



HAURAKI GULF ISLANDS DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW LANDSCAPE REPORT

September 2006

Prepared by
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for

Auckland City Council
as part of the

Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan Review

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared to document some of the landscape contribution made in the preparation of the Hauraki Gulf Islands District Plan Review 2006. Whilst specific aspects of the landscape contribution are able to be isolated and included in this report, the contribution has also included close liaison with the planning team and working party through the Plan's preparation. Such a contribution is more difficult to document, as it involved input by the landscape architect over the span of a year to many meetings and discussions. The outcomes are not easily documented in terms of specific results, but more in terms of awareness and direction. By being involved through such a process, the landscape architect was able to advocate for landscape values, which was one of the factors considered in the decision making process. The outcomes of such advocacy are embedded within many parts of the Proposed Plan rather than being separate sections that can be documented in a report such as this.

Another reason for this approach, which could be described as more of a Review than a re-do, was the excellent base that the Operative Plan provided to work from in terms of landscape values. When the Operative Plan was prepared in the early 1990's, it undertook a landscape based approach. This was an innovation under the then newly enacted Resource Management Act. The Review sought to address issues that had arisen during its operative life that needed changing.

As background research to the landscape contribution of the Proposed Plan, the Waiheke County Council District Planning Scheme was referenced, along with its pre-review statement (1987), the justification and landscape report for the Operative Plan. The significance of landscape values, and their role in the evolution of the various Plans, is a reflection of the increased social awareness of the landscape that has occurred over the last 20 years. The District Planning Scheme had zoning based on land uses as its main structure, and included a three page chapter on Landscape Design and Management.



Figure 1. Oneroa in the 1920's. Development in the absence of planning controls



Figure 2. Oneroa in the 1950's . The Western Road Board was established in 1947 and initiated planning controls.

The Operative Plan changed this approach to make the landscape itself the basis on which the plan was structured. Even with such a change, the landscape reflects the land use, so many similarities were carried forward between from the Scheme to the Operative Plan. However, the perception of landscape design and management changed from being an adjunct to being an integral part of the Operative Plan. This integrated approach has continued with the current Review, which reinforces the reason why a landscape report of the preparation of the Proposed Plan relates very much to the process that was undertaken rather than specific adjuncts to it. This is seen as a positive development, reflecting the fact that the landscape of the Gulf Islands is the central issue around which the Proposed Plan is structured.

Identification of landscape character is a central point in many aspects of the Proposed Plan, particularly in relation to subdivision and the new Land Units. It is landscape character that allows the perpetuation of the distinctive environments that are characteristic of the Gulf Islands. Recognition of the particular character that relates to each area ensures the landscape remains central to the planning process. Development is then guided by the extent to which the Plan seeks to maintain character, or the extent to which a change of character can be accommodated without losing the essential qualities that make the Gulf Islands the unique place they are.

This evolution from the District Scheme through the Operative Plan to the Proposed Plan demonstrates the change that has taken place in the approach to planning instruments and the recognition now given to the role that the landscape plays in these.

This Landscape Report therefore needs to be read in the context of and in conjunction with the Proposed Plan, which contains much of the input from the landscape architect within its structure and detail. This Landscape Report contains items that could be separated out and contained in a stand alone report, but does not reflect the full extent of the landscape architects involvement in the District Plan Review.

An example of this involvement relates to the Great Barrier Island components of the Proposed Plan. The critical landscape issues facing Great Barrier were identified as being the impact of subdivision and development in areas that are currently valued for

their natural character, plus the desire to facilitate development in an unhindered manner so



Figure 3. Great Barrier Island. Medlands Settlement Area where development is occurring

that residents were not burdened with compliance processes and costs. To achieve these aims, the Proposed Plan adopted an approach that makes development of a particular type and scale permitted activities within defined Settlement Areas, and requires development outside of these areas to meet assessment criteria that aim to maintain visual amenity and natural character. The landscape architects input is embedded in this approach, thus it is difficult to isolate specific items that warrant inclusion in this Landscape Report. However, there are two stand alone items that were prepared as part of the Review that are not included in this Landscape Report. They are the report on Colour for Buildings, and the report on Waiheke Views.

Colour for Buildings.

Colour is one factor that has a significant impact on the integration or otherwise of a building in the landscape. By defining the colours that are acceptable in terms of landscape integration, it is possible to make a permitted activity standard for colour. This has been done for the Settlement Areas on Great Barrier Island, with the aim of simplifying compliance processes and costs within the areas where development is more focused on occurring.

The Colour for Buildings report is also applicable throughout the other Gulf islands, particularly Waiheke where most new building is taking place. The report outlines the factors that influence a colour's suitability within the landscape, which are its reflectivity value and its greyness content. A full range of hues are available within the recommended colours, but a they are limited to having low reflectivity values and high greyness content. All colours are defined with reference to the British Standard 5252 Colour for Materials.

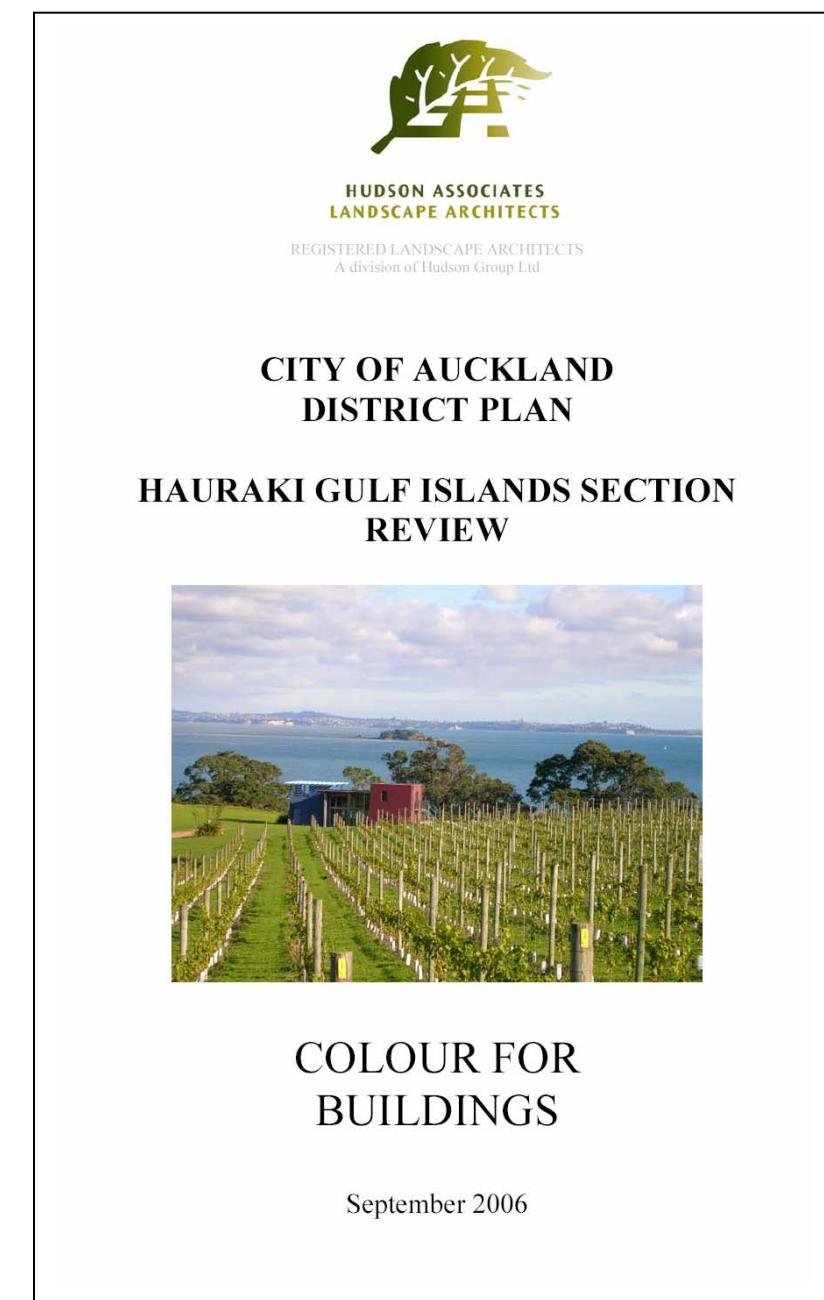


Figure 4. Colour for Buildings

Waiheke Views

The Waiheke Island View Report is also a stand alone document that was prepared in response to the concerns expressed by elected representatives and focus group members about the loss of public views on the island. In consultation with both parties, ten viewing points were selected for their merits of the views that could be seen. All were locations that the were publicly accessible, and provided views that were highly valued. All views were of coastal areas, and all were in western Waiheke, which is the only area where the assessment was undertaken.

The results ranked the ten views according to their merits and outlined the threats that existed that could cause the view to be lost. The typical threat was possible development on private land that could block the view from the public location, which was normally a roadside position. Means of retaining the views might involve negotiations with the relevant private land owner to secure the view, possible by limiting the extent of development undertaken on the private land. While this report was prepared as part of the Review, it is not designed to be a view shaft control as occurs in parts of the Isthmus District Plan. It is simply an assessment of the important views and the threats to them, so that steps can be taken in future should Council decide to ensure their retention.

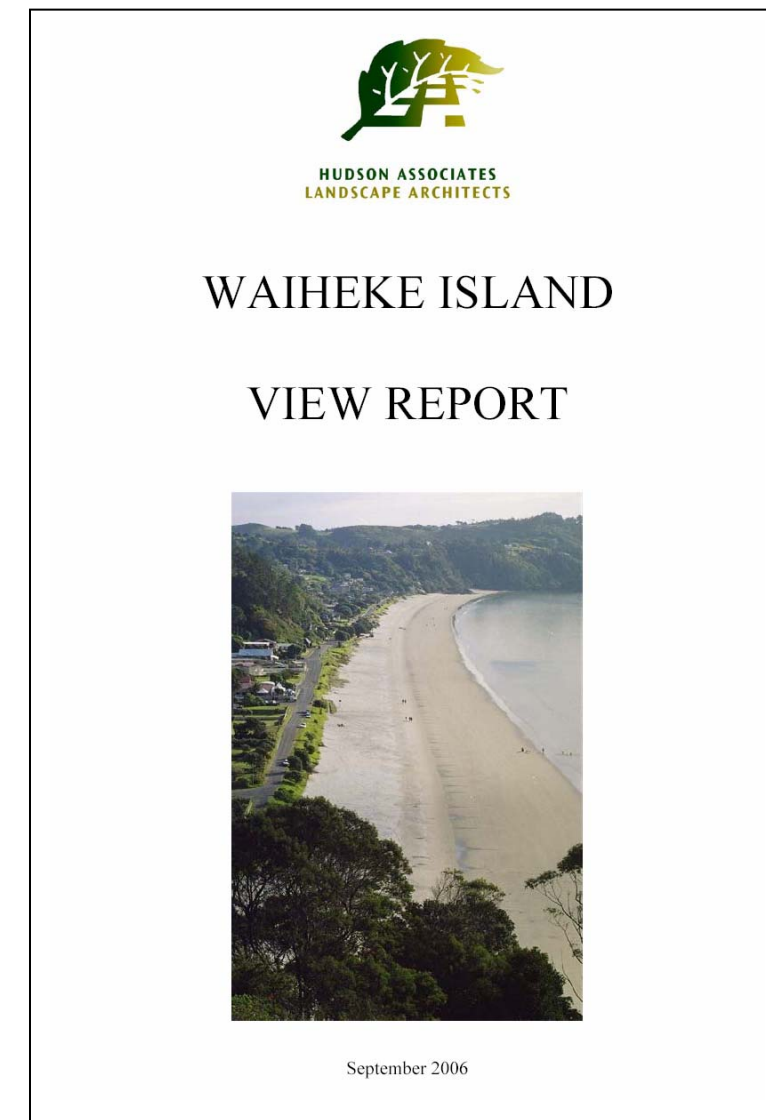


Figure 5 Waiheke View Report

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

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In preparing the Proposed District Plan, landscape character has been the underlying determinant of the land units and the landscape assessment criteria. The landscape character of the Gulf Islands can be broadly divided into cultural or natural. Great Barrier Island (GBI) has a predominantly natural landscape character, its landscape elements are large scale, and nature is dominant. Waiheke, on the other hand, is predominantly a cultural landscape, its landscape elements are small scale, and nature is accessible. These two contrasting characters complement each other, giving the islands a unique balance.

The other Islands within the Gulf cover the full range of landscape characters from highly natural through to highly modified. Little Barrier Island fits into the highly natural, whilst Karamuramu Island is highly modified through years of mining and is now almost completely destroyed. Pakihi Island has the cultural overlay of pastoral and plantation land use, but with areas of native vegetation all within an island with minimal built development. Rakino is a cultural landscape, with grasses being the dominant land cover and larger vegetation being sparse and limited to confined areas near the coast. The built pattern has been one of small scale baches located in clusters along the ridges, but change is starting to take place with larger individual houses being built on some of the more isolated and spectacular locations. Ponui has extensive areas of pasture and more recently viticulture has made its mark. Large areas of regenerating vegetation cover the higher areas to the south, but built development is very limited.

Rotoroa is also a cultural landscape, with pastoral grasses covering most of the island and the old Salvation Army rehabilitation facilities and houses being the only buildings. However, with the closure of the facilities, a new vision has emerged for the island, which is in private ownership. The vision is one of conservation and revegetation and opening parts of the island to public access for recreational use, whilst proposing a limited number of private dwellings and visitor facilities. This would see a modification of the cultural landscape to have a greater emphasis on natural character, but with a new cultural overlay to replace the previous activities. Such a change is a representative microcosm of the changes that are taking place throughout many parts of the Gulf Islands.



Figure 6
Change in Western Waiheke from rural landscape over the last 20 years



Figure 7
Great Barrier Island.
Large scale predominantly natural landscape



Figure 8
Karamuramu Island



The recognition of the natural values is increasing along with pressure for the development of cultural elements, particularly through subdivision for larger housing. Retaining the natural landscape character is important, as it is the desire to enjoy this character that attracts much of the development. However, such development has the potential to degrade the natural character that is the reason for the attraction in the first place. The approach undertaken in the landscape aspects of the Plan preparation has been to recognise and foster the natural character values and direct development in a manner that retains these values for the enjoyment of all.

The existence of the various landscape characters found throughout the Gulf Islands has formed the basis of all landscape assessment that has been undertaken in the preparation of the Proposed Plan.

Recognition of the cultural nature of the Waiheke landscape has influenced the Land Unit descriptions, resource management issues, objectives, policies and rules pertinent to each land unit. Being a cultural landscape, it has arrived at its present state through human activity, and it is able to continue to develop and change through ongoing human activity. An example is the transformation of the pastoral landscape to a viticultural landscape on Waiheke. The scale of activities is on a more human scale than those on GBI, as individual land ownership patterns are smaller and different owners land use patterns are more discernible. By contrast, much of GBI is in DoC ownership, or land ownership patterns are hidden under the more uniform land cover of native vegetation. This leads to a large scale landscape that dominates human activity rather than being subservient to it. The landscape has the ability to integrate the nine small Settlement Areas with only minor impact on the overall natural character of the Island. Accordingly, the descriptions, resource management issues, objectives, policies and rules pertinent to each Settlement Area and land unit have been written in the setting of the dominant natural landscape character.

The Operative District Plan has used a permissive approach that seeks to control the effects on the built environment, within the opportunities or constraints of the landscape character of the islands. This effects based approach has some benefits and some weakness, the main feature being the perceived weakness that occurs through the lack of certainty for all concerned when such an approach is taken. An alternative approach aimed at reducing these negative features has been to increase the range of permitted activities within the built up areas (particularly on GBI) so that there is certainty and no need for consent for activities that fall within the permitted framework. These areas fall with the Settlement Areas on GBI, which are nine in number and are areas where housing is concentrated. For areas outside the Settlement Areas, use of Restricted Discretionary activities has been adopted to some extent, with assessment criteria designed to integrate development into the surrounding landscape whilst maintaining its landscape character.



Figure 9. Rotoroa Island



Figure 10 Rakino Island

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AREAS

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The operative plan has 20 Strategic Management Areas (SMA's). Fifteen of these relate to Great Barrier Island (GBI), two relate to Waiheke, and the rest relate to the other inner or outer islands.

The operative plan states that:

“Strategic Management Areas can be broadly described as those geographic units which have a commonality (likeness) for reasons related to elements of the physical and natural environment, cultural and historical and settlement patterns, existing development extents, transportation and roading linkages and various combinations of all those factors.”

The Strategic Management Areas provide the means by which integrated resource management can be achieved and brings together the resource management process for land units into an integrated and comprehensive planning context.

There are 15 SMA's on Great Barrier Island (GBI). These are based on water catchments. Waiheke, on the other hand, has two SMA's. These are generally based on an east/west divide that differentiates the built up western end of the island from the unbuilt eastern end.

The question was asked as to whether it was appropriate to continue with the SMA's in the format of the operative plan. Ultimately it was considered that this was no longer an appropriate way of dealing with SMA's for the following reasons:

1. There is considerable repetition in the GBI SMA's in terms of their objectives and policies. Such duplication and lack of simplicity is not good practice, and does not align with the good planning approach promoted by the Ministry for the Environment.¹

¹ MfE Drafting Issues, Objectives, Policies and Methods in Regional Policy Statements and District Plans. Report prepared for the Ministry for the Environment by Gerard Willis, Enfocus Limited. Published in July 2003 by the Ministry for the Environment P15

Well Crafted Provisions: Overarching principles

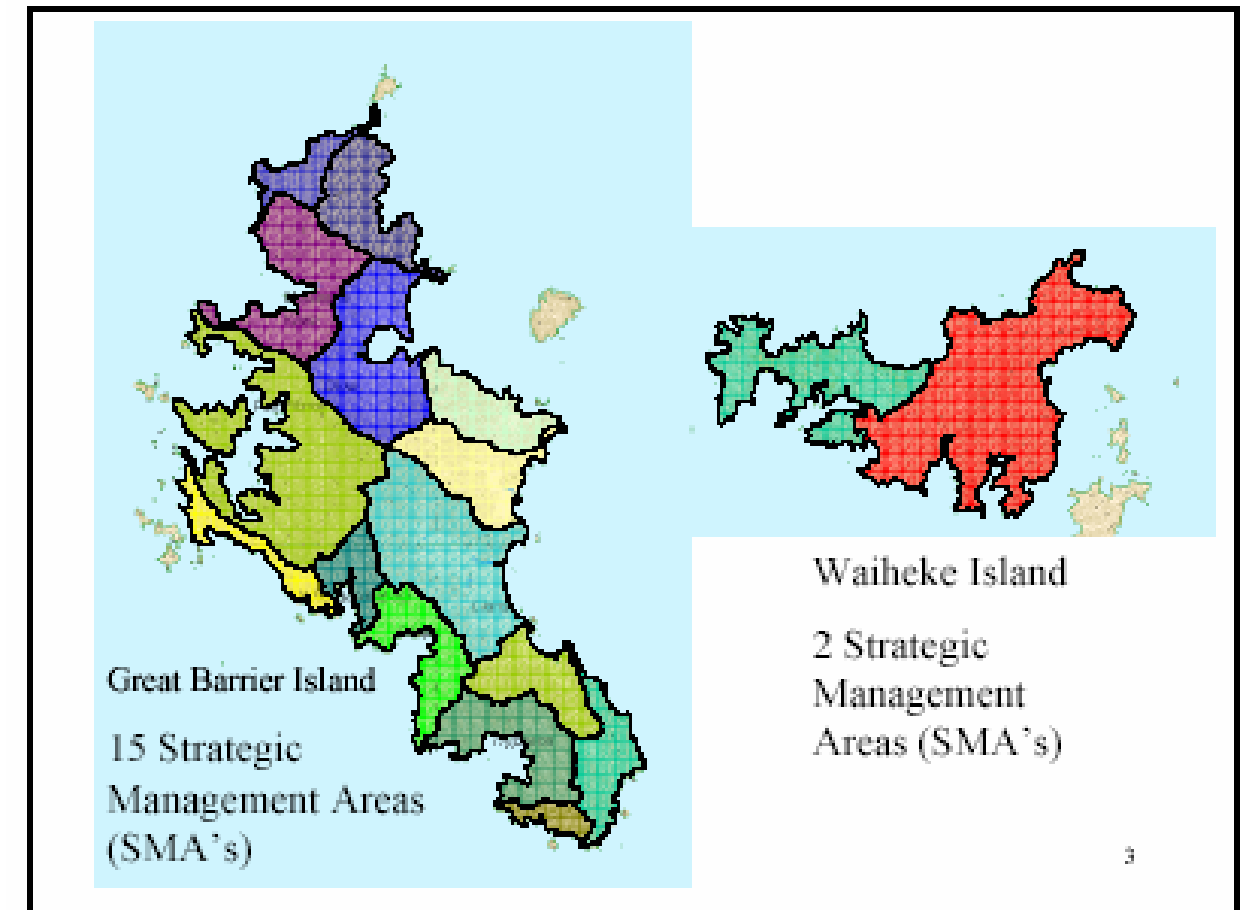


Figure 11. Strategic Management Areas

The overarching principles that apply to drafting issues, objectives, policies, methods and ERAs are:

- be succinct
- avoid duplication
- use cross referencing
- use plain English
- be transparent
- keep the purpose in mind
- set in the local context where possible.

Avoid duplication

Clearly stated and well-placed issues, objectives, and policies only need to appear once in a plan. There can be a temptation, particularly when plan rules are structured around defined areas like zones, to develop area-specific issues, objectives and policies. This can result in the duplication of issues that are common across a district or region. Avoiding this type of duplication can substantially reduce the size of plans, and show policy coherence and integration.

2. There is an inconsistency in approach between the GBI catchment based approach and the East/West approach on Waiheke. In the Waiheke situation, the SMA's are not catchment based, but include multiple catchments and relate more to the Metropolitan Urban Limits boundary.
3. The catchment based approach is one method that can be used to divide the island into management areas, but several other approaches could equally be used e.g. SMA's based on: land owner (DoC v other), Outstanding Natural Landscapes, vegetation, soils. Each of these bases provides an alternative and valid means of dividing the island into management areas.
4. There was concern that the SMA's were not achieving what was originally envisaged when the Plan was written. The reason was partly the complexity of the SMA's themselves, with multiple objectives and policies. Additionally, complexity increased when the SMA layer was combined with the Land Unit layer and the Policy Area layer plus objectives and policies from other sections such as subdivision
5. The GBI SMA's appeared unduly complex, repetitive and non-strategic. They had a physical processes focus, and lacked a focus on giving strategic direction or management.

Overall it was determined that the strategic direction would be achieved through one SMA for GBI, two for Waiheke, and one for the other islands. The objectives would differentiate between the western and eastern halves of Waiheke in terms of development, and similarly between the built and unbuilt parts of GBI. Such an approach achieves the aim of succinctness and avoiding duplication, and also provides a more strategic direction for landscape management and expands it from the focus on physical processes of the catchment based approach.

An analysis of the SMA Objectives and Policies from the Operative Plan found repetition of many similar policies. In accordance with the aim of reducing duplication, many of the objectives and policies could be combined if the number of SMA's was reduced. In order to achieve this, a departure from the Operative Plan's catchment based Management Areas was recommended and subsequently adopted. These should give a strategic direction for landscape management of the islands, whilst also recognising the

constraints of the physical processes and landscape values that are inherent and need protection.

Planning Layers

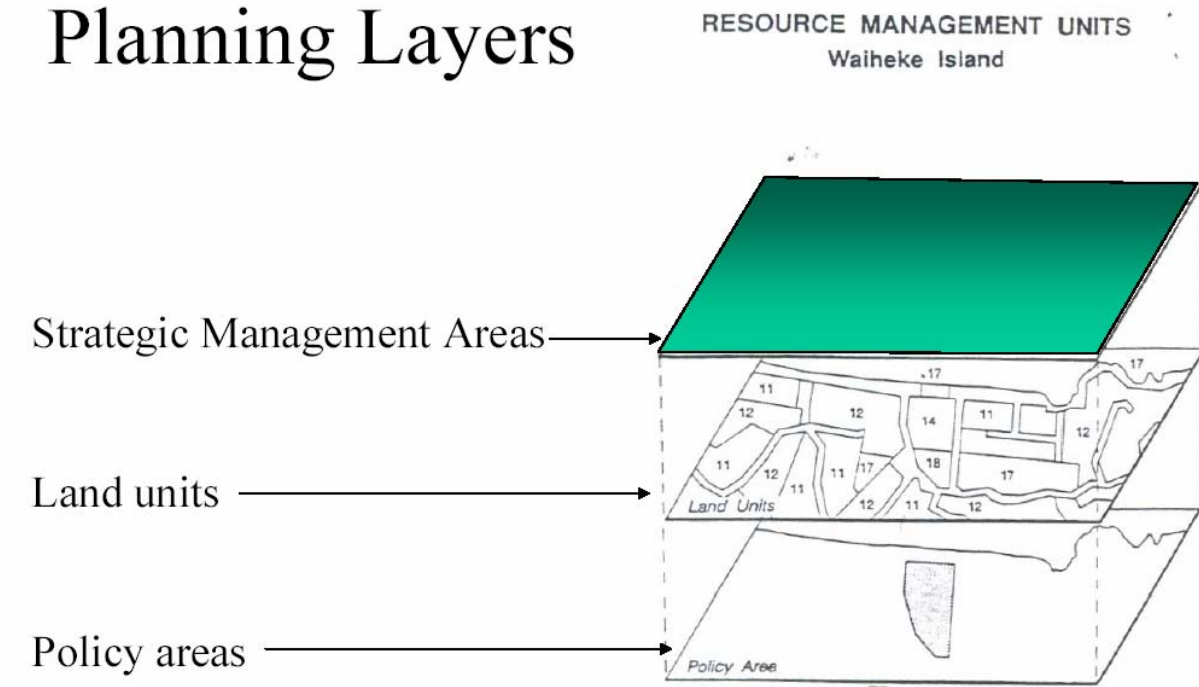


Figure 12 Planning layers

LAND UNITS

LAND UNITS

The Hauraki Gulf Islands are unique and valued because of their landscape, and because of the way that development has occurred within this landscape. The landscape remains dominant and development remains subservient in terms of character, partly because of the strength of the island landscapes and partly because of the way development has been enabled to occur. A key tool used in enabling development over the life of the Operative Plan has been the Land Unit basis for planning. Twenty six Land Units (LU's) are used across the Gulf Islands. GBI has only Land Unit numbers 1-10, whilst Waiheke includes activity based Land Units which number up to LU 22 plus LU 25 (wharf) in the Operative Plan. Pakatoa and Rotoroa Islands also have land units relating specifically to them, whilst the rest of the islands come under the umbrella of either land units 1-11,20 and 25 (eg Rakino, Ponui and Pakihi), or land unit 16 for Karamuramu island. the Conservation Islands Land Unit. As with all landscape aspects of the Plan Review, the underlying question that was initially asked was "Is the landscape based approach (for the land units) still appropriate" The answer was generally yes, for the following reasons:

- The landscape based land units allow the character of the Islands to be reflected in the objectives, policies and rules, which can be framed in a manner that allows this character to be perpetuated or changed, whichever the desired outcome may be.
- The landscape based approach allows landscape features, such as different types of land cover, to be the most important factors in determining the land units and consequently the planning regimes applicable to those units.
- Development throughout the islands has occurred within the overriding character of the landscape, which is still the dominant and over-arching factor that contributes to the islands character. It is appropriate to continue the role of landscape based planning so that this character can continue.

The land covered by the Plan is a series of islands, with each still retaining a relatively high degree of uniqueness and naturalness. The only areas that have been modified to any reasonable degree by land uses are the built up villages on Waiheke. Beyond that,

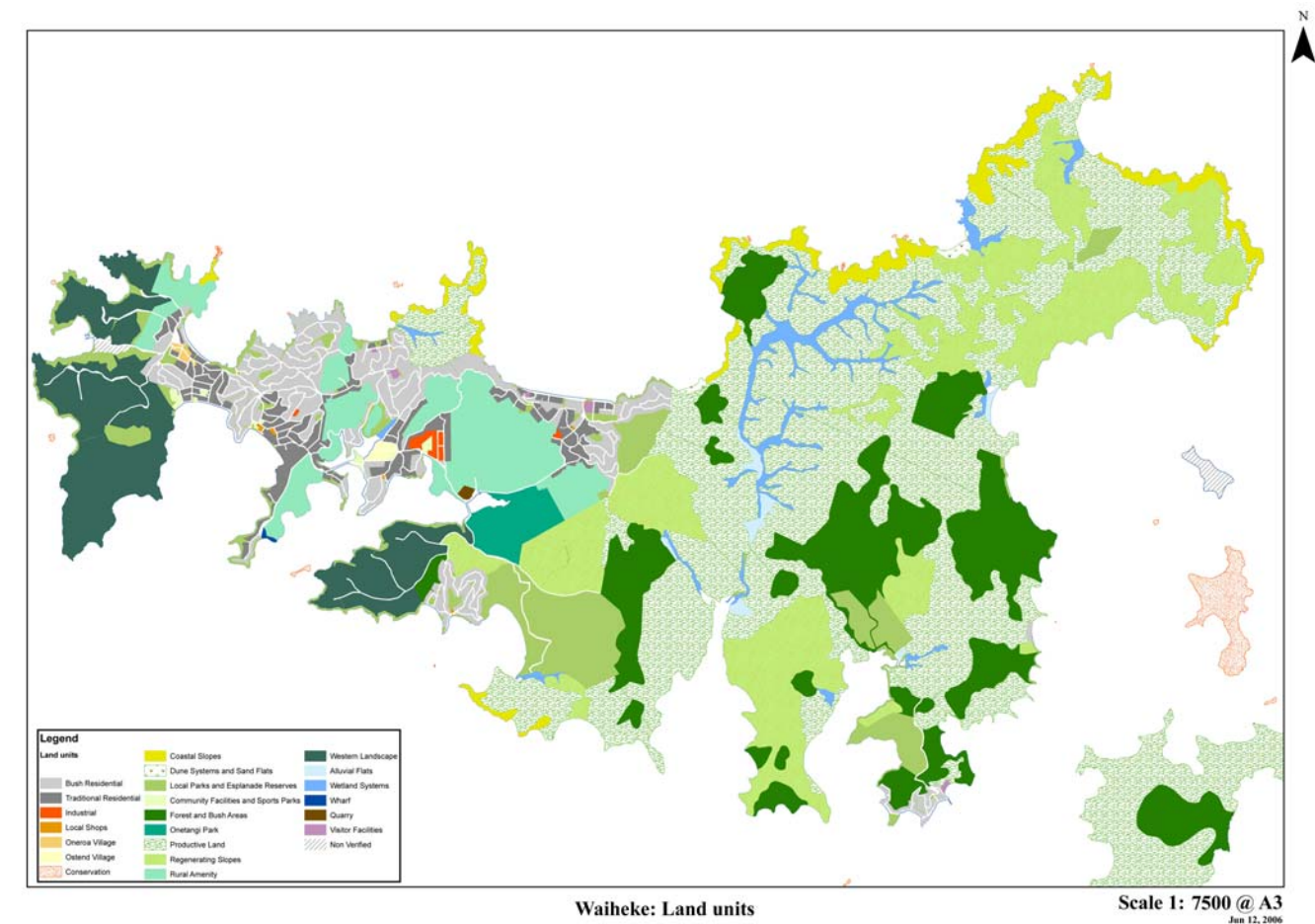


Figure 13. Waiheke Land Units

modification is generally limited to land cover. In such circumstances, the character of the underlying landscape remains readily apparent. To determine future land uses based on the readily apparent landscape allows the character of the islands to remain the dominant feature in determining change. This is appropriate on these islands, each of which is unique. It is also appropriate in places where the community and the landscape is strong, both of which contribute to the uniqueness of each island and of places within each island. A landscape based approach, accompanied by strong community values in determining appropriate land uses, is a valid and valued basis for planning in an area that is relatively undeveloped and wishes to retain existing character in the face and process of development and change.

The decision whether to continue with the landscape based Land Unit approach was supported by these reasons, and was made after consideration of the benefits of and drawbacks that the approach provided. In continuing with the approach, consideration had to then be given to refining the number, descriptions, locations, policies and rules for the land units,

Upon examination, it was apparent that a number of the existing land units had sufficient overlap and similarities to warrant investigation into merging them. This was the case for some of the landscape based land units on GBI, and for some of the activity based land units on Waiheke. Considering firstly the landscape land units, the following Land Units exist in the Operative Plan

LAND UNIT 1 - COASTAL CLIFFS

LAND UNIT 2 - DUNE SYSTEMS AND SAND FLATS

LAND UNIT 3 - ALLUVIAL FLATS

LAND UNIT 4 - WETLAND SYSTEMS

LAND UNIT 5 - FOOTHILLS AND LOWER SLOPES

LAND UNIT 6 - STEEP PASTURED SLOPES

LAND UNIT 7 - STEEP INFERTILE COASTAL SLOPES

LAND UNIT 8 - REGENERATING SLOPES

LAND UNIT 9 - LOW FERTILITY HILLS

LAND UNIT 10 - FOREST AND BUSH AREAS

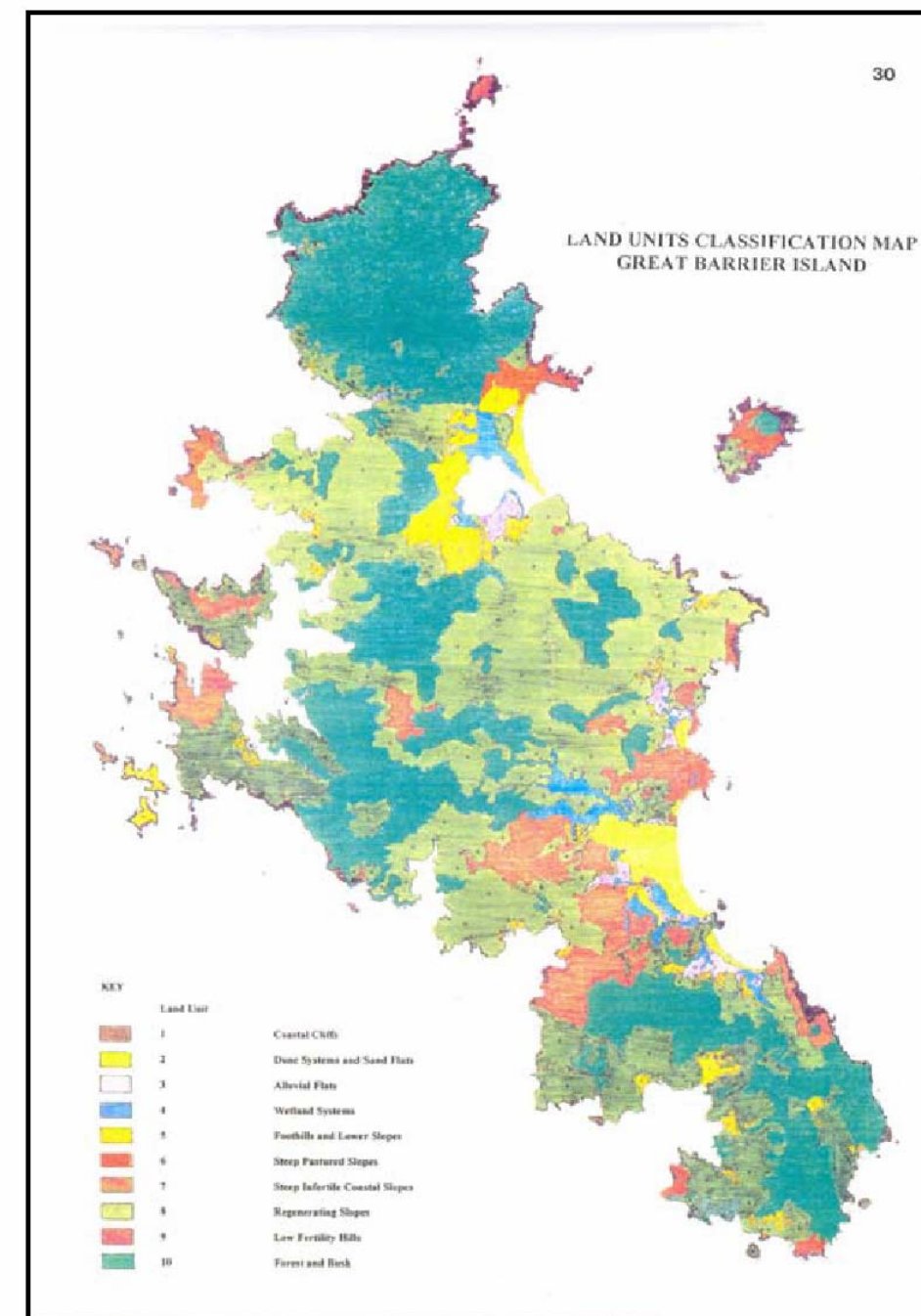


Figure 14. Great Barrier Island Land Units

The recommended landscape management strategy was to:

- *Preserve the outstanding natural features and landscapes of the island by protecting them from development that adversely affects the dominance of their natural character, and preserving their regenerating native flora and fauna, heritage areas, undeveloped coastline and undeveloped beaches.*
- *Enable productive use of land in areas where production already occurs, and enable further development in existing built up areas starting from the southern settlements of Tryphena and Medlands.*
- *Concentrate development in existing settlements*
- *Create opportunities in policy areas for tourist facilities and local amenities to develop”*

When considered in relation to the landscape based Land Units, the primary distinction for land use was to be between areas where production or development already occurs, and areas where natural character remains dominant. Within this distinction, the Land Units could be divided as follows:

Areas where production or development already occurs

LAND UNIT 3 - ALLUVIAL FLATS

LAND UNIT 5 - FOOTHILLS AND LOWER SLOPES

LAND UNIT 6 - STEEP PASTURED SLOPES

Areas where natural character remains dominant.

LAND UNIT 1 - COASTAL CLIFFS

LAND UNIT 2 - DUNE SYSTEMS AND SAND FLATS²

LAND UNIT 4 - WETLAND SYSTEMS

LAND UNIT 7 - STEEP INFERTILE COASTAL SLOPES

LAND UNIT 8 - REGENERATING SLOPES

LAND UNIT 9 - LOW FERTILITY HILLS

LAND UNIT 10 - FOREST AND BUSH AREAS

² Some of the Medlands housing is in LU2 – but not all of it



Figure 15. Land Unit 4 Wetland Systems



Figure 16 Land Unit 2 Dunes and Sand Flats

Existing Land Unit descriptions, objectives, policies and rules were then reviewed in light of this underlying distinction, along with observations of the existing landscape character on the islands. Given this underlying distinction, the purpose and usefulness of having ten Land Units was questioned, particularly in light of the aim for simplicity and avoiding duplication. The proposed minimum subdivideable lot size was also considered, which reflected the underlying landscape management strategy of focusing development in areas where production or development already occurs. This underlying distinction and its follow through into the subdivision rules and Settlement Areas lessens the need for numerous land units within either the development or the non-development areas of the island. The underlying distinction separates the landscape where cultural elements dominate from the landscapes where natural elements dominate.

Applying this analysis, the following land units were recommended for merging:

LAND UNIT 1 - COASTAL CLIFFS

LAND UNIT 7 - STEEP INFERTILE COASTAL SLOPES

LAND UNIT 5 - FOOTHILLS AND LOWER SLOPES

LAND UNIT 6 - STEEP PASTURED SLOPES

LAND UNIT 8 - REGENERATING SLOPES

LAND UNIT 9 - LOW FERTILITY HILLS

In reaching these recommendations, the current character of areas of each land unit was considered, their similarities, and the landscape outcomes anticipated for each. It was also recognised that Land Units needed to be remapped to reflect changes over time and in order to increase accuracy. Some of these changes are due to alterations in land use and land cover, such as occurs with vegetation growth over time.

LAND UNITS 1 & 7 (landform 1 coastal cliffs and slopes)

Land Unit 1 covers a relatively small area of land in comparison to LU7, and only features on GBI. Land Units 1 and 7 both relate to steep coastal areas, both aim to preserve soils and native vegetation, both are in the coastal environment and comprise landscapes of high natural character, and both have topography and a coastal location makes the land



Figure 17 Land Unit 1 Coastal Cliffs



Figure 18. Land Unit 8 Regenerating Slopes

units visually significant as an amenity resource. For these reasons, their combination into one new land unit (Landform 1 Coastal Cliffs and Slopes) is recommended. It is however acknowledged that some of the more ‘inland’ areas of LU7 may need to be absorbed into another land units such as landform 8 – regenerating slopes.

LAND UNITS 5 & 6 (landform 5 – productive land)

Both Land Units 5 and 6 are productive pastoral areas, occurring on GBI, Waiheke, Ponui and Pakihi islands. The primary difference between the two is the slope of the land. This productive land is an expansive rural landscape that contributes to the lifestyle, economy and identity of the islands. To enable these productive land uses to continue whilst maintaining the expansive rural character, there is little need to differentiate between the slope of the land. For these reasons, the two Land Units are combined into the proposed land unit called Landform 5 (Productive Land).

LAND UNITS 8 & 9 (landform 6 – regenerating slopes)

Land Units 8 and 9 are both characterised by regenerating native vegetation, being mainly Manuka or Kanuka in LU8 and more mature forest and bush in LU9. Both Land Units have high natural character and visual amenity values as a result of their visual prominence (in both coastal locations and as a backdrop to settlement areas) and their unbroken expansive qualities. One notable change that has occurred since the Land Units were developed for the Operative Plan is the extent of native vegetation growth, or maturation of the natural landscape. An example of this is evidenced by the reduction in exposed surfaces or pasture area and increased vegetation size or cover within Land Units 8 and 9. Figures 19 and 20. show photos in 1988 and 2004 of the same area, demonstrating the increased density of Manuka and its encroachment onto areas of pasture on an area of land in eastern Waiheke. For these reasons, the two land units are combined into the proposed land unit called landform 5 (Regenerating slopes).

On Waiheke Island, where activity based Land Units also occur, merging of land units was also considered. The merits of leaving or merging the following Land Units were considered as part of the landscape assessment:

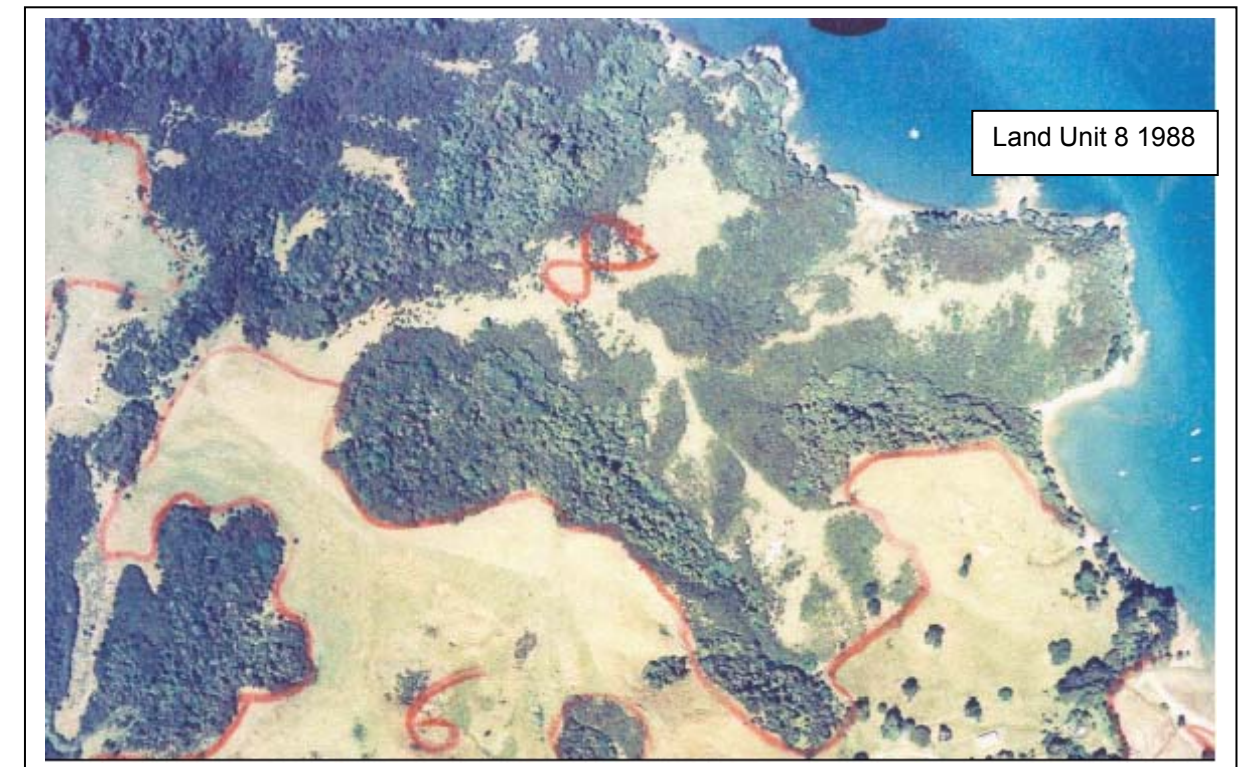


Figure 19 Growth on Land Unit 8 1988



Figure 20 Growth on Land Unit 8, 2004

LAND UNIT 11 - TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

LAND UNIT 12 - BUSH RESIDENTIAL

LAND UNIT 17 - LANDSCAPE AMENITY

LAND UNIT 18 - OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

LAND UNIT 19 - COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

LAND UNIT 20 - LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

LAND UNIT 21 - TE WHAU PENINSULA

LAND UNIT 22 - WESTERN LANDSCAPE

It was decided to retain Land Unit 17 (now called Recreation 1(local parks and esplanade reserves) unchanged as its function and character of the parks and esplanade reserves to which it is applied is quite distinct from the higher intensity of activities and buildings association with LU 18 and 19. It was however decided to combine LU 18 and 19 into the Recreation 2 (community facilities and sports parks) land unit as these land units have a similar character and function.

Similarly, the distinction between Land Units 11 and 12 remains strong in terms of landscape character, and also strong in terms of planning objectives, policies and rules. In this respect no amalgamation of the land units is proposed.



Figure 21 LU 12 Bush Residential

LAND UNIT 20 (Rural 1 – rural amenity)

The area known as Land Unit 20 (landscape protection) under the Operative Plan has been renamed Rural 1 (Rural amenity) under the Proposed Plan. The reason for the change is to more accurately relate the land unit's name to the unit's landscape character. Much of the land classed as Rural Amenity is of a small scale in terms of agricultural activities, with an open character and high amenity value. It is also located in close proximity to built up areas, or separates one built up area from another.

The objective for this land unit in the Proposed Plan is:

“To provide for rural activities and a limited range of non-rural activities while protecting the rural character and visual amenity of the land unit”

Land Unit 20 has been the subject of discussion in the Issues and Options Paper³, and also a recent Environment Court Appeal for a proposed activity on land on Onetangi Road, commonly referred to as Onetangi Straight. The name “Landscape Protection” has led to an expectation that development will not occur within the land unit. However, through the permissive nature of the Plan where many activities such as restaurants do not require consent, and through implementation of the objectives, policies and rules, these expectations have not been matched by reality. Development and change has occurred to a greater extent than some people may have anticipated. The three photographs show the LU20 area of Onetangi Straight in 1988, 1996 and 2004. The difference is apparent in the change from pasture to viticulture and the increased shelterbelt planting. In describing LU20, the Operative Plan's stated intention was that:

“the predominantly rural character of this land unit be preserved in order to maintain a buffer of open countryside between the villages on Waiheke.”

It saw the land as

“characterised by a mixture of pastoral farming activities on flat to rolling land, pockets of native bush, intensive horticultural uses, horse grazing activities and lifestyle residential activities.”⁴

³ HG District Plan Review Issues and Options Papers ACC 19/5/05 Land Units p35

⁴ HGI District Plan Operative 1996 Part 6a page 66.

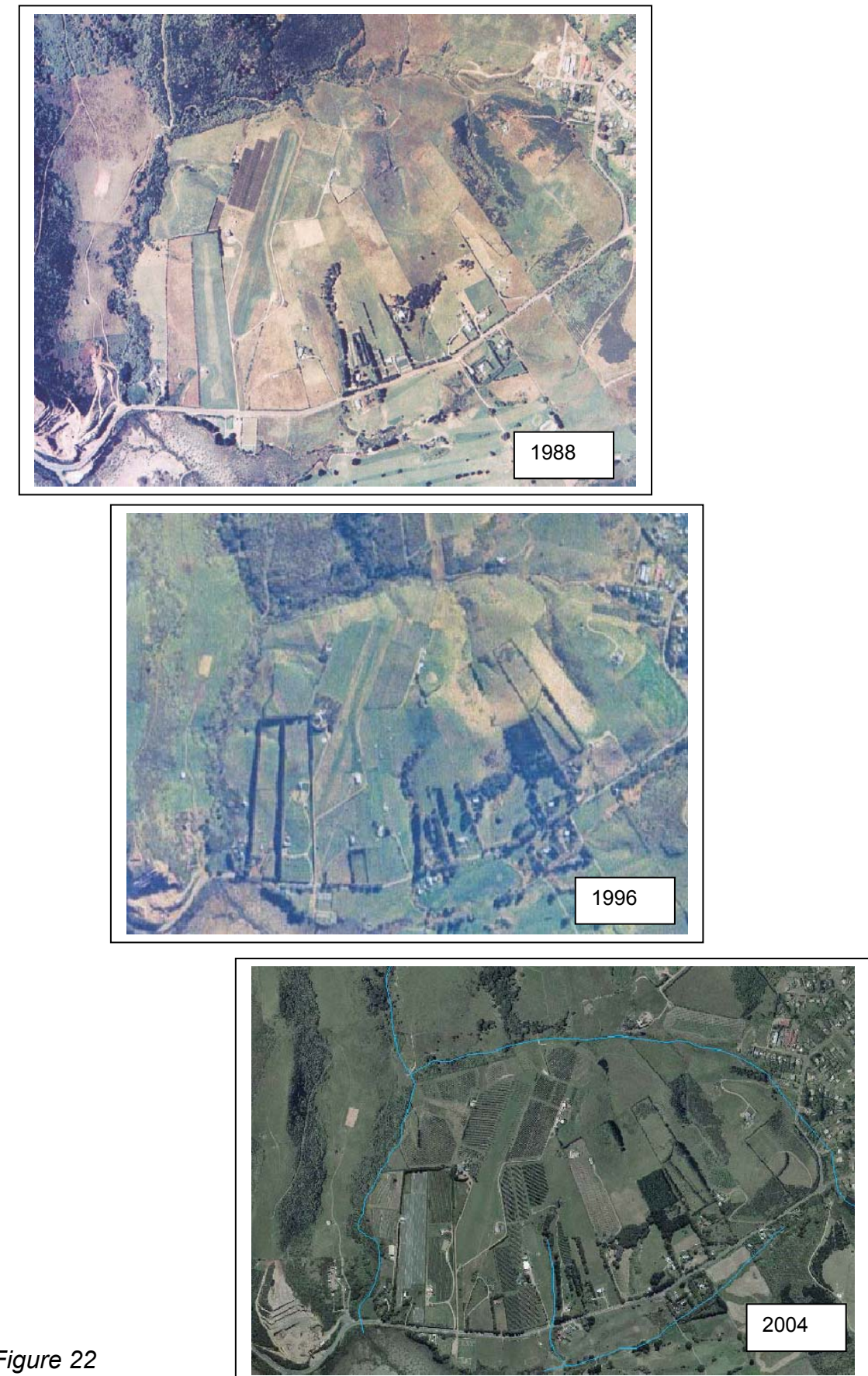


Figure 22

Land Unit 20 Onetangi Straight over 18 years

However, by 2006 the landscape had changed, with development of wineries and shelter belts being two activities to impact on this “*open countryside*” and “*pastoral farming*” landscape. This issue was highlighted by an Environment Court Decision granting consent for the development of an Events Centre at 78 Onetangi Road by Isola Estates Ltd. The Decision described the Onetangi Straight area of LU20 as follows:

*“While the impression of the visual catchment surrounding the site is that of a semi-rural scene it certainly is not pastoral and it is substantially modified by a variety of structures and the formal patterns of vines and windbreaks.”*⁵

The Decision highlights the difference between rural character and pastoral character. Rural character may include pastoral character, but this is not necessarily so. Rural character can include other activities such as structures, vines and windbreaks. It is simply an alternative expression of a cultural landscape. The openness of the landscape and the elements, features and patterns of the rural character are key characteristics that contribute to the visual amenity of the entire Rural amenity land unit. It is entirely possible that this visual amenity may be created by the features and patterns of productive activities.

Openness and rural activities, which are characteristics of the rural amenity land unit, contribute to its amenity values. Loss of openness and rural activities can contribute to a loss of these amenity values. The scale and layout of buildings contributes to the pattern of openness, as does the pattern and visibility of open space between or around them. Land uses within this open space, particularly rural activities, contribute to rural character. To ensure amenity values are not lost, any development shall maintain an open character through the design of its activities and the proportioning and location of the open space element in relation to these activities.

In considering Land Unit 20 as part of the Plan Review, the initial recommendation was to create a separate land unit for the LU20 area along Onetangi Straight and another unit for the other LU20 areas. The reason for this was the size, location, surrounds and character of the Onetangi Straight LU20 area was different to these factors for the other LU20 areas.

⁵ Environment Court Decision w 042/2006 Isola Estates v Ak City Council p3

The LU20 along beside Onetangi Straight is of a larger scale than other LU20 areas, much of it is hidden from view from passing traffic on Onetangi Road, is topographically confined by the surrounding rising topography, and contains a number of existing or approved activities that indicate a greater degree of development than in other LU20 areas. For these reasons, a separate Land Unit was recommended that would allow land use in this area to be directed in a manner that differed from the other LU20 areas, which are typically smaller scale and more intimately related to the nearby residential areas and their local amenity. The character of the Onetangi Straight area of the Rural amenity land unit is described in the Proposed Plan as follows:

The area of the land unit that adjoins Onetangi Road differs from the other areas of rural amenity land in that it contains activities that may be considered 'non-rural' in their character, such as wineries and tourist complexes. The scale of this area of the land unit is sufficiently large to accept these activities, while still maintaining a rural landscape with an open pattern.

After further review of the purpose and function of the land unit, and the different planning tools that could be used to achieve them, it was considered that one land unit could identify and provide for activities and specific rules in the Onetangi Road area, and also the other areas by creating separate activity statuses and specific rules for the two different areas within the land unit. Renaming of the land unit to Rural Amenity was desirable as a means of aligning expectations with the connotations that the name may bring about.

In order to recognise the landscape differences between the rural amenity land at Onetangi Strait and the other rural amenity areas, some specific rules are proposed that only relate to the Onetangi Strait area. These are aimed at recognising the specific character of this area, and maintaining the openness of the area as perceived from Onetangi Road. A large setback has been included in the rules for this reason, along with building controls specific to this area.

Feedback received in the Plan Review process requested changes to a number of areas of Land Unit 20 to residential land units. These are discussed below.

Kennedy Point

Kennedy Point includes land classed as Rural 1 - Rural Amenity along its eastern side, with the Goldwater vineyards at the northern end and the Kennedy Point Vineyard towards the southern end. The car ferry terminal is located just south of here, in a bay oriented to the east and clothed with scattered large trees, including Pohutukawa trees.

The land along the eastern side of Kennedy Point can be divided into a number of landscape character areas. These include the steeply enclosed bay of the ferry landing, the adjacent steep hill land where the Kennedy Point vineyard is located, the open bay north of this, the gently rolling plateau opposite the school, and the gently sloping bay of the Goldwater Vineyard. Each area has different landscape values, different vegetation cover and different scale.

The major landscape value that this land unit provides relates to the visual amenity derived from its rural character. Whilst the land uses vary from vineyards to large trees to open pasture, the lack of built elements and the scale of the land uses contribute to its rural character. The location of the land unit enables it to make a valuable contribution to the traveller's perception of the amenity of the island as experienced by people arriving on the vehicle ferry or travelling along Donald Bruce Road. The openness of the school grounds on the western side of the Point also contributes to the amenity, allowing views to the west and adding to the openness of the immediate area. Whilst some areas along Donald Bruce Rd are built up with housing and school buildings, there is a valuable contribution provided by the open space of the Rural 1 land that runs along the length of the Point from Causeway Road to the ferry wharf. Retention of this open space helps meet the objective of “... *protecting the rural character and visual amenity of the land unit*”, whilst also contributing to the general and visual amenity of the locality.



Figure 23 Kennedy Point

Cory Road

This area of land currently classified as LU 20 is located to the west of Palm Beach overlooking Mawhitipana Bay. The LU 20 continues south across Cory Road, forming a large area of rural character land down towards the causeway and Okahuiti Creek. The area of LU 20 overlooking Mawhitipana Bay is bounded to the west by residential, which is located atop the ridge, with limited views of the Bay and with limited visibility from the east. The Cory Road viewpoint is located on the eastern side of the LU20 land, with expansive views across Mawhitipana Bay to the north, Palm Beach to the east and the LU 20 land to the west

The land makes a valuable contribution to the open space and amenity values of the Bay, particularly as seen from the lookout. Views of the LU 20 area of land from Palm Beach are limited by the shape of the headland below the lookout, and it is only from the western end of Mawhitipana Bay that views can be obtained from the beach. The predominantly unbuilt character of the headland as seen from the lookout is an important contributor to the visual amenity of the area and of the land unit. To have this character changed to one that is built up would be detrimental to the amenity values that currently exist in the area and the amenity values of the land unit.



Figure 24 Cory Road Land Unit 20

Tiri Road

An area of land on the western side of Tiri Road, currently classified as Land Unit 20, separates the residential area of Oneroa from the LU 22 Western Landscape of Delamore Road. The character of the area to the west is that of rural, whilst to the east it is residential. The topography is such that an area of currently rural land adjacent to Tiri Road has the potential to be used for residential purposes without detrimentally affecting the character of the adjacent LU 20. The land drops away to the west from Tiri Road, thereby reducing the appreciation of the existing LU20, which covers the descending slopes to the west. Views from Tiri Road to the west are mainly towards the LU22 area of the Western Landscape.

Changing the classification of the LU20 area adjacent to Tiri Road would be in keeping with the residential character of the rest of the street. By limiting the extent of any reclassification to the parts of LU20 closer to Tiri Road, the residential areas are confined to those in close proximity to the existing residential character and leaves the remaining part of Rural amenity as a border between residential and Rural 3 (western landscape). The Rural amenity will also continue to act as a buffer between residential and the sewage treatment area. Reclassification of the portion of land bordering Tiri Road from LU20 to Island residential 1(traditional residential) is considered appropriate and in keeping with the character of the adjacent areas, without a significant loss of amenity values derived from the Rural amenity area.



Figure 25. Aerial of Tiri Road

LAND UNIT 21 and 22 (Rural 2 – western landscape)

The Operative Land Unit 21 Te Whau Peninsula and Land Unit 22 Western Landscape have many similarities in terms of landscape character:

- both have rural/residential land uses
- both have productive aspects that have been dedicated to land uses such as vines, olives or pasture
- both have an openness combined with these productive land uses and large areas of native bush
- both areas are also nearing their capacity in terms of subdivision, so the additional effects beyond that already approved by current subdivision rules are unlikely to occur.

The descriptions of the two Land Units in the Operative Plan were not dissimilar, with both aiming to protect the natural environment or enhance landscape qualities while allowing subdivision for low density housing and rural residential type activities.

For these reasons, the two land units are combined into one in the Proposed Plan. In recognition of the landscape character that has been developed through implementation of the Operative Plan, the Proposed Land Unit includes the following as part of its characteristics:

The landscape values of the land unit are those of a cultural landscape containing four key elements:

1. *the openness and productivity of a rural landscape*
2. *the natural character of a re-generating landscape*
3. *the amenity of a low density residential landscape*
4. *the visual prominence of a coastal landscape*

The new Land Unit is named Rural 2 (Western Landscape), and provides for a rural / residential style of living with high natural character and landscape values.



Figure 26 Land Unit 22 Western Waiheke

Thompson's Point

Thompson's Point is a large area of land on the northern side of Waiheke Island between Palm Beach and Onetangi. The majority of the coastline is rugged, with rocky cliffs climbing from the sea to meet steeply sloping pasture and occasional pieces of vegetation. Pasture and some groupings of Pines comprise the main vegetation cover, which is currently grazed and contributes to the open rural character. Whilst a small number of buildings are located on the peninsular, its size and topography limit their visibility and ensure the rural character is retained.

The Point contributes to the amenity values enjoyed by the neighbouring areas, which see different perspectives depending on their viewing point. Those in Mawhitipana Bay enjoy views from the west, whilst those in Onetangi enjoy views of the Point's coastline as seen from the east. Being such a prominent headland, the land use that occurs on it influences the amenity values enjoyed by the many people that view it, and the manner in which it contributes to the landscape character of the area. With similarities to the landscape of the Western landscape land unit before it was developed into larger rural/residential allotments, Thompson's Point has the potential to retain its cultural landscape character whilst accommodating some degree of development.

The existing pastoral land use is a cultural landscape, modified by the removal of native vegetation and the development of pastoral land cover. Rural/residential is also a cultural landscape, and one which is potentially able to preserve rural amenity values. If Thompson's Point is developed in a manner similar to the Owhanake and Matiatia area of Western Waiheke, the rural/natural landscape can prevail. Houses can remain a secondary component in the landscape character, which can include native revegetation and public access to coastal areas. By classifying Thompson's Point as Rural 2, the opportunity exists for the peninsula to be developed in a manner that will retain the rural character of an alternative cultural landscape. Such values are currently present on the peninsula, and with development in line with the Rural 2 Land Unit, the amenity values of another aspect of a cultural landscape can continue to be enjoyed. Such a change is considered appropriate in this environment, which is modified from its natural state but retains high levels of amenity. Additionally, the revegetation associated with Rural 2 is

considerably greater than would necessarily occur if a Rural 1 classification was applied, which does not require revegetation or comprehensive development.

These amenity values can be maintained through a land classification change that requires a comprehensive approach to development. Implementation of the Rural 2 (Western landscape) classification will allow such development to occur, whilst retaining these values. It will also encourage revegetation of significant areas of land, thus contributing to the natural qualities of the landscape. Large lots sizes will help maintain the predominantly unbuilt character, particularly when planned as part of the required comprehensive approach. Public access to the dramatic coast will be enhanced through the comprehensive approach, thus allowing previously distant appreciation of the peninsular to be enjoyed at close quarters.



Figure 27 Thompsons Point

RAKINO

RAKINO

The island of Rakino is notable for several landscape characteristics:

- It has minimal tree cover, with the main vegetation being grass
- The grass is self maintaining, being a complete ungrazed sward
- Water is scarce, due to the smallness of the island and lack of trees
- The buildings are clustered into groups along several of the ridges
- Dwellings are generally low key of the old bach style

The lack of trees and barren nature of the island are two of the most unique features of this island. Whilst being quite close to Auckland City, it carries a low level of development in terms of housing. Baches are the norm, with the character being mainly small scale places that are reminiscent of typical holiday communities commonly found at seaside locations in older parts of New Zealand. There are some indications from very recent constructions and consents are that more new dwellings may be planned, some of which are taking advantage of the sections that offer spectacular sea views and enjoy the opportunity for privacy still available due to the dispersed development across the island.

The island has sloping to steep sea cliffs, particularly around the northern end, while a number of bays provide sheltered mooring on the western and southern sides. The picturesque nature of the coastline, with the rugged cliffs, enclosed bays and scattered Pohutukawa's, gives parts of the island spectacular views. Capacity exists for additional housing on the island, both within the existing built up areas and on some of the more open areas. However, the location of these could adversely affect the landscape character that prevails. To address this potential change, landscape assessment criteria have been included in the Proposed Plan for new buildings and subdivisions.

Parts of Rakino have been classified as LU 20 under the Operative Plan, which is not entirely appropriate considering the differences that occur between the Waiheke landscape (where LU20 is otherwise used) and the Rakino landscape. Rakino has a simple landscape, mainly due to the simplicity of the vegetation cover. The grass land

cover is not grazed, and the amenity value derives more from the seaward vistas available from all over the island than from the character of the landscape.

For these reasons, a new Land Unit has been prepared, being Rural 3 (Rakino amenity), which is a land unit specifically designed for the island.



Figure 28 Rakino Island

ROTOROA

ROTOROA

Rotoroa is an island in the private ownership of the Salvation Army. It has recently stopped being used as a rehabilitation centre, and current plans are to remove the facilities associated with that past use and embark on a new vision for the island. That vision involves development of the island as a conservation park, but including an area for visitor facilities. It is also currently proposed that the northern portion of the island be retained for the development of a small number of private homes, focused on the exclusive nature of their setting. Public access is proposed for around the coastal edge of the island and the southern half of the island. This means that the public will have access to beaches and extensive areas of land that is currently pasture but is planned to be revegetated into native bush.

The existing landscape character of the island is influenced mainly by the topography and land cover. The island is long and narrow, with rolling hills that allow the creation of distinct areas that are visually separated from each other along the island's length. The varied topography also provides the opportunity for buildings to be integrated into the landscape, with two storey buildings being considered suitable in the central area for visitor facilities. The narrowness of the island allows activities to have a close visual and physical proximity to the sea, although views are currently hindered to some extent by the curtain of pines that border the island.

The existing land cover is predominantly pasture, having been farmed by the Salvation Army as part of the rehabilitation activities. This uniform land cover contributes to the landscape character by providing a unity along the length of the island. However, when revegetation occurs on the southern end, this unity will be lessened and the island will start to develop more distinct character areas. Such a change is considered entirely appropriate, as the changes will simply emphasise the distinctions already in existence due to the variations in the underlying topography.

The land use changes proposed, including the development of buildings, are considered appropriate for the setting. A range of buildings already exist and are well integrated into the landscape. The proposed locations for the new buildings (both residential and visitor)

also have the potential to be well integrated, provided the residential buildings are of an appropriate design, size and scale, and that the visitor associated buildings are planned and assessed in a comprehensive manner. It is also considered preferable that the majority of visitor associated buildings are located in close proximity to one another (rather than spread out) and that they are screened/integrated with existing vegetation.

The proposal provides the opportunity to develop a place that enhances ecological values through the revegetation, allows public access to enjoy the island's facilities, and maintains a limited degree of built development. Provided such development allows the landscape values that will be the key attraction of the island to be retained, the proposal has the potential to create a valuable asset within the Gulf, and also allow public access to that asset.



Figure 29 Rotoroa Island

RIDGELINES

RIDGELINES

Ridgelines are currently protected in by rules in the Operative Plan that limit development within 100m of the ridgeline. The critical ridgelines are identified on the planning maps. This system works well except for the situation where the viewer is lower than the ridgetop and looks up at a development. In this situation, there is the possibility of the development satisfying the ridgetop rule, but still being seen on the skyline from a particular viewing point. This can be a problem if the views are important or if the viewing points are frequented by many people. Such a situation occurs at Matiatia where a house on the ridgeline is clearly seen when viewing north from the wharf. The shape and colour of the house accentuates its visibility, with its steep pitch gable ends contrasting with the rounded form of the ridge and its beige colour contrasting with the darker green vegetation. This property did obtain a consent after satisfying the ridgeline rules.

Another similar situation occurs at Whakanewha where a house assumes a prominent position when viewed from Gordons Road. This is illustrated in *Figure 30*. The house is not located on an identified ridgeline. Rather, it is located on a secondary ridge that runs parallel to the ridge identified on the District Plan. The District Plan ridge is closer to the coast and slightly higher, but the secondary ridge is the one that is closer to the main viewing point on Gordons Road.

A potentially similar situation occurs on the ridgeline east of Erua Road. This ridgeline is within the proposed rural 1 land unit, which is part of the Onetangi Strait area of the land unit, but is viewed from the busy Ostend industrial area and entry road to the supermarket. The ridgeline forms a prominent skyline to the east, and is currently un-built. Resource consent has been granted for the subdivision of several sections along this ridge within the land unit, but the house locations have been determined on the consent drawings and are all well below and on the western side of the ridgeline. The house sites are sufficiently far down the slope to avoid being seen on the skyline when seen from the main viewing point of Ostend Road and the turn off to the Supermarket, as shown in *Figure 31*. It is not anticipated that any new house could be built near the ridge that would line on the skyline when viewed



Figure 30 Matiatia, house on ridge



Figure 31 Ridge east of Erua Rd

from Ostend Rd and the entry road to the supermarket. For this reason, no additional ridgeline control over and above that already in place along this ridge is proposed.

When considering whether to change the general ridgeline rules as part of the District Plan Review, the location of these sensitive ridges and the potential for more houses to be built on them was considered. The ridges that were identified as potentially warranting additional controls were the three ridgelines listed above, i.e.:

1. The ridge north of and surrounding Matiatia
2. The secondary ridge south of Whakanewha
3. The ridge east of Tahi and Erua Roads

1. Houses have already been built on all but four of the vacant lots on the ridge above Matiatia, and house sites have already been approved on these. For this reason, no additional controls are proposed.

2. The minimum site size for additional subdivision on the ridge above Gordons Rd in Whakanewha is 25 ha under the rules of the Proposed Plan. The lots in this area are typically between 1 and 7ha, so no further subdivision is anticipated unless this is achieved under the Significant Environmental Features rule. If such a rule was used, the landscape assessment criteria are designed to achieve integration of development with the landscape. For this reason, no additional ridgeline control over and above that already in place along this secondary ridge is proposed.

3. The reasons for not recommending additional controls east of Erua Rd are discussed above.



Figure 32 House on secondary ridge above Gordons Rd

OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPES

OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPES

In late 2005, the Auckland Regional Council notified their Proposed Change 8 to the Regional Policy Statement on outstanding natural landscapes (ONL). The change identified areas on Waiheke, Rakino, Ponui, Pakatoa, DOC islands and large areas on GBI as outstanding, and proposed a series of objectives and policies to support this status. By way of a summary:

The proposed change identifies two types of ONL: “wild nature” and “cultured nature”. Wild nature is where there is little or no evidence of human presence or modification and indigenous vegetation patterns dominate. Those areas identified on Great Barrier Island and parts of the areas identified on Waiheke as ONL’s would fall into this category. Cultured nature is where the land cover may be modified from bush into pasture, or there is a picturesque mix of bush and pastoral land and there is an absence of or minimal presence of human artifacts or buildings. Where buildings are present, they are subservient to the overall naturalness of the landscape. Parts of the ONL identified on Waiheke would fall into this category. For both wild and cultured nature, the critical distinguishing component of an ONL is a high level of naturalness. The RPS aims and maintaining this.

Activities that can threaten this high level of naturalness include subdivision, use and development. Council controls should aim to ensure that the introduction of built elements does not dominate over natural characteristics, particularly in areas characterized by no built modification. Cumulative effects also require assessment. In many situations, the effect of an individual building may not be significant, but the cumulative effect of additional buildings may be.

Proposed change 8 identifies methods (6.4.23) that local authorities shall use to protect the landscape values of ONL’s and Highly Valued Landscapes. ONL’s are defined by maps in the RPS proposed change 8. Highly Valued Landscapes (HVL’s) are landscapes that are important to the character and identity of the district. They are not identified in the RPS proposed change, but are left to Territorial Authorities to identify. Their importance may relate to their visual relationship or physical connections with ONL’s, their high amenity values, their sense of place, or their valued cultural or historical identity.

The council has lodged a submission generally in support of proposed change 8. The submission reflects the resource management issues that need to be addressed in the plan and highlights the potential issues arising from the change on the Gulf. For example, issues such as the ability for productive activities to establish and the flexibility to change from one productive use to another is important for the social and economic wellbeing of the communities of the Gulf.

While the proposed change is still ‘young’ in terms of the process, the proposed plan has considered the change and responded by:

- recognising the value of the land units through identifying their particular characteristics
- controlling buildings where appropriate
- providing assessment criteria which considers the effects of the activity and structures on the surrounding environment
- sets appropriate development controls for building size and location, vegetation clearance and earthworks.
- controlling subdivision
- on GBI concentrating development around existing settled areas
- provisions for and/or the identification of :
 - sites of ecological significance
 - sensitive areas
 - significant ridgelines
 - heritage items
 - area specific land units and settlement areas.

SETTLEMENT AREAS

SETTLEMENT AREAS

Settlement areas have been applied in the proposed plan for GBI in areas where there are centres of population. There are a total of nine settlement areas, being:

Tryphena

Medlands

Claris

Okupu

Whangaparapara

Awana

Okiwi

Port Fitzroy

Aotea (encompassing Motairehe and Koa)

Boundaries of the Settlement Areas are located in a way that defines the edge of the built up area, whilst allowing for some growth in areas where the landscape has already been modified and growth would have minor landscape effects on the natural character of the greater area. For example, the Tryphena and Medlands Settlement Area boundaries are located such that infill can occur within the area characterised by development, but do not extend beyond the built up area to adversely affect the natural character of the surrounds.

In developing the Settlement Area descriptions, the following were prepared as a description of each area:

Tryphena

The Tryphena Settlement Area contains the largest existing population centre on Great Barrier. Within it, existing settlement is concentrated in the two areas of Mulberry Grove and Gooseberry Flat. Each of these areas contain a small local retail centre providing services to the residents and the visitor industry. Tryphena Wharf to the southwest of the settlement areas is a principal entry point to the island for visitors and freight as well as servicing local fishing boats.

The settlement area is characterised by:

- *A small historical lot pattern accommodating small scale development.*
- *Larger bush covered residential lots.*
- *Two separate areas that for the Tryphena local retailing area.*
- *Providing the main wharf entry point for Great Barrier.*
- *A coastal margin dominated by pohutukawa forest.*

The existing settlements are centred on the lower slopes and coastal margins of the inner bays. The upper catchment of Tryphena Harbour inland of the settlement area is forested, containing significant stands of remnant forest and extensive areas of regenerating bush. There are few areas of relatively flat or gently sloping land, the most extensive being in the Tryphena valley north of the settlement area. Pockets of remnant forest are also located on this headland, in the lower valleys of Shoal Bay, and in the valley inland of Gooseberry Flat.

Within the intensively settled areas on the lower slopes, ground water levels tend to be high. There are also a number of smaller creeks which are prone to flooding.

Medlands

The Medlands Settlement Area is the second largest housing area on Great Barrier Island. Running parallel to the Medlands Beach and behind the sand dunes, there is an existing settlement comprising both permanent as well as visitor activities based upon a small lot subdivision pattern. Previous subdivision activity has created a number of smaller lots running along the length of the beach in a ribbon fashion, serviced by a road running over the sand dune system. Beyond the residential-type lots towards the lower foothills, there are a variety of lot sizes, with some of the lots being between 1 and 10 ha but most of the lots in the area are within the lot size range of 800-2,000m².

At the northern and southern ends of the Settlement Area, tidal creeks run through into wetlands and wildlife habitats and ecosystems. There is a large area of relatively flat land which has a high flood potential located behind the dunes and

sand systems, and contained by the creeks at either end of the beach. In some inland parts of the Settlement Area there is a relatively high water table. Where the flat to rolling land is not subject to flooding it is relatively fertile with good aspect, as indicated by existing uses such as horticulture and plant nurseries inland of the Settlement Area. Beyond the flat land to the south-west the terrain rises, with pastured areas covering the lower slopes of hills that rise to form a densely vegetated backdrop the Settlement Area. These lower slopes are within the Settlement Area in the vicinity of the Kaitoki-Tryphena Road. This area is included within the Settlement Area to allow relatively dense subdivision on these lower slopes as a means of providing for additional housing within the Medlands area.

At the southern end of Medlands Beach there is a DoC campground which experiences high use over the summer season. The stream adjoining the campground is protected as a wildlife reserve and is an important habitat for the brown teal duck. On the other side of that stream, on the higher land rising above it, the Settlement Area extends to include a small number of lots.

The Sugar Loaf promontory at the western end of the beach is a prominent landscape feature and is a popular location for fishing and diving. Some of the wetland areas inland are subject to flooding and are experiencing degradation as a consequence of grazing by animals.

Claris

This settlement area is located on flat to rolling land adjacent to Kaitoke Beach and Kaitoke wetland, both of which are outstanding in terms of landscape value and natural beauty. It contains the Council Service Centre, industrial facilities, and the main grouping of shops on the east side of the island. It adjoins the island's main airport, which is the arrival and departure point for most travelers on regular flights to and from Auckland throughout the year.

The Claris settlement area is characterised by:

- Mixed topography with areas of wetland, rolling dunes, and flat alluvial pasture.

- Prominence due to its function as the main receiving place for people arriving and leaving the island by airplane at the adjacent Claris Airport.
- Landscape importance due to its setting near the coastal edge of the Kaitoke catchment adjoining the significant Kaitoke Wetland and beautiful Kaitoke Beach. The proximity to these, their prominence when arriving by airplane, and the visibility of the encompassing hills and adjacent native vegetation from within the settlement area, all contribute to the high landscape values that characterize this area and are representative at this gateway to the Island.
- Scattered facilities spread across the Settlement Area, with industrial facilities in the north, shops in the middle, and residential in the south.
- Mixed uses within the facilities, with shop and residential activities amongst the industrial, industrial uses near the shops, and extended separation between the shops & service area.
- A range of vegetation types, with pasture, pine or native vegetation covered the dunes, pasture covered alluvial flats, and native sedges, grasses and flaxes throughout the wetland. Some areas of the dunes are prone to instability due to fragile vegetation cover.

Overall, the Claris settlement area is a mix of unmodified and modified land uses and dispersed activities within a larger setting of high natural character and landscape value.

Okupu

This settlement area is located on bush covered slopes on the western side of Great Barrier. Existing houses are located in two main areas: one on and near the ridgeline, the other on the lower slopes and running down to the coastal edge.

The Okupu settlement area is characterised by:

- Sloping topography, with a dominance of regenerating indigenous vegetation.

- *A dense grouping of housing along the ridgeline.*
- *Small scale residential development spread across the sloping topography among regenerating vegetation.*
- *Residential development which is dominated by the scale and prominence of regenerating vegetation in terms of both land cover and landscape character.*
- *With the exception of the ridgeline, residential activities are generally well integrated into the vegetated setting and sloping topography of the settlement area.*
- *A dominance of particularly large pohutukawa trees in the open space of the coastal interface area, creating an area of high amenity value.*

Whangaparapara

This settlement area is located in a small bay on the western side of Great Barrierd. Development is comprised of a visitor accommodation with associated activities, residential activities, and a wharf.

The Whangaparapara settlement area is characterised by:

- *A small bay, enclosed by sloping topography and bush clad hills.*
- *Residential development that is integrated amongst the regenerating indigenous vegetation on the slopes above the bay.*
- *Large pohutukawa trees that line the shore.*
- *Visitor accommodation with associated activities that attracts travelers, exposing the high natural character of the area to a wide range of people*
- *A small scale wharf that integrates well with the marine activities and character of the sheltered harbour, and provides an important access point for supply of materials to the island.*

Awana

This settlement area is located at the southern end of a white sand bay on the eastern side of the island. It is enclosed by steeply sloping headlands at either end. Development is focused on a group of houses located on the sloping hillside and lower land overlooking the beach and bay.

The settlement area is characterised by:

- *Well integrated housing that is set amongst the regenerating indigenous vegetation on the slopes above the bay.*
- *A built up character that is primarily contributed to by the visibility of a small group of housing by the road on the lower slopes of the hillside.*
- *A picturesque setting, with the settlement area surrounded by dominant landform, a beautiful beach, and undeveloped dune.*

Overall, the Awana Settlement Area provides for well integrated and small-scale residential living overlooking a picturesque bay that is valued for its natural and undeveloped character.

Okiwi

This settlement area is located on the gently sloping foothills of the Whangapoua Basin, two kilometres inland from the Okiwi airport. A primary school and small collection of houses make up the area, along with an area of rolling pasture. An area has been identified which offers an opportunity for extending the existing settlement.

The settlement area is characterised by:

- *Infrastructure of an existing settlement including local primary school, bus transport, proximity to the Okiwi airport, and an existing community.*

- *Traditional residential settlement pattern concentrated into a small settlement on the lower slopes of the surrounding Whangapoua basin*
- *Undeveloped land within the settlement area that gives opportunity for additional growth within and adjacent to the existing housing area*
- *A modified landscape within a pastoral setting, with a backdrop of sloping hills and regenerating vegetation.*

- *Low key settlement and housing.*
- *Extensive areas of regenerating bush.*
- *Pebble beaches with pohutukawa forest extending down to the beach.*
- *Small bays marking the location of areas of existing settleme*

Port Fitzroy

This settlement area is located in a large harbour on the western side of the island. Development comprises mainly residential activities. An area with wharf facilities, it is popular with recreational boating traffic and is an access point for goods entering or leaving the island.

The settlement area is characterised by:

- *A small bay, enclosed by sloping topography and hills clad in indigenous vegetation, some of which is well advanced in terms of regeneration.*
- *Small scale residential development that is integrated amongst the bush on the slopes above the bay.*
- *A wharf that services the popular nautical activities of the sheltered harbour and provides an access point for materials entering and leaving the island.*

The planning team developed the following description for Aotea

Aotea

Aotea is the name for the settlement that encompasses Motairehe, Kaoa and a number of other settlements throughout the Katherine Bay area on the ancestral Maori land of Ngati Rehua, the ahi Kaa for Great Barrier.

The characteristics of the area include:

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A number of aspects within the Proposed Plan use assessment criteria as a means of guiding decision making on restricted discretionary and discretionary activities. These include consents for subdivision and for land use activities within a wide range of Land Units and Settlement Areas. A landscape principle that has been adopted throughout has been to seek integration of development with the landscape. This may be achieved by the appropriate use of colour, or through the form, scale or location of buildings.

Colour has been considered in a separate report, with the concluding recommendations being that both greyness and reflective value are key factors in determining colours that will integrate with the landscape. The British Standard 5252 Colour Range was used as a reference, with the recommended colours for areas where colour is a permitted standard being:

1. *Have a reflectivity value of no more than 60% for greyness groups A or B;*
2. *Have a reflectivity value of no more than 40% for greyness group C; or*
3. *Be finished in natural or stained timber.*
4. *Where the material is a roof cladding, it shall have a reflectivity value of no more than 40% for groups A, B, or C.*

This rule does not apply to window frames, bargeboards, stormwater guttering and downpipes, trim or door colour.

In terms of form, scale and location of buildings, the guiding principle was also integration, with an example of a recommended assessment criteria being:

- *Being of a scale, form and location so that it maintains the visual coherence of the landscape character by not breaking the expanses of indigenous vegetation, or the pattern of any natural features such as coastal escarpments, ridges or prominent slopes.*

The criteria differ for each land unit, so the above is representative of the intent that is carried through in specific land units.

Additional recommended assessment criteria that accompany this include:

1. *Being of a scale, form and location that are not visually prominent.*
2. *Having an external colour that is integrated with the surrounding natural landscape.*
The council will refer to clause 10c.4.8 for guidance in assessing this matter.
3. *Being located so that it that does not dominate or detract from public or private views which are characterised by natural landscapes.*
4. *Being of a scale, form and location so that it maintains the visual coherence of the landscape character by not breaking the expanses of indigenous vegetation, or the pattern of any natural features such as coastal escarpments, ridges or prominent slopes.*
5. *Being of a scale, form, colour and location that does not give rise to cumulative effects within the natural landscape.*

Assessment criteria in the subdivision section of the proposed Plan emphasise maintaining natural character and visual amenity, along with the need to protect the elements, features and patterns that contribute to this natural character and visual amenity. These can be described as:

Elements are those parts which make up the visual landscape such as open pasture, indigenous vegetation, water systems and rock forms. The patterns of a landscape comprise the arrangement of those elements within the landscape. For example, the pattern of indigenous vegetation within the landscape may be irregular, or alternatively it may have a repetitive form. The features of the landscape are distinctive characteristics which often attract attention such as ridgelines, mountains, rivers and rock outcrops. Each landscape will comprise elements and patterns (and may also have features) that contribute to the landscape character and visual amenity values of each land unit. It is this character and these values which need to be maintained and protected through subdivision.

Assessment criteria were suggested as listed below, which were seen as an initial basis for development of the criteria that have been included in the Proposed Plan.

Landforms 1-7

The extent to which the development adversely affects the landscape character and amenity value of the site and of the wider visual catchment. Particular regard must be made to maintaining the landscape character and the features and pattern of elements that contribute to this.

Island residential 2)

The extent to which factors contributing to integration of the building in the landscape such as location, form, scale, colour and materials, provides for buildings that do not adversely affect the natural character or visual amenity values of the landscape or the wider visual catchment.

Rural 2

The extent to which buildings can be integrated into the wider visual catchment without adversely affecting features or the pattern of elements that contributes to the landscape character or visual amenity values

Control of buildings

With the aim of controlling development so that buildings achieve integration with the landscape, it is relevant to comment on the land units where such control by means of a resource consent should be undertaken. The following table lists the land units, and identifies those where there would be sufficient reason in terms of landscape benefits to require buildings to be consented activities.

APPENDIX

LANDFORM TABLE

With the aim of controlling development so that buildings achieve integration with the landscape, it is relevant to comment on the land units where such control by means of a resource consent should be undertaken. The following table lists the land units, and identifies those where there would be sufficient reason in terms of landscape benefits to require buildings to be consented activities.

New land unit names	Description / location	Building Control Recommended
<i>Landform based land units:</i>	<i>GBI and eastern Waiheke, Ponui , Pakihi</i>	
landform 1 (coastal cliffs and slopes)	Combines and replaces existing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land unit 7 – steep coastal slopes (note this land unit does not exist on Waiheke) land unit 1 – coastal cliffs 	Yes
landform 2 (dune systems and sand flats)	Replaces existing land unit 2 - dune systems and sand flats	Yes
landform 3 (alluvial flats)	Replaces existing land unit 3 – alluvial flats	No
landform 4 (wetland systems)	Replaces existing land unit 4 – wetland systems	Yes
landform 5 (productive land)	Combines and replaces existing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land unit 5 – foothills and lower slopes land unit 6 – steep pastured slopes 	No
landform 6 (regenerating slopes)	Combines and replaces existing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land unit 8 – regenerating slopes land unit 9 – low fertility hills (note this land unit does not exist on Waiheke) 	Yes
landform 7 (forest and bush)	Replaces existing land unit 10 – forest and bush areas	yes
<i>Island residential land units:</i>	<i>Waiheke, Rakino</i>	
island residential 1 (traditional residential)	Replaces existing land unit 11 – traditional residential on Waiheke	No (except for in the coastal amenity area)
island residential 2 (bush residential)	Replaces existing land unit 12 – bush residential	Yes
<i>Commercial land units:</i>	<i>Western Waiheke</i>	

commercial 1 (Oneroa Village)	Replaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing policy area 6 – Oneroa, and existing land units 	Yes
commercial 2 (Ostend Village)	Replaces existing land unit 13 – retailing at Ostend	Yes
commercial 3 (local shops)	Replaces existing land unit 13 – retailing and other land units at specified locations.	No
commercial 4 (visitor facilities)	Replaces existing land unit 14 – visitor facilities	Yes
commercial 5 (industrial)	Replaces existing land unit 15 – industrial	No
commercial 6 (quarry)	Replaces existing land unit 16 – quarry – at Karamuramu Is and Waiheke	No
commercial 7 (wharf)	Replaces land unit 25 – wharf at Kennedy Point (Waiheke) and Sandy Bay (Rakino) Replaces existing land units at Orapiu (Waiheke)	No
Matiatia (mixed use)	Replaces land unit 25 – wharf at Matiatia	Yes
<i>Recreation land units:</i>	<i>Waiheke</i>	
recreation 1 (local parks and esplanade reserves)	Replaces existing land unit 17 – landscape amenity	Yes
recreation 2 (community facilities and sports parks and)	Replaces existing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land unit 18 – outdoor activities land unit 19 – community activities 	Yes
recreation 3 (Onetangi Park)	Replaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing policy area 8 – Rangihoua Park, and existing land units 	Yes
<i>Rural land units:</i>	<i>Western Waiheke, Rakino?</i>	
rural 1 (rural amenity)	Replaces existing land unit 20 – landscape protection on western Waiheke.	Yes
rural 2 (western landscape)	Combines and replaces existing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land unit 21 – Te Whau Peninsula land unit 22 – Western landscape 	Yes
rural 3 (Rakino)	Replaces land unit 20 – landscape protection on Rakino	Yes
<i>Conservation land unit:</i>		
conservation	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all DOC owned land existing land unit 23 – conservation islands Kaikoura Island 	Yes (some exclusions apply)

<i>Other islands:</i>		
Pakatoa	Replaces existing land unit 24 - Pakatoa	Yes
Rotoroa	Replaces existing land unit 26 - Rotoroa	No
<i>Settlement Areas</i>		
Local retailing areas		Yes
Headland protection areas		Yes
Reserve, dune, coastal margin and wetland conservation areas		Yes
Claris airport area		Yes
Claris light industry area		No
Residential amenity area		No
Visitor accommodation area		No
Mulberry grove School, and Okiwi School and Domain areas		No
Medlands quarry area		No

This table needs to be read in conjunction with the proposed plan, as some land units do not provide for any activities to occur, therefore all activities are non-complying. In this respect, while the table may indicate that no control for building is needed, any activity, including buildings, will require a consent as no activities are provided for in the land unit or settlement area.

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REFERENCES

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