

TO: SH 16 Limited Date: 25 August 2020  
COPY TO: Barry MacDonell, MacDonell Consulting Ltd Job No: 63692  
FROM: Mark Delaney, Senior Ecologist

## **KAUKAPAKAPA PPC – DEGRADED NATURAL VALUES**

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### **Introduction**

Further to the lodgement of the Kaukapakapa – Maddies Road Private Plan Change (PPC) request by SH 16 Limited, Auckland Council requires further information to continue processing the private plan change request, pursuant to Clause 23 of the Resource Management Act 1991.

The following memorandum addresses Point 2.3 in regards to the Auckland Council Clause 23 letter dated 18 May, 2020.

The EEA overall is a relatively comprehensive report particularly in regards to the existing environment and ecological values. However, some detail is lacking in regards to the assessment of effects and how proposed restoration/enhancement activities will be implemented or required.

### **Point 2.3**

*It is noted that the cultural assessment provided called upon the applicant to address degraded natural values as part of the plan change. This does not appear to have been addressed in the plan change reporting. Can you confirm that is the case or otherwise provide detail of how the plan change addresses this?*

### **Existing Degraded Values**

Bioresearches prepared an Ecological Assessment of Effects (EAE) report for the Kaukapakapa – Maddies Road Private Plan Change<sup>1</sup>. Within the EAE the existing ecological values within the PPC area were detailed including the degraded natural values. These natural values were considered degraded in comparison to a relatively pristine environment with minimal human disturbance. In summary, these degraded natural values included:

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<sup>1</sup> Bioresearches, 2020. Maddies Road and Alpine Road, Kaukapakapa Private Plan Change: Assessment of Ecological Effects.

- Degraded terrestrial values as a result of historic and continuing farming practices;
  - Historic native vegetation clearance for agricultural purposes.
  - Productive pasture with associated stock impacts (e.g. browsing, erosion and sedimentation) and weed and pest animal species.
  - Regenerating kauri forest with a relatively low abundance of weed species and currently under pressure through edge effects and pest animals.
  - Mānuka/kānuka scrub with mixed abundances of weed species and currently under pressure through edge effects and pest animals. Additionally, the eastern boundary patch is subject to stock impacts.
  - Reduced ecological connectivity.
  - Reduced abundance of native fauna and associated habitats
- Degraded aquatic habitats as a result of historic and continuing farming practices;
  - Degraded streams and wetlands as a result of stock access
  - Online stock ponds.
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### Assessment of Effects

The EAE details the potential ecological effects of the PPC, including the effects relating to the degraded natural values. In summary, these effects included:

- The main area of vegetation and the area of highest ecological value is the kauri forest and the associated mānuka/kānuka scrub. With the exception of three relatively small arms of mānuka/kānuka scrub, this area is either covenanted, subject to a SEA overlay or both. The proposed rezoning will not affect the covenants or SEA overlay and as such these areas will retain their current protection. The remaining areas will be subject to the same Auckland wide AUP vegetation management and biodiversity objectives, policies and rules under Countryside Living Zone as those for Rural Production Zone. Accordingly, it is considered that the rezoning of the Site from Rural Production to CSL will result in negligible increased effects on the vegetation and terrestrial ecological connectivity and functioning values.
- The rezoning will potentially increase the human population density within the area. An increase in human population density often brings an increase in rat, mice and domestic cat abundance. However, there will also likely be an increase in pest control where currently there is none. Furthermore, the pest animal abundance in the higher valued ecological areas (i.e. the kauri forest and the associated mānuka/kānuka scrub) will likely currently be at carrying capacity so no increase effect is expected within these areas. Overall, it is considered that there may potentially be a low increase in rat and mice abundance. Due to the negligible effects on

vegetation and the negligible effects of pest animals, it is considered that the re-zoning will result in a negligible effect on native terrestrial fauna.

- The aquatic habitat of highest ecological value (i.e. the entire length of the main stem of Watercourse B<sup>1</sup>) is currently either covenanted, subject to a SEA overlay or both. The proposed rezoning will not affect the covenants or SEA overlay and as such this watercourse will retain its current protection. The remaining aquatic habitat will be subject to the same Auckland wide AUP objectives, policies and rules under Countryside Living as those for Rural Production. The Rural Production Zone implies that that the area is currently intended for commercial farming, which typically entails intensive farming and a lesser focus on environmental outcomes or enhancements. The less intensive farming associated with CSL, will likely result in a lower amount of sedimentation and nutrification. An increase in housing density will also likely result in a higher proportion of impervious surface. However, this increase in impervious surface will still be a relatively small proportion and the high proportion of pervious surfaces including the pasture/vegetation would mitigate this effect to less than minor. Overall, it is considered that the rezoning will result in negligible increased effects on the freshwater ecological values within the Site and the wider environment.

## Recommendations

Overall, it is considered that the rezoning will result in negligible increased effects on the overall ecological values within the PPC area and the wider environment.

Although it is considered that the overall effect will be negligible, the EAE details ecological recommendations for the PPC, including recommendations relating to the degraded natural values. If the recommendations are adhered to, even in part, then the degraded natural values of the PPC area and, to a lesser extent, the surrounding environment would be enhanced. In summary, these recommendations are:

- Avoid, where possible, all wetlands and intermittent and permanent watercourses when considering layouts for accessways and building platforms.
- Retain the isolated kauri trees.
- Covenant the patches of mānuka/kānuka scrub which are contiguous with the existing covenanted areas.
- Covenant the patch of mānuka/kānuka scrub along the eastern boundary.
- Consider connecting the existing covenanted area to the existing bush north of the PPC area with native restoration plantings.

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Regards,



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