

BEFORE THE DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL

UNDER	the Resource Management Act 1991
IN THE MATTER	an application for resource consent of LUC-2016-481
BY	Alison Charlton Applicant

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF MICHAEL WILLIAM MOORE

Introduction

1. My name is Michael William Moore. I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Science from the University of Canterbury, Master of Regional Resource Planning from the University of Otago and the Diploma of Landscape Architecture from Lincoln University. I am a registered member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects.
2. I have thirty one year's professional experience and am currently an independent consultant landscape architect based in Dunedin. Prior to this I worked for the Dunedin and Palmerston North City Councils. My work experience includes the preparation of visual and landscape effects assessments, evidence for Council and Environment Court hearings, and site planning and design for development projects. I have also undertaken assessments and mapping to assist in the preparation of landscape protection provisions in District Plans and other statutory documents. I have prepared landscape and visual assessments for numerous rural building projects of various scales and locations within Dunedin and other parts of the South Island.
3. Although this is not an Environment Court hearing, I have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (Environment Court Practice Note 2014).

Background

4. In June 2016, I was commissioned by the applicant, to prepare a landscape and visual assessment report in support of the proposed dwelling and farm shed at 1069 Highcliff Road, Dunedin. My report, dated 22 July 2016, forms part of the application documentation.

Scope of evidence

5. My evidence addresses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development and is structured as follows:

- Site and area description.
- The landscape values.
- The proposed development and mitigation measures.
- Landscape effects.
- Visual effects.
- Statutory Planning Assessment.
- Comment on the Council Planning Officer's Report.
- Conclusion.

An A3 graphic supplement forms part of my evidence.

Site and area description

6. As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the site is located on the outskirts and directly east of, the small rural settlement of Pukehiki, and above Highcliff Road where this skirts around the south-western side of Peggys Hill. The proposed house site is on west facing, pasture and gorse covered slopes approximately 150m from the applicant's house on the adjacent property (1075 Highcliff Road). Access to the site is proposed to be via an existing farm track with access off Highcliff Road adjacent to the driveway to 1075 Highcliff Road. A minor gully and associated watercourse is located just to the north of the proposed building site, and in places there is native scrub in poor condition, adjacent to this. The area is managed through stock grazing. On the slopes to the north of the proposed building site, the property contains the 1.78 ha Peggys Hill Conservation Covenant.
7. The area surrounding the site is rural in character except that to the west, the Settlement of Pukehiki is a small node of denser development, complete with historic church, community hall and library. The area is relatively densely settled and is expressive of the archetypal Otago Peninsula character with well managed pasture, Macrocarpa shelterbelts, areas of regenerating native bush in gullies and shady slopes, rock walls and farm buildings, both old and new, dotted around.

8. **Figures 2 - 5** illustrate the character of the site and area.

Landscape Values

9. The Otago Peninsula is a highly valued landscape reflected by the landscape overlays in both the operative and proposed District Plans. Away from the coastal edges, the key landscape values relate to generally coherent natural landform expressive of its volcanic origins, and rural character in which a previously more intensive dairy farming history is still legible in the paddock layouts, stone walls, *Macrocarpa* shelter trees and derelict farm buildings.
10. The features of the property at 1069 Highcliff Road that reinforce the landscape character and values of the Peninsula include:
- The Peggys Hill Conservation Covenant – noted in the Proposed Dunedin City District Plan (2GP) as a patch of dense low forest with a large number of plants not found elsewhere on Otago Peninsula.
 - The rural character and minimal impact of built elements.
11. The site is located within the Peninsula Coast Outstanding Landscape Area (PCOLA) in the operative District Plan. The 'features and characteristics to be protected' listed in section 14.5.1 (a) (iii) are as follows:
- *The general visual dominance of the natural landscape elements over human landscape elements (e.g. buildings or shelter plantings) giving the area a sense of maturity and harmony.*
 - *An apparently remote, isolated rural character.*
 - *The integrity, extent, coherence and natural character of the landform, streams and remaining areas of indigenous vegetation.*
 - *The minimal influence of any large scale structures or exotic plantings to diminish the impact of the natural landscape forms and features.*
 - *The dramatic coastal landforms and views.*

- *The presence and quality of human-made features which are relics of the past, e.g. old lime kilns, stone walls.*
- *Highlights of 'transient' wildlife interest, e.g. seals, penguins, etc.*
- *Outstanding and dramatic landform features including the following which are included in the NZ Geological Society Geopreservation Inventory for the Otago Region:*
 - *Hoopers / Papanui Inlets*
 - *The Pyramids*
 - *Sandfly Bay earthflow*
 - *Sandfly Bay lag surface and ventifacts*
 - *Sandymount sea arch*
 - *Sandymount terracettes.*
- *The extent and quality of areas of remnant forest, e.g. Taiaroa Bush*
- *The significance of places which are special to Maori, e.g. Pukekura (Taiaroa Head), Pyramids etc.*

12. In the proposed Dunedin City District Plan (2GP) the site is included within the Peninsula Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape. The 'values to be protected' as discussed in Section A3.2.3.2 can be summarized (with some interpretation required) as follows:

Natural Science Values

- Distinctive landmark features along the peninsula coast including sea stacks, extensive dunes, cliffs, Papanui and Hoopers Inlets and saltmarsh.
- Significant geological erosional features (mainly protected as ONF's).
- Hoopers and Papanui Inlets and associated dunefields (significant depositional features).
- Native coastal bush remnants and the intertidal marine habitats of Hoopers and Papanui Inlets, and the Sandfly Bay dunefields.
- Coastal wildlife.

Cultural / Historic Values

- Places with values of significance to manawhenua as listed.

- Early European settlement heritage features and human elements which emphasise local character.
- Shipwrecks

Aesthetic and amenity values

- The dramatic coastline
- Wildlife observation tourist destinations and places with important recreational amenity values
- Natural night sky values

13. There is also a ridgeline notation in the 2GP that runs through the property and the wider area is covered by a Wahi tupuna overlay which denotes wahi taoka values associated with the upper slopes and peaks of the peninsula to tangata whenua.

The proposed development and mitigation measures

14. As illustrated in **Figures 6, 7 and 7(a)**, the proposed development involves erecting a small (approx. 130m²) dwelling near the southern boundary of the property and at approximately the 320m contour. This will be approximately 19 x 7m in footprint and approximately 3.75m high and will be clad in colorsteel and vertical cedar or vertical cement weatherboard. Access to the house site will be via an upgraded existing farm track with access off Highcliff Road adjacent to the driveway to 1075 Highcliff Road. An extension to this track will be excavated into the slope to the south of a small watercourse to the house site. The house site is presently mainly gorse covered and sloping, and excavation of an approximately 30m long flat platform, up to approximately 17m wide is proposed to accommodate the development. The back of the excavations may need to be retained in some areas but as rock appears to be close to the surface in this area this may not be necessary. Any retaining walls required will be no greater than 1.2m high with slopes battered back above and planted as indicated in Figure 7(a).

15. As well as the new dwelling, the proposal also includes a new farm shed to be located near the western boundary, approximately 32m from Highcliff Road as illustrated in Figure 7. This will be no more than 17 x 6m in footprint and 4m high and there will be some relatively minor earthworks required to form a flat platform for this shed.
16. To ensure that the effects of both the house and the shed are minimized and to ensure integration with rural character, the following mitigation conditions are proposed:
 - (a) The buildings are to be finished in colours that blend with the background rural landscape. Any unpainted timber is to be stained a dark colour, and painted finishes are to have light reflectivity values that do not exceed 15%.
 - (b) All services are to be located below ground
 - (c) Earthworks are to be designed in general accordance with the concept shown in Figures 7 and 7(a) and are to blend as much as possible with the natural contours.
 - (d) The driveway is to retain an informal rural character with gravel surface and soft edges (i.e. no kerbs). Monumental gates and driveway lighting is not permitted.
 - (e) Water tanks will be sited, and / or buried and / or screened (by planting) to have minimal visual impact from beyond the property.
 - (f) Fencing is to be confined to standard rural post and wire construction or stone walls using locally appropriate rock.
 - (g) An area adjacent to the watercourse and the house and shed (as shown in Figure 6), is to be planted in locally appropriate indigenous species, as specified in Appendix A. This is to provide a more dominant framework of native vegetation for the buildings and to enhance the natural values of the watercourse. This area is

to be managed to ensure successful establishment and ongoing protection and enhancement of its natural values.

Landscape effects

17. The landscape character effects of this proposed development arise from the addition of a new dwelling and farm shed in the landscape and the earthworks required to form access drives and building platforms. In the longer term, there will also be significant effects arising from additional indigenous vegetation adjacent to the Highcliff Road boundary, the watercourse and around the proposed house site. Domestication effects associated with the new buildings will be effectively mitigated by the rural character of the shed, the small scale and recessive design and appearance of the dwelling, as well as the location on the edge of the low density settlement of Pukehiki. As the proposed native planting establishes and matures, and its impact in the landscape becomes significant, this will screen and / or balance the impact of the buildings and will heal any scarring effects associated with the earthworks. In my assessment effects on natural character and rural amenity values will be adverse but minor in the short – medium term. As the proposed plantings become significant elements, any adverse effects will reduce to negligible and landscape character effects may be positive overall.

Visual effects

18. There are only two public viewpoints from which the proposed buildings will be seen. These are Highcliff Road directly adjacent to the property, and Highcliff Road near Buskin Road, approximately 2km distant to the west.

Highcliff Road, adjacent to the property

19. From Highcliff Road adjacent, views toward the property are currently of grazed pasture at the lower levels and rougher pasture and gorse higher, as illustrated in **Figure 4**. Views of the property are briefly within

the main focus from the road for travelers going east but peripheral to the natural focus for travelers going west. This part of the road already has a fairly confined, enclosed character due to existing vegetation. Viewers will include tourists and locals and sensitivity to change is assessed as being relatively high as Highcliff Road is a scenic tourist route.

20. The proposed development will give rise to increased domestication effects. Near the road, these will be in the form of an additional gateway and driveway, and the proposed farm shed. At greater distance (approximately 200m), the proposed house will be visible some 40m higher up the hill. The prominence of the house will be minimized by the viewing distance, its low height and its recessive colours against the hill backdrop. Initial earthworks effects will be significant initially but will reduce relatively quickly as vegetation cover re-establishes (both naturally and by planting). In the case of the shed, adverse effects on visual landscape values will be mitigated by its rural character and its proposed dark colour. In the medium – long term (approximately 10 years), the visual impact of both buildings will be considerably reduced by screening and softening afforded by the proposed native plantings. The location of the site on the periphery of the settlement of Pukehiki assists in minimizing any adverse effects by providing a context in which scattered buildings at moderate densities is not unexpected.
21. It is my assessment that visual effects from this viewpoint will be adverse in nature but minor in scale initially, reducing to negligible as the proposed plantings become significant.

Highcliff Road, near Buskin Road

22. **Figure 5** illustrates a viewpoint from which the house site can just be seen over 2km distant. From here, any visual effects will be negligible considering the low form and recessive colour scheme of the proposed house against the landform backdrop, and also considering that it will be seen as part of the settlement of Pukehiki.

Adjacent residential viewpoints

23. Views toward both sites from surrounding residential viewpoints are effectively screened by intervening vegetation. No adverse visual effects are envisaged.

Statutory planning assessment

24. The provisions of the Operative and Proposed Dunedin City District Plans, relevant to the landscape and visual effects of this application have been identified in detail, and addressed in my report. In essence, these recognise and provide for the matter of national importance as set out in Section 6(b) and for the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values as set out in Section 7(c) of the RMA as follows:
- The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.
 - The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.

The protection of outstanding natural landscapes

25. In my assessment the proposed development is compatible with the protection of the values of the Peninsula Coast OLA (Operative District Plan) and the Peninsula Coast ONL (2GP). Adverse effects will be avoided or mitigated by the modest scale of the buildings, the design to minimize earthworks, the proposed height and colour controls and the proposed plantings which will eventually enhance the natural values of the site. Additionally, the site has low levels of visibility from significant viewpoints and its location at the edge of the settlement of Pukehiki provides a context that minimizes any adverse effects on naturalness or qualities of perceived isolation. The site is not coastal and there are no adverse effects on natural coastal character, heritage landscape features, wildlife habitats or recognized landform features.
26. In terms of the values listed for the Peninsula Coast ONL in section A3.2.3.2 in the 2GP, the proposed development will have no impact on the significant natural science values listed. The property is within the wahi tupuna overlay denoting wahi taoka values associated with the

upper slopes and peaks of the peninsula to tangata whenua. With regard to this, and to wider aesthetic / amenity values, it is my assessment that given the existing built development nearby and the modifications to the natural landscape by farming activities any change to the landscape character associated with the proposed development will be minor. The proposed mitigation measures will ensure acceptable integration with low levels of visual impact.

27. The proposed development will result in a minor degree of domestication of the area but will appropriately maintain and enhance rural character and amenity in my assessment. The character of the house and shed will integrate readily with only minor impact due to their scale and character and the design controls proposed. Whilst the residential density is higher than provided for in the plan, it is not seen as inappropriate in terms of landscape effects in this setting on the edge of the Pukehiki settlement. The project will result in an increase in the amount of indigenous vegetation present on the site. As the applicant owns the adjacent property to the south, setbacks from the boundary are not an issue and the proposed buildings are not located on the mapped ridgeline in the 2GP. An additional house will result in a small increase in night time light spill but in the context of the Pukehiki area generally this will be negligible.

The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values

28. In my assessment the proposed development will integrate acceptably with the rural character in this area and will not have significant effects on amenity values. This is because of the location of the building sites on the periphery of the rural settlement of Pukehiki, the modest scale of the house and farm shed proposed, the proposed mitigation to ensure integration and the low levels of visibility. There are no adverse effects on the amenity of adjoining properties of any significance.

Comment on issues raised in submissions and the Council Planning Officer's report

29. In paragraphs 81 and 97 of his report, the Council Planning Officer suggests that I hold the view that the landscape effects of the development will be more than minor in the short to medium term. This is not the opinion that I stated in my report. For clarity, it is my assessment that effects on landscape character will be adverse but minor in the short to medium term due to the effects of increased domestication, but that these will reduce to negligible as the proposed plantings establish. Eventually, the positive impact of the additional planting will at least balance out any adverse domestication effects. In terms of visual effects, I have assessed these as adverse but minor from Highcliff Road nearby, reducing to negligible as the plantings become significant. From more distant viewpoints any adverse effects are assessed as negligible.

Conclusion

30. The proposed development involves erecting a small, sensitively designed house and a farm shed on an undersized rural site on the periphery of the rural settlement of Pukehiki. Mitigation measures are proposed to maximize integration, minimize landscape character and visual impacts, and enhance natural values in the long term. The site has low visibility from significant public or residential viewpoints and in my assessment adverse effects on landscape and visual values associated with increased domestication will be minor at worst. In the long term as the proposed plantings become significant the development will enhance the natural character values of the area. It is my assessment that as far as landscape and visual effects are concerned, the proposed development is consistent with the relevant provisions of the operative and proposed Dunedin City District Plans.

Mike Moore
Landscape Architect

Appendix A: Mitigation Planting Specification

The area shown to be planted in Figure 6 is to be planted using the following species and in accordance with the following specifications:

Riparian and framework planting

Botanical Name	Common name	Approx % of planting
<i>Aristotelia serrata</i>	Wineberry	10
<i>Coprosma propinqua</i>	Mingimingi	10
<i>Cordyline australis</i>	Cabbage tree	10
<i>Fuchsia excorticata</i>	Tree Fuchsia	10
<i>Griselinia littoralis</i>	Broadleaf	10
<i>Hebe salicifolia</i>	Koromiko	5
<i>Melicytus ramiflorus</i>	Mahoe	10
<i>Myrsine australis</i>	Matipo	5
<i>Phormium tenax</i>	Flax	10
<i>Pittosporum eugenioides</i>	Lemonwood	5
<i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>	Kohuhu	10
<i>Psuedopanax crassifolius</i>	Lancewood	5

Planting maintenance and management

1. Where required, fencing should be carried out to protect the areas to be planted from grazing by stock.
2. The areas to be planted are to be sprayed to kill existing grasses and woody weed species using a non-residual systemic herbicide.
3. Planting densities are to be approximately 1.5m
4. Plant grades are to be Pb3 or equivalent, minimum.
5. One slow release fertilizer tablet will be used per plant.
6. A circle of mulch (100mm deep woodchip or sacking or similar) is to be applied around each plant to assist in plant establishment and weed suppression.
7. The area around each plant is to be maintained weed free and woody weed species are to be well controlled to ensure optimum conditions for plant establishment.

8. Plants should be watered as / if required during dry spells until well established.
9. Survival should be monitored and any dead plants replaced immediately. Animal pests should be controlled and if required, plants should be provided with an eco-shelter for protection against rabbit and possum browse.
10. The plantings are to be managed to ensure their ongoing health and vitality.

Lower stature planting near the house

All or some of the following lower stature species are recommended for plantings near the house

Botanical Name	Common name
Anemanthele lessoniana	Gossamer grass
Astelia fragrans	
Carex testacea	
Chionochloa rubra	Copper tussock
Hebe odora	
Libertia ixioides	
Phormium cookianum varieties (Green)	Dwarf flax
Poa cita	Silver tussock