

ref: Gifford/28923

10 July 2017

Hutt City Council  
Private Bag 31-912  
Lower Hutt, 5040

Attention: Dan Kellow

Dear Dan

## **ADDENDUM TO RESOURCE CONSENT APPLICATION RM170114 FOR EARTHWORKS AND VEGETATION REMOVAL - 64 WAIPOUNAMU DRIVE, KELSON**

On 17 March 2017, a resource consent application was lodged with Hutt City Council to undertake earthworks and vegetation removal at 64 Waipounamu Drive, Kelson. These works are required to facilitate a future residential development on the site.

Since the lodgment of the application with Council, a small re-vision to the proposed earthworks extent has been undertaken. The extent of the works and vegetation removals has decreased slightly as a result a short addendum clarifying the changes was submitted with this. Recently a revised Landscape and Visual Assessment (LAV), has been undertaken by Darkeford William. The revised LAV assess the landscape and visual effects of the proposal with less 'weight' being given to the consented environment. As a result of this revision by the Landscape Architect, it has been deemed appropriate by Cuttriss Consultants that a short addendum be prepared which revises the relevant section of the application AEE.

### Earthworks

#### **Amenity Values**

In addition to the conclusions of the original Landscape and Visual Assessment (LAV) and application AEE, the revised LAV has assessed the effects of the proposed earthworks on visual amenity values, in the absence of the consented baseline (this being the already approved consent for 142 lots with associated earthworks on the site).

The landscape and visual assessment has concluded that the greatest visual amenity effects will be observed by the adjoining eastern properties, at 229-237 Major Drive. A dip in the existing landform and sparseness of existing vegetation in this particular area will

expose occupants to uninterrupted views of the earthworks at close proximity. Accordingly, mitigation measures have been recommended in the form of screening planting, within the vegetation retention area denoted on the lodged plans. The planting will ensure an adequate visual buffer is established and that the effect of the proposed works on the existing amenity values of these adjoining properties is mitigated to an acceptable level. The LAV concludes that once the planting has established along the boundary, the effects of the proposal will reduce to a level where they are considered to be less than minor.

It is acknowledged that the proposed works will have increased visibility from more elevated properties to the east of the application site. However, from this aspect the application site is viewed in the foreground of the wider Belmont Hills. While the works may be prominent during the construction phase, they will not compromise the available views of Belmont Hills, as seen from the east. Once completed and re-grassed, in conjunction with the retention of existing vegetation on the eastern slopes of the ridgeline, and the retention of the central and northern vegetation of the site; the changes to the topography of the site will not significantly reduce the existing character and amenity currently afforded to properties which are elevated to the east of the application site.

With regard to the adjoining properties along the southern and south-western periphery of the application site, the wider application site is not generally directly visible, it is only discrete sections of the southern and western aspects which are prominent. As the majority of the works are concentrated about the eastern ridgeline of the site, wide angle views of the earthworks are considered to not be prominent. Where the works will be most prominent on the south-western periphery, replanting is proposed on the most visible batter slope and a vegetated band is proposed to be retained around the southern extent of the spur. This will ensure that once works are completed, vegetated aspects remain facing these south-western properties, and that effects on amenity values are mitigated to an appropriate level. Separation distances between this south-western area and the wider site, in conjunction with the existing vegetation about the periphery and central areas assists to reduce the visual impact of the works.

Where views are uninterrupted, generally from properties to the north, along Kaitangata Crescent, sufficient visual separation exists between these properties and the subject site. Accordingly, the mitigation measures proposed in conjunction with the design of the proposed works are considered to be of scale that potential effects on amenity values of the surrounding residential area are less than minor.

The revised assessment again concludes that the works will have short term visual effects on the amenity values which the site currently affords to the surrounding area. However, once completed the works and where required mitigation planting and re-grassing has been established the effects of the proposal will be acceptable.

## Effects on natural features and topography

As stated in the original application, the plan seeks to ensure that earthworks do not result in unnecessary scarring of the landscape and removal of vegetation. The reason that all earthworks require resource consent is to “*protect the distinctive characteristics, including steep hillsides, significant escarpments, and vegetation cover, which contributes to the visual amenity value.*”

The residential areas of Kelson surrounding the application site have all been subject to substantial modification by large scale earthworks, as the wider residential suburb was developed in the 1970's. Therefore, the context of the wider environment is one that has been modified over time by earthworks. As the site is zoned Hill Residential, it anticipates residential development and modification to facilitate such development. Given the topography of the application site, residential development is not achievable without substantial works being undertaken to provide suitable areas and adequate amenities that are required for urban living.

As part of the revised LAV the effects of the proposed works on the natural character of the environment has been undertaken. The report concludes that with regard to the broader landscape, the proposal will have no effect on the character of the Belmont Hills or Belmont Regional Park, which are situated to the west of the site. It also concludes that while the proposal will result in substantial modification of aspects of the existing landform and biophysical features, it will have a minimal effect on the natural character of the local area. The works are considered to generally reflect the underlying topography of the site, and their scale and gradient is commensurate with the existing contours and form of the application site.

For the above reasons, the proposed works and vegetation removals are considered to have no more than minor effects on the natural character of the application site and surrounding area.

### Objectives and Policies:

In addition to the analysis provided in the original application, the following completes evaluation of the application against the relevant objectives and policies of the Plan.

#### 4D 1.1.1 – Residential Character and amenity Values – Objective

Policies (a), (b) and (c)

The application site is situated on the periphery of a developed residential environment, that has been modified by large scale works in the past. The proposal to undertake earthworks and vegetation clearance on a site which features similar topography and natural features to the adjoining residentially zoned land, is therefore considered to be generally consistent with the character of the surrounding area. Mitigation measures have been proposed, in the form of vegetated buffers, replanting, screening planting and re-grassing to ensure amenity values of the surrounding residential properties are maintained

and that any effects on the visual amenity values are temporary in nature. The works have been designed to be generally constant with the underlying topography and that the areas of most significant vegetation has been retained on site., Accordingly it is considered that the proposal is consistent with the relevant objective and policies with regard to character and amenity values.

## **14I 1.1 – Natural Character – Objective**

Policies (a) and (b)

The proposed works will alter the current topography of the site, in some cases significantly. It has been concluded that the proposed works generally reflect the underlying topography of the site. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed works, which have been designed by a geotechnical engineer, retain the general shape and form of the sites un modified topography. The application site is situated on the periphery of a modified residential environment and accordingly the proposed works while altering the existing landform are responsive and sympathetic to the character of the receiving environment and the proposal achieves the outcomes sought by the above objectives and policies.

It is still considered that the proposal is consistent with Part II of the Resource Management Act 1991. It is therefore considered that the Council can grant the consent, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions of consent.

Yours faithfully

Sam Gifford



**CUTTRISS CONSULTANTS LTD**