

**BEFORE THE CENTRAL HAWKES BAY PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN HEARINGS PANEL  
AT WAIPAWA**

**UNDER** the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

**IN THE MATTER**

of proposed Central Hawke Bay District Plan,  
publicly notified under the First Schedule to the  
Act

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JOHN ROBERT HUDSON  
IN RESPONSE TO DIRECTIONS FROM THE HEARING PANEL ON THE**

**LANDSCAPE MATTERS**

**IN THE**

**CENTRAL HAWKES BAY PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

**Dated this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. My name is John Robert Hudson. I am a landscape architect and principal of my own practice, Hudson Associates. I have been practicing in this field for over 40 years. I am a registered member, fellow and past president of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA). I have also held the roles of member and chairman of the Institute's professional Examination Committee for ten years, as well as judge for the Institute's biennial award. I have a Bachelor of Arts (Geography, Victoria University), graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (Lincoln College) and graduate Diploma in Business Administration (Victoria University).
2. I have obtained the Making Good Decisions certificates from the Ministry for the Environment as both a Hearing Commissioner and Chair. I have been engaged as an Independent Commissioner for several large consent applications. These include an appointment by the Minister for the Environment to the Turitea Wind Farm Board of Inquiry. I have recently chaired the panel hearing for an application for a large landfill application by Waste Management in the Waikato Region, issuing the decision in October 2021.

## **RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

3. My practice consults on projects throughout New Zealand, with a particular focus on landscape assessment, subdivision, large scale design, and infrastructure. I am currently engaged by a number of local authorities throughout the country to provide specialist advice on consent applications and district plan assessments and provisions. I regularly appear as an expert witness at both Council hearings and Environment Court appeals.
4. Engagements of particular relevance to this hearing include central government, local government, public companies and private applicants. Current or recent clients include Palmerston North City Council to provide independent advice on landscape aspects relating to urban design of a new housing development of over 1,000 lots, plus assessment and mapping of their Outstanding Natural Landscapes, Manawatu District Council for assessment and mapping of Outstanding Natural Landscapes within their District and participating in the plan change to implement this, Whanganui District Council for similar work but currently going through the plan preparation and provision stage (hearing late 2022), expert evidence on landscape and natural character effects for NZ King Salmon on their proposed Open Ocean Salmon Farm near Cook Strait, expert evidence at council hearings on landscape effects of the proposed Marlborough Environment Plan. I have also completed an engagement for Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC) on assessment of an Outstanding Natural Landscape, which involved several Environment Court appeals and ultimate acceptance of WBOPDC's position that Matakana Island is an ONL, plus evidence for the Western Bay of Plenty Regional Council (WBOPRC) appeal regarding the MV Rena (WBOPRC position was also accepted by the Environment Court).
5. I have read the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses 2014, and I agree to comply with it. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise, except where I state I am relying on what I have been told by another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.
6. I have a commercial relationship with Paoanui Farms at Pourerere, having provided previous landscape advice for a subdivision which obtained consent and providing ongoing advice for their next proposed subdivision at Pourerere settlement.

## SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

7. At the hearing on 15 March the panel requested that I visit the farm of Mr Foley at 451 Oruawhoro Road to ground truth the extent of the Outstanding Natural Feature 5 (ONF 5) overlay that I recommended in my report and was shown in the Notified District Plan. Following presentation of my s42a report to the hearing panel on 15 March, the panel also asked that I visit a site I had identified as a Significant Amenity Feature 6 (SAF 6) being the Tangarewai Stream. This site was not discussed at the hearing but following deliberations, the hearing panel issued the following direction:

## DIRECTION

### Site Inspection

19. Arising from a submission heard during Hearing 1, we consider it would be useful to have the Council's landscape planning adviser, John Hudson, undertake a site visit to proposed Significant Amenity Feature SAF-6, Tangarewai Stream, upstream from the Ashley-Clinton Road bridge, not including that area identified as a SNA. The Panel specifically seek advice on whether the attributes of this section of Tangarewai Stream warrant being a SAF, given the mix of exotic and indigenous vegetation and the weedy nature of much of the existing vegetation in this section. Any such advice should be reported by 29 April 2022.

## SITE INSPECTION

8. I undertook a site inspection of the property of Mr Foley at 451 Oruawhoro Road on 21 April 2022. The landscape assessment I prepared for Council recommended that the area known as the Three Sisters just east of Takapau have an Outstanding Natural Feature overlay placed across it. Part of this overlay lies over Mr Foley's land, as shown below.



Figure 1. 451 Oruawhoro Road and ONF Overlay 5

1. The other property I visited on 22 April was the farm owned by Mr de Malmanche of 158 Wilson Cutting Road. The landscape assessment I prepared for Council recommended that the Tangarewai Stream have a Significant Amenity Feature overlay placed over the general indentation of the original river course. Part of this overlay lies over Mr de Malmanche's land. The river has incised over time, but the original extent of its weaving alignment can be clearly seen as it cuts across the plains, parallel to the other rivers rising in the Ruahine Range, indicating the formative process and erosion that has occurred over time.
- 2.
3. The incised river is home of varying stands of significant native vegetation. Monckton Reserve and A'Deanes Scenic Reserve lie within the SAF 6 downstream of Mr de Malmanche's property and are also recognized as Significant Natural Areas (SNAs). In the PDP.

#### BACKGROUND

4. When arranging these site inspections, I said I would prefer to walk across the land alone and not meet or be influenced by the land owners as my brief was to review the sites for suitability for the overlays. I visited Mr Foley's farm and did not meet anyone. I did meet Mr de Malmanche and due to the linear shape of his farm and access restrictions, he took me through his farm in his ute. We inevitably discussed the overlay and my work. Council had received a submission in his name but it became apparent that he had not seen my landscape assessment report. He appeared to have the impression that my work was focused on vegetation, which is covered separately as part of the Significant Natural Area (SNA) overlay.
5. I gave Mr de Malmanche a copy of my landscape assessment report and explained that it was landscape focused, with vegetation being just one component that contributes to the landscape. Other factors including Landform, Geology, Hydrology, Vegetation, Historic Values and Associational Values can all contribute to the landscape and the values associated with it. I had mapped the outer bounds of each of the incised river corridors that drain eastward off the Ruahine Ranges as they all contribute to the landscape patterns and values of the district.



*Figure 2 Small area of SAF 6 within the de Malmanche property on the SE corner*



*Figure 3 del Malmanche property, Significant Amenity Feature 6*

9. The area of SAF 6 is defined by the outer edges of the old incised river course, which is a typical pattern of all main rivers which drain off the eastern side of the Ruahine Range. All these main rivers have been recognized as either Significant Amenity Features or Outstanding Natural Features in my landscape assessment. The primary difference between whether they are recommended as an ONF or an SAF is influenced by a range of factors influencing landscape character. The SAF areas often have a range of land uses including those listed in Mr de Malmanche's submission such as grazing, exotic and native vegetation and weeds (Mr de Malmanche's said he is actively seeking to control pests and weeds, which is to be encouraged).
10. Areas of all these types of vegetation are located within the SAF on Mr de Malmanche's property, as shown below:

*Figure 4 SAF 6 has mixed vegetation including pasture, native trees, weeds.*



SAF 6

11. As detailed in my landscape report of January 2019, many factors contribute to an area being recognized for its landscape character. These include factors such as abiotic and biotic processes, topography, naturalness, legibility, history, cultural significance, associational values and perceptual values. The landscape is considered as a combination of these factors and in the case of SAF 6 the unifying factor is the incised landform which is clearly legible and contains representative aspects of all these factors. Its meandering form can also be seen in the aerial photo below where the incised landform generally defines the change in land use between open paddocks and taller vegetation within the river valley.



*Figure 5 Small area of SAF 6 within the de Malmanche property on the SE corner*

ONF 5

12. The landscape of ONF 5 (colloquially known as the Three Sisters) is recognized for a combination of reasons in my landscape report. The area gives a graphic representation of the geological formative processes that have shaped Central Hawke's Bay. Once an inland sea, Limestone is representative of this formative geological process. Raised in folds with tectonic processes, the tilted uplifts and steep cuesta's on their eastern edges make this process readily apparent. Boulder fields (as shown below) are derived from the broken crusts of the limestone cuesta's and illustrate this formative process.



*Figure 6 Limestone boulder field from rock that has fallen off the eastern side of the cuesta.*

13. Limestone ridges are representative of the CHB landscape, with Te Whata Kokako being a prime example of this. Other ridges exist and I mapped these when undertaking research for the district wide assessment past the Ruataniwha plains, as shown below.



*Figure 7 Limestone ridges I identified during research for the landscape report. Only the northern and southern ends of the Nga Kaihinaki a whata were identified as ONF for inclusion in the PDP*

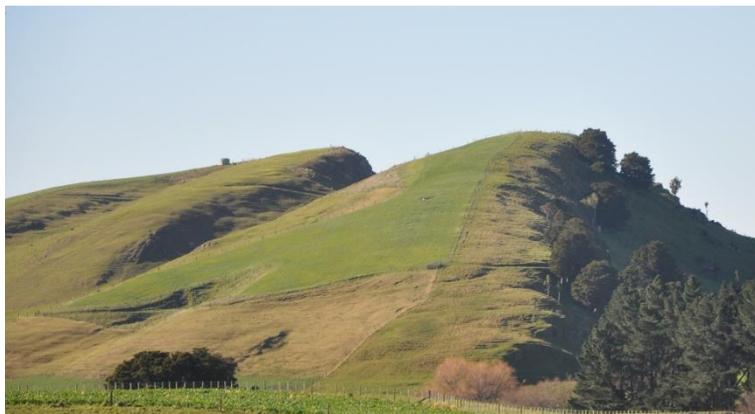
14. Horehore Pa was located on Puketotara, one of the Three Sisters. A long stand Pa of extreme cultural significance and referred to in the Deed of Settlement between Heretaunga Tamatea and the Crown. Recognised for its perceptual values due to its unique repetitive landform, the sisters form part of the CHB landscape character that is associated with its cultural and formative past. The northern edge of Seventy Mile Bush ran along the western edge of the landform, with a collection of 7 pa and 10

settlements, runoff flows into the Maharakeke Stream to the Stream to the east and Porangahau Stream to the west. Both are streams are significant within CHB. The Maharakeke formed the western boundary of the original 250,000 acre Hapuku Block and Porangahau Stream flows into the Tukituki River via the Maharakeke then Tupiko Rivers.

15. The southern end of the Nga Kaihinaki-a-whata Range has the distinctive tilted landform of uplifted limestone and exposed boulder field. Rangitoto, the highest hill in CHB outside of the Ruahine Range, lies midway between the two. I identified the entire limestone ridgeline (as shown above), linking the southern and northern features of the Range as a significant ridgeline in my research for the landscape report, but lacked sufficient information to include it as outstanding.
16. In my opinion, the Nga Kaihinaki-a-whata Range was the best example of the combined values of cultural, natural science, perceptual and associational factors. Of the many limestone ridges in CHB, this combination of factors qualifies to be recognized as an outstanding natural feature, with the northern and southern end rating most highly and qualifying as outstanding.
17. In my opinion, recent planting of plantation forestry over part of the northern landforms will have the effect of screening this feature and other parts of the collective landform and hiding the clearly discernable aspects of the landform on which the planting has taken place. This has the effect of reducing the opportunity for perception of the unique landforms that contribute to the landscape character of CHB.



*Figure 8 Limestone cuesta at the northern of Nga Kaihinaki-a-whata now with plantation forestry. Photo 2022*



*Figure 9 Limestone cuesta at the northern of Nga Kaihinaki-a-whata without plantation forestry. Photo 2018*

## SAF 9 TE AUTE LIMESTONE CREST

Questions were raised at the 15 March Hearing Committee meeting about whether SAF 9 Te Aute Limestone Crest related to any similar overlay in Hastings District Plan. As discussed at the hearing in response to this question, the Hastings District Plan does identify the limestone ridge that runs from Pekapeka Quarry right down to the southern boundary of Hastings District as a Significant Amenity Landscape Area SAL 5. The southern end of the SAL in the Hastings District Plan abuts the proposed SAF 9 in the CHB PDP. The overlay continues on this same limestone ridge down to Argyll Road, as shown below.



Provisions within the Hastings District Plan relating to the ridgeline SAL 5 (abuts SAF 9 in CHB PDP) are listed below:

- *Retention of the open uninterrupted skyline along the ranges.*
- *Land use change, in particular forestry or other vegetation cover, can disrupt the legibility of the skyline.*
- *Access and earthworks on the ranges can disrupt the natural landform patterns.*
- *Avoidance of dominant built form, incongruent with the rural character, along the edge of the feature.*

These are similar to the Responses I recommended in my Landscape Report, which related to Pine Plantations, Earthworks, Cultural Protection.

The CHB PDP has incorporated this by requiring that where activities need a resource consent then they trigger the need for an assessment of landscape effects.

## 18. CONCLUSION

Having reviewed the sites requested by the Hearing Panel I remain of the opinion that the mapping of ONF 5 and SAF 6 are appropriate to identify the extent of Outstanding or Significant landscape applicable to each. I reiterate the point that the Landscape is a combination of Physical, Perceptual and Associational factors that collectively contribute to the values that give a place its sense of character.

John Hudson  
FNZILA