

Memorandum

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Attention: The Marlborough Environment Plan Hearings Panel

Company: c/o Marlborough District Council

Date: 14 March 2018

From: James Bentley

Message Ref: Topic 5: Natural Character and Landscape - Response to Minute 8 and 9

Project No: C16091A

Marlborough Environment Plan – Response to Minute 8 and 9 concerning Landscape and Natural Character Mapping, Overlays and Values

Minute 8 discussed the need to undertake two site visits in the Wairau Dry Hills Landscape in response to two separate submitters: Submitter 907: Levide Capital Ltd and Submitter 201: Vallyn and Diana Wadsworth. I can confirm that a site visit was undertaken to both Submitter's properties on 2 March 2018. Appended as **Appendix 1** to this memorandum are two letters and two maps for each property. The letters and maps demonstrate that through greater refinement, changes were deemed appropriate to the mapped extent of the Southern Hills High Amenity Landscape or Feature. The details are contained within these letters.

As a second matter, Minute 9 discussed that both the Inner Sounds Landscape and Outer Sounds Landscape be further refined to identify smaller landscapes within each broader area. This was mentioned in expert evidence supplied by John Hudson and Sophie Gilchrist who represented The Marine Farming Association Incorporated and Aquaculture New Zealand Limited – Submitter 426 and 401. Subsequently, I have been tasked by the Panel to prepare a map identifying 'smaller' landscapes within the Marlborough Sounds specifically.

As mentioned in my Summary Statement¹, smaller landscapes can nest within larger landscapes. The Marlborough Landscape Study identified two broad landscapes in the Marlborough Sounds and stated that there are numerous 'smaller' landscapes that would 'nest' within these landscapes. However, these smaller landscapes were not mapped as the smaller landscapes could be interpreted differently depending on where one would be appreciating the landscape from. For example, someone on a boat on the water would experience the landscape differently from someone walking along a ridge (such as the Queen Charlotte track). It would be up to the resource user to consider the boundaries of the 'smaller' landscape within either the broader Inner or Outer Sounds Landscape.

Mr. Hudson mentioned in his evidence that one way a landscape could be identified would be to use a 'visual catchment' approach. He referred to the original and superseded 2009 Landscape Study, which organised the 'values' component of the report into broad visual catchments.

Within the 2015 Landscape Study, the evaluation component (i.e. the identification of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes – ONFs and ONLs) was contained in Section D. For the Marlborough Sounds specifically, the area was divided into 'areas' which enabled the values of the mapped ONFs and ONLs to be captured more comprehensively. This meant that somewhere like Mount Stokes would be captured as one

¹ Page 15 of Closing Statement from James Bentley, author s42A Report (Technical Mapping, Values and Overlays) Natural Character and Landscape (undated, but presented to the Panel on Friday 2 March 2018).

area, where all its associated values would be listed in one area, rather than divided into several parts based on catchments. The bottom line is that there are many ways in which to capture the values associated with a mapped ONF and ONL and that this further work request has asked that this be resolved to serve greater usability of the Study.

Descriptions for the Marlborough Sounds (as a whole) and the two landscapes of the Inner and Outer Sounds are contained within the descriptive characterisation part of the Landscape Study (Section C). Attached at **Appendix 2** to this memorandum is a map illustrating a number of potential 'smaller' landscapes within the Inner and Outer Sounds based on a visual catchment approach. If accepted by the panel as being appropriate, this would equate to 13 No. Outer Sounds Landscapes and 8 No. Inner Sounds Landscapes.

Whilst a visual catchment approach has been determined for identifying the smaller nested landscapes, there are other methods for landscape identification, such as land typing. This visual catchment approach has been favoured as this is the principal vantage point from which people will experience and view the Marlborough Sounds. This visual catchment approach has only been applied to the Marlborough Sounds and not the remainder of the Marlborough Region.

Table 1: Smaller landscapes nested within the broader Outer and Inner Sounds Landscapes

Regional Scale:	Marlborough Sounds Landscape	
Sub-Regional Scale	Outer Sounds Landscape	Inner Sounds Landscape
District Scale	Croisilles Landscape	Tennyson Landscape
	Eastern Tasman Landscape	Tawhitinui Landscape
	Northern D'Urville Landscape	Nydia Landscape
	Admiralty Landscape	Beatrix/ Crail Landscape
	Cook Strait Landscape	Kenepuru Landscape
	Waitata Landscape	Havelock Landscape
	Forsyth Landscape	Grove Arm Landscape
	Port Gore Landscape	Inner Queen Charlotte Sound Landscape
	Outer Queen Charlotte Sound Landscape	
	Exposed Eastern Coastline Landscape	
	Tory Channel Landscape	
	Port Underwood Landscape	
	Robertson Landscape	

To complement this table, it will be important to provide a more refined characterisation description for each landscape, based on landform, landcover and landuse. This component would be factored into Section D of the Landscape Study. There may need to be some minor refinement to some seascape boundaries.

To further assist articulate the necessary landscape values associated with each smaller landscape, Section E of the Study concerning the Marlborough Sounds only, could be 're-packaged' based on 'landscapes' rather than grouping values in the broader way. This will mean that somewhere like Mount Stokes will hold landscape value in up to three different landscapes.

Appendix 1: Southern Hills Letters and supporting Maps

The following letters and maps are contained within this Appendix:

1. Levide Capital – Submitter 907
2. Vallyn and Diana Wadsworth – Submitter 201

Appendix 1A: Southern Hills Property: Levide Capital (Submitter 907)

As outlined within Minute 8, a Site visit to this property was undertaken on Friday 2 March 2018. The following is an analysis of the overlay as it relates to this property.

Landscape values associated with the proposed HALF in the MEP

The principal landscape values of the Southern Hills lie in their aesthetic values, where the hills act as an important visual backdrop to Blenheim and contrast with the varied land uses across the plains. They hold characteristic qualities that contribute to the visual appreciation of the area. The Wither Hills (including the wider Southern Hills) provide topographical relief to the flat Wairau plains and provide a high level of visual coherence due to their prominent and mostly unencumbered nature from buildings and noticeably 'clean' ridges and spurs.

The Wairau River marks the geological boundary between the harder geology to the north (the Richmond Ranges) and the softer geology to the south. Erosion by rivers and tectonic activity has moulded the Southern Hills to a low elevation. Due to this, the southern hills that front the Wairau Plain are highly legible.

The key values of this area therefore are primarily sensory values related to the visual coherence of the hills in terms of their homogenous undulating form, undeveloped ridgelines and colour, their topographical relief from the plains and the way in which they provide a visual contrast to the land use activities that stretch across the plains, especially when viewed from the plains. They have become evocative of south Marlborough. This is predominantly due to their presence as the visual backdrop to Blenheim as seen by people on the numerous roads (and rail) in the area, including SH1, SH63, Paynters Road, Brancott Road, New Renwick Road, Hawkesbury Road (to name a few).

Through this exercise, part of the property was identified as holding high landscape values that contributed towards the mapped area of the HALF. The property is located at the eastern extent of the Wither Hills, and includes part of the 15th, 16th and 17th valleys, which themselves are an important part of the Wither Hills. Adjacent to part of this is SH1 and the railway. SH1 extends southwards towards Weld Pass and further northwards towards the Wairau Plains and Blenheim. The railway line also comes close to the property, aligning with SH1 at the head of the 17th Valley.

Due to the size of the property and the inclusion of three different valleys, variances in character are noted, however the hills nonetheless provide topographic relief from the Wairau Plains and Wairau Lagoons and also assist in providing an entrance to the Wairau Valley when travelling northwards (from Weld Pass). Rocky peaks, areas of pine forestry and intensive land uses all have an influence on the aesthetics of the hills.

The extent of the mapped area on the property broadly follows a contour approach and to some extent a visual catchment approach for some of the minor spurs. This contour approach has been used as a mapping approach for much of the Southern Hills overlay, however, where cultural interventions have prevented this, land use has been a mapping indicator.

Analysis

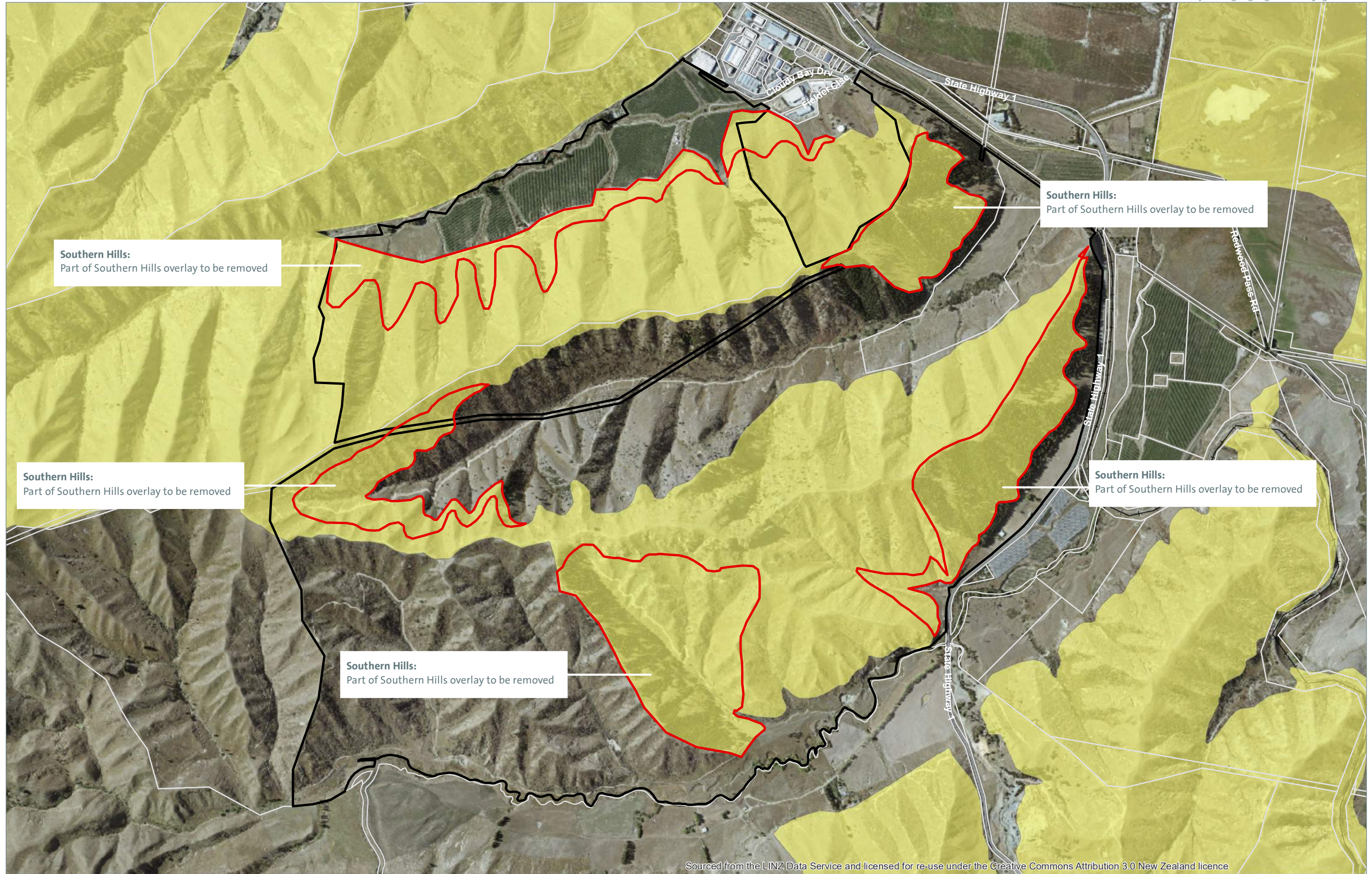
Following a visit to the property, I confirm and with the submitter that whilst parts of the property are visible from the state highway (and railway), not all of it is, and some refinement to the mapped area would better define those areas that are visible.

After the site visit to the property, Sue Bulfield-Johnston and I drove up and down SH1 to try and gain a better understanding of what parts of the property are visible and what parts are not.

Based on this I have recommended the following amendments:

1. 15th Valley: To refine the mapping around the valley floor and lower slopes of the 15th Valley. This is due to the modifications currently present on the valley floor (including vineyards and industrial buildings close to SH1). The proposed mapping method is to follow a contour line and gradually 'step-it-up' as the contours increase in elevation as the valley extends westwards.
2. To retain the mid and upper parts of the north-facing slopes southern slope as this area is visible from parts of SH1. I have carefully tried to exclude the smaller 'backside' ridges at the head of the valley where oblique views would not gain sight of these areas.
3. 16th Valley: I have excluded the area of hillside closest to SH1 and the railway line that is currently covered with pine trees. I do not consider that this part of the valley positively contributes to the values that is being captured by the overlay.
4. I have reviewed the remainder of the 16th Valley and consider that some small amendments could occur to the mapped area at the head of the valley, however consider that the remainder reflects the visibility well of this part of the valley.
5. 17th Valley: I have removed two large parts of the overlay in this valley, principally due to the modifications of existing pine forestry and that parts cannot be seen from the highway. These areas include southern-facing hill containing the pine forestry close to the state highway and the westward extent of the mapped area. A further smaller area has been removed within the middle of these two areas.

Based on this review, I recommend the amendments made on Figure 1.



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Data Sources:



Projection: NZGD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator

Legend

- Rail
- Cadastral
- VAL
- VAL to Remove
- 15TH Valley Farm Limited

SOUTHERN HILLS HIGH AMENITY LANDSCAPE REVIEW

15TH Valley Farm Limited

Date: 14 March 2018 | Revision: 0

Plan prepared for MDC by Boffa Miskell Limited

Project Manager: james.bentley@boffamiskell.co.nz | Drawn: BMC | Checked: JBe

Figure 1

Appendix 1B: Southern Hills Property: Vallyn and Diana Wadsworth (Submitter 201)

As outlined within Minute 8, a Site visit to this property was undertaken on Friday 2 March 2018. The following is an analysis of the overlay as it relates to this property.

Landscape values associated with the proposed HALF in the MEP

The principal landscape values of the Southern Hills lie in their aesthetic values, where the hills act as an important visual backdrop to Blenheim and contrast with the varied land uses across the plains. They hold characteristic qualities that contribute to the visual appreciation of the area. The Wither Hills (including the wider Southern Hills) provide topographical relief to the flat Wairau plains and provide a high level of visual coherence due to their prominent and mostly unencumbered nature from buildings and noticeably 'clean' ridges and spurs.

The Wairau River marks the geological boundary between the harder geology to the north (the Richmond Ranges) and the softer geology to the south. Erosion by rivers and tectonic activity has moulded the Southern Hills to a low elevation. Due to this, the southern hills that front the Wairau Plain are highly legible.

The key values of this area therefore are primarily sensory values related to the visual coherence of the hills in terms of their homogenous undulating form, undeveloped ridgelines and colour, their topographical relief from the plains and the way in which they provide a visual contrast to the land use activities that stretch across the plains, especially when viewed from the plains. They have become evocative of south Marlborough. This is predominantly due to their presence as the visual backdrop to Blenheim as seen by people on the numerous roads (and rail) in the area, including SH1, SH63, Paynters Road, Brancott Road, New Renwick Road, Hawkesbury Road (to name a few).

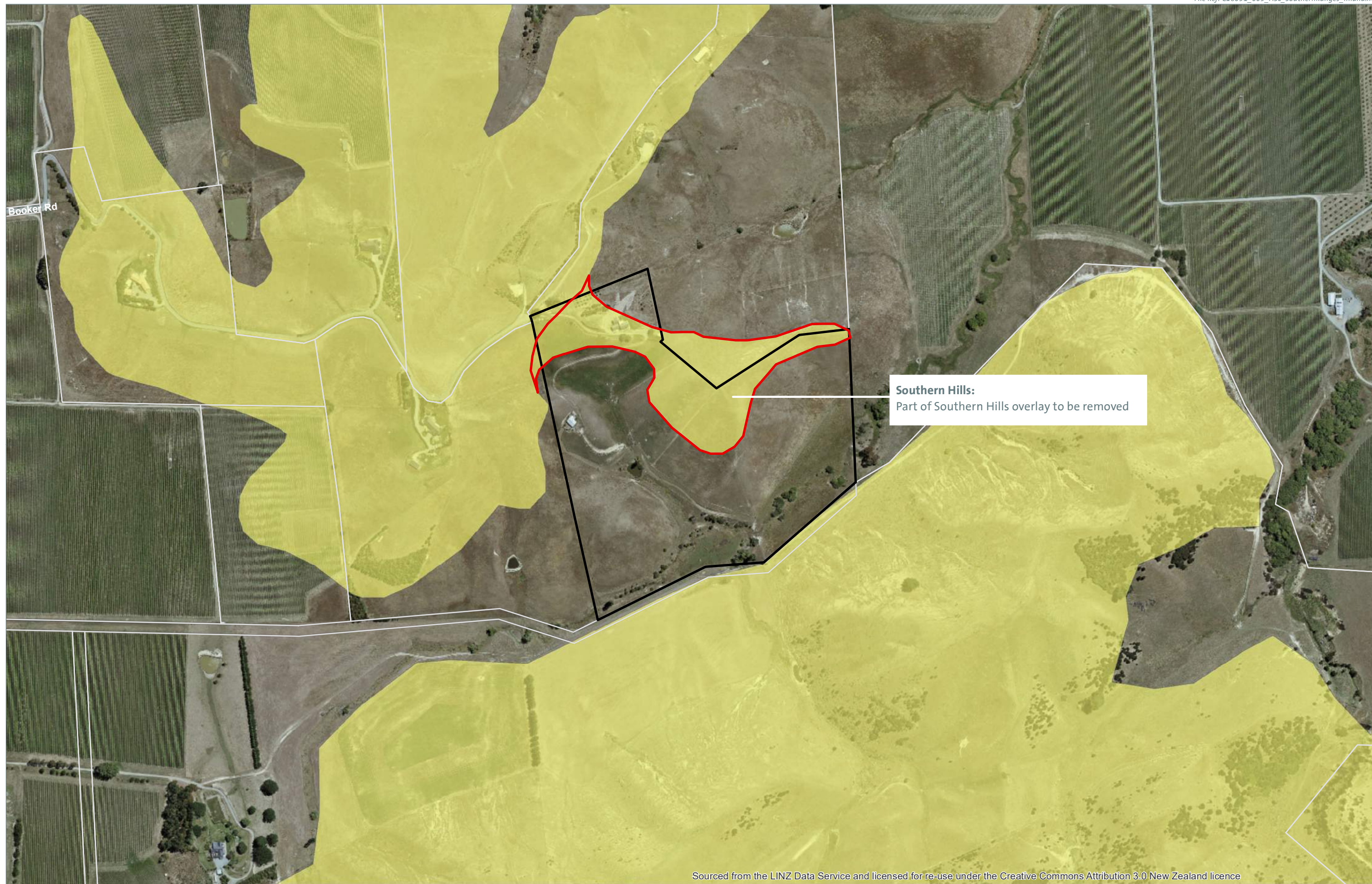
Through this exercise, part of the property was identified as holding high landscape values that contributed towards the mapped area of the HALF. Your property is located at the southern part of the third most 'easterly' ridge that extends into the Wairau plains. This small broken ridgeline divides Brancott and Paynters Roads (and valleys). The extent of the mapped area on the property follows a contour line. This contour approach has been used as a mapping approach for much of the Southern Hills overlay, however, where cultural interventions have prevented this, land use has been a mapping indicator.

Analysis

Following a visit to the property, I confirm and agree with the submitter that the property is not visible in the broader landscape and the mapped area cannot be seen easily from any local public road. Based on this, I recommend that the extent of the mapped overlay be amended as illustrated on the accompanying Figure 1 of this letter.

I also agree with the submitter that this particular ridge is lower in elevation than the other two ridges that extend into the Wairau Plains and is less defined. In many ways, cultural interventions have encroached sufficiently on this most easterly ridge to a degree where the very values that have been identified for the broader Southern Hills are difficult to identify. Whilst I consider that some identification and protection is afforded to this 'easterly ridge', I acknowledge that the values on this ridge are not as strong as the two to the west.

Based on this, I recommend the changes as outlined on Figure 2.



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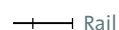

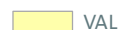




Data Sources:



Projection: NZGD 2000 New Zealand Transverse Mercator

Legend

-  Rail
-  Cadastral
-  VAL
-  VAL to Remove
-  Wadsworth

SOUTHERN HILLS HIGH AMENITY LANDSCAPE REVIEW

Wadsworth

Date: 14 March 2018 | Revision: 0

Plan prepared for MDC by Boffa Miskell Limited

Project Manager: james.bentley@boffamiskell.co.nz | Drawn: BMC | Checked: JBe

Figure 2

Appendix 2: Map of the Marlborough Sounds illustrating more refined 'landscapes'

Regional Scale:	Marlborough Sounds Landscape	
Sub-Regional Scale:	Outer Sounds Landscape	Inner Sounds Landscape
	<i>(with 13 smaller 'landscapes' identified as 1-13 nested within the Outer Sounds)</i>	<i>(with eight smaller 'landscapes' identified as A-H nested within the Inner Sounds)</i>
District Scale:	Landscape 1: Robertson	Landscape A: Inner Queen Charlotte Sound Landscape
	Landscape 2: Port Underwood	Landscape B: Grove Arm
	Landscape 3: Exposed Eastern Coastline	Landscape C: Kenepuru
	Landscape 4: Tory Channel	Landscape D: Havelock
	Landscape 5: Outer Queen Charlotte Sound	Landscape E: Nydia
	Landscape 6: Port Gore	Landscape F: Beatrix/ Crail
	Landscape 7: Forsyth	Landscape G: Tawhitinui
	Landscape 8: Cook Strait	Landscape H: Tennyson
	Landscape 9: Waitata	
	Landscape 10: Admiralty	
	Landscape 11: Northern D'Urville	
	Landscape 12: Eastern Tasman	
	Landscape 13: Croisilles	

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Legend

- Coastal Environment Boundary
- Inner Outer Sounds Landscapes
- Marlborough Sounds Landscapes

Inner Sounds Landscapes (A-H)

- A - Inner Queen Charlotte Sounds
- B - Grove Arm
- C - Kenepuru Sound
- D - Havelock
- E - Nydia
- F - Beatrix/Craik
- G - Tawhitinui
- H - Tennyson

Outer Sounds Landscapes (01-13)

- 01 - Robertson
- 02 - Port Underwood
- 03 - Exposed Eastern Coastline
- 04 - Tory Channel
- 05 - Outer Queen Charlotte Sounds
- 06 - Port Gore
- 07 - Forsyth
- 08 - Cook Strait
- 09 - Waitata
- 10 - Admiralty
- 11 - Northern D'Urville
- 12 - Eastern Tasman
- 13 - Croisilles

