

My name is Catherine Ongley, I am an Oakura resident and I object to the re-zoning application, Private Plan Change 48. I moved to Oakura from Wellington in 1998 to work at a local New Plymouth law firm. Very quickly I realised that Oakura was an idyllic and special place.

2. I live in McFarlane Street with my husband and 2 children. I have a great appreciation for the character of Oakura and the lifestyle it affords us. I have read the landscape and visual effects joint witness conferencing statement. That talks about the subdivision not technically speaking being in the “coastal environment” and not being “an “area of outstanding landscape”. I believe that consideration needs to be given to the fact that Oakura and the area for this proposed subdivision is right between the coastal environment and the national park. This creates its special character.

3. I am not against progress or development per se. Oakura has changed over the past 20 years since I moved there. There were more baches, fewer lifestyle block, fewer permanent residents in the village, and less what I would call nuclear families. A lot of the old baches have been replaced by more modern and larger homes. The change in the demographic and built environment has been gradual and has not detracted from the special character of the village. However the change proposed by this subdivision is out of proportion to the normal gradual expansion of the village.

4. I will not talk about infrastructure because I see that that aspect has been covered by other evidence, however I would like to express support for the other resident statements regarding the strain on that infrastructure. In particular Donnelly street and the capacity of the primary school.

5. This is what I appreciate about the township of Oakura:

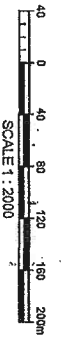
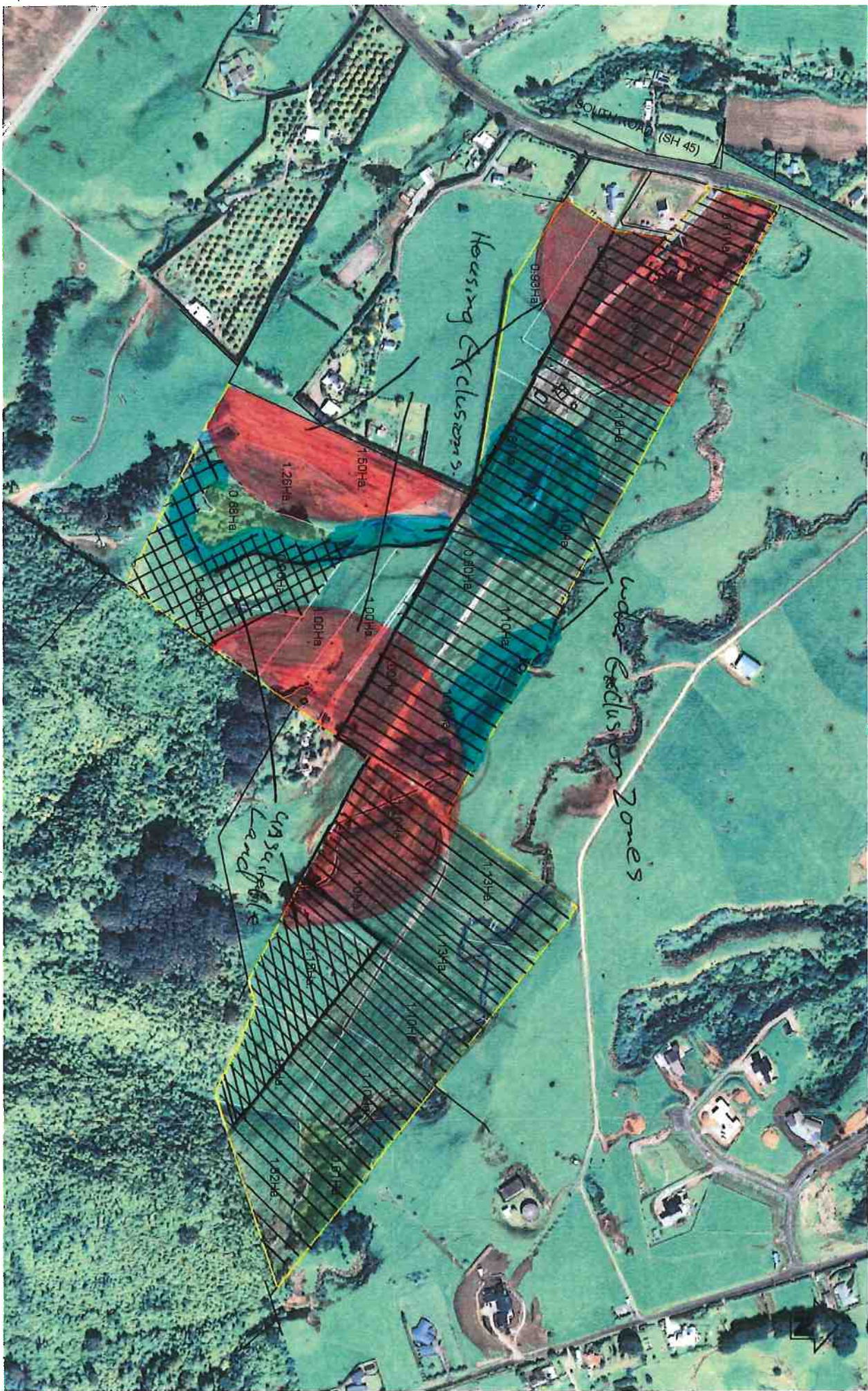
Firstly it is nestled between the mountain and the sea. More accurately, it is nestled between a beautiful cone shaped mountain leading down the Pouakais and the Kaitakes to the sea. This is a passage of landscape that I believe should be carefully managed. The proposed subdivision would be out of place with the distinctive character of this passage from the mountain to the sea.

Secondly it has a beachy and relaxed character. The houses are not monotonous, there are houses of a number of different eras, old baches existing alongside new modern homes. This adds to the varied, relaxed and inclusive feeling of the village. A new build intensive subdivision would be at odds with that character.

Thirdly it is surrounded by farmland and open space. My family enjoys getting out into these areas, in fact my regular cycle route includes going to the top of Surry Hill Road. Whereas a lifestyle block subdivision maintains that open space feeling, the proposal for intensive housing will detract from that. I don't believe a bund or a buffer equestrian zone is going to effectively mitigate that because it will close-off the area, and people will be conscious of what is behind it.

Fouthly, Oakura has the main part of the village on the seaward side of the State Highway. Real estate agents refer to the "old Oakura" being the block from Dixon Street to Wairoa Road. I consider that if there is to be more intensive housing then it should be located on that side of the state highway rather than interfere with the passageway to the mountain.

In summary I believe the proposed plan change and subdivision would significantly change the character and feel of the township of Oakura for the worse, and should be declined.



GENERAL NOTES
 1. Coordinates in terms of 1. Geoidic Datum (January 2000)
 2. Contour Interval: 1m
 3. Contour Interval: 1m

NO	DATE	BY	REVISION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE	LOCATION	PROJECT	SCALE	STATUS	DATE
1	22/10/10	AT		FINAL LAYOUT	OAKURA FARM LAYOUT	OAKURA	1:2000 @ A1	00-000		

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DEFINING LANDSCAPE



As our appreciation of landscape continues to evolve so too does the meaning we ascribe to it. Landscape means more than just 'a physical tract of land' or 'a view or scene'. Put simply, landscape can be explained as a reflection of the relationship between people and place.

All landscapes are dynamic to some extent as are our perceptions of landscape which are in a constant state of evolution. While this change is implicit it is not always predictable. Landscapes can be subject to change from various natural or human-induced processes and change can occur at a range of scales, from incremental to sudden sweeping change.

Although the term 'landscape' is not defined in the RMA or the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) 2010, various descriptions have emerged through evolving practice and case law. The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA), for instance, describes landscape as reflecting 'the cumulative effects of natural and cultural processes'.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / FACTORS AND LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTES

The Environment Court decision C180/1999 Wakatipu Environment Society and others vs Queenstown Lakes District Council established a number of principles that assist when considering landscape and visual matters. This included a set of factors referred to as the 'Amended Pigeon Bay Criteria'^[2] which are relevant

when assessing the significance of landscape.

These factors have been widely used, often in a formulaic way, and have faced criticism of potential 'double counting' or applying an overly formulaic framework to landscape that misses the 'essence' or 'spirit' of a section 6(b) landscape[3].

In response to this criticism, NZILA Best Practice Guidance and recent Environment Court decisions have grouped assessment criteria to identify three broad categories or 'landscape attributes' which should be considered. These are as follows[4]:

1. Biophysical elements, patterns and processes;
2. Associative meanings and values including spiritual, cultural or social associations; and
3. Sensory or perceptual qualities.

LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION UNDER THE RMA

In response to emergent practice and case law, provisions in RMA policies and plans have tended to rely on the classification of 'significant' landscapes which require special protection and management because of their elevated values under the RMA. These landscapes include:

LANDSCAPES WITH HIGH NATURAL CHARACTER IN THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT (AND WETLANDS, LAKES, RIVERS AND THEIR MARGINS) - S6(A)

The term 'natural character' is used to describe the natural attributes of waterbodies where there is a land-water interface – in particular coastal environments, wetlands, lakes, and rivers. The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS 2010) (<http://doc.org.nz/publications/conservation/marine-and-coastal/new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement/new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement-2010/>) provides the national policy framework to manage the coastal environment under the RMA. For more information see the Coastal Land Development Guidance Note ([index.php/planning-tools/coastal-land-development](http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/coastal-management/nz-coastal-policy-statement/policy-statement-and-guidance/)). The Department of Conservation has compiled a series of guidance publications on the implementation of the NZCPS (<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/marine-and-coastal/coastal-management/nz-coastal-policy-statement/policy-statement-and-guidance/>) to assist RMA practitioners consider and give effect to specific policies. The Department of Conservation website also includes a report on the discussion and outcomes of the natural character workshop (<http://doc.govt.nz/publications/conservation/marine-and-coastal/new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement/natural-character-and-the-new-zealand-coastal-policy-statement-2010-national-workshop/>) which was held in 2011 in relation to the NZCPS 2010.

OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPES - S6(B)

An Outstanding Natural Landscape or Outstanding Natural Feature (often referred to as ONL and ONF) is determined through an assessment process that identifies whether the sum of its values equates to it being considered "conspicuous, eminent, especially because of excellence" or "remarkable in"[5].

However, an Outstanding Natural Landscape must be a 'natural landscape', and other values may result in the landscape being considered 'outstanding'[6]. The Courts have recognised that a spectrum of naturalness exists which extends from pristine natural landscapes to cityscapes, within which a 'cultured nature'

landscape may still be an outstanding natural landscape. In general such landscapes should usually be obvious enough that no further need for expert analysis is required aside from determining where the particular landscape begins and ends^[8].

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES - S6(F)

The concept of cultural landscape is implied in the definition of 'historic heritage' in s2 of the RMA through the inclusion of '...surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources'. Further guidance with respect to 'cultural landscapes' is included in the Historic Heritage Guidance Note (<http://qualityplanning.org.nz/index.php/planning-tools/heritage>).

Heritage issues can include built, cultural, historic, and natural heritage and these frequently overlap. Historic heritage is the only one of these terms actually defined in the RMA (s2). However, there is a relationship between ss6(a), 6(e) and 6(f) with each representing a different context which requires different landscape considerations. It is important that practitioners provide clear explanations on the terms 'heritage', 'historic' and 'cultural' in the context of landscape matters to limit confusion. Specialist historic and/or archaeological advice should also be sought if buildings or sites of historic heritage value exist within an area.

AMENITY LANDSCAPES - S7

Amenity landscapes are those landscapes which offer visual amenity at a district or regional level or are outstanding but insufficiently natural^[9]. Under s7 'particular regard' is to be applied to such landscapes. Various territorial authorities throughout New Zealand have identified such landscapes as 'Visual Amenity Landscapes', 'Rural Amenity Landscapes', 'High Amenity Landscape', 'Significant Amenity Landscapes' and 'Special Amenity Landscape'.

[1] Refer to: C180/1999 Wakatipu Environment Society and others vs Queenstown Lakes District Council; C432/2010 - Upper Clutha Tracks Trust vs Queenstown Lakes District Council.

[2] The Pigeon bay criteria include but are not restricted to: the natural science factors - the geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components of the landscape; its aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness; its expressiveness (legibility): how obviously the landscape demonstrates the formative processes leading to it; transient values: occasional presence of wildlife; or its values at certain times of the day or of the year; whether the values are shared and recognised; its value to tangata whenua; its historical associations.

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[3] C11/2009 Unison Networks vs Hastings District Council, para 95

[4] Refer to: C11/2009 - Unison Networks Limited v Hastings District Council; C103/2009 - Maniototo Environmental Society Incorporated and others v Central Otago District Council and Otago Regional Council; and Decision of Board of Inquiry (2011) Hauāuru mā Raki Wind Farm and Infrastructure Connection to Grid

[5] C180 / 99, Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown Lakes District Council para 82.

[6] C432/2010, Upper Clutha Tracks Trust vs Queenstown Lakes District Council, para 65.

[7] C78/2008, Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society Incorporated vs North Shore City Council, para 135.

[8] C180 / 99, Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown Lakes District Council para 99.

[9] Ibid, para 113.

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