

## Response to Request for Further Information from the EPA

**Re : Recommended Mitigation Measures  
With Respect to Effects on Visual Amenity of the Roberts' Property  
From the Proposed Silverlight Studios Ltd SSL Development  
FTC000027**



**October 27 2021**

### **Introduction**

Anne Steven of ASLA Ltd has been asked by the EPA to liaise with Ben Espie of Vivian +Espie to agree on the mitigation measures required to ensure adverse effects of the SSL proposal on the visual amenity of the Roberts' property are "no more than minor". The measures proposed by ASLA Ltd are set out below.

Ben Espie agrees some of these measures are appropriate but not all of them are necessary to ensure the degree of adverse effect is no more than minor. Ben Espie has prepared a document setting out what his view is on appropriate measures which largely concurs with the measure ASLA recommends.

### **Comment on Outcome Sought for RCL**

Ben Espie is of the view that complete screening of built form and other activity associated with the SSL proposal is not required in RCL. He refers also to the existing consented development.

The context for the landscape and visual assessment in this case is limited to the effects on the Roberts' property not the wider landscape.

The consented development on the SSL site, which I designed, would have had very little building visibility and some traffic visibility with respect to the Roberts' property. The level or extent of built form and activity of the consented development is not comparable (by magnitudes of effect) to that being proposed in the SSL development.

### **Revised Mitigation Measures**

In the opinion of ASLA Ltd, the following mitigation measures as shown in the appended Plan by ASLA Ltd (*Proposed Mitigation Measures for the Roberts' Property*) and described below are appropriate. Where relevant, comment is made on the response by Ben Espie.

### **EARTHWORKS**

1. Earthworks to build up naturally occurring low ridges to the southeast of the lake to the necessary heights to provide immediate substantial screening of the Sound Studios and the access road. This is with respect to the view through the meltwater channel from the Roberts' dwelling and outdoor living areas. "Substantial screening" means that the height of the ridges is such that with a further .8m height of earthworks and/or planting along the ridge there would be complete screening.

*BE comment: allowing 5m of the Sound Studio buildings to be visible at the outset to be gradually screened by planting would have short term adverse effect on the Roberts' visual amenity that are moderate (minor to more than minor) in my opinion. It would take several years for planting to reach height and density to screen the*

*remaining 5m. It is my view that there should be complete screening of the sound studios in this case to maintain the level of openness the Roberts currently enjoy. The earthworks will also mitigate noise.*

The approximate area of earthworks is shown on the appended plan. The relevant earthworks plans prepared by Paterson Pitts Group need to be amended to include the new earthworks. The screening effect of the new landforms is to be demonstrated by cross-sections between the Roberts' dwelling and the Sound Studios and access road. These are to be prepared by Paterson Pitts Group.

2. The new earthworks are to be of natural form and seamless with existing topography. The final form shall be to the approval of the Roberts' family or their representative. The earthworks are to be sown in pasture grass typical of the existing pasture upon completion.

**Conditions Required:** that the earthworks to construct the ridges is completed before any building construction begins

**PLANTING:**

3. Full screening of the Sound Studios and access road and its traffic shall be achieved by an additional minimum 800mm tall layer of native "grey shrubland" and tree planting on top of the new ridges (the ultimate height of the shrubs and trees is 1.5-6m). The approximate areas of planting are shown on the appended plan. The full screening effect shall be in place before construction of the buildings so that at no time will any building construction be visible from the Roberts' dwelling and outdoor living areas.

*BE comment: requiring that mounding and planting be in place before buildings are in use means that there will be a period between completion of construction and use where the buildings are visible. In this case, to avoid any reduction in visual amenity screening of buildings needs to be from the outset in my opinion.*

Screening is to be achieved through dense planting (1m spacings) at a height of 800mm so there is limited filtered view of any built form from the outset. Larger grade plants and/or increased densities may be used to achieve visual screening in a shorter time period. The height of the ridges can be increased to provide more of the screening, if plants will be smaller grade at planting (for example, the initial planting layer could be reduced to .3 to .4m on top of the ridge).

Species shall comprise *Coprosma propinqua*, *Coprosma crassifolia*, *Coprosma intertexta*, *Coprosma virescens*, *Corokia cotoneaster*, *Olearia odorata*, *Olearia lineata*, *Plagianthus regius*, *Myrsine divaricata*, *Cordyline australis*, *Pseudopanax ferox*, *Sophora microphylla*, *Kanuka serotina*, *Melicytus alpinus*. Other naturally occurring native species may be added to the mix at any time for biodiversity purposes (e.g., native broom, mountain cottonwood, wineberry, matagouri). All plants shall be eco-sourced. The usual conditions regarding planting and post planting care and replacements shall apply.

4. The planting shall be extended in a 10m wide band along and east of the access road between the Woolshed and the meltwater channel to provide full screening of the road and all traffic on it including freight trucks and buses.  
*BE comment : BE recommends a minimum width of 5m. My view is that a 10m width is required as a minimum to allow for at least 3 layers of planting to achieve sufficient density to screen traffic including at night. The height also needs to be closer to 3m to screen out larger vehicles.*  
 Green (or black) wind break cloth (e.g. attached to deer fencing) can be used to ensure immediate screening as well as providing shelter to the planting.
5. A large patch of planting established at the junction of the southern access road to Crew Car Park One to fully screen it and any traffic on it including buses and other large vehicles with respect to views from the Roberts' property. The planting is to be dense enough to prevent headlights being visible. If necessary similar planting is to be used to ensure no traffic is visible on the northern road to Crew Car Park One.
6. Additional exotic tree planting of tall growing species such as poplar, eucalypt, ash, alder and/or oak on the new ridge closest to the lake as shown on the appended plan, to provide full screening of the Mediaeval, Paris and Venice sets visible from the Robert's dwelling and outdoor living areas. The trees shall be planted as large grade species and kept well-watered until shown to be well established. No construction of sets shall start until trees are sufficiently high enough to filter views for built form from the outset.
7. A planting plan will need to be prepared detailing exact location and extent of all plantings, species mix, numbers, grades at planting, spacings; and planting and after-planting specification. The planting plan is to be approved by the Roberts family or their representative prior to implementation.

**Conditions:**

**Ridge planting** - Stage 1 planting (on ridge crest and within 3m of it) is to be completed before building construction can commence. Remaining planting on the side of the ridges (Stage 2) shall be completed within the next two planting seasons.

**Stage 1 Ridge Planting**

- Native Plants shall be .8m tall at time of planting. If these are not available further earthworks can be carried out to raise the height of the ridge to enable smaller grade plants to be used and achieve the same effect.  
*BE comment: specifying 2.5l pot grade at time of planting does not ensure plants of necessary height are planted.*
- Planting spacings shall be approximately 1m
- Trees shall be large grade (between 3m and 5m high depending on species)
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**Stage 2 Ridge planting**

- Plants may vary in height at time of planting from .3 to .8m or taller
- Planting spacings shall be 1 to 1.2m

**Roadway Planting**

- Windbreak cloth of sufficient height to screen traffic on the road from the Roberts dwelling shall be erected on the road side of planting areas prior to any work starting on the site
- Planting shall be undertaken at the earliest practicable opportunity following granting of consent and shall be completed within 2 planting seasons
- Trees shall be large grade (between 3 and 5 m high depending on species)  
*BE comment: 1.5m high trees at time of planting would take too long to achieve the desired screening*

All native planting shall comprise only locally occurring indigenous species and shall include the tree and shrub species listed.

All planting shall be irrigated, mulched and protected from rabbits and stock.

All trees shall be securely staked.

Any plant that dies or is damaged or diseased shall be replaced with the same sized plant as soon as practicable.

### **Woolshed Earthworks and Planting**

- Earthworks and Planting shall be implemented within 2 planting seasons following granting of consent.
- Native Plants may vary in height at time of planting from .3 to .8m or taller
- Planting spacings shall be 1 to 1.2m
- Trees shall be large grade (between 3 and 5 m high depending on species)

*BE comment: Ben Espie has not commented on recommendations to mitigate noise and activity associated with events and functions at the Woolshed. An alternative measure is for the function consent for the Woolshed to be surrendered.*

### **Boundary Planting**

The existing pine belt on the boundary is on the Robert's property. It is nearing the end of its life and will need to be removed in the near future. Early establishment of a belt of native tree and shrub planting along the boundary on the SSL side (to the west and southwest of the Roberts' dwelling) would ensure a buffer of planting remains to provide mutual privacy and visual screening from activities on the SSL site.

*BE comment: Ben Espie has not commented on this recommendation.*

### **OTHER**

8. There is to be no "back lot "activity on the land between the access road and the Roberts' property, where it is visible from the dwelling and outdoor living areas. No temporary built sets shall be visible from the Roberts' dwelling and outdoor living areas.

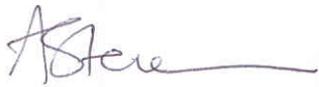
Condition:

- An open space covenant shall apply to the pink areas defined on the plan. There shall be no buildings or structures within these areas.

### **Purpose of Mitigation Measures**

1. Maintain the same degree of openness, with no more buildings in view of the Roberts' dwelling and outdoor living areas. This includes any accommodation and service buildings in the future and also temporary film sets
  2. Mitigation measures (planting, earthworks) to be consistent with the existing landscape character or enhance it; and to maintain the same level of visual coherence
  3. The access roads are screened so that traffic using them including large vehicles such as buses and freight trucks are not visible particularly at night.
  4. Earthworks are used to reduce noise generated from the SSL complex as well as to provide immediate visual screening
  5. Earthworks and planting are used to reduce the effects of noise from the Woolshed and screen out activity and night-lighting
  6. No "back lot" filming activity on land visible from the Roberts' dwelling and outdoor living areas between the access road and the eastern boundary.
  7. To give effect to the outcome demonstrated in **Annotated View 1**.
- Recommendations for Mitigation of Effects on Amenity Values of the Roberts Property** prepared by ASLA Ltd September 2021.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anne Steven', is written over a faint rectangular stamp or watermark.

Anne Steven  
ASLA Ltd

October 27 2021