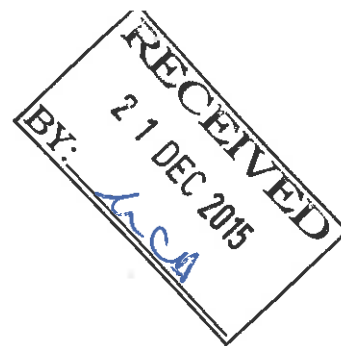




Westacott Heights, Proposed Residential Development. Dalziel Road, Dunedin

Landscape and Visual Assessment Report
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Introduction

RPR Properties Ltd has applied for subdivision and land use consents for a subdivision that will result in 34 low density residential sites at 35, 41, 43, 47 and 49 Dalziel Road, Dunedin. Figure 1 shows the proposed subdivision plan. The applicant has commissioned this landscape and visual impact assessment of the effects of proposed development on rural amenity values to assist with the resource consent application. The report is structured as follows:

- Site and area description;
- Landscape values;
- Description of the proposed development;
- Additional landscape mitigation recommendations;
- Landscape and visual effects assessment
- Operative Dunedin City District Plan assessment
- 2GP Assessment
- Conclusion.

Site and area description

Area description

The site is located between Dalziel Road and the suburb of Halfway Bush on the edge of the Dunedin urban area. Its landscape context is the eastern side of the broad hill top separating the coastal catchments of the Leith and Kaikorai Streams from the Silver Stream and other Taieri River tributaries. In this area the landform is gently sloping and plateau like with a generally gentle south-east aspect. The major natural feature is the deeply incised bush covered gully system associated with the headwaters of the Kaikorai Stream.

The site is on the current edge of the urban area of Dunedin and the suburb of Halfway Bush is directly adjacent to the east. This is an area of mainly state housing dating from the 1940's and 50's. The suburban landscape is characterized by mainly single storey

houses of modest scale set on sections generally in the order of 800m² and set back 8 – 12m from the street boundary. These houses are typically brick or weatherboard and tile. Plantings within the street and the gardens tend to be only moderate in scale with the result that elements such as the road and houses tend to dominate and there is no strongly intimate / human scale to the streetscape.

To the north of the site the land in the vicinity of Three Mile Hill Road has been settled to Rural-residential density and has an attractive, well established character due mainly to the presence of many mature trees but also attractive buildings and stone walls. Behind this, the land rises steadily toward Flagstaff.

West of the site, the land is zoned Rural-residential and the landscape is currently undergoing change from a mature larger scale rural landscape to a more densely settled rural-residential character. Although there are still elements of the old rural landscape such as Macrocarpa shelter trees, stone walls and sheds, the area is considerably influenced by relatively new and generally large scale houses set within open paddocks, not yet softened by plantings of significant scale.

To the south of the site the land falls away into the Frasers Gully Reserve and is steep and bush covered. Beyond this, some 700m south of the site, the suburb of Brockville occupies the next major broad spur landform.

Site description

The site itself is currently mainly rural in character and is largely comprised of gently sloping pasture. The majority of the site has a gentle south-east sloping aspect falling away more steeply to the gully systems on the southern and eastern boundaries. The northern part of the site has a north –eastern aspect. The gully system associated with the headwaters of the Kaikorai Stream extends into the site along its southern and eastern boundaries and these areas are steeper and mainly covered in native bush and scrub.

There is a formed driveway providing access into the property from Dalziel Road. This also provides access to 4 other properties of between 0.25 and 0.39 ha which abut or are surrounded by the development site. Two of these properties (existing lots 3 and 6) have been or are being developed with fairly large houses. A feature of the site is the presence of attractive and well maintained drystone walls defining existing paddocks, as well as typical rural post and wire fencing and timber rail fencing along the new accessway. The Waipori – Halfway Bush 33,000 KV transmission line (3 overhead powerlines) cuts through the north-eastern part of the site.

Figures 2 – 6 illustrate the landscape character.

Landscape values

The key natural features of this landscape are the waterway / gully system and where present, its bush vegetation cover. These gully areas have a strong sense of separation from the rural and urban areas surrounding due to the steep, deeply incised topography. Whilst the bush cover is weedy in places, particularly around the edges, overall it has a strongly natural character. Even where bush cover is absent, the gullies are natural landform features that contribute significantly to the landscape character.

The site contributes to the rural character of the area through its remaining open paddocks. This allows the natural landform character to show through clearly. The landform coherence contributes to a strongly defined landscape pattern in the area which is expressive of its formative processes (i.e. old lava flows and stream erosion). Although the drystone walls are not old or relating to early settlement of the area, they contribute a 'heritage' character to the landscape.

Whilst there are no landscape overlays that apply to this property in the Dunedin City District Plan, landscape related values recognized in the District Plan associated within the wider area are as follows:

- Frasers Gully Recreation Reserve, directly adjacent to the property to the south is covered by an Urban Conservation Area (ULCA) overlay. ULCA's are

described in the Plan as areas that *'provide contrast with, and relief from, the built environment and have significant landscape value'* (Explanation to Policy 13.3.1).

- Natural / rural landscape values associated with the spur top land to the west of the site that defines the skyline from both urban Dunedin and the Taieri Plain, are recognized through the inclusion of this area within the Flagstaff / Mt Cargill Landscape Conservation Area (FMCLCA) in the Dunedin City District Plan. The Flagstaff / Mt Cargill LCA is described in the Plan as providing *'a significant portion of the setting, visual containment and skyline for the urban areas....'*

The proposed development

As shown in Figure 1, the proposed development involves subdivision of the 5 existing sites into a total of 34 new sites for residential use and 10 for access or reserves. The residential sites are proposed to be 1400 – 6480m² in area and the subdivision will result in the character of the area changing from rural / rural residential to low density residential. Access will be via the existing connection to Dalziel Road (servicing an equivalent number of sites as at present) and a new public legal road off Taieri Road (lot 100) that will lead to two private lanes and which together will service the remainder of the proposed sites. In order to shield headlight glare from properties on the opposite side of Taieri Road, tree planting alongside proposed Private Lane A (as indicated in Figure 1) is proposed.

The gully areas are proposed to be vested as a 5.60 ha public reserve which will link with the Fraser Gully Reserve adjacent and provide for continuation of public open space from this reserve to Taieri Road, and protection and hopefully, extension of the bush cover. A private reserve (lot 98) is proposed adjacent to the public reserve and will appear as a continuation of this. A second private reserve (lot 99) is proposed at the junction of the two private lanes and is intended to be developed for communal recreational facilities.

Easements for public access are proposed for the the proposed private lanes. This provides for connectivity between the internal accessways and Taieri Road. Easements will also provide for public access alongside rock walls on proposed lot 97 (Lane 'H', from Dalziel Road), lots 6 and 7 (connection to the large public reserve), and between the proposed public road and Ashmore Street (doubling as the private access to lots 33 and 34).

It is proposed that the site is developed to retain some aspects of its rural heritage and character through retention and protection of the existing rock walls, the creation of open swale drains, gravel shoulders and sealed footpaths along the private laneways. It is also proposed to relocate the existing overhead power lines running through the site underground. It is intended that the proposed Large Lot Residential 1 zone (2GP) provisions of the Dunedin City District Plan are adopted in a general manner to control development including such matters as building yards and height.

In order to protect visual amenity values at 165-173 Ashmore Street and 469 Taieri Road, it is proposed that structures established on lot 33 do not exceed a level of 280.0m Otago Datum, and that that proposed structures established on lot 34 do not exceed a level of 276.0m Otago Datum. Additionally, yards of 10m width are proposed along these boundaries. In order to protect visual amenity values at 53 Dalziel Road, a 6m building height restriction could be imposed on proposed lot 32 however I understand that the owner of 53 Dalziel Road will be purchasing this lot and the height restriction may not be required.

The applicant has also proposed to incorporate restrictions on the colour (light reflectivity) of new structures and a requirement for new owners to plant a certain proportion of their land area, the purpose of which is to minimise the visual effects of the proposed built environment. These measures are as follows:

1. The dominant colours of all buildings (including accessory buildings) are to be finished in darker tones with no more than 30% light reflectivity values.
2. 10% of the area of each private residential lot is to be planted at initial densities of 1.5m using all or some of the species listed in Appendix A.

Additional landscape mitigation recommendations

In my assessment the proposed subdivision concept is reasonably sympathetic to the landscape values of the site and area. The following recommendations however are made to ensure landscape values are protected and enhanced as much as possible:

1. The proposed private reserve (Proposed lot 98) should be developed and / or managed to protect and / or enhance the natural character of the gully system within the proposed public reserve adjacent.
2. A public reserve / open space / public access linkage is retained to Dalziel Road to retain the landscape coherence of the gully system. Ideally this would include the watercourse and the south facing slopes below lots 2 and 5. If this is not possible, provision for a public pathway alongside the rock wall on the boundary with lots 2 and 5 and planting provisions over the northern part of proposed lot 32 to protect / enhance gully landform coherence, would be desirable.
3. The widened parking area on proposed Private Lane A is removed. This has the effect of increasing the scale of the earthworks that will be required and which interrupt the coherence of the natural gully landform. It is my recommendation that the design in this area be reconfigured as required, to provide the required parks to the west of the gully and to provide for acceptable pathway gradients from the roadway to the reserve areas on both sides of the road.
4. A development / management plan is prepared for the proposed public reserve areas with the objectives of protecting and restoring natural values and landscape character to the entire area and providing for pedestrian linkages along and through the area.

Landscape and visual effects assessment

Introductory comments

The following assessment distinguishes between landscape effects (i.e. effects on landscape character) and visual effects (i.e. effects on viewer’s experience). In discussing the significance of effects I will adopt a four point scale with the terms defined as follows:

Descriptor	Definition
De minimus	Negligible
Minor	Small
Moderate	More than minor but less than significant
Significant	Major / large

Assessment of landscape character effects

The proposed development will result in a major change in character from dominantly rural / rural residential, to low density residential. The current openness and dominance of pasture will be replaced by a dominantly built environment with houses up to 9m in height on large sections along with access roads and driveways. Over time, garden plantings will soften the dominance of the buildings and roading as trees mature. At the site scale, this development will result in significant modification to the natural landforms, vegetation and to dominance of built form.

Viewed more comprehensively, the effects of the proposed development on the character of the wider landscape will be less significant. The main natural landscape feature of the site, the gully system, will remain largely undisturbed with provision made to conserve and / or enhance its natural character and indigenous bush cover through inclusion within a public reserve. This would be enhanced if the reserve linkage to Dalziel Road was not interrupted as discussed above (under landscape mitigation recommendations). The proposed reserve combined with the proposed access

provisions also generally makes appropriate provision for public accessibility through this framework of natural landscape.

The roading design includes access into the subdivision from Taieri Road via a causeway up to approximately 7m high across the gully with the stream running through culverts beneath. This will have adverse landscape character effects in terms of reduced natural character and coherence of the gully landform. In my assessment, these effects will be moderate rather than significant because there is no significant bush or tree cover in this area and because gully coherence is already modified to some extent upstream of this area, by planting and land use patterns. As discussed, it is recommended that the parking area shown in Figure 1 where Private Lane A crosses the gully, is removed or relocated to minimize the scale of the required earthworks associated with this road linkage.

Assuming development on all the existing lots, the gentler pasture covered slopes above the gully system are currently consistent with the character of the rural residential landscape to the west and north of the site. The built density proposed will provide for a gradation from residential 1 zone densities east of the site, through low density residential, to rural residential density. Seen at the broader scale the natural landform will remain coherent with residential development on the gentler slopes contrasting with the natural swathe of the gully.

The development represents an extension of the urban edge of the city westward, and toward the top of the broad ridge defining the visual catchment of urban Dunedin. To the south, the suburb of Brockville is at a similar position, occupying a similar broad spur landform. Dalziel Road forms the upper limit to Brockville and will form the upper edge of Westacott as well. Dalziel Road coincides with the Flagstaff / Mt Cargill Landscape Conservation Area boundary which seeks to protect the natural / rural landscape context for the Dunedin urban area. The current urban edge in this area is defined by the Frasers Creek gully and the proposal will involve extending beyond this natural feature. This aside, the site is suitable for suburban development in terms of gradients, general aspect and proximity to existing development. There are no high class soils mapped in the Dunedin City District Plan in this vicinity.

It is my conclusion that effects on the existing rural character of the site will be significant, resulting in a fundamental change. However, I have also concluded that the effects of this change on the landscape character of the area more widely will not be inappropriate, will appear as a natural density progression, and will (mainly) protect the integrity of the natural gully landscape and the coherence of the landform pattern.

Assessment of visual effects

Significant viewpoints affected by the proposed development are assessed as follows:

Residential viewpoints to the east

The proposed new suburban landscape will be seen from a number of houses in the Halfway Bush suburb, particularly from properties off Ashmore, Turner, Blake and Lincoln Streets. Views from roads within this area are much more limited due to screening by houses, but a view across the area can be seen from the open land associated with the power line corridor (See Figure 2) and from Turner Street (see Figure 3). From these places, the current view is of largely open paddocks and beyond to the scattered houses and plantings associated with the rural residential area across Dalziel Road. The building activity associated with the previous subdivision of the site has the effect of bringing this rural residential character forward to some extent.

The proposed development will change the character of the views significantly, substituting a suburban landscape for the presently rural / rural residential one. The gully area in the foreground will remain unbuilt (although there will now be a road developed across it near Taieri Road, and proposed lots 33 and 34 will appear on the eastern side of the gully) and it is assumed that it may eventually be enhanced by native revegetation. This open space provides a buffer between the existing houses adjacent to Ashmore Street and the proposed residential development (except for the inclusion of Lots 33 and 34).

The proposed development will change the character of the views significantly, substituting a suburban landscape for the presently rural / rural residential one. The gully

area in the foreground, except for the new road and proposed lots 33 and 34, will remain unbuilt and it is assumed that it may eventually be enhanced by native revegetation. This open space provides a buffer between most of the existing houses adjacent to Ashmore Street and the proposed residential development.

Lots 33 and 34 will be established on the eastern side of the gully area, adjacent to the properties at 165-173 Ashmore Street and 469 Taieri Road. The applicant has proposed height restrictions within these new sites (limiting the height of new structures to no higher than the floor levels of the existing adjacent houses) as well as horizontal building offsets of 10m from the development property boundary. This will provide effective mitigation of visual effects from these properties.

The visual effects of the proposed development on rural amenity values will clearly be significant as the character of the area will undergo a fundamental change. More generally however, it is my assessment that visual quality effects will be moderate initially during the development phase of the new subdivision and will reduce to minor as a quality new suburban landscape evolves. The proposed built density provides for significant impact of trees to soften the buildings and the built development will appear a comfortable fit on the gentle slopes, contained by the strongly natural character of the steep bush covered gully system. Suburban land use in this locality will not appear inappropriate.

Taieri Road

The site is generally screened from Taieri Road but views are possible for a short stretch where the property adjoins the road as illustrated in Figure 4. From here, the current view over largely open paddocks will be replaced by one of suburban housing. Reserve land, albeit now with an access road cutting through it and lots 33 and 34 established on the eastern side of the gully, will provide an open space buffer between the road and the residential development, and planting and other development for amenity enhancement can be anticipated. The development will be seen in the context of the existing suburban areas of Halfway Bush to the east and Brockville in the distance to the south.

As discussed for the adjacent residential area, the visual effects of the proposed development on rural amenity values will clearly be significant for this short stretch, as the character of the area will undergo a fundamental change. More generally however, it is my assessment that visual quality effects will be moderate initially during the development phase of the new subdivision and will reduce to minor as a quality new suburban landscape evolves. The proposed built development will appear a comfortable fit on the gentle slopes and within the surrounding suburban edge context. Overall, given the limited visibility from Taieri Road generally, I assess adverse visual effects as being minor.

Dalziel Road and adjacent properties to the west

Views across the site can be gained from Dalziel Road and the properties on the higher land to the west. Figure 5 illustrates a view from Dalziel Road looking northward toward the site. Currently the rural / rural residential character of the site provides a buffer between the urban edge and Dalziel Road. The proposed development represents a significant change from these places, and a tongue of suburban development will extend to Dalziel Road, reducing the openness of the landscape.

The visual effects of the proposed development on existing rural amenity values will clearly be significant as the character of the area will undergo a fundamental change. More generally however and as discussed above, it is my assessment that whilst the landscape character will change, visual quality effects will be minor once the initial development stage is over and as a quality low density residential landscape matures. The proposed built density provides for significant impact of trees to soften the buildings and the built development will appear a comfortable fit on the gentle slopes, contained by the strongly natural character of the steep bush covered gully system. Suburban land use in this locality and context will not appear appropriate.

Brockville

As illustrated in Figure 6, the site can be seen in views north from some residential properties within the suburb of Brockville some 900m distant. From these places it is currently seen as mainly open rural land in the middle distance with the open space or

bush associated with Frasers Gully Reserve in the foreground and the rural slopes of Flagstaff behind.

The proposed development will introduce a change in the existing character of the middle distance landscape and represents an extension of the urban landscape into the rural / rural residential environment. Whilst the proposal will change scale and pattern on the spur, it will not alter the coherence of the larger scale landscape pattern.

As with other viewpoints the effects of the proposed development will have adverse effects on rural character amenity values but the magnitude of these from this area is mitigated by the distance. I assess adverse visual effects on rural amenity as moderate from this area. Again, as previously discussed, visual quality effects more generally will not be unacceptable in my assessment. Overall, and considering the viewing distance and the wider landscape context I would rate adverse effects as minor.

Specific residential viewpoints – comments

It is my understanding that the previously subdivided sites (existing lots 1, 3, 4 and 8) have title encumbrances preventing the owners from objecting to this application and that the possibility of future residential development was understood to be a possibility at the time of purchase. I have therefore not assessed the visual effects from these properties.

53 Dalziel Road

In my assessment this property can be considered particularly impacted visually by the proposed development because it is directly adjacent to a proposed residential lot and because its main (northern / sunny) outlook is toward the site. At present the site is viewed as largely open rural paddocks across the gully with the slopes of Flagstaff and the houses of Halfway Bush beyond.

The proposal will affect the outlook from this property through suburban development appearing on the slopes across the gully and changing the character from dominantly open and rural to low density residential. There are also potential effects from a high

building located close to the boundary on proposed lot 32 impacting on views from 53 Dalziel Road. A possible condition restricting building height on lot 32, combined with the already planted boundary and considerable height difference between lot 32 and the house site at 53 Dalziel Road will ensure that any adverse effects in this regard are minor. I understand also, that an agreement has been reached, whereby the owner of 53 Dalziel Road will purchase Lot 32, and will have control over development of this lot.

There will still however be the effects of the change in character of the landscape across the gully. In my assessment effects on rural amenity values will be significant and adverse. Effects on visual quality more generally will be less (moderate – becoming minor) as discussed for Dalziel Road above.

Properties adjacent to the north

Properties between Three Mile Hill Road and the site include 19 Dalziel Road, 5, 17 and 27 Three Mile Hill Road and 493 Taieri Road. In my assessment these are less impacted than 53 Dalziel Road because their northern / sunny aspect is away from the site and there is a considerable buffer of space and / or vegetation between the houses and the proposed residential lots. I would rate adverse visual effects generally as minor from these properties.

Properties at 469 Taieri Road and 165 – 173 Ashmore Street

Visual effects from this general area have already been discussed however these properties are directly adjacent to proposed lots 33 and 34 and houses on the proposed new lots will introduce a new element and change the character of the immediate context from rural / rural residential to residential. In my assessment, visual effects will be effectively mitigated by the proposed building height restrictions which will ensure that views out, toward the west from these houses are not blocked. Whilst I acknowledge that effects on these properties will be greater, I do not believe they will be significantly so.

Operative Dunedin City District Plan assessment

The relevant District Plan assessment matters are found in the Rural and Subdivision section of the plan (Sections 6.7 and 18.6). Those that address landscape matters are outlined below, with brief comment as follows:

Rural Section Assessment Matters

6.7.1 Sustainability

The objectives and policies of the Sustainability Section

The relevant provisions are Objective 4.2.1 and Policy 4.3.2, which seek to maintain and enhance amenity values. This is dealt with below.

6.7.3 Amenity Values

(i) The effect that the activity will have on amenity values

As discussed above, the proposed development will result in a fundamental change in character from a rural / rural residential environment to a low density residential environment. Values associated with naturalness and openness will obviously be significantly adversely affected but the low density residential environment that will replace the current rural landscape is likely to have high levels of amenity. This is because the large sites will provide for the presence of vegetation of a scale that will balance and soften the houses and because the suburban development as a whole will fit coherently on the natural landform, contrasting with the bush in the gully system surrounding.

6.7.4 Cumulative Effect

The cumulative effect of the activity on the natural and physical resources of the city including, but not limited to, cumulative adverse effects in relation to:

(i) Amenity values

(ii) Rural character

The rural character within the site will be lost by the proposed development and replaced with a low density suburban environment. Once the development phase is over and the development matures and softens with plantings, amenity values generally, whilst changed, will be sustained in my assessment.

6.7.9 Bulk and location

The bulk and location of buildings and their effect on the amenity values of the site, adjoining sites, adjoining roads and the surrounding areas.

Currently, the site character is rural with relatively low impact of buildings. The proposed development will alter this and a suburban landscape will evolve, dominated by buildings (albeit on large sites and softened by trees). This suburban development will be controlled by Large Lot Residential 1 zone performance standards and the scale of the individual built elements will be domestic. The location of the residential sections largely avoids the gully areas and will mainly reinforce landform coherence. Except for the proposed new road from Taieri Road and the proposed lots 33 and 34 the gully system provides a buffer between the proposed new development and adjoining roads and houses to the north and east of the application site. Where the new road and lots 33 and 34 generate effects, these have been addressed by way of proposed mitigation measures offered by the applicant. Overall, it is my assessment that whilst the character will change, amenity values generally will be sustained.

6.7.13 Visual Impact

- (i) The visual impact arising from an activity on the character of the rural landscape, visual amenity and significant views.*
- (ii) The potential effect of structures on significant views from public viewpoints, including visibility from State Highway 1.*
- (iii) The effect of an activity on the open amenity of the rural area.*

It has been acknowledged that the proposed development will change the character of the site from rural to suburban (low density). This will alter views of the area but whilst

the present rural amenity values of the site will be lost, a new suburban environment with high amenity values and that fits well into its landscape context will emerge.

6.7.15 Residential Units

- (i) The cumulative effects of an increased density of residential development in this location.*
- (iii) The extent to which soil will be covered by hard surfaces.*
- (iv) The extent to which a residential unit on the site affects the amenity and economic well-being of neighbouring properties.*
- (v) The degree to which amenities relating to the open nature of the environment are compromised.*

The increased density of housing on this site will transition this site from a rural / rural residential enclave between existing suburban and rural residential areas, to a low density suburban area, thereby extending the footprint of urban Dunedin to a degree. This will have adverse effects on the current rural / rural residential outlook of properties surrounding but in my assessment amenity values more widely will not be inappropriately impacted once the new suburban landscape matures and is softened by plantings.

6.7.21 Trees

The objectives and policies of the Trees Section

There are no significant trees impacted by the proposal and the proposed low density suburban development will be compatible with and encourage the planting of trees. A more diverse botanical environment than is currently the case is likely to evolve. The subdivision layout also protects the trees in the gully system and provides the opportunity for future structural tree plantings.

6.7.22 Indigenous vegetation and habitats

(i) The cumulative effects of the incremental loss or modification of areas of indigenous vegetation and habitats of indigenous fauna.

(ii) The potential for the enhancement of indigenous habitat or vegetation

There may be some adverse effects on bush cover arising from drainage connections into the gully in places but these can be remedied by requirements to restore any vegetation impacted. Overall, the proposed subdivision is likely to have positive effects on indigenous vegetation and habitats as it provides (mainly) for the extension of reserve land following the gully system.

6.7.25 Landscape

The objectives, policies and assessment matters of the Landscape Section.

These matters are discussed below.

Landscape Section Objectives, Policies and Rules

Objective 14.2.3

Ensure that land use and development do not adversely affect the quality of the landscape

Objective 14.2.4

Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of Dunedin's landscape

In my assessment, whilst the proposal involves a change in character on the site from rural / rural residential to suburban, there will be no significant adverse effects on landscape quality in the long term.

Policy 14.3.3

Identify those characteristics which are generally important in maintaining landscape quality in the rural area (as listed in part 14.5.3 of this section) and ensure they are conserved

This policy does not apply as the site is not within a landscape management area.

Policy 14.3.4

Encourage development which integrates with the character of the landscape and enhances landscape quality

It is my assessment that the proposed development is consistent with this policy. Low density residential land use in this area will integrate very naturally between the Residential 1 zone landscape of Halfway Bush and the Rural-residential zone landscape to the west and north of the site. The proposed reserves will also in the main, appropriately protect the existing and potential natural landscape values of the gully system and will integrate with the reserve land to the south. The subdivision layout is sympathetic to the character of the landform and macro scale landform coherence will be sustained.

Landscape Section Assessment Matters (Section 14.7)

14.7.1 Visibility

The effects of the visibility of the proposed activity or development from the main public viewpoints.

This matter has been addressed above.

14.7.2 Adverse Effects

The extent to which any adverse effects on the landscape can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Given the nature of the proposal it is not possible to avoid significant effects on rural character and amenity however measures to minimize and soften the impact of buildings are included and will assist in ensuring that an attractive residential landscape emerges . The proposed reserves will ensure that adverse effects on the natural values of the gully system and the indigenous bush cover are largely avoided.

14.7.3 Sympathetic Siting and Design

The extent to which the activity or development is sympathetic to the forms, character and scale of the landscape in its siting and design.

In my assessment the proposed development is mainly sympathetic to the forms, character and scale of its landscape setting. Its form generally fits around the gully system appropriately and landform coherence will be largely retained. Its low density suburban character will form a natural transition from the Residential 1 zone built density to the east to the Rural-residential zone densities to the north and west.

14.7.4 Landscape Features and Characteristics

The extent to which the activity or development impacts upon the important landscape features and characteristics to be protected, preserved or conserved (identified in part 14.5 of this section) within the relevant landscape management area.

Section 14.5 applies only to landscape management areas and is not relevant to this application.

14.7.5 Compatibility of Scale and Character

The extent to which the activity or development is compatible with its landscape setting in terms of its scale and character.

This matter has been discussed under 14.7.3 above.

Subdivision Section Assessment Matters

18.6.1 Assessment Matters for all Subdivision Activities

In assessing any applications, in addition to the matters contained in the Fourth Schedule of the Act, the council will have regard to, but not be restricted by the following matters:

- (a) *The objectives, policies, rules and assessment matters of the following sections of the District Plan*
- *Sustainability*
 - *Trees*

The relevant Sustainability Section provisions (relating to amenity) and Trees section provisions have already been discussed.

- (g) *The appropriateness of retaining amenity planting or planting trees and other vegetation on the site to maintain or enhance the amenity of the area and the need for conditions relating to landscape planting and maintenance.*

The application involves a fundamental change in character from a rural / rural residential to a suburban environment that planting conditions will not alter. Conditions requiring planting are however included to help to minimize and balance built impact and help to ensure that a high quality residential environment is achieved. The values relating to the indigenous vegetation in the gullies will be protected by the proposed reserve status in this area.

- (q) *Lot Size and Dimension including:*

- *The siting of each allotment in terms of topography*
- *The effects that the layout and access have on the landform*

In my assessment the subdivision layout is largely sympathetic to the site topography, appropriately restricting built development to the gentler upper slopes and providing (although not entirely) for the protection of the integrity and natural character of the gully system.

(s) Natural Character and Heritage Values, including

- *Whether subdivision enhances the retention of the character and values of these features*
- *Any adverse effects on*
 - *ecosystems ...*

The subdivision provides to a large extent for the protection and enhancement of the natural character of the gully system and its indigenous bush cover, through setting this area aside as reserve. It also retains and protects the rock walls which are features that contribute to the heritage character of the site.

2GP Assessment

Given that the 2GP has only recently been notified, little weight can yet be given to it and as a result, a full assessment against its relevant provisions has not been undertaken. It is pertinent to comment however, that the site is largely zoned 'Large Lot Residential 1', with the gully system zoned 'Rural Hill Slopes', very much reflecting the proposed subdivision pattern.

Conclusion

This application is for development of a low density residential subdivision in an area currently zoned rural, but within an area with rural residential built density and character, and adjacent to the suburb of Halfway Bush. The key landscape values of the site relate to the natural gully system and its associated indigenous bush cover. The area also currently has rural amenity values based on its rural / rural residential character. There

are no landscape values of particular significance pertaining to the site itself, recognized in the Dunedin City District Plan although the Frasers Gully Urban Landscape Conservation Area and the Flagstaff / Mt Cargill Landscape Conservation Area are close-by to the south and west respectively.

The proposed development provides for the protection and enhancement of most of the gully system and native bush by setting aside over 6.1ha as public reserve. Clearly however, given the nature of the proposal the current rural character will be lost and a quality, low density residential landscape will take its place. Landscape character and visual effects on the existing rural amenity values will be significant but it is my assessment that effects on landscape quality more broadly will transition from moderate to minor as the new residential landscape develops and matures. The proposed development will integrate well with its urban edge context and natural landform coherence will be largely sustained. Whilst the development involves extension of the urban environment across the natural gully system, I do not believe that suburban development is inappropriate in this area as far as landscape character and visual matters are concerned.

Mike Moore

Registered NZILA Landscape Architect

Appendix A: Suggested conditions to mitigate the visual impact of built development

3. The dominant colours of all buildings (including accessory buildings) are to be finished in darker tones with no more than 30% light reflectivity values.
4. 10% of the area of each private residential lot is to be planted at initial densities of 1.5m using all or some of the following species:
 - *Aristotelia serrata* (Wineberry)
 - *Carpodetus serratus* (Putaputaweta)
 - *Coprosma propinqua* (Mingimingi)
 - *Cordyline australis* (Cabbage tree)
 - *Cortaderia richardii* (Toetoe)
 - *Dacrydium cupressinum* (Rimu)
 - *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides* (Kahikatea)
 - *Elaeocarpus hookerianus* (Pokaka)
 - *Fuchsia excorticata* (Tree fuchsia)
 - *Griselinia littoralis* (Broadleaf)
 - *Hebe salicifolia* (Koromiko)
 - *Hoheria angustifolia* (Narrow-leaved lacebark)
 - *Kunzea ericoides* (Kanuka)
 - *Melicytus ramiflorus* (Mahoe)
 - *Myrsine australis* (Mapou)
 - *Olearia arborescens*
 - *Pennantia corymbosa* (Kaikomako)
 - *Phormium tenax* (Flax)
 - *Pittosporum eugenioides* (Lemonwood)
 - *Pittosporum tenuifolium* (Kohuhu)
 - *Plagianthus regius* (Ribbonwood)
 - *Podocarpus hallii* (Halls totara)
 - *Pseudopanax colensoi* (Three finger)
 - *Pseudopanax crassifolius* (Lancewood)
 - *Pseudowintera colorata* (Pepper tree)
 - *Sophora microphylla* (Kowhai)

Graphic Supplement

Graphic Material, M W Moore

December 2015



Westacott



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KEY

ALL AREAS AND DIMENSIONS ON THIS PLAN ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL SURVEY

Geotech Category Line

Watercourse

Lot Number with Nett. Area in m2

17 2620

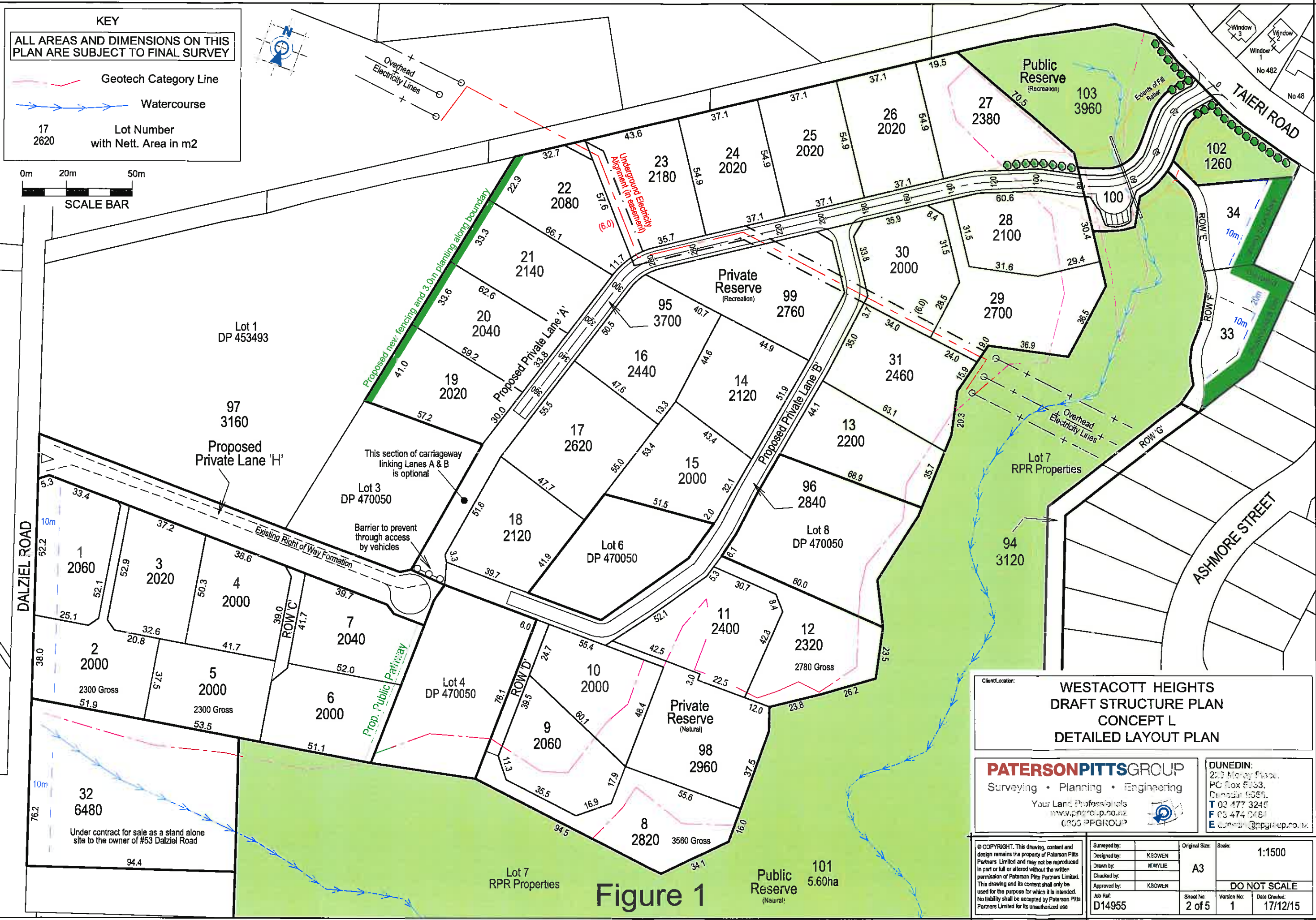
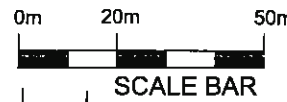


Figure 1

Client/Location: **WESTACOTT HEIGHTS DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN CONCEPT L DETAILED LAYOUT PLAN**

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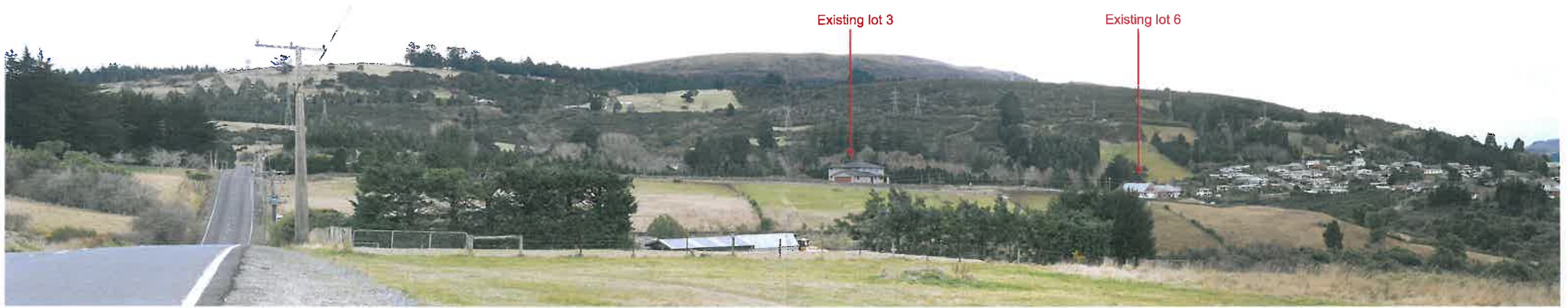


Figure 5 : View of the site from Dalziel Road (looking north)

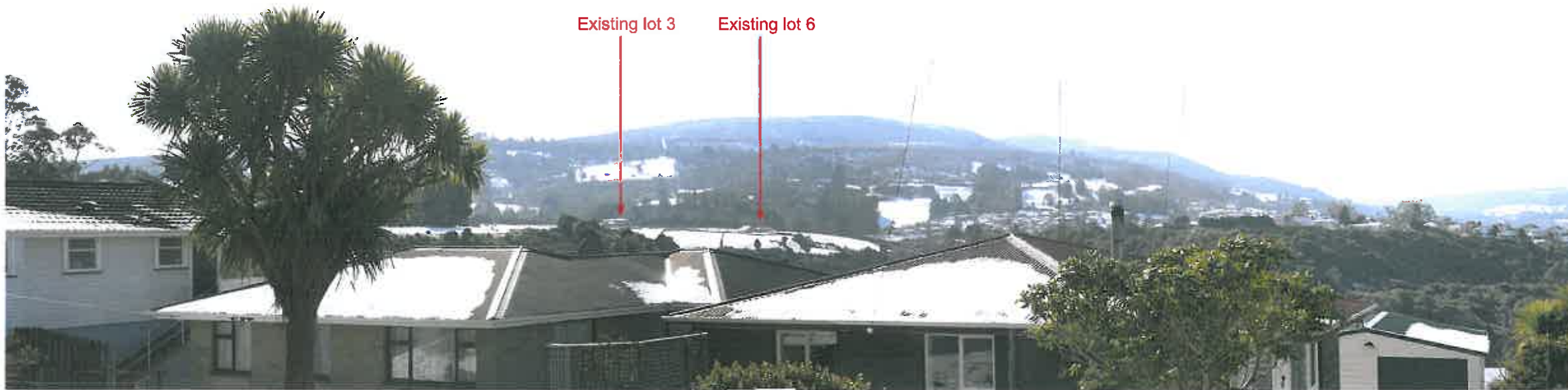


Figure 6 : View of the site from Caldwell Street, Brockville



Figure 2 : View of the site from 161 Ashmore Street, Halfway Bush



Figure 3 : View of the site from Turner Street, Halfway Bush



Figure 4 : View of the site from Taieri Road