

APPENDIX B

COUNCIL OFFICERS' REPORTS

Memorandum

TO: Lianne Darby, Planner

FROM: Barry Knox, Landscape Architect

DATE: 9th September 2016.

SUBJECT: **LUC-2016-384, REMOVAL OF VEGETATION FROM PIPELINE, 58 NAIRN STREET, 25 LYNN ST.. COMMENT FROM LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT.**

This memorandum is in response to your request for comment on the application to disturb vegetation located in the DCC owned Shetland Street Reserve and Kaikorai Commons, as part of a more extensive project to replace or renew sections of sewer, water main and stormwater pipes in Kaikorai Valley.

The area involved is largely within an Urban Landscape Conservation Area in the operative plan, (*ULCA 16 Ross Creek/Balmacewen*). Up to an 8 metres wide strip of significant vegetation would be affected, and Rule 13.8.2(i) determines that removal of bush within a ULCA is a restricted discretionary activity, with Council's discretion being restricted to the impact of the proposed works on the amenity, natural character and landscape values of the locality and the values of the bush.

The wider project involves consents for more than removal of the bush. The Upper Kaikorai stream tributary concerned needs to be relocated in parts and this will involve the need for resource consents from Otago Regional Council (ORC). There are also requirements for consents to remove indigenous vegetation from within 5 metres of a water body or from a wetland.

My comments relate to the effects of removal and modification of vegetation in Shetland Street Reserve and Kaikorai Common.

Background

I became aware of the broader Water and Waste (W&W) project proposal when I was asked to accompany W&W and other representatives on an initial site visit to explore the areas involved and look at issues. A record of this site visit is attached as *Appendix 1*.

A key matter is that the area involved has very distinctive and well developed vegetation, most of it planted around and along a frequently used walking access path. This vegetation was predominantly planted and maintained by the Dunedin Environment Centre Trust (DECT), a community organisation which also has a nursery in the immediate vicinity based on DCC land and covered by a occupation agreement. The main representative of DECT is Henrik Koch, who was on this site visit, and who expressed dismay and concern about the proposal. As the DCC landscape architect, I had assisted Mr Koch with development of the DCC Kaikorai Common from an open grassed reserve into an attractive wetland with much improved biodiversity values, and I shared his concerns. The Kaikorai Common area will be significantly affected by the wider piping proposal.

Opus have the main support consultant role with project, and staff involved appreciated from an early stage the importance of consulting with and involving DECT, which is reflected in the application.

Further consultation was involved after the site visit and prior to the development of the application. I include at *Appendix 2* an email sent to W&W which expresses my views on a Vegetation Management Plan being developed at that stage, as well as an endorsement for W&W to examine less obtrusive ways to complete the pipe project without disturbing so much of the surface vegetation.

Vegetation storage during the Kaikorai Pipeline renewal project.

Three sites are being used to storage of plants during the project. For the area between School and Shetland Street, trees will be stored inground at DCC-owned vacant lot at 56 School Street, and in the large grassy area near the wetland area (Please see attached **map 1**). These areas will be fenced off from the public during the duration of the project, and will be put back into grass, or further developed as part of the commons after use as storage.

Storage of uplifted trees and shrubs from the area between Shetland Street and Bishops court Sports ground is proposed to be sited in a strip at the end of the Sportsfield (Please see attached map 2). This area will be fully fenced off from the public.

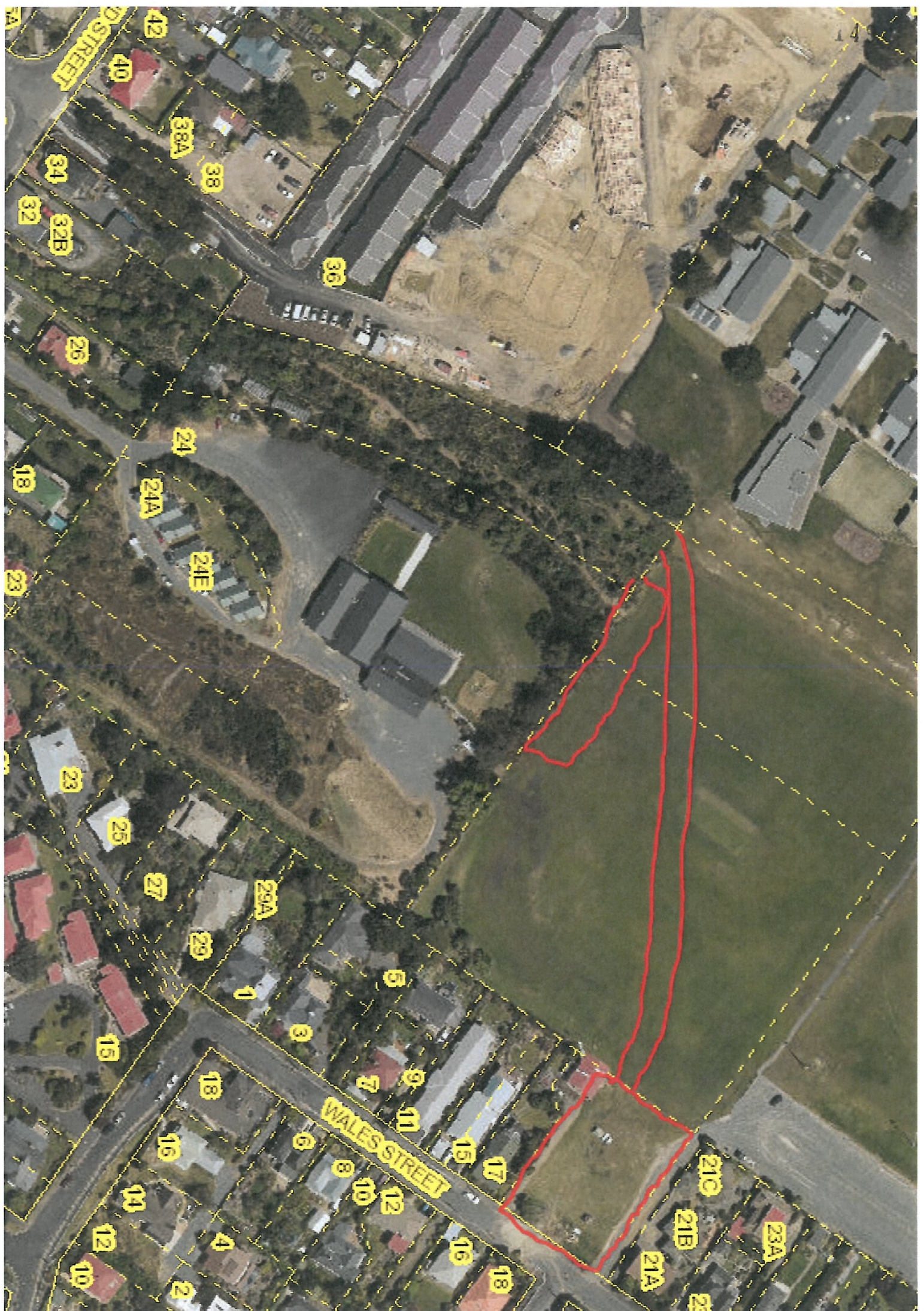
Depot site for contractors

The Wale Street site is currently proposed as a depot site for contractors (Please see attached **map 2**). This site is the only available access for the works to be carried out. If the Wale street site is not able to be used as a depot it is possible that an area of the sportsfield could be fenced off and made secure for use. Please note that this is a proposal only at this stage.

This Sportsfield is currently in need of redevelopment, and is used for lower grades of Touch, Cricket and Rugby.

With contractors having to access the site across the sportsfield, it is envisaged the ground will be unable to be used by the public for two years, after which it will be redeveloped and improved for future sports use.





General Comments

There will be a significant adverse effect on the vegetation associated with this pipe renewal project. The application discounts alternative underground tunnelling approaches to the new piping project as untenable, but then outlines positive ways that DECT should be involved in mitigation which will lessen the impact. However, I consider that to achieve the desired W&W outcomes, there will be a short to medium term significant adverse effect on vegetation, biodiversity and amenity values. For the latter, the importance of this area as an access way, particularly for the nearby Balmacewen School and adjacent Somerset Retirement complex, may not have been as fully explored as it could have been, in my opinion.

Values of the ULCA

Policy 13.3.1 in the Dunedin City District Plan is:

"Protect and enhance the natural character of those areas identified as Urban Landscape Conservation Areas in the District Plan Maps through:

- *protection of natural land-forms and waterways*
- *protection of trees and areas of bush*
- *control over the erection of buildings and other development."*

ULCA 16 is one of twenty four identified in the Dunedin City District Plan. Specific values for individual ULCA's are not outlined in the Plan. ULCA's are described in the explanation to Policy 13.3.1 as areas that *"provide contrast with and relief from the built environment and have significant landscape value"*.

The explanation further notes that,

"..The important characteristics and features of these areas are the natural elements such as trees, areas of bush and other vegetation, and natural features such as streams or landforms. The visual dominance of these elements over human elements such as buildings or roads is a fundamental characteristic..."

Effects of the Proposal on the Values of ULCA 16.

I provided comments on the effects of a development on the values of ULCA 16 one other time – for the adjacent Somerset Retirement Village, which changed an open grassed field into a densely built complex. In that instance there was a direct conflict between (quite legitimate) development in a residential zone and the noted ULCA values, and my comments about significant adverse effects were probably noted but largely overlooked. This situation here is not exactly the same, but any comment I make on effects of the removal and modification of vegetation to improve the piping situation will probably have a similar outcome.

There will be undoubted adverse effects on ULCA values, at least in the medium term (four to five years). What is now a well-regarded riparian area of planting with good biodiversity and amenity values which provides an attractive relief and contrast to nearby built urban areas, will change.

In several years, if the Vegetation Management Plan is adhered to, and if DECT are able to assist with the restoration and management of planting to the extent they did in the last twenty years to establish what is there now, some of these ULCA values which would be lost may be returned.

Hopefully, if consents are granted and the project proceeds, Upper Kaikorai Valley will not only have much more secure sewer, water main and stormwater systems, but it will continue to have an attractive riparian walkway with high amenity and biological values.

Possible Conditions

If consents are approved, I recommend consideration of attaching the following or similar conditions:

- *As work proceeds on the pipe replacement project, the riparian margins which have had vegetation removed shall be replanted at a width of a maximum two metres in accordance with the Indicative Vegetation Management Plan attached as Appendix B of the application.*
- *The applicant will assist and enable Dunedin Environment Centre Trust to maintain any new planting established as part of project mitigation.*

Barry Knox
Landscape Architect

RECORD OF SITE VISIT RE UPPER KAIKORAI STREAM FOUL SEWER PIPELINE RENEWALS

Date/Time:

21st January 2016, 2.30 – 5.00

Site Visit Attendees:

Janan Nirainjanan W and W

Jared Oliver W and W

Barry Knox

Henrik Koch and another representative.

Various Opus representatives from Dunedin and ChCh, including Jack Earl (LA)

KTKO representatives (x2).

Notes Recorded:**Background**

The W and W work is required to replace an old, damaged sewer going along the approximate course of the Kaikorai Stream, usually on public land, but sometimes under private.

I was approached several months ago by Jared Oliver and subsequently by Henrik Koch, based on earlier work concluded for Kaikorai Common. My role for this was probably co-ordination. I had also had some contact with David McKenzie, Opus LA Manager, who could not be on this trip, but who will in future.

Various Relevant Points Made During Walk Around

- The swathe required depends of route and adjacent activities, but generally 2-4 metres will be needed. A machine will be used to create the drainage ditch.
- Hendrik Koch noted that some trees could be relocated, but many would not survive, or would “sulk” for up to 10 years.
- Mostly the alignment would be straight. Some opportunities to skirt around, but not much.
- Hendrik said that perhaps a larger overview needs to be taken. Do we not need to relocate some sections of the stream entirely? This would be desirable in some parts, particularly the upper stream.
- One of the Opus representatives noted that the pipe needs to avoid the number of swampy areas if possible.
- Towards the school, an area will be set aside to provide for perimeter planting for relocated species. This could provide more definition and biodiversity to this area.
- Re resource consents, it is still unclear whether or not public notification will be required, especially for ORC.

Update, 25th January

Looking at 2GP, ULCA here will change to UCMA (Urban Conservation Mapped Area) and 10.3.2.1 will apply.

Paraphrasing, vegetation clearance must not exceed 20 m² (measured from stems at ground level), any site, any 3 year period, except:

a..

..

d. vegetation clearance for maintenance (but not extension) of existing network utilities, tracks, drains, or roads.

e. vegetation clearance that is provided for as part of a conservation management strategy...

Barry Knox,
Landscape Architect

Appendix 2. Email to Janan Nirainjanan, Water and Waste, 1/2/16

Hi Janan,

Thank you for the opportunity to first of all be involved in the site visit, and secondly to have a look at the Opus Draft Vegetation Management Plan. I'm glad you also involved The Dunedin Environment Centre Trust (especially Hendrik Koch) and KTKO, as both of these groups have a particular interest and involvement in the project site.

As a general statement I have to reiterate what many other local people who use and have a great affinity for the upper Kaikorai Stream say, which is that in terms of environmental, recreational and amenity values this area is special. A definite overall long term objective of any Vegetation Management Plan should be to ensure that these values will be retained or enhanced, or within as reasonable a time as possible following work disruption, will be returned as close as possible to what was there originally.

(Slightly off track, but I couldn't help thinking when we were looking around the most confined and sensitive parts of the site, the feasibility (and of course related cost) of using the technology of underground drilling for these bits, in preference to creating a 7.7 metre construction zone for surface based access. I imagine this may have been considered but discounted for good reason).

To specific comment:

- I agree with the general thrust of the plan – that a key issue is the large extent of vegetation disturbance, and the principle way of dealing with this (apart from underground drilling!) is removal, or possible transplanting of significant vegetation.
- The suggestion, supported by Hendrik Koch, of relocating parts of the stream (which apparently is not in its original location in some places anyway) is a good one which might lead to some positive outcomes.
- I agree that, as proposed in the additional work required, a qualified arborist could be used to provide good information on tree location, id, height, canopy dimensions, etc. However, as I noted on site, Hendrik Koch is a key person for any arboricultural work to be done here, either for identification or subsequent relocation work. I only know Hendrik from earlier work done at Kaikorai Common so I have no other reason to push his case than that he knows his stuff, he's planted a lot of the vegetation here himself, but mostly because he is passionate about this area. Personally, I think DCC is lucky to have him available. I note from his response to the Draft Vegetation Management Plan that he suggests the DEC Trust could be provided the resources to restore and relocate the plantings to a plan agreed to by DCC and DEC, and that costs could be avoided doing this. I certainly support the Opus approach, but however this is achieved, DEC should be involved in a significant way, in my opinion.
- VM03 Appendix C outlines a number of good issues and opportunities, which seem to cover the matters we looked at on site. The next important stage is to take these ideas a little further, so that anyone looking at specific parts of the plan can know clearly what is proposed before any work is contracted out or commenced.

Regards,
Barry