominant part of the view. Whilst the character of the area will change significantly a reasonable level of amenity can be achieved through the planting of trees.

Recommendation

That tree planting be undertaken along Irongate Road where it is staddled by the industrial zone. Large scale trees shall be planted at spacings 8m to be located within the property boundaries on both sides of the road. Species to be selected from *Quercus robur Fastigata; Plantanus orientalis "Autumn Glory"; and Platanus acerifolia.*

6.6 Boundary Amenity

There is considerable discussion in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and the Landscape Strategy about the need to ensure that large buildings in particular do not dominate the boundaries.

Each boundary treatment has been discussed fully in this report and recommended treatments consist of a combination of setbacks and planting. The possibility of a recession plane rule to provide additional amenity has been reviewed, however it is considered that the setback and planting combination achieves an adequate result.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment recommends a 15m height restriction for buildings. There is little discussion on why this is proposed. It is understood that this was to ensure a building scale and size consistent with those in the surrounding area – the Plains Zone where a 15m height restriction applies. Advice from Councils building officers suggests that this height restriction is appropriate to achieve the desired coverage and that there have been no applications for buildings beyond this height in recent times. In addition this building height is considered an appropriate tool to control the size and scale of the buildings and ensure that they do not unduly dominate this landscape location which does have a significant viewing audience associated with Maraekakaho Road and the proposed Southern Expressway Extension. For these reasons the 15m height restriction is supported.

Recommendation

If a 15m height restriction and a 10m yard setback is applied with either specimen tree planting or shelterbelt plantings then it is not considered necessary to also have a recession plane rule to achieve amenity outcomes.

6.7 Internal Landscaping

This site does not have characteristics vastly different from other similarly zoned areas in the District. It is therefore recommended that similar requirements be imposed in relation to landscaping to maintain internal site amenity.

Planting is often undertaken in good faith however the ability for it to achieve its intended outcome is heavily dependant on its ongoing maintenance. It is therefore recommended that this be monitored against "good practice" guidelines for the establishment of amenity planting.

In addition any areas set aside for stormwater management purposes – swales and attenuation areas be considered as areas to enhance the internal amenity of the site. Whilst it must be acknowledged that this is not required to mitigate potential adverse effects these areas do provide an opportunity to enhance the amenity of the area.

Recommendation

A strip of land, not less than 2.5 metres wide adjoining the front boundary of the site shall be landscaped, planted and maintained for the full length of the boundary (excluding vehicle entrances). This planting should include a mix of no more than 5 species of shrubs and ground covers, which should not attain a height of more that 1.8m. Where trees are to be planted in this area they should be selected from the following species list *Quercus robur Fastigata; Plantanus orientalis "Autumn Glory"; and Platanus acerifolia.*

That all planting undertaken be monitored for compliance against "good practice" guidelines for the establishment of amenity planting. Planting should be undertaken and maintained in accordance with the relevant Hastings District Council specifications for shrub bed and tree maintenance.

6.8 Signage

Signage has the potential to have adverse effects on the amenity of any area and can dominate views from roadways in particular. However, it must be acknowledged that signage, advertising and directional, will be an important part of any activity located in the proposed new industrial zone.

NZTA are comfortable with the rules in the District Plan related to signage however they have advised that there must by a strip free of signs which allows for the maintenance of shelter belts.

The existing Industrial 2 zone which has a minimum lot size of 1000m2 for front sites allows for 0.7m2 of signage for every lineal metre of frontage. This is considered to be a significant area of signage if it were to be directly applied to the proposed new industrial zone which has a minimum site size of 1ha and thereby potential site frontages 10 times as long.

Recommendation

That advertising signs should not be permitted within in any of the landscape strips other than where signage is required near the entry to sites to provide direction.

On the basis of the above it is recommended that 0.07m2 of signage be permitted per lineal metre in the new zone.

7.0 CONCLUSION

A number of issues have been identified in the earlier reports related to landscape associated with the proposed rezoning of the proposed new Irongate Industrial Area. These are summarised in this report.

Some of the earlier reports placed significant emphasis on achieving a **high level of amenity** in this location and identified a number of alternatives for achieving these outcomes.

However, the focus of this report has been to identify specifically what is needed to ensure the potential effects of the rezoning are able to be avoided, remedied or mitigtated thus resulting in effects that are no more than minor.

Specifically this report has focused on boundary treatments, treatment of roadways, and treatment of the Irongate Stream.

It is the opinion of this report that potential adverse landscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed rezoning can be avoided, remedied or mitigated if the

techniques outlined in this report are employed through the rules and methods to be used in the Proposed Plan Change. .

REFERENCES

King Consultants Ltd, Georgina Thow (2008): *Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*

King Consultants Ltd, Georgina Thow (2008): *Irongate Industrial rezoning Area, Landscape Strategy Report*

MWH, (2009): *Irongate Plan Change, Assessment of Effects on Irongate Stream*

MWH,(2008): Irongate Industrial Plan Change, Stream Ecological Valuation Assessment

King Consultants Ltd, Georgina Thow (2004); Landscape Strategy Report

APPENDIX A

King Consultants Ltd, May 2008 - Irongate Industrial Rezoning Area – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

APPENDIX B

King Consultants Ltd, February 2009 – Letter to MWH in relation to the Resource Consent Area (RCA)