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for Opotiki District Council.

THE GOODFELLOW GROUP LTD
Landscape Architects

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT – PEER REVIEW

PROPOSED SUBDIVISION – 98C ŌHIWA HARBOUR ROAD (ONEKAWA ROAD), ŌHIWA.

Kim Goodfellow - Registered Landscape Architect NZILA

The Goodfellow Group Ltd

23rd August 2022

SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE OF KIM GOODFELLOW: STILWELL APPLICATION

The Peer Review highlighted a number of concerns with the validity and accuracy of information provided within the landscape report, and as a result did not clearly demonstrate that landscape and visual effects are acceptable.

This supplementary evidence has been prepared in response to the evidence from Mr Christopher Campbell. The paragraph numbering used below refers to that in Mr Campbell's evidence.

Para 33

The evidence presented does not identify the number of trees and shrubs to be planted with any certainty:

- 655 native trees (para 33 - Christopher Campbell evidence)
- Total of over 10,261 native trees and shrubs (para 28 - Christopher Campbell evidence)
- Over 3000 native trees (para 40 and para 45 - Gavin Stilwell evidence)

It would be useful if the Applicant can confirm the total numbers of plants to be installed, and of this total what (if any) planting might be installed early (i.e. advance planting – refer discussion under para 63 below).

Para 34

The alternative proposal provides for the retention of 34 mature avocado trees to help maintain the existing orchard character. These trees may reach up to 20m high will *'...require a light prune every year and a heavier prune every 2-3 years'*. Having large fruit trees does not seem to be realistic measure within residential lots (i.e. private gardens) given this level of regular care and maintenance is likely to be undesirable to residents and families on an ongoing basis or the effect of shading of these large trees. This point raises some doubt with possible future compliance of proposed Consent Condition 33.x. which recommends to *'Maintain in perpetuity the landscape plantings in the area as shown on Plan X'*.

Para 37

Each of the Applicant's proposed dwellings have a 200m² footprint. This building size seems very unlikely when compared to a desktop review of other residential buildings planned (or under construction) to the immediate west/southwest of the Stilwell property which are significantly larger in comparison e.g. twice the floor area or more. In addition, the orientation of many of the Applicants dwellings does not seem logical given the elevated views available to these dwellings – e.g. many dwellings would seem to be located sideways to key views.

Consent Condition 33 viii. of the Section 42A Report - *'Building coverage on lots 10-12 shall not exceed 500m²'* - is considered to be a more realistic building size.

The size and orientation of these dwellings on such an elevated landscape is likely to have a direct bearing on potential landscape and visual effects, yet these aspects of the building layout seem incongruous and unconvincing based on my site observations and desktop review.

At the same time the Applicants revised visual simulations of Viewpoint 06 (Appendix 3) shows 'transparent blocks' to represent the future building areas of the adjacent Ōhiwa Cove subdivision which is yet to be constructed and located west of the Stillwell site. I think these transparent blocks tend to over represent the visual appearance of neighbouring buildings and therefore I do not agree these simulations reflect a realistic or plausible portrayal of what would be seen.

Para 46

Many of the concerns raised in the Peer Review stem from the inaccuracy or incompleteness of information provided such as visual simulations (3D views).

The Applicant has now presented an alternative 'reduced density' proposal which decreases the total number of lots (from 9 to 7) and increases the overall amount of planting as shown in Appendix 2. While such changes are likely to positively reduce the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposal, it is difficult to arrive at any reliable conclusions because no 3D views are provided to illustrate this alternative option.

It is important to stress that when evaluating landscape and visual matters (of any proposal), clear and accurate drawings and 3D views are critical. With current digital technology, 3D views are a very useful tool to show a proposal in its receiving environment in a realistic manner and with an appropriate level of accuracy. Such outputs are a standard tool within the design and planning profession which should likewise be applied to the Applicants proposal to help examine the potential effects of the subdivision located on an exposed coastal headland. The concerns previously raised in the Peer Review on the lack of realism or accuracy of the visual representations (3D views) are yet to be fully addressed.

Para 63

It is understood that the dwellings will be constructed at varying times within the next 1 – 5 years (para 38). Given this construction period will occur on a visually exposed site, establishing plants early (i.e. an advanced planting programme) is likely to be a positive mitigation measure to reduce potential landscape and visual effects of the subdivision and help to screen some of the construction activity also. Consent Condition 30 (Stage 2 conditions) of the Section 42A Report recommends *'The plantings on the certified landscaping plan shall be implemented at least 12 months prior to applications for s224c'*. Mr Campbell is willing to accept this condition which I also agree with. I consider a 12-month period as a minimum time since it will likely to capture the benefits of 2 x growing seasons which is especially important around lots 10 – 12 on the exposed ridgeline.

Para 64

Eco-sourced plant material (Consent Condition 28) has been recommended by the BOPRC ecologist Nancy Willems. Ms Willems also provides further detailed suggestions on particular plant species which I agree with. The Applicants' uncertainty to supply eco-sourced stock is not considered a valid response since eco-sourced stock is a common requirement on both public and private developments across New Zealand and with many reputable plant nurseries catering to this demand. Use of eco-sourced plant material is normally achievable through management strategies including:

- early contact and order with the required plant propagators
- tailoring the construction programme to suit
- procuring plants from numerous suppliers.

Eco-sourced plant material is also better suited to the climatic conditions of the site – i.e. an increased chance of plants successfully establishing – and this point relates directly to the discussion below – Consent Condition 29 ongoing maintenance of planting works.

Para 64

I do not agree that maintaining 4m high shelterbelts will screen buildings given the heights of buildings are 5m (lots 10-12), and therefore I support the recommended 6m height as per Consent Condition 33 ix.

Consent Condition 29 (Stage 2 conditions): ongoing maintenance of the planting works

A detailed landscape proposal will represent a clear vision of what should be achieved realistically over time including any landscape mitigation measures. However a successful planted result also depends on a number of different factors including an Applicants ongoing commitment to care and regularly maintain the installed planting for an agreed period of time following the end of construction (i.e. Landscape Maintenance Period), with a LMP typically varying from 1 to 3 years in duration.

A number of other factors relate to establishment of planting over the long term: Opotiki District Council currently have no standard reference to specify the LMP for the subdivision planting in detail, and Council have limited resources to inspect and monitor the planting over time to Practical Completion. In addition, the elevated and exposed nature of the Stilwell site may mean a higher risk of dead or damaged plants may result from harsh wind or weather conditions.

The Applicant is proposing a 3-year LMP for the subdivision landscape. I consider this LMP is reasonable however further detailed information would be helpful to identify how a quality landscape outcome will be achieved during the maintenance phase - e.g. regular maintenance tasks, horticultural standards, reporting, etc – and thereby provide Council with an additional level of certainty on how any agreed landscape outcomes will be achieved post construction.

Alternatively, Consent Condition 29 recommends a bond is paid to Council (150% of the value of the landscape works) to help ensure the appropriate level of maintenance is carried out. This condition may be a useful mechanism but perhaps this arrangement could be supported by the Applicant submitting more detail on the proposed landscape maintenance programme to Council.

Summary

The Applicants alternative proposal needs to be more clearly communicated including plausible visual simulations which can then be used to better evaluate any potential landscape and visual effects with certainty.