



Submission on Greater Christchurch Settlement Update – Our Space 2018-2048

Red Spur Ltd

November 2018

Greater Christchurch Partnership

Submitter Details

Name: Red Spur Limited

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Resource Management and Planning
PO Box 1435
Christchurch 8140

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Contact Person Fiona Aston

Hearings:

I wish speak at the hearings.

Preferred location: Christchurch City

Contact number: C/- Aston Consultants Ltd. Contact details as above.

Background and Site

The submitter Red Spur Ltd ('the Submitter') owns or has interests in land at 12 Redmund Spur Road, legally described as Lot 43 DP512456 (93.34ha) and Part Lot 1 DP2905 (9.88ha). Lot 43 DP512456 is located to the south of the existing Residential Hills zoned land – Redmund Hill and east of the existing Residential Hills zoned land - Upper Kennedys Bush land. Part Lot 1 DP2905 is located on the southern side of Kennedys Bush Road and adjacent to the Quarry Hill Development.

The Submitter wishes to 'future proof' the Redmund Spur and Quarry Hill subdivisions by providing a roading link between the two subdivisions with sufficient sections alongside the link to fund the construction and consequential development costs (see further discussion below). **Our Space** has a 30 year time horizon (to 2048). It is intended that the roading link will be provided with in this timeframe. Whilst it will be one of the last stages of the overall subdivision development (it is at the upper end), it is anticipated that the subdivision will completed within the next 30 years.

The Redmund Spur subdivision is zoned Residential Hills and has a Mixed Density Overlay. This provides for a maximum of 400 lots, with a minimum of 30% of sites with a minimum net site area of

1500m²¹. The proposed 'roading connection' zoning extension is currently zoned Rural Port Hills. It is within an Area of Outstanding Landscape (ONL 38.3) apart from a small portion at the top of Quarry Hill which is within Rural Amenity Landscape 11.4 – see Planning Maps below.

ONL 38.3 relates to the mid to upper slopes of Western Port Hills and seeks to retain (amongst other matters) special features such as the Port Hills distinctive volcanic landform, skyline (forms an important visual backdrop to Otautahi/Christchurch), a natural landscape characterised by openness and a general absence of human-made structures on the upper slopes and ridges, the presence of important areas of indigenous vegetation and a predominance of natural features, processes and patterns and farming with existing development generally well integrated into the landscape.

RAL 11.4 relates to the mid to lower slopes Kennedy's Bush Spur. Special features identified in the District Plan in respect of the RAL – Port Hills pertains to their important visual backdrop to Christchurch District and their major recreation resource for the city's residents and visitors.

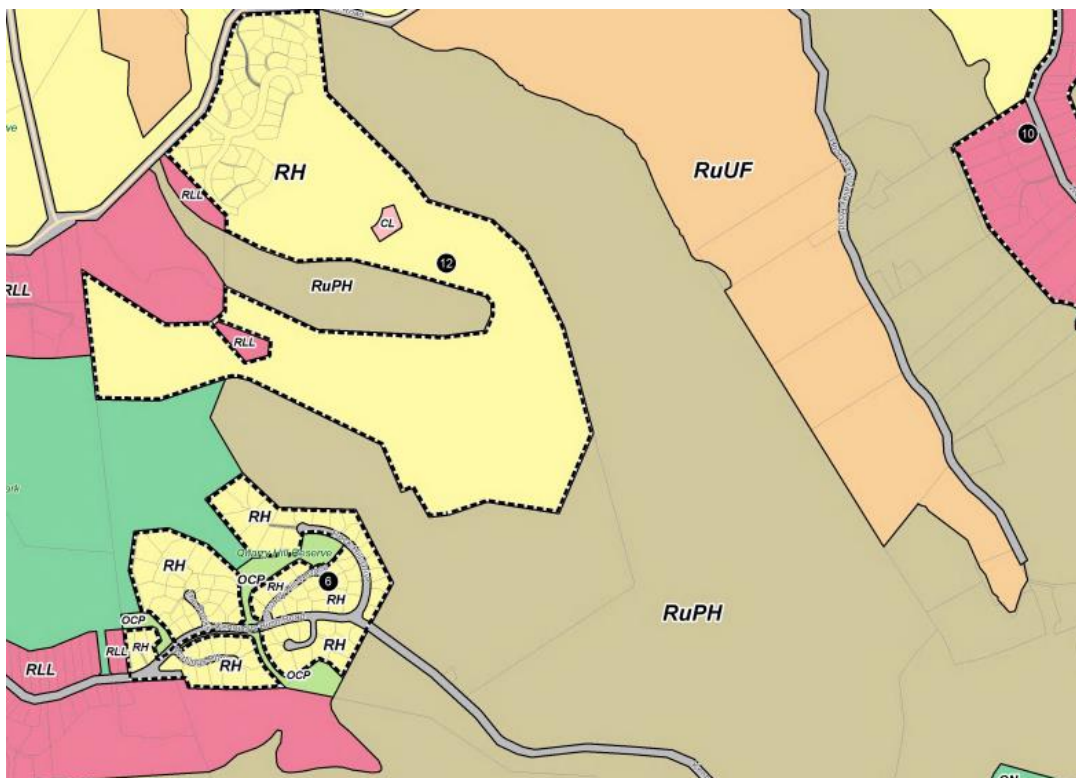


Figure 1: Zoning

¹ Christchurch District Plan Rule 14.7.2.1

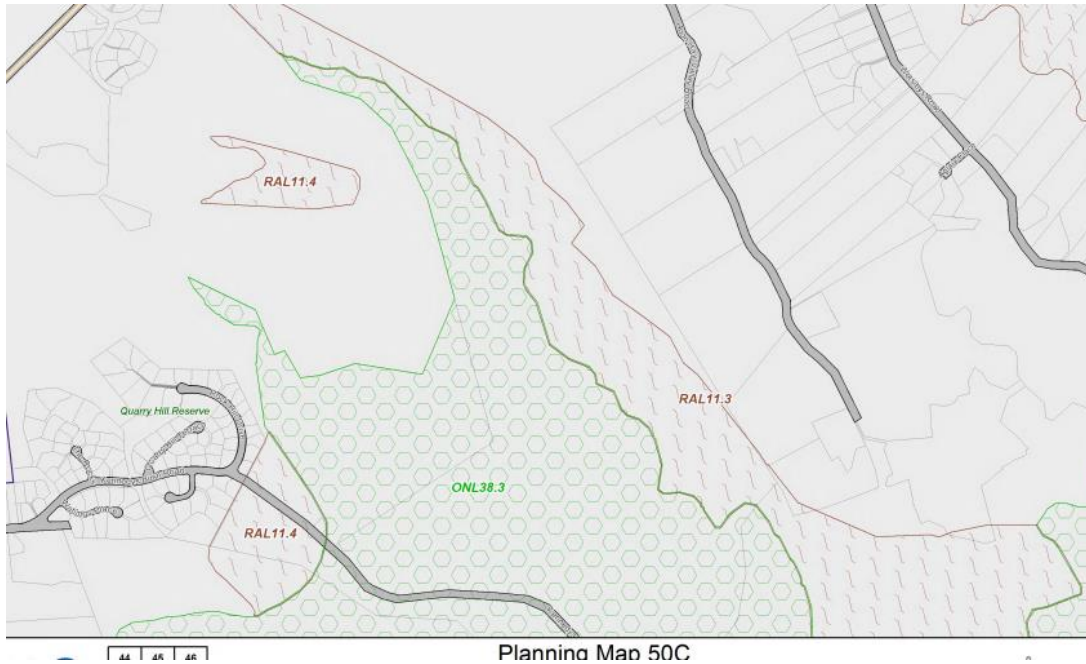


Fig 2: Natural and Cultural Heritage

Development Proposal

An overall preliminary concept plan and proposed zone areas for the Redmund Spur subdivision is attached as **Appendix A**. The areas marked as yellow represent the proposed area to be rezoned from Rural Port Hills (RPH) to Residential Hills (RH) Mixed Density Overlay to support the Kennedys Bush Road link to Redmund Spur (10.9ha in total). The existing RH zone area is 56.9ha, with 400 sections or 7 sections per hectare – applying this ratio to the proposed additional areas gives a development yield of 76 sections.

Extension to Zoning to Facilitate Connectivity Between Upper Kennedys Bush and Redmund Spur

Red Spur's surveyors and land development consultants (Fox & Associates) have been in discussion with Christchurch City Council officers for some time regarding a proposed extension to the Residential Hills zoning, to facilitate provision of a roading link between the two subdivisions. The proposed zoning extension comprises approximately 11 ha of land, sufficient to accommodate enough residential sections to fund the roading link and other costs such as provision of services, Development Contributions and proposed revegetation areas relating to the development of residential sections. The proposed new zone boundaries relate to the local topography and avoid prominent visual areas.

The roading link is essential to facilitate best practice urban design, which includes the principles of integration and connectivity, and to provide alternative emergency access. The intention is to avoid a 'repeat' of other hillside residential subdivisions, such as Richmond Hill and Westmorland which is a substantial residential subdivision with, until the most recent stage of development, a sole vehicle entry and exit point, along Cashmere Road.

In keeping with the Redmund Spur RH zoning and mixed density overlay, the proposed zoning would enable a wide range of lot sizes to facilitate a more 'mixed demographic' neighbourhood, with lot sizes ranging from 150m² to 3000m². A minimum of 30% of sites would have a minimum average site area of 1500m². A 'pepperpotting' of densities is proposed.

The proposal would further include possible environmental enhancement measures including a walkway link between existing mountainbike tracks and walkways that will link the proposed road extension with Halswell Quarry Park, and indigenous planting in gully areas (as shown on the Concept Plan attached as **Appendix A**)

A submission was filed on Stage 2 of the Proposed Christchurch Replacement District Plan seeking appropriate zoning to enable development in accordance with the proposed development concept and zoning extension. The proposed roading extension (marked yellow) was later withdrawn from the Stage 2 submission as the intended development timeframe was beyond the District Plan timeframe of 10-15 years.

Suitability of Land for Development

Attached as **Appendix B** is a letter from Fox Surveyors which confirms that there are no servicing constraints to development of the proposed zoning extension.

Tonkin and Taylor have undertaken a preliminary 'walk over' of the Site and advise that there are unlikely to be any geotech or other natural hazard constraints to development of the Site, under the provisions of s106 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (see **Appendix C**).

Landscape Values

Andrew Craig, landscape architect assessed the landscape and natural values of the Site at the time of the Christchurch Replacement District Plan Review and concluded that the proposed roading link and associated land use and the effects arising from the proposed re-zoning will, on

balance, be appropriate in landscape terms. There exist favourable conditions – contiguousness, remediation, modest size, the lack of significant site features, good access and the enhancement opportunity involving the planting in the vicinity of the site with indigenous re-vegetation in this case, and only a relatively small area of ONL will be lost.

There will be no adverse amenity effects arising from development following re-zoning. The area proposed for re-zoning is well below the skyline of the most prominent local landscape feature and as with both the Quarry Hill and Redmund Spur developments, building covenants attached to the titles will ensure that the modern housing will be high quality. (see **Appendix D**).

Policy 9.2.2.2 of the Christchurch District Plan is relevant:-

Recognise the qualities of the identified outstanding natural landscapes described in Appendix 9.2.9.1.2 and protect them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development by:

- (i) avoiding use and development that breaks the skyline, including the crater rim, ridgelines on Banks Peninsula and the radial spurs of the Port Hills;*
- (ii) avoiding subdivision, use and development in those parts of outstanding natural landscapes with little or no capacity to absorb change, and allowing limited subdivision, use and development in those areas with higher potential to absorb change;...*

Policy 9.2.2.2 seeks to preclude inappropriate development not all development. The proposed Residential Port Hills zoning extension is located below rather along a ridgeline or radial spur. However, as with virtually all development on the Port Hills, it will break the skyline when viewed from some very specific local vantage points. As noted by Andrew Craig, the Site also has the ability to absorb change. Policy 9.2.2.2.2 therefore does not seek to preclude the Site from development.

Other Positive benefits

Emergency Access

The 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes sequence and the more recent Port Hills fires have highlighted the importance of having emergency access and evacuation routes at times of extreme, and/or unanticipated natural events. Appropriate emergency access should preferably be available for all urban areas, including on the Port Hills. Creating a roading link between the Redmund Spur and Upper Kennedys Bush subdivisions is essential for this purpose.

The epicenter of the major February 2011 earthquake event was at Heathcote on the lower Port Hills. The neighbouring suburb of Clifton was completely 'cut off', apart from limited 4WD access across the adjoining rural Richmond Hill farmland. Evans Pass Road between Sumner and Lyttelton remains closed, 7 years later.

Developments outside and changes to Rural/Urban Boundary

An unfortunate consequence of a fixed rural/urban boundary line in the CRPS and on **Our Space** Fig 16 and an associated objective and policy framework which requires 'avoidance' of urban activities outside that line (CRPS Objective 6.2.1 and Policy 6.3.1), is there is in effect, no flexibility to respond to anomalies, or meritorious boundary changes which do not offend the overall urban growth management approach of **Our Space** and the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS). Suggested policy wording is included in the Relief Sought below to address this issue.

The **Our Space** urban growth management approach is intended to provide certainty as to where development will take place to enable planning for and development of infrastructure required for projected urban growth; to protect key strategic infrastructure such as strategic transport networks; and to ensure development is appropriately located in terms of potential environmental effects.

Relief Sought:

Additions are shown in bold and underlined and deletions as strike through.

1. Amend Fig 16: Proposed locations of future development areas in Greater Christchurch by as follows:-
 - Amend to include the proposed area to be rezoned from Rural Port Hills to Residential Hills (Mixed Density Overlay) as shown in yellow on the **Appendix A** Fox & Associates plan titled 'Proposed Zone Area – Redmund Spur, Cashmere Road, Halswell as 'Existing Urban Area'.

2. 6.2 Schedule of future work
Amend 8 (page 34) as follows:-
Prepare a proposed change to Chapter 6 (Recovery and Rebuilding of Greater Christchurch) of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement:-

- amending Map A to be consistent with the relief sought in this submission (including 1. above and 3. below); and
- provide flexibility to accommodate meritorious proposals for urban development and zoning and to facilitate a responsive planning approach by amending and adding to the objectives and policies as follows (insertions in bold and underlined):-

Add new Policy 6.3.1A as below:-

Policy 6.3.1 A

(a) Enable urban development or zoning outside the Greenfield Priority, Special Housing Areas and Existing Urban Areas shown on Map A provided the following conditions are met:-

- (i) Any additional land is contiguous with a Greenfield Priority Area, Special Housing area, or Existing Urban Area; and**
- (ii) Any additional land will integrate with the provision of infrastructure; and**
- (iii) Any additional land is a logical addition to the urban area and will contribute to a consolidated urban form; and**
- (iv) The urban development or extension will have beneficial planning outcomes; and**
- (v) All of the criteria in Policy 6.3.11 (5)(a) to (g) inclusive are met.**

Explanation:

This policy confirms the requirement for urban development to be contained within Greenfield Priority, Special Housing and Existing Urban Areas but provides some flexibility to accommodate meritorious proposals and to facilitate a responsive planning approach given the uncertainties associated with the housing and business land capacity assessments which have informed Map A, and with the primary drivers and influencers of urban development in Greater Christchurch.

6.2.1 Recovery framework

Recovery, rebuilding and development are enabled within Greater Christchurch through a land use and infrastructure framework that:....

- 3. avoids urban development outside of existing urban areas or greenfield priority areas for development, unless expressly provided for in the CRPS **or which has only minor**

or less than minor adverse effects that will not compromise the overall CRPS urban growth management approach;

6.3.1 Development within the Greater Christchurch area

In relation to recovery and rebuilding for Greater Christchurch:

4. ensure new urban activities only occur within existing urban areas or identified greenfield priority areas as shown on Map A, unless they are otherwise expressly provided for in the CRPS **or have minor or less than minor adverse effects that will not compromise the overall CRPS urban growth management approach;**

6.3.7 Residential location, yield and intensification

In relation to residential development opportunities in Greater Christchurch:

7. Subject to Policy 5.3.4, residential greenfield priority area development shall occur **generally** in accordance with Map A. These areas are sufficient for both growth and residential relocation through to 2028.
3. Remove the rural/urban boundary line shown on CRPS Map A and **Our Space** Fig 16 (defined as the outer edge of Green Field Priority Areas, Existing Urban Areas and Special Housing Areas) and insert in the relevant District Plans, with appropriate criteria for assessments of proposals to amend 'the line' included in the CRPS and District Plans; or as a less preferred alternative, other methods to retain flexibility and 'future proofing' to respond to meritorious housing and business development proposals which give effect to the NPS-UDC but are not recognized or provided for in **Our Space** and supporting documents.
4. Consider streamlined RMA or other streamlined processes to facilitate the amendments sought which are specific to the Submitter's land and potentially other meritorious rural/urban boundary changes, and associated policy wording. Do not use streamlined processes for implementation of the overall **Our Space** strategy and approach which has very significant implications and needs to be subject to rigorous RMA based evidential testing.
5. Consider other amendments to the CRPS and other documents and other actions which

are appropriate to facilitate a responsive planning approach to management of urban growth of Greater Christchurch.

6. Such other consequential, additional or other amendments to Chapter 6 of the RPS and other documents, and any other actions, to be consistent with and give effect to the above, including directing consequential amendment to the Christchurch District Plan to rezone land from Rural Port Hills to Residential Hills (Mixed Density Overlay) as shown in yellow on the **Appendix A** Fox & Associates plan titled 'Proposed Zone Area – Redmund Spur, Cashmere Road, Halswell.

Reasons for Relief Sought:-

1. For the reasons set out above and under the responses to the Submission Form questions below.
2. The housing and business development capacity targets, urban form outcomes, and Schedule of Future Work measures (including change to the CRPS) contained in **Our Space** will have a profound and defining effect on the Greater Christchurch settlement pattern for the next 30 years. There will be significant flow on effects for the local, regional and potentially national economies. There is an acknowledged high level of uncertainty with the housing and business development capacity targets; and the adopted approach is aspirational and untested with its focus being redevelopment and intensification of existing urban areas, underpinned by an as yet unfunded “*vision for transformation of the transport network that fosters much greater public and active transport usage, and reduced reliance on the private vehicle*”. Despite all this, there is no s32 assessment accompanying Our Space.
3. The amendments sought will enable the Submitter as owners of 12 Redmund Spur Road and their adjoining land to use and develop the land in the most appropriate, effective and efficient way which will achieve the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act).
4. **Our Space** as notified proposes an urban growth management approach, in particular as it affects 12 Redmund Spur Road, which is inconsistent with and does not give effect to the Act, including Part 2 and Section 32, and other relevant statutory and non statutory matters.
5. The **Our Space** development capacity targets are uncertain and likely to be inaccurate and are based on a flawed methodology. With respect to hillside developments, it is likely that

some of the existing zoned hill areas will not be practical, economic or feasible to develop, including due to geo-tech, access and other physical constraints.

6. The proposed rezoning will have significant public benefits, in particular 'future proofing' the neighbouring Redmund Spur and Quarry Hill/Kennedys Bush subdivisions by adopting practical urban design principles including providing a roading link between the two subdivisions and alternative emergency access.

Housing Growth:

Question 1:

Our Space highlights there is significant capacity for new housing through redevelopment in Christchurch City but to accommodate housing growth in Selwyn and Waimakariri it identifies additional greenfield land around Rolleston, Rangiora and Kaiapoi.

Do you agree with this approach and why?

Response:

There needs to be flexibility to respond to meritorious changes to the urban/rural boundary not just at the major centres of Rolleston, Rangiora and Kaiapoi. **Our Space** and the CRPS are 'high level' documents which do not consider locationally specific factors which impact on appropriate zoning decisions at the local level. See also the discussion above regarding need for flexibility and responsive planning.

Question 2:

Our Space adopts the current planning framework that encourages a range of new housing types, especially in the central city, close to suburban centres within the City and around existing towns in Selwyn and Waimakariri.

Do you agree with this approach and why?

Response:

There needs to be an ability to provide mixed density neighbourhoods in many places – to respond to local site and amenity characteristics and to ensure a mixed demographic which has positive social and economic benefits. The proposed development will be 'mixed density'.

Question 3:

Our Space proposes to develop an action plan to increase the supply of social and affordable housing across Greater Christchurch and investigate with housing providers the different models to make it easier for people to buy their own home.

What elements should be included in this action plan?

Response:

No comment. The submitters are not housing providers.

Business Growth

Question 4:

Our Space adopts the current planning framework that directs new commercial development (office and retail) to existing centres to retain their flexibility and vitality, especially the central city, suburban centres and town centres in Selwyn and Waimakariri.

Do you agree with this approach and why? What further measures would support such development?

Response:

No comment. The submitters do not seek commercial development with this application.

Question 5:

The Canterbury Regional Policy Statement and the District Plans for Christchurch City and Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts have already identified suitable capacity for new industrial businesses.

Do you agree or disagree this is sufficient and in the right location and why?

Response:

No comment. The submission does not address industrial business.

Growth needs

Question 6:

The proposals in **Our Space** are informed by a Capacity Assessment that considers future demands for housing and business land, based on demographic changes and projections from Statistics New Zealand, and likely changes in our economy, including through business sector trends and impacts from technological change.

Do you agree or disagree with this evidence base and why?

Response:

See comments above. With respect to hillside developments, it is likely that some of the existing zoned hill areas will not be practical, economic or feasible to develop, including due to geo-tech, access and other physical constraints.

Transport and other infrastructure

Question 7:

Our Space promotes greater densities around key centres to increase accessibility to employment and services by walking, cycling and public transport. This aligns with recent transport proposals that signal more high frequency bus routes and in intention to deliver rapid transit along the northern and south-west transport corridors.

Do you agree or disagree with this approach and why?

Response:

Addition of a road linkage with the associated provision of mixed density housing will provide better access and more people for any public transport initiatives in this area.

Question 8:

Our Space aligns with broader infrastructure planning (including wastewater, water supply, stormwater, energy, telecommunications, community facilities, schools and healthcare) to help create sustainable, cohesive and connected communities.

Do you agree or disagree with this approach and why? What more could be done to integrate infrastructure planning?

Response:

The existing Redmund Spur development has already necessitated infrastructure planning particularly with regard to provision of potable water supply in this area. An extension of this planned facility will be possible. It is noted that there are no other infrastructure constraints affecting the development proposal.

Other

What other points do you wish to make to inform the final **Our Space 2018-2048 Greater Christchurch Settlement Update?**

Response:

No further comments other than as noted above.

Appendices

Appendix A: Preliminary concept plan and zone areas

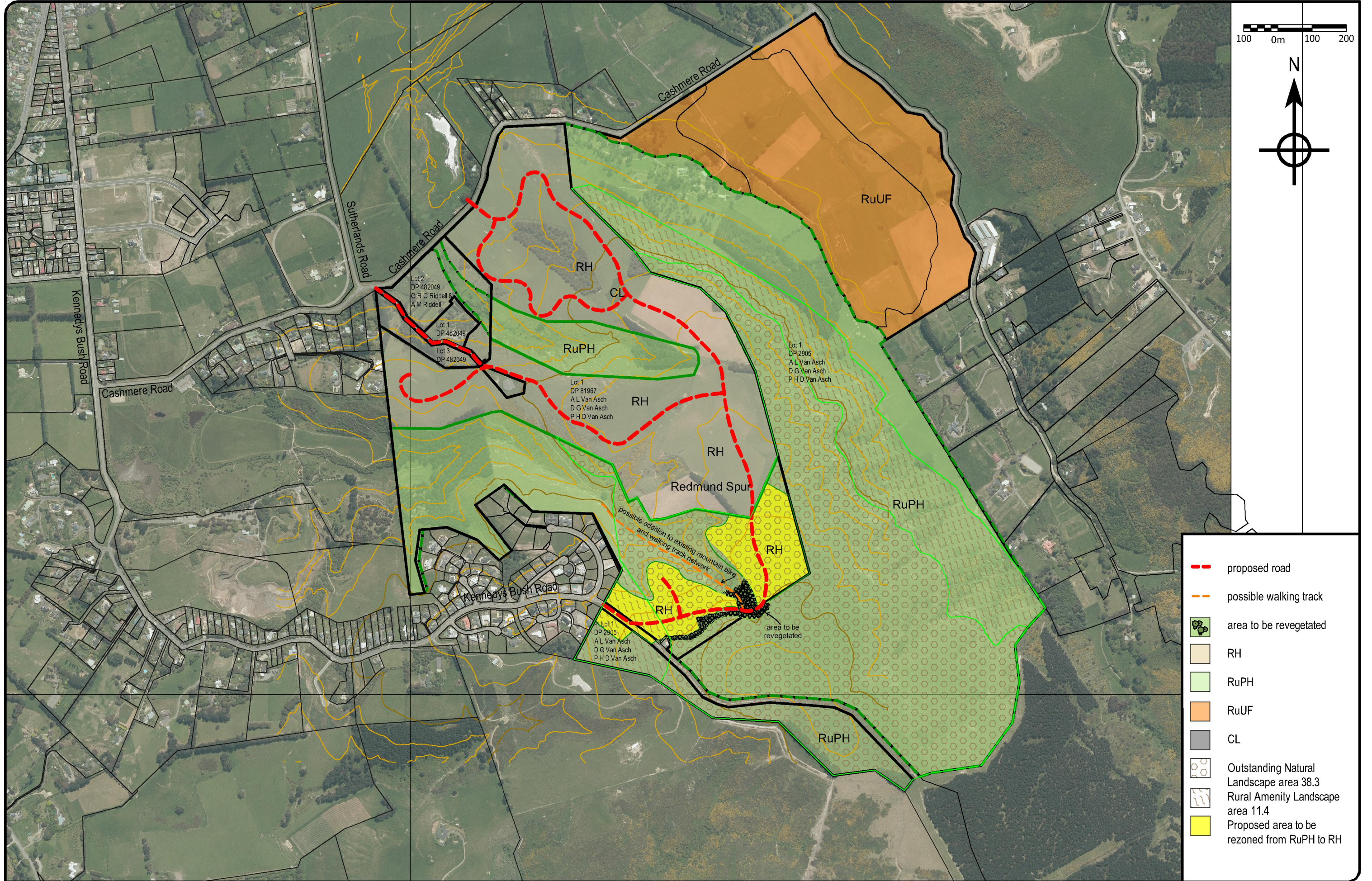
Appendix B: Letter from Fox & Associates re Servicing

Appendix C: Letter from Tonkin & Taylor re Site Suitability in relation to Natural Hazards

Appendix D: Landscape assessment (Andrew Craig)

Appendix A

Preliminary concept plan and zone areas



- - - proposed road
- - - possible walking track
- area to be revegetated
- RH
- RuPH
- RuUF
- CL
- Outstanding Natural Landscape area 38.3
- Rural Amenity Landscape area 11.4
- Proposed area to be rezoned from RuPH to RH

G			
F			
E			
D			
C			
B	New ONL, RAL areas shown	MJM	28/11/18
A	Proposed zone extension area reduced	CAF	30/07/15
No.	Revision	Appd	Date

Scale (A1)	1:5,000	Job No.	2186V.01
Reduced (A3)	1:10,000	Sheet No.	1 of 1
Designed	DOF	Drawn	LJW
Checked		Rev.	B
Date	30 July 2015		

Appendix B

Letter from Fox & Associates - Servicing

Date
28 November 2018

Job Number
2186V.01



195 Peterborough St, Christchurch 8013
PO Box 895, Christchurch 8140

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0800 369 787

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**SUBMISSION ON
GREATER CHRISTCHURCH SETTLEMENT UPDATE
– OUR SPACE 2018-2048**

**CONCEPTUAL DESIGN AND SERVICING
OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA**

At: Kennedys Bush Rd, Redmund Spur Rd, Kitcheners Knoll Rd

For: Red Spur Ltd

Date: 28th Nov 2018

Prepared by: Michael Martin - Surveyor and Land Development Consultant

Introduction

Our client's family has owned the land and run a farming operation on Redmund Spur between Hoon Hay Valley and Kennedys Bush Road for more than sixty years. The Quarry Hill Subdivision at the top of Kennedys Bush Rd was developed starting 20 years ago. The Redmund Spur area adjacent to Cashmere Rd was rezoned some 15 years ago, and development of this area commenced in 2015.

At the top of the areas currently zoned for development there is an area that could be developed to allow a road connection between the two spurs thereby linking the 2 residential areas.

We consider that completing the road between Kennedys Bush and Redmund Spur is a logical thing to do and will benefit the combined areas. During emergency events (e.g. the recent fires and earthquakes) having dual access provides redundancy for egress and access to these areas.

Unfortunately, roading is not cheap and in addition the road must pass through some steep terrain at the highest point. Developing the adjacent land will assist with the funding of the road construction.

There is a limited number of sites capable of being developed on the Port Hills. Some of the existing Port Hills land zoned for residential development has constraints that mean it will not be developed. The Redmund Spur area has zoning for 400 sections in total with 360 lots remaining. These lots sell at an average of 15 per year. This gives a theoretical 24 years of supply.

The Urban Limit is being set in place for the next 30 years. We consider that allowing the proposed extension to the residential development will allow more sections to be supplied to this geographically constrained market for almost 30 years.

Services

Sewer can be extended from the existing developments (Quarry Hill and Redmund Spur) below the proposed development area.

Stormwater: this area drains to an existing stormwater and retention area just upstream of the Halswell Quarry Reserve. The capacity of this existing system can be increased to deal with the additional storm water runoff draining from the proposed development area.

The storm water treatment and retention area I am referring to is still owned by our client.

Water Supply: We have already established a reservoir to serve the Kennedys Bush road area. We will be establishing two more reservoirs to service the existing zoned land and these additional reservoirs will also be capable of providing a domestic water supply to the additional sections abutting the proposed new connecting road.

Power and Telecommunication reticulation can be extended from the existing residential areas adjacent to the proposed development area.

Constraints

The proposed development area has similar Geotech characteristics to the adjacent development and we do not anticipate additional natural hazards for the new residential area.

We consider that the rezoning of this area is a logical extension of the existing residential areas and will enable desirable connectivity for this suburb, and help cater for the hillside allotment supply requirements.

Yours faithfully



Michael Martin | Registered Professional Surveyor

Fox & Associates Ltd

K:\2186V.01 Cashmere Rd Planning\WordDocs\2186V.01 20181129 Urban Limit.docx

Appendix C

Letter from Tonkin & Taylor re Site Suitability in relation to Natural Hazards

Rock Hill Ltd
681 Cashmere Road
Christchurch 8025

Attention: Dan van Asch

Dear Dan

**Geotechnical Opinion for Plan Change Submissions. Redmund Spur,
Halswell**

This letter provides Tonkin & Taylor's preliminary opinion on geotechnical and slope hazards issues related to a proposed road link between Kennedys Bush Road and Redmund Spur subdivision. T&T's opinion was requested by David Fox of Fox Associates on behalf of Rock Hill Ltd, with respect to proposed plan change submissions.

Preliminary road alignments are shown as pink and green dashed lines on the Fox Associates plan attached to this letter.

We are familiar with the land traversed by the proposed road alignment. Loess soil overlies volcanic rock on the 1(V):6(H) to 1(V):10(H) slopes of Redmund Spur. Loess soil and surface outcrops of volcanic rock will be encountered in traversing across 1(V):3(H) slopes to the existing Kennedys Bush Road.

There are no existing rock fall, or medium to large landslide hazards evident along the proposed road alignment. Normal Port Hills slope hazards including loess soil erosion (tunnel gully), areas of seepage, and small scale landslip can all be mitigated by civil engineering design that follows the principals of 'good hillside practice' for cuts, fills, drainage and retaining structures.

In T&Ts' opinion the proposed development is feasible from a geotechnical perspective. We expect, subject to an appropriate assessment, that a properly engineered development will meet the test of Section 106 of the RMA, in being 'not likely to accelerate, worsen or result in material damage to the land'.



This letter has been prepared for the benefit of Rock Hill Ltd with respect to the particular brief given to us and it may not be relied upon in other contexts or for any other purpose without our prior review and agreement.

Yours Sincerely



Barry McDowell

Senior Engineering Geologist

Reviewed for Tonkin & Taylor Ltd by:

Grant Lovell

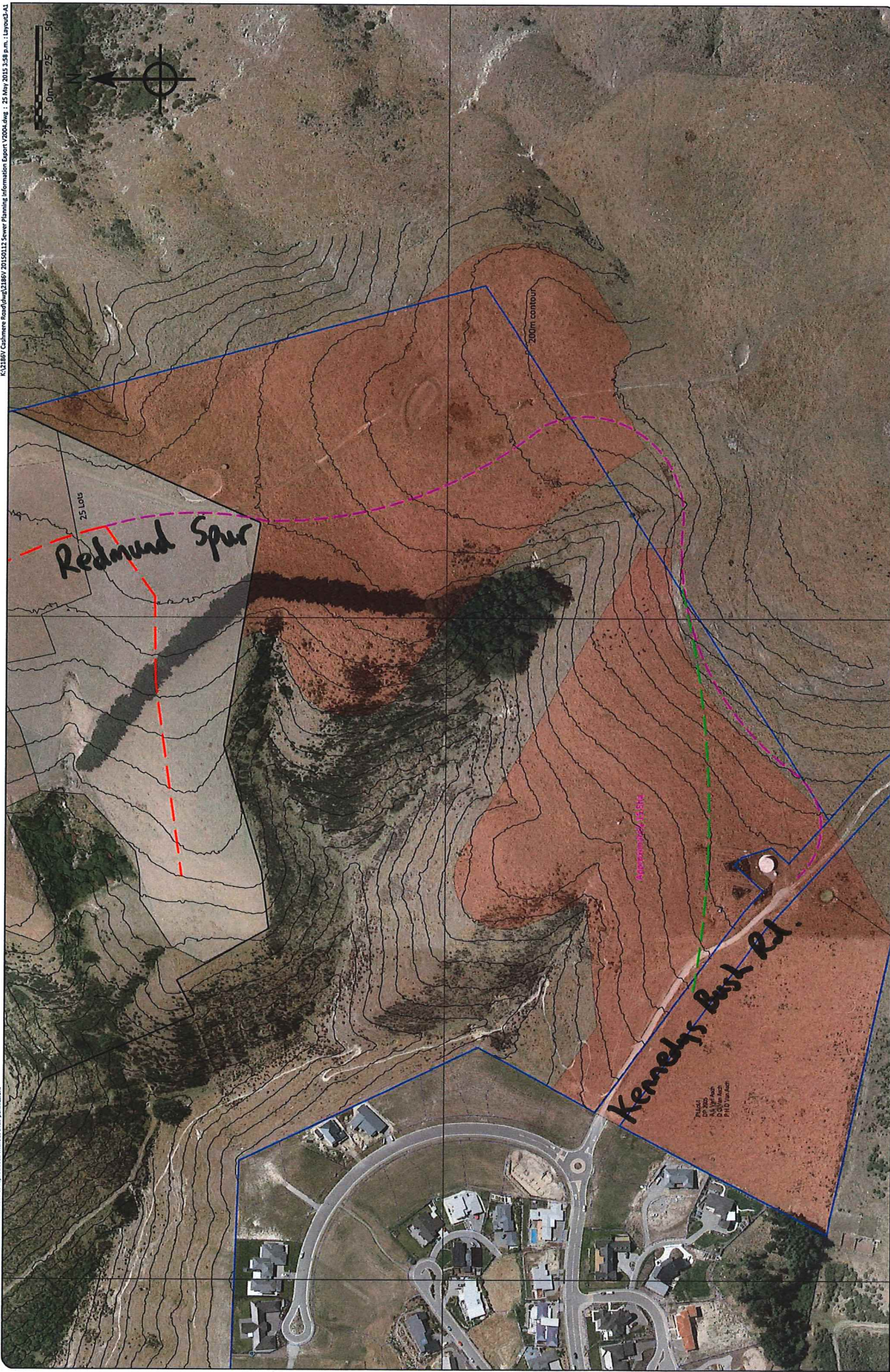
Principal, Business Leader - Land

MIPENZ, CPEng (Civil & Geotech)

Attachment: Fox Associates plan dated 25 May 2015

BMCD

p:\51887\51887.0050\workingmaterial\road extension to kb rd\2015.05.27 road extension ltr.docx



Address: ##### No: _____

Consent No: _____

Project Phase: _____

Scale (A1)	1:1,250	Job No	2186V.01
Reduced (A3)	1:2,500	Sheet No.	
Designed	###	CF#	1 of 1
Drawn	###	Checked	
Checked	###	Date	25 May 2015
Date			

Redmund Spur

Additional land to be assessed for geotechnical suitability

www.foxsurvey.co.nz
 0800 FOX SURVEY
 P.O. Box 895
 CHRISTCHURCH

Creating Spaces with Skill

Appendix D

Landscape assessment (Andrew Craig)

LAND USE RECOVERY PLAN REVIEW – LANDSCAPE ADVICE

For: Rock Hill Limited
Date: 29 May 2015
Prepared by: Andrew Craig – Landscape Architect

INTRODUCTION

The landholder seeks to rezone for low density (average lot size being 1500m²) residential purposes land currently zoned Rural Port Hills.

The approximately 12.4 hectare site is located above the existing residential area at Kennedys Bush (Quarry Hill subdivision) and the Redmonds Spur development which is currently being implemented. An outcome of the proposed re-zoning is to provide a road link between Redmond Spur and Quarry Hill subdivisions. It is understood that for this to be economically viable additional land is needed for housing.

The land is currently zoned rural with an 'Outstanding Natural Landscape' overlay.

Vehicle access is via Kennedys Bush Road. Public pedestrian access is available via formed walking tracks ('Kennedys Bush' and 'the Crocodile') which are located within the applicant's land.



Figure 1 *The site – indicated by yellow dashed line - as seen from Cashmere Road looking across Halswell Quarry Park.*

What is the landscape character of the existing environment?

The landscape character of the site is summarised as follows:

- 1 The site is entirely rural as it is devoid of any buildings. The only structure of any significance is the water reservoir which in fact will be located outside of the proposed re-zoning.
- 2 Landcover (vegetation) is entirely exotic comprising mostly exotic pasture grass, pine shelter belts and woody weed species – mostly broom. Some broadleaf exotic trees are also present – see Figure 2 photograph.



Figure 2 *The site as viewed from the reservoir above Quarry Hill subdivision. The gentler gradients extending to the pine shelter belt will accommodate dwellings.*

- 3 Native vegetation is present but throughout the site it is very scant (mostly tussock). A fenced area of native re-vegetation is located at the head of a gully at the top end of the Redmond Spur subdivision. This will be retained as part of any development arising from re-zoning.
- 4 Physical features are largely confined to boundary fences and little else.
- 5 Arising from the above points the landscape of the site is modified to a moderate degree, and therefore exhibits moderately high natural character.
- 6 There are no especially significant natural features within the site such as salient rock outcrops, water courses (with permanently running water) or bodies and native vegetation. The site does however include or sits alongside a system of gullies that form the upper catchment to Halswell Quarry Park.

- 7 Topographically the site is located mid slope where above the aforementioned gully system. The gully gradients are steep relative to the gentler gradients above where anticipated housing would be located. Broadly, then land form can be described as undulating rolling hill country.
- 8 Within the site there are no recognised (in the operative City Plan and proposed Replacement Christchurch District Plan) heritage features (buildings, sites or trees) and no significant ecological sites.
- 9 Amenity is moderately high on account of clearly apparent rural character, moderate naturalness, open space and vegetation.
- 10 There is a high degree of contrast between the urban residential area and neighbouring rural land. This contributes appreciation of each environment arising from opposing qualities.

Are there any landscape constraints?

As mentioned, there is no significant or salient landscape features within the site for which re-zoning is sought. There is a prominent and distinctive knoll directly above the site and the existing Quarry Hill subdivision - see Figure 3 photograph. This will constrain the upward extent of subdivision as do the gullies below.

*Prominent knoll to be free of buildings
No buildings will occur above yellow line*

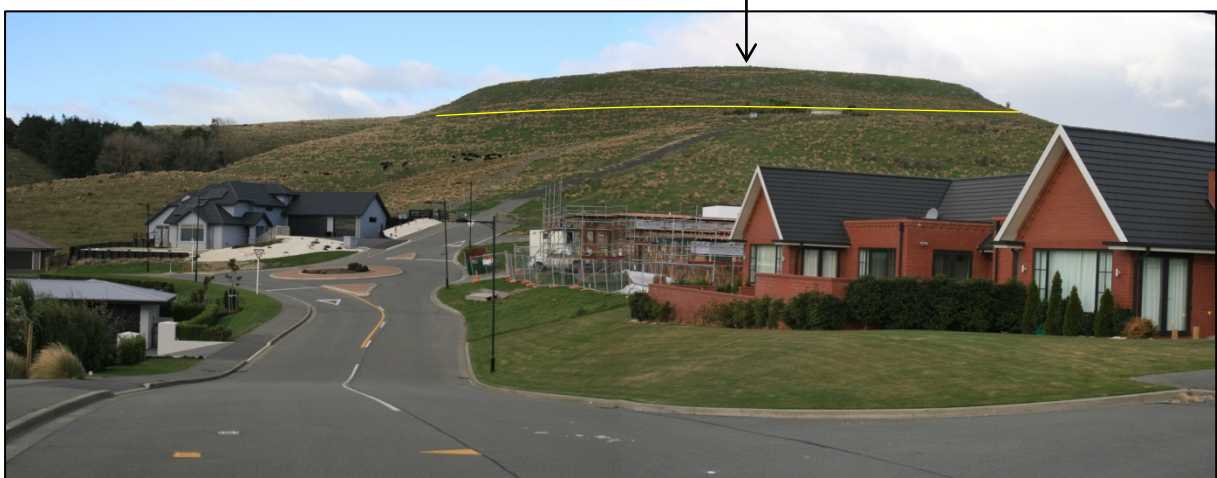


Figure 3 Showing the prominent knoll to be kept free of buildings.

Apart from the fenced re-vegetated area, none of the vegetation within the site is significant or particularly important.

Also as mentioned, the site is regarded as part of a wider ONL overlay that applies to most of the Port Hills rural area. Rezoning for residential purposes will result in the irrevocable loss of that part of the ONL comprising the site. In my opinion the landscape character of the site is such that its contribution to the overall ONL is relatively small and not particularly significant. That is, other parts of the ONL where rock outcrops, remoteness, native vegetation and distinctiveness are more significant compared to those occurring within the site.

What are the relevant Christchurch Replacement District Plan objectives and policies?

In the following discussion the objectives and policies relevant to landscape outcomes of the Christchurch Replacement District Plan are identified and briefly considered.

Replacement Plan (version dated 14/5/15)

8.1.1 Objective Natural and Built Environments

a. Significant natural features, landscapes, indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems, springs, significant trees, and historic heritage are protected or enhanced through the subdivision process.

It is apparent that regarding the listed features the Objective does not preclude the possibility of subdivision involving the features listed. Of these the only one of relevance is the ‘...landscapes ...’ as all others are absent from the site. The effects on the ONL will be discussed next as this is a concern raised in the following policy.

8.1.1.1 Policy – Natural features and landscapes

a. Ensure that subdivision and associated works shall achieve the long term protection and enhancement of:...

ii. outstanding natural features and landscapes, significant features and landscapes, important ridgelines;

The ONL component of the site will be diminished as will its naturalness due to the introduction of residential activity. Or to put it another way, the site will be further modified. It is my opinion that the landscape effects are not just confined to the site; that is the wider context of the site is an important consideration. Within that (the Rural Port Hills) the site is

relatively insignificant arising from its modest extent (12.4ha). Further it is contiguous with the existing residential area and so will appear as a relatively minor extension¹ to it. Or to put it another way, the site is not an isolated entity within the rural Port Hills. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that diminishment of the ONL is a landscape cost. I further understand, regarding RMA s6(b), that subdivision within ONLs can be entertained provided it is not inappropriate.

The policy however, is not only concerned with protection, but also enhancement. Enhancement will result from some indigenous re-vegetation of the gullies within the site, the extent of which has yet to be determined.

iii. significant indigenous vegetation and / or indigenous fauna, including sites of ecological significance.

There are no significant features listed that exist on site, although there may exist indigenous fauna such as lizards.

8.1.1.3 Policy - Environmental Compensation

a. Apply the concept of environmental compensation where net benefit would arise from a subdivision proposal occurring within outstanding natural features and landscapes, significant natural features and landscapes, sites of ecological significance, and in relation to heritage items and settings, and significant trees.

The ‘...net benefit...’ will result from the aforementioned indigenous re-vegetation of the gullies alongside the site. The location and extent of this is shown on the scheme plan. A further benefit will be the formation and provision of pedestrian access linking Halswell Quarry Park and the proposed road connecting Quarry Hill and Redmonds subdivisions.

Re-vegetation of the gullies will help control erosion, provide habitat, enhance amenity and improve water quality and runoff.

14.1.5.7 Policy - Residential development on the Port Hills

¹ A policy amendment is sought requiring minor extensions to be less than 15 hectares

Ensure that the development of greenfield land on that part of the Port Hills facing the Christchurch main urban area complements the natural landform and character of the hillside by ensuring that development:

(i) has a backdrop of a natural landform or vegetation when viewed from the flat land and coastline/coastal environment;

As the Figure 2 photograph shows, the site will have for the most part a landform backdrop when viewed from the flat land below. Houses may however intrude the skyline at the point where the current pine shelter belt exists as seen in the Figure 2 photograph. Where this occurs planting is proposed to provide backdrop vegetation, reinforced by the inevitability of further vegetation within domestic gardens following development.

(ii) avoids buildings and structures on significant and outstanding skylines;

As indicated, the site will not result in buildings and structures appearing on significant skylines.

(iii) is of a density that provides ample opportunity for tree and garden planting to reduce the visual dominance of buildings within the hillside landscape

The proposed lot sizes will overall average 1500m². This size will enable and therefore ensure there is ample opportunity for tree and garden planting, thereby reducing building dominance. This effect will improve as vegetation matures over time.

(iv) integrates well with existing residential areas and where possible provides connections to public open space;

The site is contiguous with the existing residential area and so will be integrated with it. Site design will include the aforementioned walkway which will connect to others beyond the site – namely Kennedys Bush walkway. Vehicle access will be in the form of the road linking Quarry Hill and Redmonds subdivisions.

Further integration will involve the indigenous planting in the gullies which connect the site with Halswell Quarry Park.

(v) has regard to the location and scale of the principle building to reduce its visual dominance on the landscape;

Principal buildings will be the dwellings. The site plan has been designed in such a way that these are optimally located so as to minimise potential adverse effects. Also taken into account in this regard will be the location of backdrop planting in addition to the application of relevant bulk and location standards.

(vi) if adjoining significant and outstanding natural landscape, conservation and biodiversity areas, remains compatible with these areas; and

(vii) where possible provides access to mahinga kai and places of cultural significance.

The relationship between the proposed residential zone and surrounding rural ONL land will fundamentally remain the same as the current situation – that is; residential activity abuts the rural ONL. The only difference is that the boundary is shifted, while in generic terms the adjoining activity stays the same.

Nearby places of cultural significance – namely Halswell Quarry Park – will be accessed via the existing (Crocodile Track) and proposed walkway – see Figure 4 map. The proposed link road will also facilitate better access to these sites.

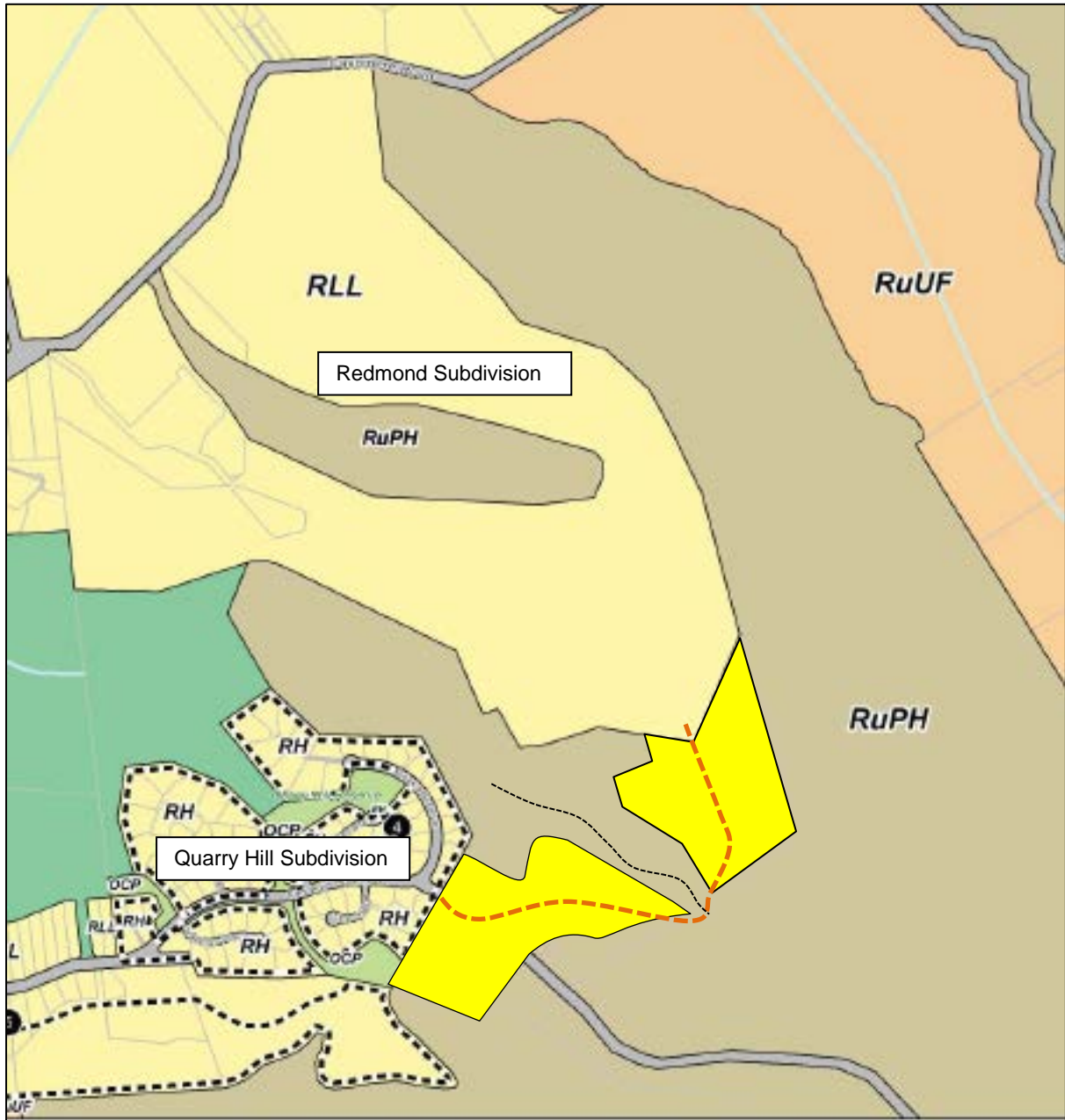


Figure 4 *The location of the site is identified within the yellow areas shown on the above Stage 2 Planning Map 50. The red dashed line represents the proposed road alignment. The black line through this area is the proposed walking track connecting to Crocodile Track below.*

What are the landscape advantages and disadvantages?

In the following discussion the advantages (benefits to the landscape) and disadvantages (costs to the landscape) of re-zoning are identified and considered.

Advantages

1 *Remediation & enhancement*

This will occur within the gullies to be re-vegetated with native plants. Current land cover comprises broom and exotic grass. The gullies will therefore be enhanced for the reasons outlined earlier.

3 *Contiguosness*

Future dwellings will be contiguous with the existing residential area and so will appear as a continuation of it. As a result current development patterns will be maintained, even though their extent is altered. For this reason residential activity within the site would not be unexpected – that is, it would not be out of keeping with existing patterns. Consequently there would be little or no adverse associative effect.

4 *Pedestrian access*

Subdivision will include an additional pedestrian access track via the gully shown on the site plan. This will be in addition to the existing 'Crocodile Track'. The tracks will enhance people's appreciation of the Port Hills environment and the presence of wildlife. They will also connect with the existing network of tracks within Halswell Quarry Park.

Disadvantages

1 *Diminished Outstanding Natural Landscape*

The subject site is currently within the Rural Port Hills zone which carries an 'Outstanding Natural Landscape' (ONL) overlay. It is therefore subject to RMA s6(b) which seeks protection of such landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use or development. Rezoning will result in a relatively minor reduction of the ONL area.

2 *Diminished rural area*

As for the ONL, rezoning will result in some loss of the rural landscape.

Conclusion

In landscape terms there are clearly costs and benefits arising from the proposed re-zoning. As is the case with all land use proposals, context is the key consideration. As identified and considered in the foregoing discussion it is evident that there exist favourable conditions –

contiguousness, remediation, modest size, the lack of significant site features, good access and the enhancement opportunity involving the planting in the vicinity of the site with indigenous re-vegetation.

The chief cost is lessening of the ONL, where in this case the primary landscape value is loss of vegetated open space. Further, the area lost from the ONL will be small relative to its overall extent.

There will be no adverse amenity effects arising from development following re-zoning. The reason is that modern housing on large lots will be high quality. The large lots will further enable large scale planting which will further provide amenity.

Overall, it is my opinion that the land use and its effects arising from the proposed re-zoning will, on balance, be appropriate in landscape terms given the circumstances discussed above.

Andrew Craig
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29 May 2015