

BEFORE THE NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL (The Council)

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of the Limited Notified Resource Consent Application submitted by Trevor Swan to undertake a two-lot discretionary activity subdivision at 170 Ackworth Road, Lepperton.
(Council Reference SUB19/47283)

Statement of Evidence of Martha Dravitzki

Landscape and Visual Impact Issues

August 2020

Introduction

1. My full name is Martha Mary Dravitzki. I am a Registered Landscape Architect.
2. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Applied Science Landscape Management from Massey University and a Masters in Landscape Architecture from Lincoln University. I have gained experience in Urban Design and Landscape Architecture for four years with the Christchurch City Council and nine years at New Plymouth District Council. My role at New Plymouth District Council involved providing landscape and urban design advice to policy and regulatory activities and capital projects. I co-produced the New Plymouth District Rural Subdivision and Development Design Guidelines. I have assessed the landscape effects of many resource consent applications within the New Plymouth rural environment.
3. I have read and am familiar with the Environment Courts Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses, contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014, and agree to comply

with it. My qualifications are set out above. Other than where I state that I am relying on the advice of another person, I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement are within my area of expertise. I have not omitted material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

4. I was engaged by the applicant to prepare landscape and visual impact evidence for the hearing.

Outline of Evidence

5. My evidence will identify the landscape and visual impact resulting from a proposed two lot subdivision and the significance of those effects. This evidence covers the following:
 - Description of the Proposal
 - The Existing Landscape Context, Character and Amenity
 - Landscape Effects
 - Visual Effects
 - Cumulative Effects
 - Plan Provisions relating to landscape and visual effects
 - Comments on issues raised in Submissions and Planning Officers Report
 - Mitigation and Condition Recommendations
 - Summary and Conclusion

Proposal

6. The application is to subdivide Lot 1 DP 414901 at 170 Ackworth Road, Lepperton, into 2 lots. Lot 1 will have an area of 4.27ha and encompass the existing dwelling on site. Access to this lot will be via the existing lawfully established access points along Ackworth Road. Lot 2 will have an area of 4,130m² and is vacant pasture area. A full description of the proposal is contained within the Application/AEE and is also described in Mr Sousa's evidence.

7. It is noted the applicants are responsible land managers with extensive horticulture and organic orchard management experience and they have maintained and improved the property overtime with shelter, screening and ornamental planting, and sustainable pasture and stock management. In the 1990's the family broke ground in New Zealand's Feijoa industry and the supply of good quality organic produce to various new markets influencing the grass roots feijoa industry of today.
8. The main aspect of the proposal that has potential landscape and visual effects are:
 - Lot 2 as shown below in Figure 1 and the subsequential development that is likely to occur as a result of the subdivision including a dwelling and associated buildings, access and service areas.



Figure One: The proposed subdivision layout at 170 Ackworth Road (An extract from the Application Assessment of Environmental Effects)

9. In preparing my evidence I have relied on the following documents:

- The Application and Assessment of Environmental Effects prepared by Jufferman’s Surveyors Limited; 18 April 2019,
- The Planning Officers Section 42a Report dated 21 August 2020 and the Council’s Landscape Assessment,

- Submission of Ms Butterworth of 198 Ackworth Road,
- Information and evidence from the Applicant and experts in the Applicant's project team,
- Several site visits with the Applicant and the Applicant's project team.

Relevant Statutory Provisions

10. The Application/ AEE along with the planning officers Section 42a Report and Mr Sousa's Planning Evidence provide a thorough description of the relevant planning provisions. The New Plymouth District Plan (the plan) rules relating to rural character are the most directive and pertinent for this evidence. The plan reserves discretion over development to ensure *'design and layout including consideration towards SITE size, shape, aspect, position of boundaries and placement to maintain RURAL CHARACTER.'* Rural Character is defined in the District Plan.

The Existing Landscape Context, Character and Amenity

11. This section describes the sites existing landscape character, visual and amenity qualities and the receiving environment. The NZILA defines landscape as *'...the cumulative expression of natural and cultural features, patterns and processes in a geographical area, including human perceptions and associations.'* There is no industry specified landscape assessment methodology. Based on Institute review workshops there are several best practice guidelines used which this assessment follows including the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment 3rd Edition published by the British Landscape Institute and the NZTA Landscape and Visual Assessment Guidelines.
12. The site is located in a Rural Environment Area as determined in the Operative New Plymouth District Plan.

13. The site is located 3.5km to the south east of Lepperton along Ackworth Road which is a relatively quiet 2.6km country road with several farm houses and a proliferation of rural lifestyle properties and small farmlets. It is accessed from Kelly Road to the north or Richmond Road to the south.
14. The underlying landform is dissected with undulating topography but with relatively flat areas suitable for housing and built development adjacent to the road. Houses located along the west side of Ackworth Road are generally orientated to make the most of the solar access and the northwest aspect afforded by the elevation of land above an undeveloped rural valley system that runs generally northward towards the sea, which can be seen in the distance.
15. Pastoral based landcover is predominant along with associated land uses. There are pockets of native or naturally regenerating vegetation present in the wider landscape usually located along water courses or on steep land that is not otherwise productive. Shelter planting around dwellings from predominant winds is common along with rural hedges along the road.
16. The site's landform includes a relatively flat area adjacent to Ackworth Road which steeply drops towards the west valley system. Pasture is the predominant landcover. The existing dwelling has well maintained extensive garden planting including an orchard, shelter and ornamental areas.
17. Large pine trees dominate a small revegetated area in the middle of the subject site with some regenerating native species present such as ponga and kawakawa, however the undergrowth contains a majority of barberry, cotoneaster and climbing weed species. The topography of this remnant is very steep and the area is likely to be retained as a revegetating area as other productive landuses are not viable. The large pine trees will require management over time. Specimen Kauri trees are planted along the edge of the remnant and demarcate the top of the cliff.
18. The property is currently run as a grazing unit with a low stock rate of young stock to ensure the pasture is well maintained; this avoids erosion associated with older, larger

stock and higher stocking density. There is shelter planting along fence lines and an implement shed at the south end of Proposed Lot 1.

19. Proposed Lot 2 is relatively flat. The frontage to Ackworth Road is 69m. There is a recently planted pittosporum hedge along the road front and a post and wire boundary fence. There is shelter planting being established along the south west corner of the site. The pasture area is currently used for grazing.
20. Rural character in this landscape is heavily based on pastoral production and the rural-lifestyle development being absorbed into the landscape with planting and good location of building platforms. The aerial diagram shown in Figure 2 illustrates the extent of pastoral land and built development.
21. Lush and vibrant remnants of native vegetation in the wider area contribute to the natural character and sense of place of rural Taranaki; they are especially notable in the summer months when pasture browns off.
22. Visual amenity is informed by the rural character. The undulating and in parts steep topography along with rural lifestyle properties and farmlets along Ackworth road also dissect views so they are more often short or medium distance. The snippets of view along the valley towards the Tasman Sea from the higher platforms along Ackworth Road from existing dwellings is notable for the long distance and absence or at least distant setbacks of built development. Visual clutter is restricted and any impression of the overall change of increased built development overtime is screened from view compared to other rural areas where visibility is not so well controlled. Views towards the mountain are often valued but also balanced with the need to provide shelter from the cold southerly and characteristic strong westerly winds in this area.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

23. This section is focussed on how the landscape will physically change as a result of the proposed subdivision. The landscape has been relatively stable with additional dwellings

and reduced property sizes being accommodated into the landscape overtime with planting, in particular roadside hedges, and topography.

24. Landscape effects are likely to be experienced in the subsequent development of Proposed Lot 2 where an area of land will change from a paddock to there being a house. The primary mitigating factor is the retention of the balance area of Proposed Lot 1 as a viable productive grazing property. Open and spacious qualities are retained on the property overall via Proposed Lot 1 and the location of Proposed Lot 2 at the south end of the site avoiding the potential of fragmentation that would arise with alternative development locations. The undeveloped area along the slopes of the valley are also retained providing a coherent and recognisable landscape of rural uses.
25. Overall, the proposed landscape change is considered to be low. Further mitigation measures to manage the change in the landscape are discussed in the mitigation section. With proposed and additional mitigation in place I consider the landscape effect to be less than minor.

Assessment of Visual and other Amenity Effects

26. This section considers how individuals or groups of people may be affected by changes to their surroundings. The Application/AEE and Planning Officers Section 42a report outline the potentially affected viewers from neighbouring properties. Due to written approval from several neighbours the only property that is discussed as a potentially affected viewer in this report is 198 Ackworth Road. Potential visual effects for viewers using Ackworth Road are also considered. This evidence restricts consideration of visual effects to the subsequent development likely to occur at Proposed Lot 2.
27. I note that I have not visited 198 Ackworth road and describe the view based on site visits to 170 Ackworth road and information gathered from the submission; the planning officers Section 42a report and what can be ascertained from aerial photographs of the site.
28. The dwelling at 198 Ackworth Road is located approximately 11m from the north boundary of the property. There is a 7m access leg that runs between the application

site and 198 Ackworth Road which acts as an additional spatial buffer between the two properties. With the 15m side boundary setback for habitable buildings imposed onto Proposed Lot 2 there will be approximately 43m distance as a minimum from the dwelling at 198 Ackworth Road and the likely future dwelling of Proposed Lot 2.

29. The potential for development that may occur without resource consent such as a shed or a productive orchard within Proposed Lot 2 that may have adverse visual effects somewhat balances the overall effect of future rural lifestyle development likely to occur if Proposed Lot 2 was granted consent. In addition, the presence of the bush with the large pine trees already limits visibility from 198 Ackworth. Of course, there are a range of personal preferences possible with large pine trees, they can contribute to positive rural character but in this situation, it has been indicated by the submitter that the trees are not considered valued elements of 198 Ackworth Road's surrounding rural character albeit their long-term presence in the landscape as they are 40+ years old. Therefore, effects from loss of views towards the pine trees are not considered to be significant.
30. While there will be a change of open pasture to built development experienced within Proposed Lot 2 it is considered the retention of the open and spacious rural outlook possible from within 198 Ackworth road towards the northwest also limits the visual effect. The viewshafts are illustrated in Figure 3 198 Ackworth Road – Existing View and Landscape.
31. The likely future rural lifestyle development may (with proposed mitigation) in the long-term improve the visual amenity for 198 Ackworth Road and provide increased certainty and predictability of neighbouring activities.
32. When considered on its own the limited distance between neighbours in the rural environment has potential to be moderately adverse when compared to the present state of Proposed Lot 2. However, there are some inherent mitigating factors and with proposed mitigation that further limit the effect so that it is considered to be low in my opinion. I will cover the mitigation in more depth later in this evidence.

33. The potential for overspill of domestic light, noise and movement from future residents of Proposed Lot 2 can cause an adverse amenity effect towards 198 Ackworth Road. In this situation the main outdoor living areas and access of Proposed Lot 2 are likely to be orientated towards the north of the future dwelling to maximise solar access and existing topography. This significantly mitigates the potential adverse effect as it visually screens and reduces the volume of noise with the building located between the source and any viewers at 198 Ackworth Road as illustrated in Figure 4 Proposed Lot 2 Building Platform and Site Layout. In addition, it is recommended that directional hoods are used on any future outdoor lighting and that outdoor lighting is kept to minimal levels. Any residual amenity effect is likely to be less or equivalent to what may occur at the moment as a rural operation including movement of tractors, quad bikes and animals. Other alternative and permitted activities occurring on site such as a production orchard would likely have more adverse amenity effects. It is considered with mitigation the potential adverse amenity effects are low.
34. In terms of the broader landscape and possible views from Ackworth Road I consider that the angle of view and the proximity to existing development and established vegetation along with the recently planted pittosporum hedge and the proposed mitigation the proposal has negligible visual effects.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects

35. Cumulative effects result from changes caused by a proposed development in context with other development or activities that are present or are likely to occur in the landscape. In this case Proposed Lot 2 may contribute to a cumulative effect of lifestyle development in a rural area. The District Plan identifies that retention of rural character is of some importance in the rural environment. I think this is salient in places such as the application site where lifestyle development is occurring overtime and there is

potential for viewers travelling along the road to find changes to the rural character adverse.

36. I agree with the Council's Landscape Adviser that while there is some lifestyle development present it has prevented and reduced its associated effects with building platforms being located well within the undulating topography, 30m building setbacks, single storey built development, road side hedging and other planting. When travelling along Ackworth Road these measures mean that large groups of houses are not readily visible. Ackworth Road also has a number of gentle corners which further limit an overall impression of built development. Views of development are more peripheral and fleeting. Road side hedges can screen built development. Accessways are relatively evenly spread along the road so there is not an impression of a proliferation of housing.
37. In the vicinity of Proposed Lot 2 views of the two-storey dwelling at 198 Ackworth Road will be possible. On the opposite side of the road there are two other houses that will be visible. Given the clustered nature of this small group and the fleeting view as the viewer moves through the landscape, I do not consider future built development on Proposed Lot 2 to be an adverse cumulative effect. The scale of the grouping is equivalent with what may reasonably occur within this rural landscape. As vegetation establishes in the vicinity and within Proposed Lot 2 views of built development are likely to decrease overtime.
38. The proximity to the two-storey dwelling at 198 Ackworth in particular reduces the overall effect of an additional one storey dwelling setback from the road and with mitigation planting it will not dominate the landscape. When travelling north the future development on Proposed Lot 2 behind the house at 198 Ackworth Road will be barely perceptible. When seen travelling south glimpses of the future development on Proposed Lot 2 will be seen nestled beneath the outline of development and specimen trees at 198 Ackworth Road.
39. Potential cumulative effect for 198 Ackworth Road are considered to be low as the proposal will allow for one dwelling and mitigation has been offered to achieve this. Views from 198 Ackworth Road are directed north west where there are no other

dwellings in close proximity. It is not considered that the addition of one dwelling with mitigation in this instance contributes to a cumulative effect.

40. In my opinion the proposal does not create adverse cumulative effects. This is a dissected landscape that accommodates a number of rural lifestyle developments within the topography and established vegetation without cluttering the landscape. The scale, setback from the road, clustering with other dwellings and proposed mitigation means future development is able to be well absorbed into the landscape.

Mitigation

41. The effects from this proposal are largely avoided by positioning of Proposed Lot 2 at the southern part of the property. This allows for maintenance of open and spacious rural character for the remainder of the site and avoids potential fragmentation of the landscape. The productive nature of the property will continue. The location of Proposed Lot 2 in proximity to 198 Ackworth Road, and the two houses on the opposite side of the road allows for a longer stretch of Ackworth to be maintained as continuous hedging or open rural fencing with views of pasture and remain without built development. The landform of the property lends itself to the current location of Proposed Lot 2 as the established bush with large Pines on the very steep terrain means there is only narrow access between the Proposed Lot 2 and the rest of the property. The maintenance of the undeveloped bottom and sides of the valley retains a good quality long distance rural view to the northwest for several properties along Ackworth and to a lesser extent from properties along the other side of the valley accessed from Richmond Road.
42. When considering the potential adverse visual effect from viewers moving along Ackworth Road the location of Proposed Lot 2 and the likely future building platform which is perpendicular to the road limits the length of time the view is appreciable. In addition, the pittosporum hedge that is planted will in 5 – 7 years screen views of any

future dwelling. It is considered the pittosporum hedge considerably mitigates the potential visual effect. The 5-10m grass berm in this vicinity and the limited traffic of Ackworth Road means that if parts of the hedge are possibly encroaching a small amount within the road reserve it is not likely to be an issue in the long term. The applicant intends to manage the hedge to ensure a manageable height of approximately 3.5 - 4m height with a dense form that effectively screens and shelters the property.

43. In summary so far mitigation includes:

- The location of Proposed Lot 2 avoiding fragmentation of the landscape.
- The location of the building platform setback from the road and in proximity to 198 Ackworth Road.
- The pittosporum hedge along the road side to be maintained at a height of 3.5-4m.

44. In addition, detailing of the future vehicle access will help and this mitigation includes

- Rural materials such as post and wire fencing and hedging to be used to define the boundary.
- Rural materials to be used for the driveway with no use of pillars or block wall entranceways or plain white concrete.
- Only one entry point is permitted onto the road per allotment.
- The driveway is to be located more than 30m from the south boundary of Proposed Lot 2 to avoid cluttering that area with three accessways in a row.

45. The application/ AEE also offers the following mitigation:

- Retention of the boundary hedge along the length of Proposed Lot 2. This has been superseded by the removal and replanting of the hedge with Pittosporum and renewal of the boundary fence with a post and wire fence.
- Limit of one habitable dwelling.
- Colour controls of the dwelling to LRV <35%

46. Other mitigation that is recommended to reduce the visual effect from viewers moving along the road and 198 Ackworth Road include:

- A single storey building height limit of 6m for the dwelling and 4m for any other service buildings.
- Directive light hoods on any outdoor lighting located to the south of any dwelling or building.
- Colour controls to LRV <35% on any additional buildings.
- Ornamental planting at the south of the building platform to soften views towards the future dwelling from 198 Ackworth Road.

Conditions

47. This section addresses the conditions supplied in Appendix Three of the Planning Officers Section 42a report. Generally, the proposed conditions are accepted. This section addresses landscape matters related to some minor changes recommended to the conditions to provide for efficient development and ongoing liveability of Proposed Lot 2.
48. Ref Section 9 (c) It is recommended the height limit of the dwelling be changed to 6m to allow for the pitch of the roof. A height limit of 4m is proposed for any additional structures. It is recommended that these heights are taken from existing ground level at the time of subdivision.
49. Ref Section 9 (g) It is recommended to remove this condition as it will incur unnecessary costs and planning processes for simple domestic structures such as a woodshed. Any potential visual effects of additional structures within Proposed Lot 2 are managed with:
- building height limits to 4m for all other structures;
 - colours with a reflectivity value of less than 37% are used for all other structures;
 - Pittosporum hedge is maintained along the roadside boundary;
 - Rural fencing and boundary treatments to be used;
 - District Plan building setback from all side boundaries to be complied with.
50. Ref Section 9 (i) It is recommended to remove the second part of this condition to allow for reasonable domestic use of the land without onerous planning procedures being required. The building platform is predominantly flat and no major earthworks are

intended for the site however the applicants wish to construct a vegetable garden and possibly a small water feature towards the north of the building platform.

51. Ref Section 9 (j) It is recommended the phrase 'on boundary fences' is added to the end of this condition. This would allow for limited amount of necessary fencing that may occur on site e.g. a small amount of low shelter fencing around the vegetable garden or visual screening around a spa pool.
52. Ref Section 11 (a) 1 and 2. It is recommended to remove these conditions. It is considered the existing pittosporum hedge will rapidly establish (in landscape terms) to a height of 3.5 - 4m with a dense opaque quality to sufficiently soften and screen any future development of Proposed Lot 2. A hedge typology as planted blends with the surrounding landscape.
53. Ref Section 11 (b) It is recommended that the size of any replacement plants that are required are at the discretion of the applicant. Smaller pittosporum species typically establish and thrive better than larger specimens which can take time to acclimatise and fail to thrive for some time as they adapt to the planting process.

Response to Submission

54. This section addresses landscape matters raised in the submission of Ms Butterworth of 198 Ackworth Road. The submitter observes the proposal is likely to impact upon views from their property. Likely future development of Proposed Lot 2 will obstruct some of the current outlook towards the north over the paddock comprised in Lot 2. However, although there is likely to be some restriction, the dwelling at 198 Ackworth Road will still overall retain the possibility of a large degree of openness as shown in Figure 3. Currently the perception put forward is that future development will completely obscure north views unless the building is located within the 30m road setback. A more nuanced approach with a finer grain consideration of potential adverse effects and a good mitigation strategy is required. With careful design as proposed it is not considered that future development of Proposed Lot 2 will dominate the existing amenity of 198 Ackworth Road.

55. The image labelled 3a in the submission appears to have been taken from an elevated level, possibly the top storey of the dwelling, when considering the angle of view to the 1.7m high hedge. The view from ground level or the bottom storey of the dwelling is likely to illustrate the hedge would provide a much higher level of screening with proposed development being much less visible, particularly with recommended building height limits adopted.
56. Through conversation with the applicant's project team and the planning officer it has been ascertained that the main first floor view is from a bedroom. It is relevant to note that long-distance views from private property within the rural environment are not an element specifically referred to in the District Plan. Outlook is not defined in the District Plan; it is considered to refer to the general ambient environment including views but not necessarily long-distance views. It is considered that outlook can be retained without access to long-distance views from all parts of the property.
57. Typically, the location from where an effect is experienced influences the magnitude of the adverse effect. Outlook and privacy from main shared living areas indoors and outdoors are considered to more strongly impact on residents' sense of enjoyment of dwelling in a place. The view from main living areas and all other views will retain elements of the rural environment to contribute to the sense of place. The glimpses of the long distance views to the sea and mountain are supplemented with layers of vegetation and open pastures. There will be an open area without built development on Proposed Lot 2 that will retain this openness for 198 Ackworth Road.
58. It is noted in Figure 3 that there will be a view shaft retained with the proposed building platform and boundary setbacks for built development. This will retain the long-distance view that is currently present from 198 Ackworth Road, even from the first-floor window.
59. With reference to the submitters image labelled 2 (a,b,c) and the existing screening. This is considered a more minor matter; it is noted there are alternative landscape designs possible. Angled belts of planting and varied heights of planting could retain westerly shelter and avoid completely screening views to as illustrated. Windows through the

shelter could be opened to increase the impression of openness and better connect the property at 198 Ackworth Road with the wider rural landscape.

60. It is my opinion the restriction of views for the submitter is outweighed by the maintenance of:

- An expansive outlook from the submitter's property to the south, west and northwest to a lesser extent.
- The existing character and amenity of the submitters property which provides a level of shelter and enclosure from potential changes happening at lower levels outside the property.
- Potential views of the rural environment from the submitter's property
- Good quality outdoor living space from the ground level of the submitters property that retains solar access and will not allow for views of future development of Proposed Lot 2.
- Easy access to the wider rural landscape and the rural amenity present.

Response to Te Atiawa request for best practice site management

61. Best practice land development will be adopted, development will follow current guidance to avoid erosion or sediment moving outside of the property. Existing vegetation referred to is likely to be retained as the steep terrain means that other uses are not viable although the large pine trees will require management over time.

Response to Landscape Issues raised in the Planning Officers section 42a report

62. This section addresses landscape matters raised in the Planning Officers Section 42a report and the accompanying landscape memo which have not been addressed otherwise within this evidence.

63. I note that the officers report and the accompanying landscape memo have limited assessment of effects to those on 198 Ackworth Road and on public viewpoints from road users. I therefore have focussed my evidence on these two main viewers.
64. Generally, this evidence is consistent with the landscape conclusions drawn in the Planning Officers Section 42a report in respect to the existing character of the area. On page two the landscape memo written by Ms Griffiths notes that the landscape has a rural residential character due to development that has occurred overtime. It describes public viewpoints from Ackworth Road.
65. While the landscape memo and the officers report presently conclude that effects are not comprehensively addressed the authors consider the landscape has the capacity to absorb development of Proposed Lot 2 without causing overt visual change in the landscape based on additional mitigation being taken into account. As described earlier in my evidence additional mitigation measures are adopted in order to reduce the potential visual effect from the two view points considered.
66. The mitigation measures addressed in the landscape report and Section 42a have predominantly been adopted with the exception of the change on building platform location. In my opinion the benefits of setback from the road for mitigating the visual effect of public viewpoints and increased amenity for the likely future dwelling outweighs the potential adverse effect on 198 Ackworth Road. With mitigation and a nuanced approach, the building platform can retain a 30m building setback without significant adverse landscape and visual effects.
67. As Ms Griffiths landscape memo concludes the recent planting of a pittosporum hedge may not be the most ideal planting to mitigate effects but will nonetheless be effective. The applicants have experience with managing good quality shelter and screening since before I was born so I do not consider it is appropriate to further specify management tools to ensure effective screening is provided. The benefit of the hedge is shared and in the interest of the applicants to properly maintain. I do not consider subjective conditions regarding hedge management to be an effective tool to manage good quality outcomes in the landscape.

68. I note the Planning Officer considers the proposed subdivision (in paragraph 44 and 71) has potential effects on rural character and amenity effects on the immediate and wider rural environment including a loss of open space and low density-built form that cannot be mitigated. This seems to be at odds with the landscape description of being that of rural-lifestyle (in paragraph 45 and 56). Rather than creating a cluster of houses as suggested the proposal avoids fragmentation and reduces effects on the wider landscape by complementing an existing cluster with one single storey dwelling with low reflectivity colouring and mitigation planting that result in a building that will blend into the existing landscape.
69. In my opinion the location of Proposed Lot 2, in proximity to 198 Ackworth Road and the dwellings on the other side of the road is consistent with the wider rural environment. The extent of fragmentation is limited by locating Proposed Lot 2 in the south paddock of the Property which is spatially annexed from the remainder of the property thus retaining productivity and an open and spacious rural character.

Conclusion

70. This evidence considers the proposal's impact on rural character and visual amenity with specific reference to 198 Ackworth Road.
71. An updated landscape mitigation plan has been prepared and provided in Figure 4.
72. In my opinion the planning officer has hastily concluded the potential amenity effects without consideration of the outcome of a more nuanced approach with additional mitigation. The character of the environment is one of rural lifestyle; with mitigation the addition of potential future development of one single storey building at Proposed Lot 2 fits within the landscape.
73. The proposal provides for the ongoing connection with the land and contribution to the community of a landowner that has spent much of their life to sustainable and

productive land management in this landscape as their needs and capacity reduce into retirement.

74. With mitigation I consider the proposal will not create significant adverse rural character or amenity effects on either the submitters or the broader landscape.

Martha Dravitzki

Registered Landscape Architect

Appendices

Figure 2 Landscape Context/ Rural Character

Figure 3 198 Ackworth Road Existing View and Landscape

Figure 4 Mitigation Plan