

Landscape Assessment Report

Punakaiki Wild

4671/4663 State Highway
6, Te Miko, Punakaiki

20 December
2024



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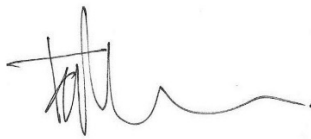
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

Rough Milne Mitchell Landscape Architects (**RMM**) has been engaged by ACG Properties Limited (**the Applicant**) to assess the actual and potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed tourism related activity development, located at 4671/4663 State Highway 6, Te Miko/Perpendicular Point, Punakaiki (**the site**). The proposal includes a Lodge comprising a restaurant, bar/cafe and spa facilities, 15 cabins providing visitor accommodation and worker accommodation.

The '**site**' comprises a 22.47 ha block of land, legally referred to as Part Section 1 Block IX Brighton SD.



Figure 1. The 'site' located at 4671/4663 State Highway 6, Te Miko/Perpendicular Point, Punakaiki is shown outlined in red.

Under the operative Buller District Plan (oBDP) the site is zoned Paparoa Character Area. The proposed vehicle access, setback breaches, activities within 50m of HWSM, residential activity (worker accommodation), and the provision of a sign triggers the need for resource consent under the oBDP. In addition, and overall, as a commercial and tourist related activity within the Paparoa Character Zone, and exceedance of earthworks quantities, gross ground floor area the proposal will be a **non-complying** activity.

The oBDP will be replaced by the proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan (TTPP), which is the combined District Plan (DP) for the Buller, Grey and Westland districts. The DP review process is currently hearing submissions, however the following chapters of relevance to the landscape aspects of the proposal have immediate legal effect:

Historic heritage

Sites and Areas of Significance to Maori (SASM)

Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity

Natural Character and Margins of Water

Under the proposed TTPP the site is zoned General Rural with several overlays applying. The site is part of an Outstanding Natural Landscape¹, has part High Natural Character in the Coastal Environment² and part Outstanding Natural Character in the Coastal Environment, is within a Pounamu Management Area, and is partly within a Site of Significance to Maori (SASM30). It is understood that the proposed development will require a resource consent under the chapters that are legally operative. However, given the progress of the TTPP under the review process regard must be given to the operative objectives and policies. These are set out below in section 3.

The landscape assessment report is formatted as per the following:

- A description of the proposal
- A description of the site.
- An outline of the relevant policy provisions within the Operative Buller District Plan (oBDP) and the proposed Te Tai o Poutini Plan (TTPP)
- The identification and description of the receiving environment. The receiving environment is described in terms of the landform, land cover and land use attributes and how those landscape attributes contribute to the receiving environment's existing landscape values.
- An assessment of the actual and potential landscape, natural character and visual effects, including cumulative effects.
- An assessment against the relevant statutory provisions.
- A conclusion.

This report is accompanied by a Graphic Attachment (**GA**), that contains maps and aerial images of the site location, the relevant District Plan planning maps, plans of the proposed development, photographs of the site from within the site, and photographs of the site taken from the surrounding public places.

¹ TTPP-ONL 45-Ōkoriko / Razorback, Dolomite and Perpendicular Point

² TTPP-NCA43 – Perpendicular Point to Woodpeckers Bay

1.2 Methodology

The methodology and terminology used in this report has been informed by the Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines³.

The site and its surrounds were visited on the 8th of July and the 28th of August 2024. This site visit was undertaken to assist in understanding the landscape character and values within the receiving environment to assess the proposal's actual and potential landscape and visual effects.

This report is tailored to suit the nature of the project and its context including the framework of the governing legislation. The statutory documents containing provisions relevant to the proposal are found in the RMA and both the oBDP and the TTPP. The District Plans give effect to the RMA within the context of the site and provides the policy framework against which the proposal has been evaluated. Given the current review process at this point in time more weight is given to the oBDP than the TTPP, although the provisions in both plans have been considered. The proposal is determined to be a noncomplying activity under the oBDP.

The table included in Figure 1 outlines the rating scales that are referred to in this report. The table included in Figure 2 is a comparative scale between the seven-point scale, and the RMA s95 notification determination test and the RMA s104D non-complying gateway test.

Very Low	Low	Low - Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - High	High	Very High
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Figure 1. The seven-point landscape and visual effects rating scale.⁴

Very Low	Low	Low - Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - High	High	Very High
Less than Minor		Minor	More than Minor		Significant	

Figure 2. The comparative scale of degree of effects.⁵

³ 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

⁴ 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Page 140.

⁵ 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Page 151.

2 The Proposal

2.1 Description of the Proposal

Resource consent is sought for an ecotourism development comprising a main Lodge, lodge support building, 15 cabins for visitor accommodation, workers accommodation, associated infrastructure, access and native planting restoration / revegetation. The existing dwelling and shed on the site will be retained in their current form and location. The proposal and landscape mitigation are illustrated on **GA, Pages 11-14**.

The complete details of the proposal are set out in the documents that accompany the resource consent application. The following points are of key relevance to an assessment of landscape and visual effects.

Punakaiki Wild Lodge

The Lodge will be approximately 5.5m in height above existing ground level and approximately 621.2m² in area. It will be located at the north-western corner of the site and setback 1.7, 2.3 and 3.4m at the three closest points from the site boundary and coastal edge. As shown on the architectural plans the proposed floor level for the Lodge will be 33800masl and at this level it will be below existing ground level. The Lodge floor plan will be formed as an organic 'S' shape form with an undulating roofline and extended eaves to mitigate wind and glare. The northern and western elevations will be fully glazed with the east and southern elevations partly glazed. The balance wall cladding will consist of masonry block and precast concrete finished in highly textured vertical flute render with a high content of local beach pebbles with other recessed walls finished in a dark grey low reflectance value colour. The roof material will be long run tray profile iron finished in matt gunmetal gray. The building's cladding will be consistent with a low reflectance value (LRV).

The Lodge will contain a restaurant, lounge bar and spa with WC and kitchen facilities. Outdoor dining and seating will be accommodated to the northeast and west of the Lodge. Access to the Lodge will be provided as a loop road off the existing site road to a drop off zone and return to the carpark which will accommodate 22 carparks. Provision for at least an additional eight car parking spaces will be provided by the lodge support building in a non-sealed area.

Cabins

A total of 15 cabins will be located throughout the site, of which nine will be single cabins (**SC**) accommodating a maximum of two people and six will be configured as family cabins (**FC**) accommodating a maximum of four people. The SCs will be 3.340m in height and 35.9m² in area. Each cabin will be an open plan layout containing a double bed, bathroom, gas / wood fire heating, kitchen, dining and lounge. A covered 6.67m² deck to the entrance will provide shelter and storage for wet gear.

The FCs will be 3.8m in height and approximately 100m² in area configured in an H arrangement connected by a covered vestibule that doubles as a sheltered entrance and storage area.

The external cladding of the cabins will be Ultraclad 205 Aluminium in Flaxpod colour. The cabin roofs will be COLORSTEEL Longrun Cladding with a Tray profile in a colour with a light reflectivity value (LRV) of less than 20%.

Each cabin will be provided with a carpark and access will be via a 2.8m wide compacted gravel track.

Worker Accommodation and Laundry

The worker accommodation and laundry will be located centrally on the site tucked into the existing and proposed native bush. It will comprise a 251m² simple gable building up to 4.80m in height, with roofing and cladding comprised of corrugated coloursteel in matt Flaxpod. A total of 85 solar panels will be contained on the north facing roof. The worker accommodation will contain 6 apartments (providing for a maximum of 12 people) each consisting of a bedroom and en-suite with a shared kitchen, and lounge facilities. A woodshed, laundry and linen store will be externally accessible.

Four water tanks will be located outside the worker accommodation and laundry building.

An existing dwelling located at 90masl in the vicinity of the property entrance will provide the onsite accommodation for the site manager. An additional four 30,000L tanks will be located along the southern boundary of the site behind the existing dwelling. The existing shed at 93masl will house maintenance plant and vehicles etc.

Lodge Support Building

The Lodge support building will be collocated with the carpark at the western end of the existing accessway. It will be 56.32m² in area and up to a maximum 3.0m in height. It will contain a general service and storage area in addition to an A/C plant area, and gas bottle storage. An enclosed refuse area is also provided. The cladding will comprise 200 series concrete block walls finished in heavy textured mortar render in a dark gray colour. The doors will be painted in dark grey with matt black powder coated aluminium frames and the window will be tinted a dark grey with the frames matches those of the doors. The building will be easily accessible from the existing accessway and surrounded by amenity planting.

Circulation

Existing access to the site is from SH6 at 98masl and this is proposed to be upgraded to meet the relevant traffic standards including sight lines, safe entrance and egress. Refer AEE, Traffic plan.

A formed farm track currently traverses the centre of the property downhill to the western coastal edge of the site as a compacted gravel chip surface 4m in width. At the western end of the formed track, a 875m² compacted gravel surface carpark will provide 22 carparks for casual visitors and Lodge customers. Access to each SC and FC will be via minor compacted gravel tracks (formed to 2.8m wide) except SC 3, which will be walk in or accessible via a golf cart or similar ATV.

Vegetation

The Masterplan identifies the areas of existing and proposed vegetation across the site and will be accompanied by a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP). Indigenous vegetation removal is minimal and limited to establishing access tracks where necessary. In any event, the extent of indigenous vegetation removal will be less than 500m².

The proposed Vegetation Management Plan focusses on a providing a comprehensive ecological restoration for both flora and fauna over the entire site and will be a mix of active planting, and passive regeneration. The plant species have been specifically chosen to provide habitat enrichment, food and habitat refuge for native birds, insects, and lizards endemic to the locality based on advice provided by RMA Ecology.

The restoration planting will include species for hillside forest, riparian, and coastal edges. Amenity planting will also provide visual mitigation and will be focussed on areas in the vicinity of the Lodge and cabins and at the site entrance. The proposed Plant Schedule is included on **GA, Page 30**.

It is intended that the proposed Vegetation Management Plan will be accompanied by a suite of pest, animal and wasp controls to achieve the best ecological outcome.

Earthworks

Earthworks will include the construction of the foundations for the Lodge, cabins and staff accommodation, accessways / tracks, power supply, the construction of the wastewater infrastructure and excavation for water tanks.

An Accidental Discovery Protocol (ADP) will be in place at all times during the site works.

All cut and fill batters created by the foundation work for building platforms or driveway construction, and / or areas disturbed through development of sewerage disposal systems, will be grassed or planted with suitable species from the plant schedules to ensure complete coverage of the cut and filled faces and/or disturbed areas. The maximum height of exposed batter faces shall be 2 metres with an angle of repose no steeper than 1 in 3.

Lighting

All external lighting shall be directional sensor lighting or restricted to bollard downlighting. All exterior lighting attached to buildings, shall be at a height no greater than 2.0m above the ground. At this point in time, the detailed lighting design for the site has yet to be determined. It is anticipated however that small bollard lighting will be established along the cabin access tracks, with these being sensor activated and downward facing / shielded to avoid excessive light spill. It is proposed to address the lighting design outcomes for the site through the preparation of an Exterior Lighting Management Plan (ELMP), with this providing an opportunity to consider the specific lighting outcomes having regard to the opportunities to avoid and mitigate any adverse lighting effects on landscape amenity and ecological matters.

Signage

One bilingual sign will be located at the site entrance with SH6.

3 Relevant Policy Provisions

3.1 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010

3.2 The Operative Buller District Plan (oBDP)

Under the oBDP, the site is shown on planning map as being located within the Paparoa Character Area.⁶ The BDP also identifies a historic place on the site being Sea Caves 60.⁷



Figure 4. The site is outlined in black and lies within the Paparoa Character Area under the oBDP.

Under the oBDP, commercial and tourist related activities within the Paparoa Character Zone, the exceedance of earthworks volumes and the exceedance of the permitted gross floor area of a single building (the Lodge) will trigger a **non-complying** activity status. Other parts of the proposal including vehicle access, activities within 50m of HWSM, residential activity (worker accommodation), and one sign also trigger the requirement for resource consent under the oBDP.

The resource management issues relevant to landscape matters related to the proposal are set out in Part 4 under :

4.4 Rural Land and Water Resource

4.6 Cultural / Historic Resources

4.7 The Coastal Environment

4.8 Ecosystems and Natural Habitats

4.9 Landscapes and Natural Features

⁶ Buller District Council | Operative District Plan | 5.4 Paparoa Character Area.

⁷ Buller District Council | Operative District Plan | 14.1 Historic Places.

And in Part 5 Character Area under the Paparoa Character Area at 5.4.

As a **non-complying** activity consent may be granted if the council is satisfied that either the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be minor or the application is for an activity that will not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the relevant plan.

Accordingly, the proposal is assessed against the objectives and policies relevant to landscape matters and is also assessed with regard to the effects of the proposal on the receiving environment. The relevant objectives and policies are appended to this report in full at Appendix A. Some of the objectives and policies with regard to farming / rural productivity and those relating to landscape and natural features, ecosystems and natural habitats and tourism appear to be contradictory, notwithstanding the policy recognition that compatible activities shall generally be permitted to locate in the rural area.

Under the parts of the oBDP relevant to landscape is a focus on the protection of rural character and amenity, protection of historical and cultural values, the preservation of natural values and character of the coast, and the protection of the distinctive character and values of ONLs (acknowledged by the Paparoa Character Area) including retaining and enhancing the scenic and amenity values of the coastline by avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of inappropriate land use activities. Of particular relevance are the intended Environmental Outcomes for the Coastal Environment at:

4.7.9.1. Siting and development of activities in a manner and scale which is in harmony with and/or enhances the character of the coastal environment.

4.7.9.2. Improved quality of the coastal environment.

4.7.9.3. Improved access to, and public appreciation of, the coastal environment.

The Paparoa Character Area emphasises retaining and enhancing the scenic and amenity values of the coastline. While some level of development is anticipated, the rules / standards for the Paparoa Character Area aim to protect the values by controlling development to small scale buildings through floor areas, and height to implement policies, which seek to reduce the visual intrusion of buildings on the landscape and natural values of the Paparoa coastline.

Further guidance on what may be defined as appropriate development is found in Part 9, including additional matters in the Paparoa Character Area, which contains the criteria for the assessment of discretionary activities used below to guide an assessment of the proposed development in section 5 of this report.

3.3 Te Tai o Poutini Plan (TTPP)

Under the proposed TTPP, planning map 34⁸ shows the site as being located within the General Rural Zone, and within an area of Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONL**), partly within an area of High Natural Character (HNC) in the Coastal Environment and partly within an area of Outstanding Natural Character (ONC) in the Coastal Environment, a Pounamu Management Area, and part of a Site of Significance to Maori (SASM30).

⁸ TTPP Buller Zoning Mapbook and Buller Environmental and Cultural Values Mapbook



Figure 4. The site is outlined in a black dashed line and lies within the General Rural Zone under the TPP.

Under the proposed TPP the following chapters of relevance to a landscape assessment have immediate legal effect:

Historic Heritage

SASM

Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity

Natural Character and the Margins of Water.

Except under Indigenous Vegetation where the indigenous vegetation clearance triggers a discretionary activity as a conservative approach the proposal will be a **permitted activity**. However as mentioned above given the current status of the district plan review, regard is given to the operative objectives and policies relevant to landscape matters that relate to the proposal.

Strategic Direction Objectives and Policies

NENV Natural Environment

NENV- O1 To recognise and protect the natural character, landscapes and features, ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity that contribute to the West Coast's character and identity and Poutini Ngāi Tahu's cultural and spiritual values.

TRM Tourism

TRM – O1 To recognise the significance of tourism to the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini economy by providing for sustainable tourism development while managing the adverse effects on the environment, communities and infrastructure. This includes Supporting the development of visitor facilities and accommodation within and near existing settlements and communities and on public conservation land where appropriate;

Managing the development and expansion of visitor activities and services so that the natural and cultural values, amenity and character of the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini and its communities are maintained;

Promoting a sustainable approach to tourism and minimising the adverse effects, and in particular cumulative adverse effects, of visitor activities and services on cultural values and wāhi tapu, natural values, amenity and landscape;

NFL Natural Features and Landscapes

NFL – O1 To protect the values of outstanding natural landscape and outstanding natural features on the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini, while providing for subdivision, use and development where the values that make the landscape or feature outstanding can be maintained or enhanced.

NFL – P1 Where possible, avoid significant adverse effects on the values that contribute to outstanding natural landscapes described in Schedule Five and outstanding natural features described in Schedule Six. Where significant adverse effects cannot be avoided, ensure that the adverse effects are remedied, mitigated or offset.

NFL-P2 Where possible, avoid significant adverse effects on the values that contribute to outstanding natural landscapes described in Schedule Five and outstanding natural features described in Schedule Six. Where significant adverse effects cannot be avoided, ensure that the adverse effects are remedied, mitigated or offset.

NFL – P3 Recognise that there are settlements, farms and infrastructure located within outstanding natural landscapes or outstanding natural features and provide for new activities and existing uses in these areas where the values that contribute to the outstanding natural landscape or feature are not adversely affected.

NFL – P4 Require that new buildings, structures within outstanding natural features or landscapes minimise any adverse visual effects by:

- Ensuring the scale, design and materials of the [building](#) and/or [structure](#) are appropriate in the location;
- Using naturally occurring [building](#) platforms, materials and colour that blends into the landscape; and
- Limiting the prominence or visibility of buildings and structures including by integrating it into the outstanding natural feature or landscape.

NFL – P5 Minimise adverse effects on outstanding natural landscapes and outstanding natural features by considering the following matters when assessing proposals for land use or subdivision:

- The scale of modification to the landscape;
- Whether the proposal is located within a part of the outstanding natural feature or outstanding natural landscape that has capacity to absorb change;
- Whether the proposal can be visually integrated into the landscape and whether it would break the skyline or ridgelines;
- The temporary or permanent nature of any adverse effects;
- The functional, technical, operational or locational need of any activity to be sited in the particular location;
- Any historical, spiritual or cultural association held by Poutini Ngāi Tahu;
- Any positive effects the development has on the identified characteristics and qualities;
- Any positive effects at a national, regional and local level;
- Any relevant public safety considerations; and
- The measures proposed to mitigate the effects on the values and characteristics, including:
 - The location, design and scale of any buildings or structures, or earthworks;
 - The intensity of any activity; and

The finish of any buildings or structures, including materials, reflectivity and colour; and landscaping and fencing.

General District -Wide Matters

CE – Coastal Environment

CE – O1 To preserve the natural character, landscapes and biodiversity of the coastal environment while enabling people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing in a manner appropriate for the coastal environment

CE – P2 Preserve the natural character, natural features and landscape qualities and values of areas within the coastal environment that have:

Significant indigenous biodiversity including Significant Natural Areas as described in [Schedule Four](#)

Outstanding natural landscapes as described in [Schedule Five](#);

Outstanding natural features as described in [Schedule Six](#);

High coastal natural character as described in [Schedule Seven](#); and

Outstanding coastal natural character as described in [Schedule Eight](#)

CE - P3 Only allow new [subdivision](#), use and development within areas of outstanding and high coastal natural character, outstanding coastal natural landscapes and outstanding coastal natural features where:

The elements, patterns, processes and qualities that contribute to the outstanding or high natural character or landscape are maintained;

Significant adverse effects on natural character, natural landscapes and natural features, and adverse effects on areas of significant indigenous biodiversity, areas of outstanding natural character and outstanding natural landscapes and features are avoided;

The development is of a size, scale and nature that is appropriate to the [environment](#);

RURZ Rural Zone

RURZ – O1 To provide for a range of activities, uses and developments that maintain the amenity and rural character values of the rural environment, while retaining highly productive land and rural activities, and supporting a productive rural working environment.

RURZ – P1 Enable a variety of activities to occur within RURZ - Rural Zones while maintaining rural amenity and character. Outside of settlements, activities should:

For buildings and structures have a bulk and location that is characteristic of rural environments;

Maintain privacy and rural outlook for residential buildings;

Be compatible with existing development and the surrounding area;

RURZ – P6 Recognise that the rural areas may be the most appropriate location for some utility, industrial or commercial uses to establish, where these have a functional relationship with rural areas, provided the character and amenity of the rural areas is maintained and adverse effects are managed.

RURZ – P9 Recognise that the rural areas form an important part of the visitor economy of the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini, particularly as a location where tourism and visitor attractions are established.

RURZ – P10 Support the development of appropriate tourism and visitor businesses such as accommodation, education and other facilities which relate to the rural environments in which they are located

EW - O1 To provide for earthworks to facilitate subdivision, use and development of the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini's land resource, while ensuring that their adverse effects on the surrounding environment are avoided or mitigated.

EW-P2 - Manage the effects of earthworks to minimise impacts on landscape character, amenity, natural features, water quality, biodiversity, cultural and heritage sites and the quality of the environment.

LIGHT O2 - Artificial outdoor lighting is located, designed and operated to maintain the character and amenity values within zones, so that it does not adversely affect the health and safety of people, the safe operation of the transport network, protects views of the night sky, the habitats and ecosystems of nocturnal native fauna and the species themselves.

LIGHT – P1 Provide for the use of artificial outdoor lighting that:

- a) Allows people and communities to enjoy and use sites and facilities during night time hours and contributes to the security and safety of private and public spaces;
- b) Maintains the character and amenity values of the zone and surrounding area;
- c) Supports the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing or health and safety of people and communities, including road safety;
- d) Minimises sky glow and light spill; and
- e) Protects the health and well-being of people and ecosystems.

LIGHT – P3 - Control the intensity, location and direction of any artificial outdoor lighting to:

- a) Ensure that any artificial outdoor lighting avoids conflict with existing light sensitive areas and uses;
- b) Internalise light spill within the site where the outdoor lighting is located;
- c) Minimises adverse effects on views of the night sky and intrinsically dark landscapes including in areas of outstanding coastal natural character;
- d) Minimises adverse effects on the significant habitats of light sensitive native fauna and the species themselves; and
- e) Minimises adverse effects on the health and safety of people and communities in the surrounding area.

4 Landscape Description

4.1 Description of the Receiving Environment

The receiving environment is characterised by its diverse and dramatic landforms and coastal environment. The approximate extent of the receiving environment, being the area that is potentially affected by the proposal is illustrated on GA, Page 3. It is an area between Kaipakati Point (north), Dolomite Point (south), the Tasman Sea (west) and the top of the eastern coastal escarpment to approximately 400 metres above sea level (masl) between Limestone Creek, Bullock Creek and Pororari River.

The topography within the receiving environment predominantly consists of the coastal escarpment with steep slopes including limestone rock escarpments, bluffs, and cliffs that except for intermittent, narrow areas of flat land in places, descend directly to the coastline or extend into the sea as rocky peninsulas.

The coastal escarpment lies parallel to the Paparoa Range and is part of a syncline containing Tertiary sediments (coal measures, limestones, mudstones and sandstones) and Quarternary gravels. The landscape is uplifting and is far younger than the river courses that transect it. As a consequence, the lower Bullock Creek and the Pororari River cut through the seaward escarpment of this syncline as steeply incised gullies. Bullock Creek and the Pororari River are both tributaries to the Pororari Lagoon, to which Punakaiki, (the primary settlement within the receiving environment) is adjacent.

The coastline between Kaipakati Point to the north and Dolomite Point to the south contains a series of striking geological limestone features, including spectacular coastal cliffs, blowholes, sea caves, and small beaches between narrow peninsulas. The cliffs feature a distinctive layered appearance resembling stacks of pancakes formed by alternating hard and soft layers of marine sediments and are often referred to as pancake rocks.

The local climate in the coastal zone is distinctive, being shielded by the Paparoa Range from much of the potential cold air drainage in winter and influenced by the ameliorating effect of the subtropical oceanic Westland Current. The climate is therefore generally mild and humid, with approximately 2000-6000mm of rainfall per annum. The combination of climate and topography results in a high diversity of vegetation that consists of many tropical species including nikau palms and puka.

The steep topography and climate also contribute to the largely intact indigenous vegetation sequences from the hills to the sea including coastal wetlands aided by the extensive areas of land tenure held by the DOC. The bulk of the land east of the site and SH6 is protected as the Paparoa National Park and other public conservation land. This largely unmodified vegetation pattern is interspersed with narrow strips of marginal pasture, exotic tree clusters, and exotic weed species including gorse associated with agricultural activities mostly confined to the narrow flat areas along the coastline.

A penguin colony breeding ground is located along this section of the coastline, accessible from Truman Track. Further south of the Punakaiki River is the only place that Westland Petrel seabirds breed. Kiwi (Great Spotted) are often heard, rather than seen in the forest along with morepork. Bellbird, tui, tomtit and fantail and grey warbler are common birds in the area, along with kereru /nz pigeon, kaka and weka. The fernbird has been seen in the vicinity.

The coastline and the associated hillsides within the receiving environment are interrupted only by the modified topography containing SH6 and interspersed occasionally with farmland, clusters of privately owned dwellings and small settlements that occupy the limited areas of flat land along the coastline. The small settlement of Punakaiki is located some 2.3km south of the site and sprawls along 2km of SH6 between the Pororari River and the Punakaiki River where flat land allows. Punakaiki includes the recently constructed Punakaiki Visitor Centre, Café and tourism services, bus and car park access to the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes.

Punakaiki predominantly consists of clusters of dwellings and baches located in close proximity to the coastline, a campground, in addition to tourism services, various forms of accommodation and other hospitality venues located along the state highway. Punakaiki is located on the edge of the Paparoa National Park, and although it only has 100 permanent residents, the settlement and SH6 often receive over 500,000 visitors per year due to tourism.

Other small nodes of development include the Hartmount Place subdivision tucked into dense bush south of the site and the Woodpecker Rise development at Kaipataki Point Road approximately 5.2km north of the site. In addition to these subdivisions, over 14 dwellings are located on the coastal side of SH6 and 11 dwellings and accessory buildings are located uphill of SH6 between Kaipataki Point and the site. These developments are typically hidden by the vegetation but visibly evident from SH6 by narrow accessways, letter boxes, and signage.

The receiving environment is valued for its numerous recreational and tourism opportunities due to the spectacular geological and ecological features of the coastline, the karst landscape and indigenous forest recognised by the Natural Open Space Zone and public conservation land managed by DOC, including the Paparoa National Park that applies over much of the coastline and hinterland.

Features of interest include the Pancake Rocks and Blowholes, the Cave Creek Resurgence, the Ballroom and the Punakaiki Cavern, all of which are products of the karst landscape within the 38,000ha Paparoa National Park. The Truman Track is 865m from the site and is a 1.4km return walk through subtropical forest where podocarp and rata trees tower above thickets of vine and nikau palms⁹. The Paparoa Track / Pike29 Memorial Track is designated as a Great Walk for trampers and mountain bikers, and joins sections of the Inland Pack Track, Pororari River Track and the Croesus Track. Past coal and gold mining activity is evidenced by landform modification, rusting machinery relics and in places exposed coal seams throughout the locality.

Activities include viewpoints / scenic lookouts to the coastline along SH6, tramping / hiking, biking, rock climbing (notable climbing faces along Bullock Creek Road), fishing, surfing, boating, camping, caving, bird watching and artistic pursuits.

Tangata whenua have a long association with the West Coast. The receiving environment is home to the Ngāti Waiwai people, a hapu of Ngai Tahu, who traded much-prized pounamu. Their takiwā is centred on Arahura and Hokitika and extends from the north bank of the Puerua River to Kahurangi and inland to the main divide. In this locality the coastal caves and overhangs bear traces of seasonal Maori occupation. Other sites were occupied along the coast, especially at lagoons and river mouths.

Te Miko sea cliffs were historically known as a notorious obstacle to coastal travel. The TTPP acknowledges cultural associations, referring to Te Miko as an ara tāwhito / a traditional travel route. Research indicates that maori ladders made of pieces of rata wood lashed together with flax provided access up the steep Te Miko cliffs north of Punakaiki for Charles Heaphy, Thomas Brunner, their

⁹ <https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/west-coast/punakaiki-walks.pdf>

Maori guide Kehu and dog Rover¹⁰. These ladders were later replaced by chains and rungs, until a reliable inland road was built in the 1860s.

Poutini is the name of the taniwha swimming up and down the West Coast of the South Island protecting both the people and the spiritual essence or mauri of pounamu, greenstone. Poutini guards the mauri within the treasured stone. The mana or spiritual force of pounamu comes from Kahue (or Ngahue), an atua. Poutini as protector of the stone is the servant of Kahue. That is why the coast is known as Te Tai Poutini, 'the tides of Poutini'.¹¹

4.2 Description of the Site

The site has an area of 22.47 ha and is located on and adjacent to the area of land known as Te Miko / Perpendicular Point. The site's eastern boundary abuts SH6, while on its northern and western boundaries the site is surrounded by coastline which is comprised of sea cliffs, sea caves and small beaches. The southern boundary of the site adjoins a 22.92ha scenic reserve that is part Paparoa National Park and an 8094m² private property at 4655 SH6, Te Miko that contains a dwelling. The Hartmount Place subdivision and development is located approximately 500m south of the site comprising 39 properties of varying sizes, some containing dwellings including providing tourist accommodation.

The existing landform of the site slopes west, with the steeper slopes adjoining the SH at 100masl becoming gradually less steep but highly undulating towards the sea cliffs at 40masl above the coastline. Numerous incised and connected streams and gullies run across the site generally east-west with areas of wetland and karst rock protruding above the surface in places. One large limestone outcrop is a central feature of the site.

Previously the site was farmed, providing grazing for sheep and cattle on the flatter land. The site contains one residential dwelling surrounded by a grassed curtilage area and a farm shed within 46m and 13m of SH6. Recent improvements include removal of a farm shed, stock pens, fences, an upgrade to the farm track that runs east-west more or less dividing the site in half and the replacement / addition of a culvert across one of the streams. Large areas have been cleared of gorse, which rapidly established on the open pastoral areas after the removal of grazing stock.

The steeper west facing slopes remain vegetated with podocarp forest including miro, kahikatea, kamahi, rimu, matai, rata, and nikau palms. A lone pine tree endures amidst the forest on the steeper slopes with a cluster of established pine trees located at the north-eastern corner of the site along the cliff edge and at the site entrance off SH6. The coastal margins (partly outside the site) are mainly a mix of phormium, coprosma, including areas of saline grassland. The wetland areas consist of riparian species including juncus and carex species, with a high proportion of introduced species.

Landcover on the gently sloping areas of the site predominantly consists of exotic pasture and pasture weeds including extensive gorse areas. Some of the gorse has now been removed leaving exposed ground, which will quickly revert to gorse unless actively managed.

The ecology report has identified the presence of four streams, some of which have side-branches or are ephemeral. These streams provide good quality habitat and riparian cover. Six natural wetlands have also been mapped on the site with most perched over a hard pan with underlying soils

¹⁰ <https://teara.govt.nz/en/video/21085/charles-heaphy-on-maori-ladder>

¹¹ <https://www.lin.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board/place-name-stories/maori-oral-history-atlas/poutini-guardian-taniwha>

providing poor drainage. The streams and wetlands were mapped – refer Figure 2 below. All wetlands have been grazed historically for a long time and although impacted with recover quickly.

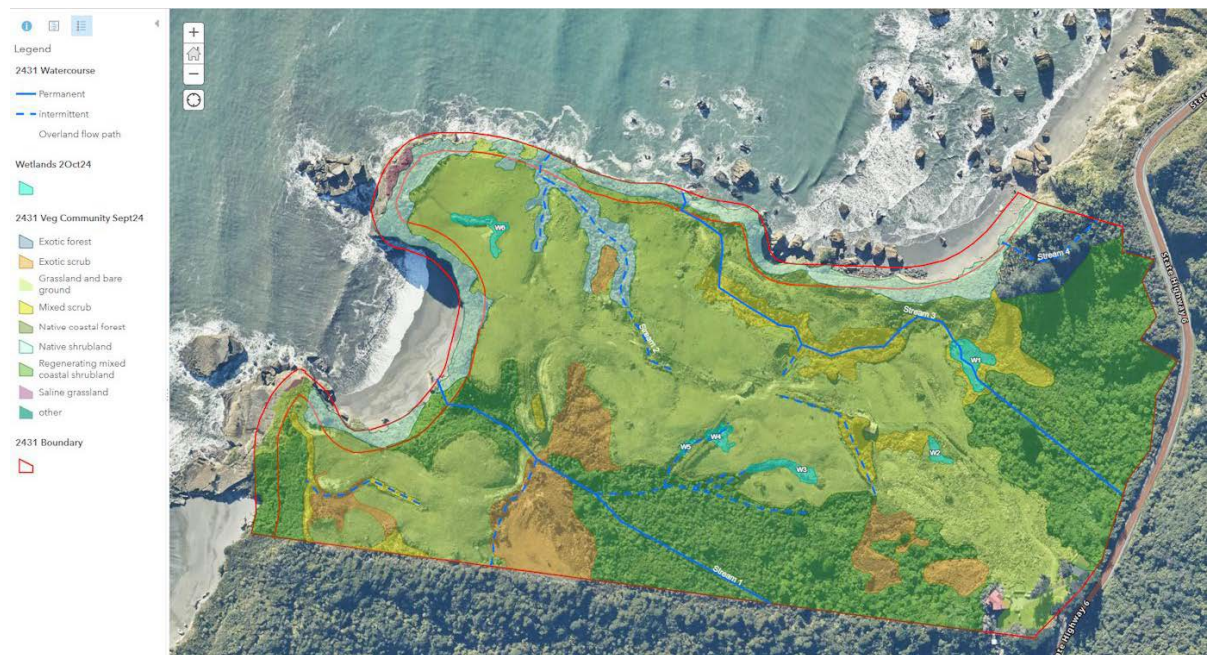


Figure 3. Vegetation Types, Streams and Wetlands within the site

In addition, the ecological assessment recorded existing lizard (grass skink) habitat in open areas, and West Coast green gecko habitat in the taller shrubland and forest. Fernbird was seen on the southern part of the site.

The Natural Hazard Desktop Assessment¹² dated 9 August 2024 identified a falling debris hazard area on the steep eastern slopes of the site, gully hazard areas associated with the two major gully systems throughout the site, a cliff erosion area and two undermined cliff hazard areas. These areas are viewed as constraints rather than no build zones on the site and serve to identify areas that require more detailed assessment and design before locating buildings, infrastructure or access in these areas.

The SASM (Site and Area of Significance to Māori) 30 - Te Miko is located on the site and is acknowledged as an ara tāwhito (traditional travel route). The actual cliff ladder location lies outside the site boundary within the legal (paper) road setback but accesses the site while existing metal artefacts / relict components once provided access to cray pots off the cliff edge.

Under the oBDP Part 14 – Schedule of Historic Building and Sites lists a sea cave identified on the coastline which extends under the site¹³. The geotechnical report by Tonkin and Taylor identified two arc-shaped caves along the beaches at the western edge of the site.

4.3 Landscape Values of the Receiving Environment

The landscape values of the receiving environment (physical, perceptual and associative) form the baseline, along with the policy provisions, for an assessment of landscape and visual effects. The

¹² Tonkin and Taylor. Natural Hazard Desktop Assessment DRAFT report. 9 August 2024

¹³ OBDP. Refer 7.9.7 Historical / Cultural Buildings and Sites

landscape values of the receiving environment (including the site) stem from its past and present landscape attributes (landform, landcover and land use). The landscape values that are relevant to an assessment of the proposed development are listed below.

Physical¹⁴

The values of the receiving environment are conveyed by the contrast between the landforms of steep coastal hillsides that merge into the dramatic coastline of sea cliffs, sea caves, and beaches juxtaposed with the wild Tasman seascape. The geology and weathering that has occurred to shape the distinctive limestone formations within the receiving environment also contribute to the karst landscape that is highly expressive of its process of formation.

The abrupt elevational change as the coastal hillsides climb out of the sea provides an unbroken altitudinal sequence of beech-podocarp vegetation, coastal forest dominated by species like northern rata along with dense tangles of kiekei, supplejack vines and native pines, which is lush, vibrant, and largely unmodified due to the landform and climate. The landcover and coastline provides habitat to a wide range of bird species including sea birds and mammals.

In the TTPP, ONL45 overlay identifies the following values for Ōkoriko/Razorback, Dolomite, and Perpendicular Point:

- Sequence of distinct rock formations including Dolomite Point Pancake Rock and Ōkoriko/Razorback Point as well as adjoining cliff faces.
- Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, rock stratification, blowholes, sheer cliffs, caves, and windswept vegetation impart a strong sense of naturalness.
- Striking interface with the Tasman Sea. Sheer cliffs plunge dramatically into the sea.
- Patterning of wind-swept coastal forest and scrub across the rock formations along with pockets of lowland forest and stands of nikau reinforce the landscapes topography and exposure.
- Dramatic wave action, evident coastal erosion, and seasonal changes to atmospheric conditions are highly expressive and natural processes.
- This landscape as a whole is a landmark.

Perceptual¹⁵

The experiential values of the receiving environment include the transient and ephemeral qualities of the landscape and seascape derived from the changing weather conditions, often resulting in violent wave action, mist, rain, and sunshine. Transient values are found in the light plays that emphasise and dramatize the coastal landforms and seascape at certain times of the day.

¹⁴ ***Physical***¹⁴ means both the natural and human features, and the action (and interaction of natural and human processes over time).¹⁴ Typical physical factors include geology, topography, hydrology, ecology, climate, vegetation, biological elements settlement patterns, buildings, heritage features and tāngata whenua features within the landscape.

¹⁵ ***Perceptual*** means both direct sensory experience and broader interpretation through the senses. While sight is the sense most typically applied to landscape assessment, direct sensory perception importantly includes all the senses.¹⁵ Typical perceptual factors include geomorphic legibility (how obviously a landscape expresses the geomorphic processes), wayfinding and mental maps (legibility or visual clarity of landmarks, routes, nodes, edges, and areas of different character), memorability, coherence (the extent to which patterns reinforce each other, for example between human patterns and underlying natural landscape), aesthetic qualities and views.

The aesthetic values of the receiving environment are primarily derived from the natural character of the coastline, which also provides dramatic scenic outlooks and a sensory vividness due to its transient qualities.

In the TTPP the overlays identify the following values:

Outstanding Coastal Natural Character NCA42 and NCA44 - Dolomite Point Pancake Rocks and Woodpecker Bay foothills to Needle Point

NCA42:

- Sequence of distinct rock formations including Dolomite Point Pancake Rock and Razorback Point as well as adjoining cliff faces.
- Varied amalgam of raw and exposed landforms, rock stratification, blowholes, sheer cliffs, caves, and windswept vegetation impart a strong sense of naturalness.
- Striking interface with the Tasman Sea. Sheer cliffs plunge dramatically into the sea.
- Dramatic wave action, evident coastal erosion, and seasonal changes to atmospheric conditions are highly expressive and natural processes.
- Extensive flax vegetation cover across the rock formations along with pockets of lowland forest and stands of nikau.

NCA44:

- Sequence of coastal bluffs and escarpments vegetated in mature coastal forest that wrap around the back of Woodpecker Bay and continue along the coast to Needle point. An assemblage of craggy headlands and points, rock shoals and outcrops characterise the latter part of this coastline.
- Interplay of exposed headlands, craggy bluffs, vegetated escarpments accentuate the dynamic and expressive coastal processes that have and continue to shape the coastal environment.
- Striking interface with the Tasman Sea. Sheer cliffs and scarps including Needle Point plunge dramatically into the sea.
- Continuous mature wind swept coastal forest across the escarpment enhances the sense of naturalness and wildness.

High Coastal Natural Character NCA43 – Perpendicular Point

- An extensive assemblage of craggy headlands and points, rock shoals and outcrops interspersed with sweeping sandy / stony beaches, dunefields, vegetated in coastal scrub and forest.
- High aesthetic values are associated with the inter-relationship between the series of craggy points and outcrops and the open waters of the Tasman Sea.
- Natural qualities are clearly evident in the amalgam of landforms, wind swept vegetation cover and their relationship with the Tasman Sea contributing to a very endemic landscape.

- Dramatic wave action, evident coastal erosion, and seasonal changes to atmospheric conditions are highly expressive and natural processes.
- The prominence of number of houses / batches and SH6 along the coastline affects the perceived intactness and cohesion of the coastal environment, however they do not overly detract from the highly expressive and natural processes that dominate the landscape.
- Backed by a steep escarpment covered in mature coastal forest.

Associative¹⁶

The associative values of the receiving environment include those within the site being SASM 30 relating to ara tāwhito (traditional travel routes) and as part of a Pounamu Management Area. Multiple other SASM lie within the receiving environment and relate to kāinga, caves, mahinga kai, nohoanga, and wāhi taonga.

In addition, the wider landscape supports a variety of recreational activities as set out above, including walking / tramping, fishing, biking, and sight-seeing.

¹⁶ “**Associative** means the intangible things that influence how places are perceived – such as history, identity, customs, laws, narratives, creation stories, and activities specifically associated with the qualities of a landscape.”¹⁶ Typical associative factors include cultural (tangata whenua) and historic values, as well as shared and recognised attributes such as recreational opportunities.

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

4.4 Potential Issues

The potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposal include the following:

- Effects on physical (geological), perceptual (visual amenity, scenic outlook, visual coherence, openness, legibility and naturalness) and associative values arising from the introduction of built form into a rural site and the proposed revegetation of the site.

4.5 Assessment of Visibility and Visual Effects

“A visual effect is a kind of landscape effect. It is a consequence for landscape values as experienced in views. Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects. A visual assessment is one method to help understand landscape effects.”¹⁷

The significance of the visual effect is influenced by the visibility, distance, duration of the view, the scale, nature and duration of the proposal, its overall visual prominence, the context in which it is seen, and the size of the viewing audience.

Whether the proposal is considered appropriate or not is partly determined by the visual effects on the receiving environment and whether the landscape values attributed to this setting are retained or whether, if adversely affected, effects can be satisfactorily avoided, remedied or mitigated. In general, landscape values experienced visually include a dramatic scenic outlook to the headland of Perpendicular Point, views over a rural landscape, the legibility, perceived naturalness, and visual coherence of the coastal landscape including the site.

Viewpoint 1 - 2. Located Kaipataki Point Road Lot 45B and at the intersection of SH6 / Coast Road and Kaipataki Point Road looking southwest towards the site at distances of approximately 5.5km and approximately 5.2km respectively.

These viewpoints afford the first view from SH6 towards the site at a distance of over 5.2km due to the coastline topography. Viewpoint 1 is located at a casual parking area on the road shoulder seaward of the intersection with Kaipataki Point Road. Kaipataki Road provides access to a 16 lot subdivision that extends from the SH at around 65masl along the coast up to 175masl. The lots range from 5622m² up to 32ha in area with the larger lots at higher elevations predominantly covered in native vegetation.

Viewpoint 2 is located on Lot 45B. Other signs of habitation are evident at Kaipakati Point on the coastal side of SH6, and further north at the small bach settlement at Tiromoana / Fox River where the Fox River Summer Market, Freedom Camping, Rusty Cup Café, Fox River Car Park and Fox Cave Track Hike are located. Ready access to the beach and Fox River is available. Further south between Pahautane and the site dwellings are present on both sides of SH6. In total between Kaipakati Point and the site the aerial plans show at least 14 dwellings on the coastal side and 11 dwellings plus some accessory buildings uphill of SH6. Most of these small, clustered, dwellings are well hidden / absorbed by the topography, bush vegetation and difficult to see from the SH. Overall, they are visually subservient to the extensive areas of bush clad hillsides and dramatic outcrops, coastline and beaches.

¹⁷ ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Page 135.

The landscape values are contributed by the dominance of native vegetation, and the complex topography along a dynamic coastal environment with high coherence, legibility, vividness and scenic outlook. Transient aspects also play a role with changeable weather conditions resulting in dramatic coastal views. The landscape, which although inhabited is perceived as a wild and remote location.

The site is visible because it protrudes from steep inland cliffs as a gently sloping peninsula enclosing part of the coast. At this distance site features are difficult to distinguish. The coastal haze on a fine day also reduces visibility of the site. From Viewpoints 1 – 2 the Lodge will be visible appear as a dark shape close to the end of the peninsula that given its organic roof form and low profile will likely appear indistinguishable from a rock outcrop or dark coloured vegetation. Six SC (1 – 3, 7 and 8) will not be visible given their small scale, recessive colour and setback from the coastal cliffs, noting that although the cabins are close to the property boundary in effect, they will be over 30m from the cliff edge with a backdrop of vegetation.

It is considered that the visual effects on landscape values from these viewpoints will be **no - very low**.

Viewpoint 3. Located at Puhautane / Limestone Creek Beach carpark and beach access looking southwest towards the site at distances of approximately 3.6km

Viewpoint 3 is one of the few places along the rocky coastline that offer a gravel shoulder and access to a small grey sand beach separated by a penguin protection fence. The beach is enclosed by native coastal vegetation and intersected by the Limestone Creek. The sheltered accessible bay with high natural character and dramatic vegetated slopes and cliffs contributes to a very high visual amenity. On a clear day looking south the site is visible as part of the distant sweeping coastal landmass although not specifically visible as a peninsula per se. Beyond Pahautane Beach except for a brief section of road at Hattens Bay the site is obscured by roadside vegetation and topography.

The view from passing vehicles will be fleeting over a short distance with no effect arising from the proposal, however for those who stop to enjoy the view the proposal is unlikely to be distinguishable as built development, at best the Lodge may be glimpsed as a dark organic form on the peninsula.

As a consequence of the distance, winding road and short intervals the site may be seen the visual effects on landscape values will be **very low**.

Viewpoint 4. Located at Irimahuwhero Lookout, looking southwest towards the site at distances of approximately 1.4km

Viewpoint 4 affords an elevated view of the site from a designated lookout and sealed roadside shoulder. It is a popular stopping point with panoramic views both north and south along the coast. An interpretation sign refers to Irimahuwhero, named by Māori travellers as ‘the place of the hanging red hair’ because of the crimson rata flowers that festoon the coastal bluffs at the height of the summer. The landscape values include a high legibility, naturalness, wildness, vivid drama, high visual coherency conveyed by the geology and scale of the complex landforms and consistent native vegetation cover except with regard to the site.

The site is clearly seen in good weather conditions, as the view focus to the south. The site is differentiated from the predominant native forest surroundings as a slice of inhabited farmland comprising gently sloping pasture and gorse, flowering yellow in spring.

The proposal will be visible particularly the dark recessive organic form of the Lodge appearing on the cliff edge close to the tip of the peninsula. Cabins particularly those along the northern edge of the site will be noticeable but not obvious except during construction period and in the short term until the mitigation planting establishes. The active revegetation of the site will remove evidence of the

historic pastoral modification and will contribute to an enhanced natural character. Once established the proposal will be consistent with the development pattern that has occurred in discrete locations along the West Coast SH6 between Punakaiki and Kaipakati Point and beyond to Tiromoana.

Overall, from this popular scenic outlook the short-term effects of the proposal on landscape values will initially be **moderate** but increasingly reduce overtime to **low** post construction and as the vegetation / native forest establishes and matures.

Viewpoint 5. Located at Coghlan's Lookout and picnic area looking northwest towards the site at a distance of approximately at 175m closest point – 640m to end of peninsula.

Viewpoint 5 is the closest view of the site from a place frequented by passers-by. It is 840m north of Truman Track and 577m north of Te Miko subdivision. A sealed footpath extends 1.6km from Punakaiki to Truman Track, which essentially is the outer edge of Punakaiki settlement.

The viewpoint is a mown grassed clearing with a sealed road shoulder where a gap in roadside vegetation focusses views directly to the site. The view overlooks dense native vegetation and the cleared undulating pastoral slopes of the site to the expanse of sea. The main access road and vehicle parked at the edge of the coastal cliff was visible at the time the site visit was undertaken. Landscape values are conveyed by the dense native vegetation and expanse of sea beyond the site. Overall, a pleasant visual amenity is derived from the scene.

The Lodge will be evident as a feature organic structure at the farthest edge of the site approximately 715m from the viewpoint. Although large in scale the recessive colour and organic form of the Lodge will add intrigue and interest and maintain a visual coherence rather than detract from landscape values of naturalness and legibility. The carpark will be located more or less at the end of access road, at 607m from the viewpoint. The gravel surface and transient presence of parked cars will be more or less obvious depending on numbers of cars. However, amenity planting and mounding will mitigate views of cars from this viewpoint.

The associated Lodge support structure and seven of the 15 cabins around the periphery / outer edge of the site will be visible looked down on from the viewpoint, however the small scale of these buildings and recessive cladding colours will ensure that they will not appear prominent. Furthermore, they will be absorbed into the site and visually mitigated by the proposed amenity planting. The revegetation will also enhance the topography and natural character of the site.

Overall visual effects on landscape values will be **moderate** in the short-term during construction and until amenity and revegetation planting establishes to mitigate views of the structures and site activity to reduce effects to **low**.

Visual Summary

To summarise the above, the visual effects on landscape values resulting from the proposal are as follows:

View-point	Location	Distance	Extent of Visibility	Effect on landscape values pre-mitigation	Effect on landscape values post mitigation
1	Kaipataki Point Rd	5.5km		No	No
2	SH6	5.2km		No	No

3	Pahautane Beach	3.6km		Low	Very low
4	Irimahuwhero Lookout	1.4km		Moderate	Low
5	Coghlan's Lookout	175m – 640m		Moderate	Low

The above assessment assumes clear weather conditions so visual effects which are highly dependent on the weather conditions will be very reduced in bad weather – low cloud and rain. These weather conditions are prevalent on the West Coast.

4.6

Assessment of Landscape Effects

“A landscape effect is an outcome for a landscape value. ... Change itself is not an effect: landscapes change constantly. It is the implications of change on landscape values that is relevant.”¹⁸

For the purpose of this assessment the landscape values identified for the receiving environment are related to the massive almost overwhelming scale and unique geology and topography of the landforms, their interaction (natural processes) with the coastal environment, expansive seascape and the continuous sequence of indigenous vegetation from mountains to sea that contributes to very high natural character, very high legibility and very high aesthetic / scenic qualities. Notwithstanding the scale at which these values occur it is acknowledged that some intimate / enclosed areas also afford high landscape values.

These values are acknowledged over the site by the high natural character (**HNC**) in the coastal environment over that part of the site that has been obviously modified by farming. The outstanding natural character (**ONC**) in the coastal environment lies over that part of the site that is dominated by native vegetation and will be retained as intact native vegetation. An ONL overlay encompasses the entire site despite the modified landcover. Further associative values relate to the sea caves, SASM30, pounamu and general recreational opportunities in the locality.

The proposal will inevitably change the landscape from farmland to a site that conveys a higher degree of natural character by removal of grazing stock, pasture and farm management practises and replacing the site management using an Ecological Enhancement Management Plan (**EEMP**) to restore the natural character of the site (landcover, biodiversity, habitats etc) in a way that is consistent with the development patterns within the immediate receiving environment. The comprehensive nature of the proposed development will restore a continuity to the coastal environment and uphold or improve the landscape values relating to natural character, legibility, visual coherency and a scenic outlook.

Open character (characterised by lack of trees as well as lack of structures) is not an important quality that is particularly associated with the West Coast given the predominance of native forest and large tracts of conservation land. However, the site itself is characterised by its open character and open space (lack of buildings) where the pastoral modification for farming purposes is evident. The built structures and development (Lodge, cabins, Lodge support, workers accommodation and carparking) are proposed for that part of the site which has already been modified by farming and while the proposal will inevitably reduce open space and to a small degree natural character this will be offset

¹⁸ ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Page 135

by the retirement / removal of farming activity (grazing) and the proposed revegetation to restore native vegetation cover.

The proposed Vegetation Management Plan (**VMP**) which will be included within the EEMP will form part of the site management. The VMP identifies the intended areas and types of revegetation that will occur within the site. The VMP identifies the intended areas and types of revegetation enhancing the naturally occurring native vegetation patterns, particularly recognising and emphasising the wetlands and gully systems throughout the site. The proposed revegetation will result in a site that is consistent with the surrounding conservation land and sites in the vicinity that contain built development.

The Lodge, cabins, workers accommodation, Lodge support building, carpark and access roads will be located within areas of open pasture or gorse so the removal of any native vegetation will be negligible. In accordance with the ecological report and plan the proposed development will also comply with a 10m build setback to the wetlands and a 5m build setback to the streams. Existing vegetation along the streams and wetlands will be enhanced with further riparian vegetation. The saline grassland will remain intact being outside the site boundary. Of note is that the proposed development will avoid damage or removal of any karst features within the site.

The buildings will all comply with the DP height requirements. The Lodge will be less than 7m in height and will comply with the oBDP height standard. The cabins will be below 3.8m in height and the workers accommodation will similarly be well below the 7m maximum height limit. Further in response to the site constraints, the layout of the proposed built forms will avoid the natural hazard areas identified by the Tonkin and Taylor Natural Hazard Desktop Assessment dated 9 August 2024.

Despite its coastal location, the bespoke architectural design of the Lodge will convey an organic horizontal form that relates to the topography and with its generous eaves will mean that it appears well grounded into the site. Further, the undulating roofline and elevations with recessive cladding will ensure that the building will be readily physically and visually absorbed into the topography of the site assisted by the amenity planting proposed to surround the Lodge.

The cabins, Lodge support and workers accommodation will be easily absorbed into the site by their small scale, spatial arrangement on the site that responds to the topography, avoidance of high natural character areas, recessive colours and the proposed mitigation vegetation.

Associative values relating to the site include SASM *relating to* ara tāwhito and *as part of a* Pounamu *Management Area* and the presence of historical caves. It is understood that these relate primarily to the coastal edge on the periphery or outside the site itself given the approximate 20m setback from the cliff edge that accommodates a paper road / coastal setback, and the site boundary which is offset further from that. Notwithstanding the setbacks it is understood that these attributes will remain intact and unaffected by the proposed development, which will not impede access by the public. In reality the proposed development will encourage public access that was previously denied to the site. Therefore overall, it is considered that there will be no effects on associative values.

The result will be a restored site with a development pattern and landcover that is consistent with the receiving environment and that will protect and enhance the landscape values, being physical, perceptual and including associative values.

Overall, for the reasons set out above, the proposal will have a **very low** degree of adverse effects on the landscape values of the site and its receiving environment.

5 An Assessment Against the Relevant Policy Provisions

The proposed development is assessed below and considers the relevant matters to landscape in accordance with the non-complying activity status under the oBDP.

5.1 **Part 9. Criteria for Assessment of Discretionary Activities**

Those relevant to a landscape assessment of the proposal are:

9.2.1. The extent to which the activity complies with any relevant objectives and policies of the Plan and any other relevant policy document, plan or proposed plan including those identified in Part 2.

Response

The objectives and policies of the oBDP generally relate to the protection of landscape values including water quality, indigenous cultural values and natural character of the coastal environment.

The objectives and policies at 4.4 Rural Land and Water Resource relating to productive land resources and water quality are in part conflicting where the maintenance of rural productivity requires removal of native vegetation for the establishment of pastoral grazing, in contrast to where the maintenance of wetlands including natural character, areas of indigenous vegetation and riparian margins / habitats are sought. While the productivity of the site will not be maintained for a rural activity, the objectives and policies relating to water quality will be met because the proposal will protect and enhance the wetlands and streams, and revegetation will occur along all riparian margins. Furthermore, the proposed development will comply with the setbacks required from wetlands and rivers.

Under 4.6 objective 4.6.7 and associated policies seek the protection of cultural values. These values are largely outside the site boundary and associated with the coastline caves and cliff access and therefore no adverse effects on cultural values will arise from the proposed development of the site, notwithstanding the improved public access to the site.

At 4.7 objectives and policies relating to the coastal environment seek to maintain or enhance the natural character by avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of land use activities requiring a coastal location. The Paparoa Character Area focuses on retaining and enhancing the scenic and amenity values of the coastline.

The development is by default within the coastal environment as much of the available and accessible private land lies along the coastline. The proposed Lodge and cabins are sensitively located within the site, well set back from the coastal cliff edge, sited in response to the topography and located within the modified farmland of the site. The bespoke organic architectural form of the Lodge relates specifically to the natural coastal character of the site, and the visitor accommodation cabins are small scale, and recessive and will be difficult to see. The proposed development will be an appropriate outcome for the coastal environment by restoring the natural character of the site through native revegetation that will also enhance the scenic and amenity values of the coastline and further will not preclude public access.

In relation to objectives and policies relating to Ecosystems and Natural Habitats at 4.8 as mentioned above the proposed development is accompanied by a Vegetation Management Plan which recognises the wetlands and streams within the site, identifies the various vegetation types and

proposes the rehabilitation of farmland to restore natural habitats and ecosystems including riparian margins.

At 4.9 objectives and policies relating to Landscapes and Natural Features seek the protection of the distinctive character and unique values of ONLs. The values associated with specific ONL landscapes are given further priority as character areas. The site lies within the Paparoa Character Area. The ONL values relevant to the site are set out above in section 4.3 and mostly relate to the broad scale landforms and coastal features of the locality and the continuous sequence of native landcover extending from the mountains to the coast.

Of note is that the proposed development will replace farmland with native vegetation thereby restoring an unbroken sequence of native vegetation from the SH 6 boundary to the coast. Furthermore, the proposal avoids karst features, wetlands and streams within the site ensuring that the natural character values will be maintained. The prevalence of built development within the Paparoa coast is testament to the ability of the landscape's topography and presence of native vegetation to absorb development without adverse effects on the scenic and amenity values of the coastline. The same will occur with the proposed development within the site once the restoration and amenity planting has been established.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development will not be contrary to the relevant objectives and policies in the oBPD.

9.2.2. Where standards have been specified relating to activities in each Character Area the extent of compliance with standards for permitted activities shall be considered when assessing the application.

The standards relating to the Paparoa Character Area limit building size to ensure that the coastal environment is protected from the effects of activities which could detrimentally impact on the scenic and natural values of this character area. In particular floor area and height controls seek to avoid the visual prominence of buildings. All built form proposed for the site will comply with the standards except the Lodge, which functionally and operationally requires a larger floor area to accommodate a luxury tourist experience. While the Lodge complies with the height controls the floor area standard will be exceeded. However as previously mentioned the bespoke architecture and organic form with an undulating roofline and the dark recessive cladding ensures the Lodge will relate to the topography of the site appearing like a natural rather than a built feature. The visual assessment demonstrates that the prominence of the Lodge will be visually absorbed into the site with **No - Low** effects on high natural coastal character.

9.2.3. The likely effects, both adverse and beneficial, of the proposal including effects on:

9.2.3.2. Natural habitats and/or vegetation, landscape and natural features and the integrity, resilience and functioning of indigenous ecosystems.

9.2.3.3. The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins.

The proposed development includes a VMP, which will be accompanied by an EMP to restore the site with an indigenous landcover, enhance natural habitats and ecosystems and protect the natural character of the existing wetlands and streams within the site. In doing so the high coastal natural character will be maintained. The outstanding coastal natural character will remain intact being removed from the proposed development area which is contained within the modified pastoral area of the site.

9.2.3.7. Visual amenities including those of any buildings or structures associated with the activity and other ancillary features, for example, signage and parking. The design, siting and appearance of buildings should have special regard for, and be visually appropriate to, the natural landscape and scenic character of the locality, particularly in areas of high scenic value. Appropriate landscape treatment and sensitive use of colours for example, assist in mitigating possible adverse effects.

The parking is 875m² and located at the end of the existing accessway. It provides 22 car parks for the Lodge visitors. The site parking is co-located with the Lodge support building and the service area and carpark will be screened by the proposed native amenity planting. The cabins each have their own park space, which will also be well hidden by the amenity planting.

Signage will consist of one bilingual sign at the site entrance of SH6. Its location on the SH will be well removed from the coastline and will not detract from the ONL including amenity values of the area.

9.2.3.8. The relationship of tangata whenua with their ancestral lands, waters, waahi tapu sites and other taonga.

This is addressed above in the response to the oBDP objective 4.6.

9.2.3.12. Neighbouring land uses. Landowners adjacent to the site should not have activities on their land jeopardised or detrimentally affected unless their prior written consent has been obtained. Where written consent is not obtained, the effects on adjacent landowners' amenity and activities will be considered.

Over 800m of site's north and west boundary adjoins the coastline, with 375m along the eastern boundary with SH6. The southern boundary is 684m. Approximately 96m adjoins an existing private property at 4655 SH6 being the southeast corner of the site. The balance of the southern boundary adjoins the Paparoa National Park. The southern boundary is densely vegetated on both sides and will remain intact. Consequently, adjoining landowners will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

9.2.4. The extent to which any adverse effect of the activity can be overcome by mitigation measures.

The potential adverse effects of the proposed development will be overcome by a suite of mitigation measures including the site layout, building design, use of recessive materials, and proposed planting. The existence of built form in the coastal environment between Punakaiki and Tiromoana demonstrates the effectiveness of the native vegetation and topography in screening buildings and the ability of the landscape to accommodate development without adversely affecting the scenic qualities of the area.

5.2

Additional Matters in the Paparoa Character Area

9.5.1. For all activities the effect of the activity on the scenic qualities of the area. Conditions may be imposed to mitigate any adverse effects, for example, conditions on access or design of buildings.

9.5.2. For all activities the values and sensitivity of the land/sea interface. Conditions may be imposed on buildings to mitigate any adverse effects on the scenic qualities of the area. Acceptable activities are likely to be low impact recreational activities or those which enhance the natural values and character of the coast.

For the reasons above it is considered that the proposed development will be appropriate and will further enhance the natural values and character of the coastal environment.

5.3

Assessment against the proposed TTPP provisions

The themes of the objectives and policies within the proposed TTPP under the strategic direction chapters Natural Environment, Historic and Cultural Values, SASM, Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity, Natural Features and Landscapes, Natural Character and Margins of Waterbodies, the General District Wide Matters in the Coastal Environment and the Area Specific Matters Rural Zone chapter are generally aligned with the oBDP objectives and policies relevant to landscape matters that are discussed above. In addition, further guidance is given under Natural Features and Landscapes policies P4 and P5. These policies support the outcome required at NFL-O1 which anticipates development where *values that make the landscape outstanding can be maintained or enhanced*. In other words, the TTPP does not envisage that there will be no development within the ONLs.

NFL – P4 Require that new buildings, structures within outstanding natural features or landscapes minimise any adverse visual effects by:

Ensuring the scale, design and materials of the [building](#) and/or [structure](#) are appropriate in the location;

Using naturally occurring [building](#) platforms, materials and colour that blends into the landscape; and

Limiting the prominence or visibility of buildings and structures including by integrating it into the outstanding natural feature or landscape.

NFL – P5 Minimise adverse effects on outstanding natural landscapes and outstanding natural features by considering the following matters when assessing proposals for land use or subdivision:

The scale of modification to the landscape;

Whether the proposal is located within a part of the outstanding natural feature or outstanding natural landscape that has capacity to absorb change;

Whether the proposal can be visually integrated into the landscape and whether it would break the skyline or ridgelines;

The temporary or permanent nature of any adverse effects;

The functional, technical, operational or locational need of any activity to be sited in the particular location;

Any historical, spiritual or cultural association held by Poutini Ngāi Tahu;

Any positive effects the development has on the identified characteristics and qualities;

Any positive effects at a national, regional and local level;

Any relevant public safety considerations; and

The measures proposed to mitigate the effects on the values and characteristics, including:

The location, design and scale of any buildings or structures, or earthworks;

The intensity of any activity; and

The finish of any buildings or structures, including materials, reflectivity and colour; and landscaping and fencing.

Response

The site is 22.47ha in area and contains one dwelling and a farm shed. An existing shed and other farm equipment has been removed from the site. Overall, the proposed development will equate to a site coverage of 2017.2m² or 0.9% of the site. Consequently, the site coverage will uphold a rural character where open space and vegetation remain dominant.

The proposed development has a functional and locational need to be sited within the coastal environment to achieve the concept of a luxury ecotourism experience.

The proposal responds to the ONL values, including the high coastal natural character and the outstanding coastal natural character whereby the proposal is located within the modified area of the site leaving the balance existing forest and coastal shrubland intact with a further 10.366ha of proposed native revegetation to replace the existing pasture and gorse landcover although 2.487ha will be retained of open space pasture as habitat. The development is setback from the coastal cliffs that accommodates a paper road between the coastline and the site boundary within which the topography and existing coastal shrub mitigate visual effects on the coastal environment. This will ensure that the proposal will be visually integrated into the site.

The scale of the proposed development is very low with the Lodge and cabins spatially separated in response to the topography, within the modified areas of the site. Furthermore, although the Lodge is a large in area (621.2m²) the building is low profile at less than 7m in height with an undulating roof line. The organic form and recessive materials and cladding colours reflect a rural west coast vernacular. The 15 cabins and Lodge support building will be small, below 4m in height and clad in the recessive Flaxpod colour aluminium cladding. The worker's accommodation is similarly low profile with recessive colour cladding and will be nestled within a clearing amongst existing native vegetation and mitigated by further native planting. The design features of the buildings ensure that the proposed development will be visually integrated into the ONL as demonstrated by the visual assessment above.

The proposal is not located on a ridgeline, but the Lodge will break the skyline from some viewpoints along the SH because it is located on the coastal edge of the headland. However, the undulating roofline means that from a visual perspective the Lodge is difficult to distinguish as built form but rather appears to relate to the topography of the landform. Therefore, visual effects arising from a skyline intrusion will range from **No-Low**.

Overall effects during construction and while the revegetation is establishing will be temporary and short term and increasingly diminishing overtime.

The cultural values associated with the site (as per the TTPP Sites of Significance to Māori 30) relate to ara tāwhito, being part of a traditional travel route. This is consistent with the coastal location of the site in a landscape that consists of steep coastal cliffs and a mountainous hinterland. The proposed development has been designed to be sensitive to the receiving natural environment and potential te ara tāwhito values of the site and will not prevent access given the cliff edge setbacks of the site and proposed development and the public access provided to the site. The overall project and mitigation are considered to be an appropriate response to potential cultural values of the site and surrounding area.

The positive benefits of the proposal relate to the replacement of the farm activity, structures and pastoral modification with the restoration of the indigenous vegetation sequence from the mountains to the sea, that will improve biodiversity and habitats, protect the existing wetlands and waterways within the site and enhance the ONL and coastal natural character values including the scenic outlook and amenity.

To avoid undue repetition, comments on the objectives and policies contained within the proposed TTPP are limited to objectives and policies under Tourism, Earthworks, and Light that are additional to those set out in Appendix A of this report and / or that have not been discussed above.

The earthworks objectives and policies seek to facilitate development while ensuring the adverse effects are avoided or mitigated. With regard to landscape matters earthworks will be limited to building platforms (Lodge, Lodge support building, workers accommodation and 15 cabins) for the purpose of constructing building foundations, 2.8m and 4.8m wide access roads, a carpark accommodating a minimum of 22 sealed carparks (with the capacity for at least an additional eight

non-sealed spaces), service trenches and water tanks equating to approximately 5,500m² in area, subject to a detailed design. The majority balance area of the 22.47ha site will remain undisturbed by earthworks. Furthermore, the proposed development will comply with the required setbacks from wetlands and streams to ensure that earthworks will not adversely affect landscape values including character, amenity and natural features and cultural sites within the receiving environment.

The objectives and policies relating to Light enable rural productive activities to occur within the rural zone, so some external lighting is anticipated for dwellings, night-time work etc. The lighting within the site has been designed to maintain the rural character and amenity values of the site and coastal surroundings. Lighting will be restricted to sensor lighting at the building entrances. Outdoor wayfinding will be provided by downward facing bollard lights along the main accessways to limit skyglow and light spill. Interior lighting will be restricted by generous eaves, curtains and sensitive lighting colours.

6 Conclusion

It is proposed to develop a luxury ecotourism experience at 4671/4663 State Highway 6, Te Miko/Perpendicular Point, Punakaiki.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respond to the landscape values particularly the natural character, scenic and amenity values of the coastal environment. The proposed development includes a VMP that will restore the site's natural character by replacing farmland with native vegetation, enhancing natural habitats and ecosystems, and protecting karst features, the existing wetlands and waterways on the site.

The visual assessment concludes that visual effects on amenity including scenic values will be **Very Low** and the landscape assessment reaches a similar conclusion as to effects on landscape values. It is acknowledged that during construction period and while vegetation establishes to provide visual mitigation that adverse visual effects will temporarily be up to **Moderate** over the short-term (3 - 5 years) however, adverse effects will increasingly reduce.

It is acknowledged that if key mitigation planting can be established on site prior to construction starting, then potential adverse effects during the construction period will most likely reduce from Moderate. Further detail is required regarding this, and comfort can be had that this will be included in the EEMP to be produced following resource consent.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development will have a **No-Low** degree of adverse effects on the landscape values of the site and the receiving coastal environment equating to a less than minor adverse effect. In addition, as a non-complying activity the proposed development will not be contrary to the relevant objectives and policies of the oBDP and the proposed TTPP.

APPENDIX A

Operative Buller District Plan Objectives and Policies

The following objectives and policies are relevant to the landscape matters relating to the proposal:

4.4 Rural Land and Water Resource

4.4.4 Objective

4.4.4.1 To ensure that the overall integrity and character of the rural environment and productivity of rural land resources is protected while enabling rural communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing.

Policies

4.4.5.1. A wide range of compatible activities which do not individually or cumulatively adversely affect the sustainability of rural land resources shall be generally permitted to locate in the rural area.

4.4.5.2. Sustainable land management practices which maintain and/or enhance the productive values of soils and amenities and character of the rural area shall be encouraged and promoted.

4.4.13. Objective

4.4.13.1. Promote land use activities which maintain or improve the water quality of the District's rivers and do not adversely affect water quantity, in order to safeguard the life supporting capacity of water.

4.4.14. Policies

4.4.14.2. Significant ecological, cultural and heritage sites related to the water resource shall be recognised and wherever possible protected through the encouragement of integrated land management practices.

4.4.14.3. To control the modification of significant natural wetlands to protect their natural character, landscape values, and their significance as areas of indigenous vegetation and habitats for indigenous fauna, and to sustain their life supporting capacity as indigenous ecosystems.

4.4.14.7. To protect and enhance riparian margins adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and the coast for the purposes of: (i) Maintenance of the natural character of waterways, natural habitats and water quality including the mitigation of adverse effects of contaminant discharges and other natural and aesthetic and amenity values associated with the adjacent waterway. (ii) Public recreation. (iii) Public access. (iv) Maintenance of bank stability and reduction in sedimentation.

4.6 Cultural / Historic Resources

4.6.7 Objective

4.6.7.1. To protect places and sites of historical and cultural value from the adverse effects of land use activities and to ensure where appropriate, access to historic and cultural sites is maintained and enhanced.

4.6.8. Policies

4.6.8.1. A close and on-going relationship with tangata whenua and the Council shall be maintained, including the maintenance of confidential records in ways which accord with the tikanga of tangata whenua of known waahi tapu.

4.6.8.2. Evaluate and protect heritage resources by identifying those resources of historic, cultural or architectural value or of special significance to the District.

4.6.8.3. As and when cultural and/or historical sites of importance to tangata whenua are identified by respective Kaitiaki in Buller District, the Council shall facilitate the recording of such sites in ways which accord with the tikanga of local iwi.

4.6.8.4. Assessment of resource consent applications shall include their potential impact on known places of historic and/or cultural value. 4.6.8.5. Continued access to sites of special cultural significance to tangata whenua shall be supported. 4.6.8.6. Upon accidental discovery of urupa or skeletal remains, consultation with the tangata whenua shall be required.

4.7 The Coastal Environment

4.7.5 Objective

4.7.5.1. To maintain or enhance the natural character of the coastal environment by avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of land use activities and subdivision requiring a coastal location.

4.7.6. Policies

4.7.6.1. The subdivision, use and development of land in the coastal environment shall be tightly controlled within the Paparoa Character Area.

4.7.6.2. Sensitive coastal environments including areas of importance for mahinga kai shall be protected from the adverse effects of land use activities.

4.7.6.3. The protection and enhancement of whitebait spawning habitats shall be encouraged in conjunction with the other regulatory agencies.

4.7.6.4. The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastline shall be encouraged except where restrictions are necessary to ensure public safety or to avoid the potential adverse effects of people and/or vehicles on the coastal environment.

4.7.6.5. Alternative methods of refuse and sewage disposal for settlements within the coastal environment shall be investigated where landfill discharges enter waterways and/or where raw sewage is discharged directly to the sea.

4.7.6.6. Co-operation and co-ordination with the West Coast Regional Council in noise management within the Coastal Marine Area.

4.7.6.7. The needs of existing and future activities requiring a coastal location shall be recognised.

4.8 Ecosystems and Natural Habitats

4.8.6. Objective

4.8.6.1. To protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna and to recognise their importance to the character and quality of the natural and physical environment and to the wellbeing of the people and communities in Buller.

Policies

4.8.7.1. The adverse effects of land use activities on natural habitats and ecosystems shall be taken into account when considering development proposals which impact on these areas.

4.8.7.3. To control the modification of significant natural wetlands to protect their natural character, landscape values, and their significance as areas of indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna, and to sustain their life supporting capacity as indigenous ecosystems.

4.8.7.4. For the purposes of Section 6(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991, the following criteria will be used as guidelines to identify areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.

1. Representativeness: The area is one of the best examples of an association of species which is typical of the ecological district.

2. Distinctiveness: The area has indigenous species or an association of indigenous species which is unusual or rare in the ecological district, or endemic, or reaches its distribution limit.

3. Intactness: The area has a cover of predominantly indigenous vegetation, is little modified by human activity, and is not affected in a major way by weed or pest species.

4. Size: The area of indigenous vegetation or habitat is 5ha or more in size or together with adjacent indigenous habitat is larger than 5ha; or in the case of natural wetlands is larger than 1ha in size.

5. Protected Status: The area has been set aside by statute or covenant for protection or preservation.

6. Connectivity: The area is connected to one or more other significant areas in a way (through ecological processes) which make a major contribution to the overall functioning of those areas.

7. Threat: The area supports an indigenous species or community of species which is threatened within the ecological district or ecological region or threatened nationally.

8. Migratory Habitat: The area is important as habitat for significant migratory species or for feeding, breeding or other vulnerable stages of indigenous species, including indigenous freshwater fish.

9. Scientific or Cultural Value: The area is a scientific reference area, is listed as a geopreservation site, or has significant amenity value.

4.8.7.5. Using the significance criteria identified above as a guideline for forming a schedule, Council will compile a schedule of significant natural areas.

4.8.7.6. In the interim the Council will make decisions on resource consent applications which recognise and provide for the protection of:

1. Significant indigenous vegetation and indigenous habitat;
2. Natural values associated with riparian margins.

4.8.7.7. To protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna from inappropriate use, subdivision and development.

4.8.7.8. To encourage the retention of existing indigenous vegetation on the margins of waterways, wetlands and the coast and the enhancement of these areas through the use of indigenous vegetation where rehabilitation plantings are to be carried out.

4.9 Landscapes and Natural Features

4.9.3.1. To protect the distinctive character and unique values of outstanding landscapes and natural features.

4.9.4. Policies

4.9.4.1. To discourage activities which would significantly alter the character of outstanding landscapes.

4.9.1.1. Protection of the outstanding landscape values and natural features of Buller District from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

4.9.4.2. Character areas shall be identified in the Plan and shall reflect the distinctive landscape elements and natural values held for each region.

Part 5

5.4 Paparoa Character Area

5.4.1.1. The Paparoa Character Area extends from the southern boundary of the Buller District near Dolomite Point, Punakaiki to Needle Point. Areas in Punakaiki and Ross Subdivision are included in the Urban Character Area with special controls to acknowledge their special scenic significance. The seaward boundary is represented by MHWS and the inland boundary as indicated on the planning maps. Within the Paparoa Character Area the coast has a significant influence on landform, vegetation and human activities. The Paparoa Coast is identified as being unique compared with the remainder of the District. In recognition of this distinctive character, a different management approach has been applied to the Paparoa Coast.

5.4.1.2. The emphasis of the rules for the Paparoa Character Area is on retaining and enhancing the scenic and amenity values of the coastline. Protection is given to indigenous vegetation and to water quality, coastal character, historical and cultural resources. Significant areas of natural or modified indigenous vegetation remain over much of this coastline and contribute to the dramatic contrast that exists between the land and the sea.

5.4.1.4. Any activity in the Paparoa Character Area is either permitted, controlled or discretionary if it falls within the standards for each category in Table 5.10A. It must also comply with the District Wide rules in Part 7.

5.4.2. Permitted Activities

5.4.2.1. Any agricultural, forestry or residential activity which complies with the standards listed in Table 5.10A except those listed as controlled activities.

5.4.2.2. Additions to any existing building or structure as per the standards in Table 5.10A.

5.4.2.4. Any clearance of indigenous vegetation to be incidental to a permitted activity and limited to 200m² per hectare.

5.4.2.5. No modification to, or destruction of, an area identified as a significant natural feature or landscape. No modification to, or destruction of, areas identified as significant indigenous vegetation or significant habitats of indigenous fauna is allowed.

5.4.4. Discretionary Activities

5.4.4.1. Any earthworks to be incidental to another activity and limited to a maximum volume of 100m³

5.4.4.2. Maximum clearance of indigenous vegetation is 500m² per hectare.

5.4.4.2.1. Discretionary activities will be assessed according to the criteria in Part 9.