

Attachment 3

Landscape and Visual Assessment Memo on Implications of Rezoning



To: Stuart Penfold **Copy to:**

Company: Bloxam Burnett & Olliver

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Project: 2020-052 Ohinewai Foam Factory and Rail Siding

Implications of the *Ohinewai Rezoning* with respect to the findings identified in the *Ohinewai Foam Factory and Rail Siding; Landscape and Visual Assessment Report*.

I am the author of the *Ohinewai Foam Factory and Rail Siding; Landscape and Visual Assessment Report ((OFFRS Report) R5, dated March 2021)*, and have been asked to make comment on the implications on that report, of the rezoning decision of the site and surrounds from *Rural Zoning* to *Industrial Zoning within the Waikato District Plan*. I refer to *Figure OHI -1 Ohinewai Structure Part 3 Area-specific matters, Zones, Special purpose zones, Decisions Version, Waikato District Plan*. This plan identifies the extent of the *Industrial Zone* in which the proposed site, and several neighbouring properties to the south, are fully contained.

This decision significantly affects my analysis and rating of the effects of the proposed development evaluated in the *OFFRS Report*, as the proposed industrial development and its anticipated effects are now largely aligned with receiving industrial zone context. As a result, while the visible effects of the development remain the same, the resulting character shift toward industrial character is now consistent with the underlying zone.

Within the *OFFRS Report* the proposed development was considered to have

an adverse effect on the existing landscape character and visual amenity associated with the site, from close proximity (within 1.5 kilometres). The landscape character of the site will change from its present rural (pastoral) land use, to that of an industrial development. Existing pasture will be lost to large industrial buildings that are of a character and scale not currently represented in the area and views of the open pastoral landscape beyond the site will be lost. the development will result in moderate to high levels of effect on the existing visual and landscape amenity.

The rezoning alters this assessment, as the zone change anticipates the shift from rural character to industrial character within the site. The character and scale of industrial buildings, the provision of extensive hardstand, and the nature of the activity within it are now consistent with expected development in this zone. Considering this, my analysis of the effects of the proposed development would also alter. Rather than the effects being considered adverse to the intended character of the site, they are now positive to the industrial character of the site. While they still result in a change in character, the development shifts the qualities and attributes of the site to converge with the anticipated character of the underlying zone.

While the proposed mitigation strategy and design continues to assist with the integration of the development into the wider landscape, the change to the underlying zone has the most effect for close proximity analysis. As the proposed mitigation does not fully mitigate the scale and character of the development on the immediate surroundings, the industrial character of the proposed development remains obvious. It is now, however, an expected characteristic of the environment.

As the site is effectively a greenfield site, it is appropriate to consider the development against the permitted baseline test. When considered against potential non fanciful development permissible under the industrial zone the development is considered to be closely aligned. Within this context the development considered to have low to very low ratings at close proximity and is now considered overall to have *a less than minor* effects on existing landscape and visual amenity.

Restricted Discretionary Component

It is noted that the proposed development is not entirely consistent with the plan provisions of the *Industrial Zone* with regard maximum building height. The plan provisions allow a 17.5m tall building in the *Industrial Zone* as a *permitted activity*. Building 4 (*the Rebond Building*) however, has a maximum height of 17.9 m and therefore has *restricted discretionary activity status*. This discretion is restricted to *effects on amenity*. It is noted that technically the exceedance is 2.0m above 'natural ground level before cut and fill', as the required building platform for building 4 is 1.6 metres above natural ground level. Due to the nature of the site and the relative perception of the building and finished ground level on completion of the development, the apparent height exceedance will be 0.4m. The comments below however remain consistent with consideration of both the technical and perceived exceedance.

In this instance, given the perceptible exceedance of the plan provision, (0.4m along the roof ridgeline), the location of the building centrally within the overall site, the distance from publicly accessible viewpoints, other surrounding buildings which will provide both context and screening, and the surrounding mitigation strategy for the wider site; I consider that the effect on amenity as a result of the minor exceedance will be negligible. This is because the exceedance will be difficult to detect, is not considered to introduce any additional critical obstruction or intrusion of views of the surrounding area and is not considered to result in any significant change to the propagation of effects of the development, such as over shadowing, beyond the development site boundary.

Necessity of the Southern Boundary Mitigation Landscaping

As a result of determination of the extent of the *Industrial Zone*, and the area of Industrial Zoned land to the south of the APL sites southern boundary, further consideration has been given to the need for mitigation planting along the southern boundary.

The original purpose of the mitigation planting along the southern boundary was to provide screening for adjacent residential properties and assist with the integration of the development. With the change of the underlying zone to industrial, the necessity for low level screening is removed. As the Industrial zone now extends beyond the Foam Factory site, developments of a similar nature are anticipated to occur beyond the southern boundary which will negate the benefit of low-level screening while a collector road is proposed adjacent to the southern boundary.

It is considered however, that the retention of some taller specimen tree planting would be advantageous to delineate the site boundary and provide a degree of screening for the development from more distant publicly accessible views. As a result, I would recommend a reduction of the extent of mitigation planting along the southern boundary to a single row of wider spaced taller species. It is suggested that these trees form part of the street tree planting suggested for the collector road, and that their implementation is timed to be coincide with that development.

Should you require any clarification of these matters please do not hesitate to contact the author.

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Director

PROJECT MEMORANDUM



All variations must be approved in writing before any work is undertaken. Prior to the issuing of any variation instructions, a variation price shall be submitted to the project engineer for review with the client and approval. Please indicate any time frame requirements when making variation suggestions or submitting variation prices as this will assist in determining and communicating priorities to the client.