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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Isthmus Group Ltd (IGL) was engaged by Land Matters on behalf of the Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC) and the owners of Matakana Island to provide a constraints and opportunities assessment of the landscape values of the island to inform the development of a Whole of Island plan. The identification and assessment of the key landscape values of the island will allow for high values areas to be identified as constraints to any future development or use of the island. Equally some landscape guidance can be extended to opportunities for land suitable for papakainga, small scale rural settlement, lifestyle purposes or limited Urban Activities (as defined in the Regional Policy Statement).

The island takes its name from Matakana Point (also known as Flax Point) lookout on the western side of the peninsula, where a sentry would keep watch on the coast for war parties approaching. 'Mata' means eye and 'kana' is an abbreviation of pukana meaning open eye or alertness. Matakana Point has a commanding view over the surrounding mainland peninsulas and bays which look toward the island. The high point of the island on the peninsula is also known as Matakana.

1.1 Methodology

The following methodology has been used to assess the site, proposal and its landscape and visual effects:

- Background research into the relevant statutory documents, and the intent of the provisions the zoning of the Western Bay of Plenty District Plan (WBOPDP), the Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP), and the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) in relation to Matakana Island;
- The development of an approach to landscape assessment under the RMA;
- Assessment of the landscape and natural character values of Matakana Island; and
- Identification of landscape and natural character constraints to the management and development of the island.

2.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

2.1 *Matakana Island*

Matakana Island is a long narrow island, approximately 25km long, oriented in a northwest-southeast direction. Matakana is comprised of two main geographic units: the barrier island (approximately 4,300ha) forms the eastern coast line and much of the inner harbour coast and is made up of Aeolian dunes; and the western peninsula (approximately 1,500ha) protruding into the Tauranga harbour, comprised of silt stones, sand stones and conglomerates. The underlying geology of the barrier island is dune sand of the upper quaternary¹.

Matakana Island and the surrounding landscape context are illustrated on **Figure One**.

The underlying topography of the barrier part of the island is rolling sand dune land and hills, ranging in height up to 15 metres above sea level (asl). The eastern side of the island contains a series of dunes, generally 10-12 metres asl, with the inner eastern side of the barrier generally having a lower profile.

The barrier is between 1 and 2.5 km wide, and the western peninsula is approximately 6km long by 3km wide.

The very northern tip of the island contains dune lakes and wetlands and is noted in the relevant planning documents for having ecological significance.

The western peninsula has more pronounced topography, with low lying inlets and tidal wetlands and higher rolling land up to 68 metres asl. The highest part of the island is on the western part of the peninsula and takes its name from the Island. The western part of the island is more heavily settled with two marae at Opureora and Matakana Point, a school, a shop, a fire station and a number of areas of residential settlement concentrated around Opureora Road, Waihirere Road, Matakana Point Road and Opuhi Road. Areas of avocado and other orcharding operations have been developed on the western peninsula.

Unsealed forest access roads and tracks have been developed on the barrier, with the Hume Highway linking the south east and north west ends of the island, and a number of roads traversing between the open coastline and the inner harbour. The western peninsula includes a number of roads linking the northern and southern ends of the peninsula with the barrier

¹ New Zealand Geological Survey 1972. North Island Geological Map of New Zealand. DSIR. Wellington.

section of the island, including Opureora Road, Waihirere Road, Matakana Point Road and Opuhi Road. A small residential settlement has been developed on the north side of the old mill site on the barrier section of the island.

Prior to human arrival the island would have been covered mainly in coastal forest dominated by pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*), puriri (*Vitex lucens*), kauri (*Agathis australis*), tanekaha (*Phyllocladus trichomanoides*) kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) totara (*Podocarpus totara*), northern rata (*Metrosideros robusta*), maire (*Nestegis* sp.), kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*), and possibly hard beech (*Nothofagus truncata*)².

The kauri gum fields of Matakana Island were a significant part of the history of the island in the early 20th century:

“In 1902 there was a burst of interest in the deposits of kauri gum on Matakana. The Bay of Plenty Times reported in December that ‘Messrs Campbell and Jackson representing an Auckland syndicate holding the option over the gumlands of Matakana Island are at present prospecting there.’”³

The main treed land cover across the barrier island is *Pinus* sp., which occurs on the island as both managed plantation, and as wilding pines. *Macrocarpa* (*Macrocarpa* sp.) and eucalypts (*Eucalyptus* sp.) have also been planted in parts of the island. Both pines and eucalypts have naturalised in parts of the island with large areas of unmanaged pine and eucalypt on the edges and the northern point of the barrier providing a buffer between the open coastal areas and the plantation pines on the island. Pines were first planted in 1924 at the southern Panepane end of the barrier. Approximately 160 ha was originally planted by the Tauranga Harbour Board⁴. By the 1950's saw milling had been established on the island to service the first rotation of plantation pine harvesting.

The domestication and cultivation of the island has occurred since pre-European times, with the value of the Matakana soils recognised early on:

“Matakana Island... includes an extensive area of fertile land. A large portion of the island is owned by natives, who grow maize extensively and are harvesting some splendid crops this year.

² Wildland Consultants Report No 2001. Ecological Assessment of Proposed Protection Lots and restoration Options and Opportunities for Blakely Pacific Land on Matakana Island. July 2008.

³ Stokes, E. A History of Tauranga County. Dunmoore Press Ltd. 1980. p 272.

⁴ Murray, Heeni. Matakana Island. Te Whakaruruhau o Te Moana o Tauranga. Publicity Printing Ltd. Tauranga. 1990. Pg 48.

They also produce large quantities of kumeras. Some have also embarked on the dairy industry and are now milking a fair number of cows. Their aim is to increase the herds. The cream is sent to the Katikati butter factory. The natives at Matakana are an industrious community and those who are not engaged in farming pursuits have been employed by the Public Works Department on the railway construction works”⁵.

Matakana Island is a strong landscape reference point within the Tauranga landscape, and the wider area, essentially creating a barrier island landform at the mouth of the Tauranga harbour. The low profile landform of the Island and calm inner harbour is a visual centre-piece for the amphitheatre created by the backdrop landforms of Mauao, the Tauranga harbour peninsulas, the foothills hinterland of Welcome Bay, Te Puna, the Minden Ridge, Katikati, and Athenree, and the higher backdrop of the Kaimai and Coromandel Ranges.

When viewed from the inner harbour and the landward edge of Tauranga, Te Puna, and Omokoroa (from the west); Rangiwaea, Motuhoa, and Motungaio Islands contain similar topography and landcover and are viewed as part of the same complex of inner harbour islands as Matakana. When viewed from the mainland it is very difficult to separate these island landforms from one another.

In order to assist in the classification and assessment of landscape values within Matakana Island, the island has been divided into a series of landscape character areas based mainly on the underlying topography, land uses and the landcover. The landscape character areas are mapped in **Figure 2**:

Open Coastline: The open beach and dune system facing to the northeast, with light sand beaches and intertidal areas, and relatively high profile dunes (6-10m asl). Indigenous dune species and wind sheered pines provide the edge to the plantation forest.

Inner harbour edge: The low profile inner edge between the island and the calm harbour. The topography is low and subtle and is wet and inaccessible in areas, with tall pines to the harbour edge.

⁵ Stokes, E. A History of Tauranga County. Dunmoore Press Ltd. 1980. p 248.

Eastern dune ridge:	The taller dune system occupying the eastern and central spine of the island (up to 10-12m asl). The land cover is generally a contiguous cover of plantation pines.
Western lower terrace:	The lower western terrace containing a mixture of plantation forestry, wetlands and more open land cover. The backdrop of pines provide the land/sky interface.
Barrier ends:	The north and south ends of the island which are the focus of the harbour entrances, and are particularly sensitive to landscape change.
Inner harbour peninsula:	The peninsula containing the existing residential development, orcharding, and pastoral activities within the island. The inner harbour peninsula is most visible from the mainland and the harbour and is the most settled part of the island with a number of small residential communities.

2.2 Wider Landscape

Matakana Island guards the harbour entrance to Tauranga Moana. At the north end is Bowentown Heads (89m asl) marking the northern, or Katikati entrance to the harbour, and at the southern end Mauao (231m asl), marks the southern entrance. Bowentown heads and Mauao are both considerably higher than the low lying island, and in particular the northern and southern ends of the barrier, which are closest to these larger landscape features. The landscape context is illustrated in **Figure 1**.

Tauranga harbour is protected by Matakana Island and the Papamoa sandspit ensuring that the waters of the harbour are not open to the currents of the Pacific Ocean. The wide sweep of the Bay of Plenty coastline is partially formed by the eastern edge of Matakana Island.

A series of mainland peninsulas protrude into the Tauranga Harbour including the Papa peninsula (Tauranga CBD and Sulphur Point), Otumoetai, Te Puna, Omokoroa, Aongatete, Katikati, Kauri Point, and Bowentown Heads. These peninsulas and headlands create the series of inlets and bays of the gentle inner Tauranga harbour. Foot hills at Whakamarama and Te Puna mark the next scale of topography back towards the Kaimai Ranges which surround the amphitheatre that overlooks Matakana Island and the Tauranga Harbour. The Kaimai Ranges

link the Mamaku plateau to the Coromandel Range which provide the inland hill country to the west.

3.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

Planning documents which are relevant to the landscape and natural character values of the Matakana and the surrounding area are summarised in more detail in **Appendix 1**. An overview of those documents in relation to Matakana is set out below.

New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS 2010)

Consistent with Method 17A.4(iv) of the Regional Policy Statement, the NZCPS 2010 guides Local Authorities to consider where to put development in the context of coastal environments. Policy 7 is particularly relevant in that respect.

Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS)

The Bay of Plenty Regional Policy Statement (RPS) promotes the sustainable management of the Bay of Plenty Region's natural and physical resources.

Relevant to this assessment, Chapter 9 of the RPS relates to the Coastal Environment and Chapter 15 relates to Heritage Issues.

Operative Bay of Plenty Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP)

The purpose of the Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP) is to enable Environment Bay of Plenty to promote the sustainable management of the natural and physical resources of the Bay of Plenty coastal environment. Sustainable management is defined in Section 5 of the Resource Management Act as:

Managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while –

- a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and*
- c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

Part II of the RCEP covers Matters of National importance, as Listed under Section 6 of the RMA. Of particular relevance to this application, Chapter 4 of the RCEP relates to Natural Character, and Chapter 5 relates to Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes. Also of relevance to this assessment, the Fifth Schedule of the RCEP contains management guidelines for Natural Features and Landscapes.

The Tauranga Harbour is identified as an outstanding natural feature and landscape in the Fourth Schedule of the RCEP:

“01 Tauranga Harbour. The entire harbour, its estuarine fringe, and unmodified islands. Generic Landscape Policy for Harbour, Headland, Estuarine and Islands” (see Fifth Schedule of RCEP).

A full list of the relevant provisions of Chapters 4 and 5, and the Fifth Schedule of the RCEP is contained in **Appendix 1**.

Western Bay of Plenty District Plan

Appendix (ii) of the Western Bay of Plenty District Plan (WBOPDP) identifies a schedule of identified significant landscape features:

“Appendix (ii) – Schedule of Identified Significant Landscape Features

Natural Features and Landscapes

This appendix lists the visually significant natural features and landscapes in the District (also identified on the planning maps). Those identified tend to be either:

- *Dominant landform features such as peaks and ridgelines which provide a visual focus and/or enclosure; or*
- *Sharp transitions between landform types such as the boundary between land and water.*

S19 – Matakana Island

The area identified as visually significant includes all the land 40 metres inland from MHWS.”

Similar provisions have been carried over into the Proposed Western Bay of Plenty District Plan. There has been some strengthening of the landscape provisions with the introduction of a Landscape Yard. These provisions are also included in **Appendix 1**.

The Resource Management Act (1991)

Matters of national importance are listed in section 6 of the Resource Management Act (1991) (RMA). Section 6 of the Act states that:

“In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- (a) The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development:*
- (b) The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development...”*

Landscape is a broad subset of the environment. Landscape is an integrating concept, and is more than merely visual. It includes factors relating to the physical landscape, people’s perceptions of the landscape, and the values or meanings that people associate with landscape.

In terms of RMA case law, the most seminal discussion relating to landscape is in C180/99 Wakatipu Environmental Society vs Queenstown-Lakes District Council⁶:

“The criteria for assessing a landscape includes:

- (a) the natural science factors – the geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components of the landscape;*
- (b) its aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness;*
- (c) its expressiveness (legibility): how obviously the landscape demonstrates the formative processes leading to it;*
- (d) transient values: occasional presence of wildlife; or its values at certain times of the day or of the year;*
- (e) whether the values are shared and recognised;*
- (f) its value to tangata whenua;*
- (g) its historical associations.”*

In relation to naturalness as it relates to natural science factors, and aesthetic values in the ‘Amended Pigeon Bay Criteria’, the court provided further guidance⁷:

“We consider that the criteria of naturalness under the RMA include:

⁶ See Pg46 Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown-Lakes D.C. C180/99, 5 NZED 85, [2000] NZRMA 59.

⁷ See p51 & 52 Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown-Lakes D.C. C180/99, 5 NZED 85, [2000] NZRMA 59.

- *the physical landform and relief*
- *the landscape being uncluttered by structures and/or 'obvious' human influence*
- *the presence of water (lakes, rivers, sea)*
- *the vegetation (especially native vegetation) and other ecological patterns.*

The absence of compromised presence of one or more of these criteria does not mean that the landscape is non-natural, just that it is less natural. There is a spectrum of naturalness from a pristine natural landscape to a cityscape”.

‘Landscape’ is not defined in the RMA but certain definitions and principles have been accepted through case law.

In relation to the identification and assessment of natural character, Policy 13 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 provides further guidance:

"Policy 13 Preservation of natural character

... (2) Recognise that natural character is not the same as natural features and landscapes or amenity values and may include matters such as:

- (a) natural elements, processes and patterns;*
- (b) biophysical, ecological, geological and geomorphological aspects;*
- (c) natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks;*
- (d) the natural movement of water and sediment;*
- (e) the natural darkness of the night sky;*
- (f) places or areas that are wild or scenic;*
- (g) a range of natural character from pristine to modified; and*
- (h) experiential attributes, including the sounds and smell of the sea; and their context or setting".⁸*

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL CHARACTER VALUES

4.1 Landscape and Visual Values

Visual

Given the broad landscape setting of Matakana Island, parts of the island are visible from a wide range of land, harbour and sea based viewing locations.

⁸ New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010. Policy 13: Preservation of natural character.

The outer edges of the island are the most visible from land and sea based locations. From the mainland area to the west, and in particular from the peninsulas of Mount Maunganui, Tauranga city and Sulphur Pt (the Papa Peninsula), Matua, Omokoroa, Katikati, Kauri Point, and Bowentown Heads, the inner edges of the island are visible. From many locations Rangiwaea and Motuhoa Islands are closer and screen much of the view to the closest areas of Matakana. Where the edges of Matakana Island are visible, the long low landform is dominated by the forest dominated landcover, in the case of the barrier section, and by the coastal cliffs and shelter belt vegetation on the peninsula.

From higher land forms such as Mauao, the Minden lookout, and Bowetown heads, it is possible to view 'down into' the island and broader areas of the land surface are visible. Due to the extensive scale and length of Matakana, even when viewed from elevated landforms, it is only the closest parts of the island that are visible in any detail. For example, the vantage point looking down from Mauao views into the land owned by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council at Pane Pane point and the rest of the very southern end of the island. From that location the legibility of the subtle features in the landscape fades out due to distance and the screening provided by the foreground trees.

The northern and southern barrier ends are very sensitive to visual change given their proximity to the elevated and publicly accessible landforms Mauao and Bowentown heads.

The inner Tauranga Harbour is popular for fishing, sailing, paddling and other water recreation. The edges of Matakana are visible in more detail from closer viewing distances within the harbour. At the lower viewing angles that the harbour provides, the most dominant features are the land edges (coastal cliffs) and land cover (pines, shelter belts and remnant native coastal vegetation). From the harbour and the mainland peninsulas, residential development at Opureora and Matakana Point are clearly visible.

The eastern side of the island presents a very consistent pattern of wide sand beaches, coastal dunes, wind sheered pines (on the edge) and plantation pines to any views available from the open coastline on the eastern side of Matakana. From the sea on the eastern side of the island, no development is visible, other than the Pipeline Road marker sign, and the navigation aid on the Council land.

From further afield, such as the Pyes Pa Road (close to Pyes Pa School - travelling north) approach to the southern end of Tauranga, Matakana is part of a panoramic landscape setting,

including Mauao, the Tauranga Harbour and peninsulas, Matakana, and the Bowentown heads. From this distance the detail of land cover and land uses is not apparent, however the long low elevation of the island itself, bookended by Mauao and Bowentown is.

Flights to and from the Tauranga airport frequently traverse Mauao and the south end of Matakana, allowing the most revealing views of the island, with forestry roads and compartments, in various stages of harvest and re-establishment being clearly visible. It is these aerial views which indicate the visual character of the working inner parts of the barrier and peninsula sections of the island, which are not readily available from land and sea based locations.

A common perception is that there is very little human modification to the barrier, apart from the pine trees. However from site inspection it is clear that the landscape includes areas of modification through tracks, forestry, visible structures within the Coastal Marine Area on particularly the harbour side, the mill, housing settlements around the mill, lifestyle properties, a pine nursery, and signage.

Landscape

For Matakana Island the Amended 'Pigeon Bay Criteria' introduced in **Section 3** are applied in order to assess the landscape values under the RMA. Given the broad range of landscape values which are present within Matakana, the diversity of land uses, and in particular the well established Tangata Whenua and historical values, it is appropriate to consider the full suite of landscape values which make up to Amended Pigeon Bay Factors:

(a) the natural science factors – the geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components of the landscape;

Matakana Island is broadly subdivided into two geographical units above: the long narrow barrier island, and the inner harbour peninsula. The geology and topography of these two units read as being quite separate. The island is further subdivided into a series of landscape character areas, as indicated in **Figure 2**. The geology of the inner harbour peninsula is made up of silt stones, sand stones and conglomerates, while the barrier geology is Aeolian dunes. The underlying geology and topography of the island is generally in tact, with only localised

earthworks and track formation. Some low lying areas within the peninsula have been drained to provide better conditions for grazing.

The key landcover pattern within the island which contributes to the ecological and dynamic components is that of an interrelated mix of plantation forestry and remnant indigenous vegetation on the barrier and pastoral cover on the peninsula. The outer edges of the island, the low lying tidal valleys of the peninsula and the wetlands within the barrier display the greatest amount of remnant indigenous vegetation, and therefore the greatest vegetative natural science values.

(b) its aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness;

Matakana Island plays a significant role in the landscape interplay of the Tauranga harbour. The island is a gatekeeper and a focal point to many of the eastern and northern views from Tauranga and the rural hinterland to the north. The island currently contains broad and consistent patterns of landform and land use which are very memorable. It is the largely treed and pastoral cover which provides the greatest opportunities to maintain the memorable values of the island, especially as experienced by people from the peninsulas and landscape hinterland of Tauranga and the western Bay of Plenty. The scale of the area of the two dominant land covers: the plantation pines and pasture create a very legible and memorable landscape centre piece.

For the most part, it is the aesthetic values of Matakana, as experienced from long viewing distances, generally 5 to 10 km and upwards, that are presented to the general public. From these distances it is very difficult to read, or even see patterns of residential development and other urban development, and therefore it is the pasture and forestry landcover pattern that provides the aesthetic values of the island to most long distance viewers.

From within the island the peninsula reads as a typical pastoral farming locating, which could be within any working farming landscape within the wider Bay of Plenty. Within the barrier, the forestry operations are typical of mainland forestry, with compartments in various stages of forestry management with channelised unsealed forest access roads within.

The edges of the island provide the greatest level of aesthetic value. The open coastline is spectacular in its landscape composition and scale. See **Site Photographs 12**, and **16-21**.

(c) its expressiveness (legibility): how obviously the landscape demonstrates the formative processes leading to it;

The edges of the island provide the strongest cues to the formative processes which are still shaping the landforms of the island. Within the areas under plantation forestry the expressiveness of the landscape is less easily interpreted due to the scale of the forestry operations and the lack of visibility. The plantation pines are generally 20-30 metres tall and easily mask and out-scale the subtle nature of the underlying dune landforms. Key landscape features are visible from the air and from the edges of the island.

The sandstone geology of the peninsula is more legible given the 'lighter' nature of the pastoral land cover and the bolder topography, which reaches its highest point at 68 metres asl at the Matakana trig. The inner edges of the peninsula are eroding with the resultant sandstone cliffs being almost vertical in places. Wetlands and low lying valleys still drain parts of the peninsula and the barrier, however some have been drained for pastoral farming.

(d) transient values: occasional presence of wildlife; or its values at certain times of the day or of the year;

The wildlife characteristics of the island are partially based on the relatively restricted access and low density of residential development within the island. The open coastline edge of the island provides habitat for the NZ dotterel. It is likely that other indigenous fauna are present on the island. Pig hunting is popular on the island, with permits being issued regularly for pig hunters throughout the forested barrier section.

Thorough assessments of ecological values have been recorded in baseline work for a number of recent subdivision and access proposals for Matakana.

(e) whether the values are shared and recognised;

The suite of Regional and District Planning documents which identify both the Tauranga Harbour and Matakana Island as having landscape significance have been through technical assessment and public consultation processes. Matakana Island retains a level of mystique to the general public due to its relative lack of accessibility, and the restricted internal access to the forested parts of the barrier, however is much viewed and recognised from a distance. Within the island itself, the landscape values are more akin to a working rural forestry environment. Matakana quite clearly has broad landscape value within the context of the Tauranga harbour and its'

hinterland, however is a working environment for the farmers, orcharders, foresters and communities which make a living there.

The level of interest which is taken in planning and development proposals within the island indicates the heightened local interest in the landscape values and character of the island in general.

(f) *its value to Tangata Whenua;*

The following interpretation of Tangata Whenua values is based on a broad level desk top assessment of the recorded values of Matakana Island. This does not pretend to represent the values held by Tangata Whenua, nor the special relationship between Tangata Whenua and their ancestral lands.

Matakana Island contains strong cues to ongoing habitation and cultivation, which are consistent with other local landscape features of significance to Tangata Whenua, such as Mauao. A large number of recorded sites on Matakana indicate the level of history and habitation that the island has seen. Named landmarks include Ratahi Rock, Waihirere, Matakana Point, Tahutoru, Rangiwaea, Puhikaiwaka, Te Whakatauaki, Tauranga-taua, Karioi, Pikirangi, Te Huinga, Te Pirau, Oponui, Panepane, and Tirohanga. These land marks are mapped and described in Matakana Island: Te Whakaruruhau o Te Moana o Tauranga by Heeni Murray.

It is very clear through even a desk top assessment, that the Tangata Whenua of Matakana retain a very strong connection with the land. The lack of development across the island ensures that a broad cross section of significant sites have been retained, although perhaps more is known about the inner peninsula given it is a working rural environment and has been settled for some time.

(g) *its historical associations.*

Matakana Island has been inhabited and cultivated throughout recent and pre-European times, and has been long valued for its' soils and gentle climate, like much of the Bay of Plenty lowlands.

The most significant historical values associated with Matakana relate to Tangata Whenua values. More recent historical values are associated with the forestry and farming industries. For the most part the barrier has been in European ownership since the late 1880's and the owners over the years have been responsible for plantation forestry since the 1920's. Local

people have assisted in the forestry operations through employment particularly in the Mill at Hunters Creek.

Natural Character⁹

Natural character is generally associated with the presence and health of natural elements, patterns and processes. There is some overlap between the natural character considerations, as set out in Policy 13 of the NZCPS 2010 and the natural landscape values which are set out in the Amended Pigeon Bay Factors.

The long narrow shape of Matakana and its location on the edge of the open Pacific ocean and the Tauranga Harbour ensures that all of the island is within the coastal environment and therefore the consideration of natural character is a key part to assessment of development or subdivision of the island.

The areas with the highest levels of natural character within the island are the coastal edges, particularly the Pacific Ocean coast, the inland wetlands and tidal valley floors, any remnant coastal vegetation, the coastal cliff edges, particularly the sandstone cliffs of the peninsula, and freshwater springs and streams.

In general, it is the outer edges of the island that that retain original or remnant landforms and vegetation that exhibit the highest levels of natural character.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- It is clear, that even without the benefit of a technical landscape assessment, Matakana Island occupies a very special place in the landscape composition of Tauranga Moana and the wider Bay of Plenty coastline: it is the centre piece to a classic amphitheatre composition.

⁹ RMA s6(a) requires 'protection of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. The RMA does not define coastal environment. A rule of thumb is that it extends to the first ridgeline inland of the coast. The RMA also does not define natural character. The following definition was developed by a number of leading practitioners through the environmental indicator program initiated the Ministry of Environment: 'Natural character is a term used to describe the naturalness of all coastal environments. The degree or level of natural character within an area depends on: (1) the extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur (2) The nature and extent of modifications to the ecosystems and landscape/seascape. The highest degree of natural character (greatest naturalness) occurs where there is least modification. The effects of different types of modification upon the natural character of an area varies with the context, and may be perceived differently by different parts of the community.'

- The access to the island creates a perception of mystique with which the general public view the island.
- The landform and landscape character of Matakana Island is characterised by a long low landform of shallow dune systems (up to 15 metres high) with a largely contiguous cover of pine plantation forests (25-30metres tall), taller sandstone landforms with pasture and orchards on the peninsula and a range of natural areas and edges within the island.
- Matakana Island is recognised widely throughout the regional and district planning documents for it's landscape value.
- Matakana Island is not an outstanding landscape or natural feature itself, however parts of it are highly valued in particular for its Tangata Whenua, historical and ecological values.
- The Tauranga Harbour and a number of other surrounding landforms are Outstanding and this has some bearing on how Matakana is perceived.
- The most sensitive parts of Matakana Island are the outer edges of the barrier section, in particular the northern and southern harbour entrances, the open Pacific Coastline, the wetlands and remnant natural areas and landforms, and the landscape features and named areas that have significance to Tangata Whenua.
- The landscape constraints identified within this interim assessment should be more specifically mapped along with other values to ensure that any future development proposals respect the highest landscape and natural character values of the island. **Figure 2 attached** should be used as the basis for the landscape values mapping.

Landscape - Constraints and Opportunities Conclusions

The Regional Policy Statement provides guidance for the matters to consider when undertaking an investigation of the values on Matakana Island. In particular method 17A.4(iv) deals with specific types of land use for the investigation. With regard to these matters, the following conclusions are made;

1. From a landscape legibility, amenity and character perspective, papakainga development could be best located and associated with Marae and the existing settled part of the Island. The Marae are located on the peninsula and Rangiwaea Island.
2. The Proposed District Plan provisions address this through rules and standards for housing on *Maori Land* – see controlled activity rule 16.3.2 (g) – (h). There would be no

- landscape constraint to achieving papakainga housing associated with the Marae on the peninsula given its modified character.
3. There is an opportunity to share the experience of the landscape values on the island through making better provision for public access. Currently the values are transient from distant vantage points. Public access would need to be constrained to consider natural values (for example dotterel nesting areas), particularly the appropriate form of access.
 4. The District Plan (both Operative and Proposed) acknowledge that some rural subdivision and living could be established on the barrier through its Rural G provisions. There is an opportunity to provide for further lifestyle living within the forested areas given the expanse of land and ability of landform and vegetation to mitigate impacts.
 5. Such rural living and lifestyle opportunities would be constrained by natural character considerations given the vantage points from, for example, Mauao and it is recommended that significant built form on the edges of the Council lands or the northern barrier end or within areas within close proximity to Mean High Water Springs (coastal edges), should be constrained and very carefully located and designed. In all areas specific aspects of density, colour, reflectivity, height and form of built form should be controlled and addressed to account for the distant views to Matakana discussed in this report. It is apparent that some of these issues are dealt with in chapter 6 of the Proposed District Plan although an increase in density would have to be assessed to manage built form in a more detailed manner.

Brad Coombs
Isthmus
August 2011

Appendix 1 – Relevant Planning Provisions

New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (2010)

Policy 7 Strategic planning

- (1) In preparing regional policy statements, and plans:
 - (a) consider where, how and when to provide for future residential, rural residential, settlement, urban development and other activities in the coastal environment at a regional and district level, and:
 - (b) identify areas of the coastal environment where particular activities and forms of subdivision, use and development:
 - (i) are inappropriate; and
 - (ii) may be inappropriate without consideration of effects through a resource consent application, notice of requirement for designation or Schedule 1 of the Act process;And provide protection from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development in these areas through objectives, policies and rules.
- (2) Identify in regional policy statements, and plans, coastal processes, resources or values that are under threat or at significant risk from adverse cumulative effects. Include provisions in plans to manage these effects. Where practicable, in plans, set thresholds (including zones, standards or targets), or specify acceptable limits to change, to assist in determining when activities causing adverse cumulative effects are to be avoided.

Bay of Plenty Regional Council

Regional Policy Statement

Method 17A.4(iv)

Environment Bay of Plenty and City and District Councils will:

Investigate a future land use and subdivision pattern for Matakana Island, including papakainga development, through a comprehensive whole of island study which addresses amongst other matters cultural values, land which should be protected from development because of natural or cultural values and constraints, and areas which may be suitable for small scale rural settlement, lifestyle purposes or limited Urban Activities.

Regional Coastal Environment Plan

MATTERS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

This part of the plan addresses the matters of national importance listed in section 6 of the Act. Section 6 of the Act states that:

In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- (a) *The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.*
- (b) *The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.*
- (c) *The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.*
- (d) *The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers.*
- (e) *The relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu and other taonga.*

4.2 Issue, Objective, Policies and Methods

4.2.1 Key Issue

There is ongoing and often incremental loss and degradation of natural character through inappropriate subdivision, use and development in the coastal environment.

4.2.2 Objective

The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

4.2.3 Policies

- 4.2.3(a) To recognise that there are areas of exceptional natural character which require preservation and for which no development is appropriate. These include but are not limited to the Coastal Habitat Preservation Zone (see chapter 6 – Significant Areas of Flora and Fauna, and the maps).
- 4.2.3(b) To recognise that most of the coast has some degree of natural character which needs to be protected from inappropriate use and development. The following plan provisions should be used as a guide to the relative weight to be attached to the protection of natural character in particular localities:
 - The purpose of the zones as set out in chapter 3 – Plan Structure.
 - Policies 4.2.3(f), 4.2.3(i), 5.2.3(a), 5.2.3(b), 6.2.3(a) and 6.2.3(b).
 - Policies 13.2.3(b), 13.2.3(c) and 13.2.3(d).
 - The outstanding and regionally significant landscapes and natural features identified in the maps and the Fourth Schedule – Natural Features and Landscapes.
 - The sites of ecological significance and areas of significant conservation or cultural value identified in the maps, the Third Schedule – Areas of Significant Conservation Value, the Sixth Schedule – Significant Marshbird Habitat Areas, the Seventh Schedule – Significant Indigenous Vegetation Areas, and the Fourteenth Schedule – Areas of Significant Cultural Value.
 - Fifth Schedule – Management Guidelines for Natural Features and Landscapes.
- 4.2.3(c) To recognise that all remaining areas of indigenous vegetation and habitats in the coastal environment contribute to the overall natural character of the environment. Cumulative adverse effects on these areas should be avoided.

- 4.2.3(d) To recognise the important ecological interconnections that are necessary to sustain species and their habitats. Cumulative and irreversible adverse effect on these interconnections should be avoided.
- 4.2.3(e) To encourage other agencies to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.
- 4.2.3(f) New subdivision, use and development should be located in areas already modified by development. It should also be compact, not add to sprawl or sporadic development, and minimise further loss of the remaining natural character of the areas. In particular, further urban development of the coastal environment in western areas of Tauranga Harbour, Ohiwa Harbour and Waiohahi Estuary, should be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that there will not be cumulative effects on the natural character and life supporting capacity of these areas.
- 4.2.3(g) Natural character must be restored where appropriate in areas where it has been degraded.
- 4.2.3(h) To promote the appropriate protection and management of privately-owned areas within the coastal environment in order to maintain or enhance natural character values.
- 4.2.3(i) New development requiring coastal marine location should be located in the port and harbour development zones, in preference to other areas. The remaining natural character in these zones should be retained to the extent consistent with achieving the purposes of the zones as set out in chapter 3 – Plan Structure, and the need to avoid sprawling development through the wider coastal environment.
- 4.2.3(j) Esplanade reserves or strips adjacent to the coastal marine area should be required as a condition of subdivision or major development.

5.2 Issue, Objective, Policies and Methods

5.2.1 Key Issue

There is ongoing degradation of the physical integrity and aesthetic values of natural features and landscapes, including those that are outstanding and/or of regional significance, through inappropriate subdivision, use and development within the coastal environment.

5.2.2 Objective

The maintenance of the quality of the outstanding and regionally significant landscape features.

5.2.3 Policies

- 5.2.3(a) To ensure the visual quality, and the physical and ecological integrity of the outstanding and regionally significant natural features and landscapes of the coastal environment are maintained. The guidelines contained in the Fifth Schedule – Management Guidelines for Natural Features and Landscapes, will be applied.
- 5.2.3(b) To recognise and provide appropriate protection for natural features and landscapes of district or local significance in the coastal environment. The guidelines contained in the Fifth Schedule – Management Guidelines for Natural Features and Landscapes, should be applied.
- 5.2.3(c) Adverse visual effects on the outstanding and regionally significant natural features and landscapes identified in the Fourth Schedule – Natural Features and Landscapes, and the significant sub-tidal scenery identified in the Third Schedule – Areas of Significant Conservation Value, should be avoided or remedied.

- 5.2.3(d) To maintain significant public views and visual corridors associated with the outstanding and regionally significant natural features and landscapes identified in the Fourth Schedule – Natural Features and Landscapes. This includes views from within the landscapes or features, and views of the landscape and features.
- 5.2.3(e) To avoid damage to visually significant vegetation such as Pohutukawa and other native vegetation on headlands, coastal cliffs, and margins of the outstanding and regionally significant landscapes and features identified in the Fourth Schedule – Natural Features and Landscapes.
- 5.2.3(f) Wilderness values should be protected.
- 5.2.3(g) To protect the cumulative landscape qualities of channels, tidal flats, beaches, coastal margins, vegetation and the land backdrop.
- 5.2.3(h) Reclamations and seawalls must reflect natural coastal landforms (curves, embayments and headlands) rather than straight lines and rectangular shapes.
- 5.2.3(i) New development should be of a design, materials and colours which blend the development with the surrounding environment, and maintain amenity values. Markers or high visibility materials may be required to provide for safety where relevant.

7.2 Issue, Objective, Policies and Methods

7.2.1 Key Issue

Provision of access to the coast is not always adequate, although in some cases uncontrolled and/or inappropriate access can cause degradation of the coastal environment, including destabilisation of dune systems and habitat modification.

7.2.2 Objective

The maintenance and enhancement of appropriate public access to and along the coastal marine area.

7.2.3 Policies

7.2.3(a) To promote public access to and along the coastal marine area and ensure that public access is restricted only where necessary:

- To protect areas of significant indigenous vegetation and/or significant habitats of indigenous fauna;
- To protect Maori cultural values;
- To protect public health or safety;
- To ensure a level of security consistent with the purpose of a resource consent; or
- In other exceptional circumstances sufficient to justify the restriction notwithstanding the national importance of maintaining that access.

Further provision for and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area will, as far as practicable, avoid any adverse effects on other values.

The provisions of chapter 3 – Plan Structure, chapter 4 – Natural Character, the Third Schedule – Areas of Significant Conservation Value, the Sixth Schedule – Significant Marshbird Habitat Areas, the Seventh Schedule – Significant Indigenous Vegetation Areas, the Fourteenth Schedule – Areas of Significant Cultural Value, and the maps, should be used as a guide to the relative sensitivity of the coastal environment to public access.

7.2.3(b) To promote the use of a limited number of official accessways to and along the coastal marine area in sensitive areas.

- 7.2.3(c) Esplanade reserves or strips adjacent to the coastal marine area should be required as a condition of subdivision or major development.
- 7.2.3(d) New facilities should be designed to maximise public use and access as well as private use.
- 7.2.3(e) Public access onto and alongside the commercial wharfs at the Port of Tauranga should be restricted where reasonably necessary to provide for security and public safety.

2.1 Significant Issues

- 2.1.1 Ongoing pressure on the finite rural land resource of activities which has the potential to compromise its ability to be managed and developed in an efficient and sustainable manner. Such activities include:
 - (a) concentrated subdivision for large lot residential uses of rural land adjacent or in proximity to existing urban areas and the Tauranga Harbour.
 - (b) dispersed subdivision for predominantly residential purposes.
 - (c) incremental establishment of other activities not based on primary production.
- 2.1.2 The extent to which subdivision is likely to result in the permanent or long term loss of productive land to non-productive purposes.
- 2.1.3 The extent to which subdivision is likely to increase or decrease the potential of the finite rural land resource to be used and developed in an efficient and sustainable manner.
- 2.1.4 The extent to which intensification of the residential and other non primary production based use of rural land is likely to inhibit the ability of other rural land users to realise the productive potential of the finite land resource in an efficient and sustainable manner.
- 2.1.5 The potential impact of more intensive subdivision, use, and development of rural land on:
 - (a) the amenity provided by the low density character of the rural environment.
 - (b) existing natural or other features of recognised value to the community.
 - (c) roading and other infrastructural services.
 - (d) the safety and efficiency of State highways.
- 2.1.6 The potential for the establishment of non primary production based activities in rural areas to reduce or replace development in urban areas such that an under utilisation of urban land and infrastructural services results.
- 2.1.7 The potential for controls on the use and development of rural land to conflict with the special relationship of Maori with their ancestral land and the associated desire to live on such land.
- 2.1.8 Introduction of new business areas to established rural areas, particularly those characterised by lifestyle lots, has the potential to create conflicts amongst activities, including reverse sensitivity.

2.2 Objective and Policies

2.2.1 Objectives

1. Sustainable management of the finite rural land resource within the district to be used for a wide range of activities, principally those relating to primary production.
2. Protection and enhancement of the amenity provided by the low density character of the rural environment.
3. Protection and enhancement of natural or other features recognised as having ecological, landscape, cultural, archaeological or other values of significance to the District. (See also Sections 9, 10 and 11).

4. Minimisation of the potential for conflict between activities in the rural environment to occur.
5. Minimisation of constraints created by non-rural based activities on the efficient use and development of the rural land resource for primary production.
6. Sustainable management of existing roading and other infrastructural services and sustainable development of new or extended services.
7. Safe and efficient operation of State highways.
8. Efficient use and development of land, roading and other infrastructural services within urban areas of the District.
9. Fulfilment of the special relationship of Maori with their ancestral land.
10. To ensure development within the Te Puna Rural Business Park Zone is compatible with the amenity values of the neighbouring rural environment.

2.2.2 Policies

1. Enable sustainable primary production based activities, including any associated ongoing management measures, to operate in a manner that is reasonably necessary to achieve efficient resource use and development without undue adverse effects on the environment or on the health, safety and welfare of the rural community. (See also Section 13 – Amenity).
2. Avoid the fragmentation of rural land titles to the extent that the potential of the finite rural land resource to be efficiently used, developed or otherwise managed in a sustainable manner is compromised.
3. Enable subdivision to occur which maintains or increases the likelihood that the versatile soils of the District will be used and developed to their full potential in a sustainable manner.
4. Enable rural lots to be created for residential purposes using a minimum of land.
5. Ensure that all new rural lots have the capacity to be used and developed without the potential for any adverse effects on the environment being created unless any such effects can be appropriately mitigated or remedied including through the use of financial contributions.
6. Protect the safety and efficiency of the District roading network (including State highways) from any potentially adverse effects resulting from increased development in rural areas.
7. Prevent the establishment of activities which:
 - (a) either individually or cumulatively will or would be likely to create the need for new, extended, or upgraded roading and other infrastructural services unless the costs of any such higher levels of service can be directly charged to the activities concerned without necessitating the unanticipated expenditure of public funds (see also Section 16 – Development Contributions), or
 - (b) could reasonably locate within urban areas of the District where adequate land, roading, and other services exist.
8. Limit the establishment of activities which either individually or cumulatively:
 - (a) will or would be likely to conflict with the reasonable operation of other established rural land uses, or

- (b) reduce the amenity provided by the low density character and primary productive focus of the rural environment unless such incompatibilities or adverse effects can be appropriately avoided, mitigated or remedied.
- 9. Enable the use and development of ancestral Maori land in a manner consistent with the special relationship of Maori with such land.
- 10. Subdivision, activities and development within the Te Puna Business Park Zone shall be subject to stricter mitigation measures than the standard Industrial Zone, to achieve a lower level of impact and ensure adverse environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- 11. To allow older and/or dependent relatives to be accommodated in minor dwellings on a site that is shared with their relatives, in a manner which does not place undue additional demand on roading and other public infrastructure.

Appendix (ii) – Schedule of Identified Significant Landscape Features

Natural Features and Landscapes

This appendix lists the visually significant natural features and landscapes in the District (also identified on the planning maps). Those identified tend to be either:

- Dominant landform features such as peaks and ridgelines which provide a visual focus and/or enclosure; or
- Sharp transitions between landform types such as the boundary between land and water.

S19 – Matakana Island

The area identified as visually significant includes all the land 40 metres inland from MHWS.

Western Bay of Plenty District Plan

View Shafts

There are seven views that have been identified from public locations that contribute significantly to the experience of the District. They include views from two formal and one informal public lookouts and from four locations on the State highway where on entering or leaving the District dramatic first/last glimpse views are revealed over a short traveling distance (refer Landscape Technical Paper for further details).

View One: View to Tauranga Harbour and Matakana Island along State Highway 2 just past the Athenree turnoff.

The shaft of this view is little wider than the road corridor itself and traverses the land between the northern edge of the road and the harbour, a distance of some 500 metres.

The view is already to an extent compromised by roadside and other proximate vegetation which could be better maintained or removed to improve the extent or quality of the view.

View Two: View towards Tauranga Harbour from State Highway 2 travelling north.

Near to the location of View One there is a section of State Highway 2 aligned parallel to the harbour which when travelling northwards out of the District affords highly attractive views of the harbour. This view has only recently been revealed by a pine shelterbelt having been pruned to a height of some 2 metres above ground level allowing views under the canopy.

The harbour is generally not highly visible from State Highway 2 and as a final view of the harbour before turning inland this view is significant.

This view is available over a distance of approximately 500 metres and is characterised by viewing through the pine tree trunks.

Landscapes

Explanatory Statement

A landscape assessment has been undertaken to identify the District's important landscape features and views from public places (including from roads). These features and views are sensitive to changes which may generate adverse visual effects. Controls are required to ensure their values are not compromised.

Lot boundaries provide the overall pattern of landscape that in time determines landscape character. Where possible, they should be aligned to reinforce the natural pattern of the landscape. Similarly, buildings and utilities (public and private) have the potential to detract from the visual quality of the rural landscapes, an impact that generally can be mitigated.

Existing use rights apply. These include farm management and land currently managed for forestry, woodlots and quarries.

10.1 Significant Issues

10.1.1 The District has a number of significant natural features and landscapes, the visual quality of which can be adversely affected by inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

10.1.2 Important view from public locations such as State highways and public lookouts can be compromised by inappropriate landuse activities.

10.2 Objectives and Policies

10.2.1 Objective

Protection and, where appropriate enhancement of the existing visual quality and character of the District's landscapes.

10.2.2 Policies

1. Within areas identified as being significant landscape features, protect and enhance landscape character by protecting the feature from inappropriate activities.
2. Identified significant viewshafts throughout the District shall be maintained and enhanced through the avoidance of inappropriate development.

10.3 Rules

These rules apply only within identified significant landscape features and identified view shafts. Refer planning maps for general location and Appendix II for detailed descriptions. For the purpose of interpretation, the description provided in Appendix II shall take priority over the maps with regard to location.

NB: Identified significant landscape features include the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park and adjoining contiguous areas of native forest, and the area 40m landward of MHWS around Tauranga Harbour and Matakana Island, Maketu and Waihi Estuaries.

10.3.1 Permitted Activities

In addition to those activities listed as permitted in the respective zone (or in Rule 17.3.1) but excluding those listed as discretionary in 10.3.3 below, the following are permitted activities:

- (a) Production forestry in landscape feature S19 – Matakana Island.
- (b) Native forest logging under the Forest Amendment Act (1993).

10.3.2 Controlled Activities

Those activities listed as controlled in the respective zone, but excluding those listed as discretionary in 10.3.3 below.

10.3.3 Discretionary Activities

In addition to those activities listed as discretionary in the respective zone, and in the Tauranga Harbour, Matakana Island, Maketu Estuary and Waihi Estuary Landward Edge Protection Yard (up to 40m landward of MHWS) the following are discretionary activities:

- (a) Buildings
- (b) Alterations to existing landforms (or earthworks or drainage) where a face height of greater than 1.5m is involved in any one area of earthworks operation
- (c) Subdivision
- (d) Native vegetation clearance
- (e) Production forestry
- (f) Works and Utilities classified as discretionary activities by Rule 17.3.1 (identified significant features)
- (g) Infilling (including dumping), drainage or piping of wetlands

10.3.4 Activity Performance Standards

- (a) Except as provided in 10.3.4(b), the following activity performance standards shall apply to activities within identified significant landscape features as they are visible from State highways and identified public lookouts.
- (b) The following activity performance standards shall apply to activities within the Landward Edge Protection Yards (Tauranga Harbour, Matakana Island, Maketu Estuary and Waihi Estuary) where such activities will be visible from the adjoining water body.

10.3.4.1 Criteria for Discretionary Activities

The applicant shall prepare a site plan to include RL (Reduced Levels i.e. levels related to a known datum point) lot boundaries, contours, landform features, native vegetation, and other trees over 6 metres in height, waterways, significant adjacent off-site natural features, the location of buildings and structures (and RL's for roofs), proposed access, fencelines, and the finished landform and levels in relation to the proposed subdivision or proposed works, to clearly demonstrate the protection of the natural landscape character.

The following performance criteria are applicable to discretionary activities. The level of detail provided with any application shall be related to the scale of the activity and the nature of any effects.

- (a) The extent to which the development will maintain the integrity of the landform and skyline profile.
- (b) Structures should be aligned with the contour of the land.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be removed except where there is no alternative for building location or access (including in wetlands and estuary margins).
- (d) Where native vegetation clearance is required this should only include the area necessary for the building platform, access of minimum width related to the activity such as a house site, subdivision access or public road, vehicle turning and a 6 metre radius living court.

- (e) Earthworks shall generally not exceed that required for the building(s), vehicle access and turning, and outdoor living court(s).
- (f) All disturbed ground should be revegetated with species appropriate to the context and use of the site.
- (g) Where the finished landform relative to any earthwork is steeper than 1 in 4, the slope should be planted in tree and shrub species.
- (h) The visual effects of any works and network utilities with discretionary status (see Section 17.3) shall be considered as part of any assessment of effects required to be undertaken by the Act.
- (i) For significant ecological elements within the visual landscape, see Section 9.
- (j) Access tracks and roads should generally follow the contours, minimise any cut at ridgelines, and mitigate any impact by regressing/planting. Work should take account of weather and planting times.¹²⁰
- (k) For subdivision, new lot boundaries should follow the contours wherever practical. They should avoid the top of ridgelines and where practical incorporate the landform feature within the lot. Water courses, areas of native bush and wetlands should not be dissected.
- (l) Production forestry shall be in general accordance with the New Zealand Forest Code of Practice with particular regard to the following matters:
 - (i) avoiding geometric and unnatural shapes and unnatural orderliness.
 - (ii) attention to the shape and line of the production forest to blend into the landscape.
 - (iii) avoid disruption to the skyline.
 - (iv) avoid vertical lines that divide a landscape.
 - (v) oversowing clearfelled areas with grasses or replanting as soon as possible after felling.

15.1 Significant Issues

- 15.1.1 Individual properties may not always comprise land that is suitable for development for its intended purpose or for development to the maximum intensity permitted by the District Plan.
- 15.1.2 Subdivision usually increases the potential intensity of development of the land concerned which may create the need to upgrade existing or provide new infrastructural services such as roading, sewerage, and public water supplies in order to ensure that the servicing needs of the land being subdivided and other adjacent land are or can be met. Demands can also be placed on services provided by other network utility operators.
- 15.1.3 Subdivision of land to provide for a greater intensity of development may also have the potential to adversely affect the environment, particularly water and soil values or features recognised as having ecological or other significance of value to the wider community.
- 15.1.4 The technical nature of many matters involved with subdivision requires the input of expertise from appropriately qualified professionals to ensure all potential adverse environmental effects are adequately addressed.
- 15.1.5 Due to historic management of horticulture and agriculture activities (particularly pre-mid 1970's) in this District, a low risk exists that persistent chemical residues may still exist on land to be converted from rural uses to higher intensity uses that may arise in exposure of persistent

chemical residues to humans. These persistent chemical residues may result in potential adverse health effects for future occupants or users of the subject land. Investigating the potential for adverse effects to human health from persistent chemical residues where appropriate, at the time of subdivision or other development, provides an opportunity for environmental effects to be avoided or remedied before the land use changes to a more sensitive use.

15.2 Objectives and Policies

15.2.1 Objectives

1. Newly-created land parcels that are able to be developed for their intended purposes in a complying manner.
2. Adequate servicing of the land being subdivided and other land in the vicinity.
3. Protection of water and soil values and of natural or other features recognised as being of significance to the wider community.
4. Subdivision applications which address all related matters in a professional manner.

15.2.2 Policies

1. Ensure land is suitable for its intended purposes following subdivision, taking into account its physical characteristics and servicing needs.
2. Ensure the servicing needs of land being subdivided and other land within the vicinity are taken into account.
3. Ensure facilities to be taken over by Council as public services are designed and constructed to a standard commensurate with their purpose.
4. Ensure adequate protection is afforded to water and soil values and natural or other features recognised as being of significance to the wider community which may otherwise be adversely affected by subdivision and associated land development.
5. Ensure information submitted with subdivision applications is prepared and presented in such a manner that compliance with all relevant Council requirements can be confirmed at all stages of the subdivision process.
6. In the new urban growth areas at Katikati and Omokoroa use, where practical, the identified natural flowpaths:
 - for the treatment and disposal of stormwater to avoid, remedy or mitigate the potential adverse effects of reticulated stormwater discharges
 - to provide separation from potentially incompatible land uses
 - to provide linkages throughout the community to assist in the off road movement of people by walking, cycling and mobility scooters
 - to provide green space which provides relief from the built form and the opportunity for enclosure of neighbourhoods within the township
 - to provide for the enhancement of ecological values.

Appendix 2 – Maps and Site Photographs