

**BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL
APPOINTED BY KAPITI COAST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER OF | I TE TAKE O the Resource Management Act 1991
AND | ME

IN THE MATTER OF | I TE TAKE O Proposed Plan Change 5 (Private):
100 and 110 Te Moana Road,
Waikanae, Kāpiti Coast District

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
BENJAMIN RAYMOND ORMSBY
ON BEHALF OF ERIC, VINCE AND RAECHEL OSBORNE**

Dated 2 September 2026

Introduction

1. My full name is Benjamin Raymond Ormsby.
2. I have prepared this Statement of Evidence regarding Private Plan Change 5 (**PC5**) to the Kapiti Coast District Plan, in relation to landscape matters.

Qualifications and experience

3. I hold a Master of Landscape Architecture (first class honours) from Lincoln University (2025). I am a graduate member of Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects. I also hold a Master of Planning Practice from the University of Auckland (2009).
4. I am a Landscape Architect from Wayfinder Landscape Planning and Strategy, based in Hastings, with one year experience in that role. Prior to this I worked for over 10 years in local and central government planning and policy.
5. My experience includes iwi and regional policy focused on freshwater (through a catchment scale plan change), conservation resource management including statutory land management, coastal policy and planning standards, and strategic transport policy focussed on urban development and growth in tier 1 urban areas. Most recently I have authored landscape assessments and peer reviews for a range of projects including proposed subdivisions, renewable energy and infrastructure, residential and industrial developments.

Code of Conduct

6. I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and confirm that I have complied with it in preparing this evidence. I confirm that the issues addressed in this evidence are within my area of expertise, except where I have indicated that I am relying on others' opinions. I have not omitted material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my evidence.

Summary of work completed

7. My colleague Megan McBain at Wayfinder prepared the report titled *Landscape & Visual Effects Assessment: 110 Te Moana Road, Waikanae Beach* dated 25 February 2025 (**LVA**) and associated *Graphical Attachment LVR*.
8. The methodology used, landscape characterisation, assessment of landscape and visual effects, and conclusions reached are all as set out in that LVA.
9. Ms. McBain also prepared a response to further information requested by the Council dated 24 June 2025 (**RFI response**).

10. In preparing my evidence, I have:

- reviewed LVA and associated plans, including reviewing the project with Ms. McBain and other colleagues at Wayfinder;
- reviewed the Section 42A Report and landscape evidence of Mr Button prepared on behalf of the Council;
- reviewed the submissions relevant to landscape and visual matters;
- undertaken a site and locality visit on 25 August 2026;
- considered the relevant provisions of the District Plan and any applicable national and regional planning documents;
- had regard to the guidance set out in *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines*; and
- applied my professional knowledge, expertise, and experience as a landscape architect in assessing the landscape and visual effects of the proposal.

11. Except as otherwise modified or updated as stated in this evidence, I **adopt** and support the LVA, and RFI response as my opinion for the purpose of this hearing.

Summary of opinion

12. For convenience, I summarise the conclusions and main findings from the LVA and RFI response – landscape and visual, as follows:

13. The site is part of the wider Waikanae coastal dune landscape and is a modified environment that has been shaped by historic farming, forestry operations, artificial drainage, residential development and infrastructure including the Kāpiti Expressway. While the underlying dune landforms remain evident and contribute to local landscape character, they are no longer considered highly representative of an intact natural dune system.

14. The LVA assessed the site's natural character values as low. This conclusion is based on the predominance of modified pasture, harvested forestry areas, exotic vegetation, modified drainage features and a strong urban influence from surrounding development and transport infrastructure. While the dune landforms contribute some natural character value, the overall attributes of the site are considered peri-urban rather than rural or natural. I note and adopt the following paragraph from page 9 of the LVA in this respect.

Overall, the natural character values of the site are relatively diminished as it is predominantly a highly modified pastoral farmland. The site is within the regions characteristic sand dune formations, however they have been highly modified and do not provide a high natural representation. The perceptual experience was one of a populated urban character adjacent to a busy road

and expressway. Therefore the natural character values of the site are considered to be **low**.

15. The LVA concluded that landscape effects associated with rezoning and future residential development is low. The LVA found that residential development would be consistent with the established and planned pattern of urban growth surrounding the site. Retention of mature pōhutukawa trees, protection of the QEII covenant area, and development that responds to existing contours were identified as factors that would assist in maintaining local landscape character and limiting adverse effects. I note and adopt the following two paragraphs from pages 12 and 13 of the LVA in this respect.

The proposed re-zoning would allow for future residential development. This would result in a change of character and land use from a highly modified, undeveloped pocket of land with very limited productive capacity to one of residential character and land use with associated infrastructure, roading, dwellings and residential activities.

...

Considering the site is land locked between existing and developing residential development, the Kāpiti expressway, Te Moana Road and a private Urupa further south, the site is well placed for this type of development. Furthermore, the unproductive capacity of the site and pastoral land is at odds with the surrounding built environment and residential character. Natural character values are low and the existing ecological values within the QEII site will be retained. Therefore, the anticipated landscape effects of a plan change from general rural, to general residential is considered **low**. However there is potential to reduce the adverse effects on natural character to **very low** by retaining the overall legibility of dune forms.

16. Visual effects were also assessed as low. The LVA found that views of the site are constrained by landform, vegetation, surrounding development and the expressway corridor. Future development would generally be viewed in the context of an existing urbanising landscape and would not become a dominant feature or substantially alter important views experienced by residents, road users or recreational users.
17. The RFI response addressed Council's questions regarding natural character and provided more detail on natural character values and effects, in accordance with *Te Tangi a te Manu*. The response concluded that the site's natural character values remain low due to the extensive modification of dune landforms, vegetation and hydrological systems, as well as the site's location within an urban context.

18. The RFI response concluded that natural character effects associated with the proposed rezoning would also be low. This conclusion was based on the ongoing protection of the QEII covenant area, retention of mature trees, opportunities for additional planting, and that future residential development would occur within a landscape already influenced by urban development, infrastructure and modified land uses.
19. In responding to questions about the original landscape effects rating, the RFI response reaffirmed that overall landscape effects would remain low. It acknowledged that if medium-density residential development and associated earthworks were extensively applied across the steeper and more elevated dune areas, natural character effects could increase to low- moderate (equating to minor in RMA terminology). Despite this qualification, the response maintained that the proposal would remain generally consistent with the surrounding landscape context and that overall landscape effects would still be best characterised as low. I also note and agree that as Mr Button explains (paragraph 3.6), District Plan Policy requirements for bulk earthworks mean there is adequate protection of the sand dunes in the southern part of the site, to ensure their overall legibility is maintained.
20. Overall, both the LVA and the RFI response conclude that the site is suitable for residential development because it is a highly modified landscape surrounded by existing and planned urban development, contains no identified outstanding natural landscapes or features, and retains protection for its most significant ecological values. Both documents ultimately conclude that landscape, visual and natural character effects are low overall and that the proposal is generally compatible with the site's existing and anticipated landscape context.
21. Having reviewed the landscape information related to the proposal, I concur with all of the conclusions reached in the LVA report of 25 February 2025 and the RFI Response, with one exception noted in paragraph 23 below.
22. In addition, I have undertaken my own consideration of the landscape character and effects. I have not repeated the detail of the LVA but provide commentary based on my assessment, in addition to the LVA and RFI Response.
23. I note that the Landscape Development Framework recommended in the LVA was proposed by Ms. McBain to primarily manage natural character effects. Following discussion with Susan Jones, I consider that effects on natural character can be sufficiently managed by the District Plan or through the resource consents process as required (as noted in paragraph 19 above). For that reason, I do not consider the Landscape Development Framework (also intended to reduce effects from low to very low) is necessary as part of PC5.

Submissions

24. The Fairway Oaks Drive Residents Partnership submission is the only submission to raise landscape matters. The submission raises concerns in relation to the loss of rural amenity and character and describes the Te Moana landscape as having a distinctive rural character through its open, low-density green edges.
25. I accept that the existing openness and undeveloped nature of the site provides a degree of visual amenity, particularly for the adjoining Fairway Oaks Drive properties. I agree that, at a broad scale, there are rural character values adjacent to and beyond the wider suburban residential development along Te Moana Road, which I consider can be defined as the Te Moana landscape.
26. However, due to the peri-urban location and modified nature of the site, I consider that it makes a limited contribution to the rural attributes of the wider Te Moana landscape. The site is located within an area that is already experiencing ongoing change through residential development and associated infrastructure such as the Kāpiti Expressway. In my opinion, and as identified in the LVA, the rural character values of the site are low.
27. PC5 will not result in the rural character of the wider Te Moana landscape being erased. I note that the dune landforms within the site will be managed under the District Plan framework and that the identified Pohutukawa on the Te Moana Road frontage will remain. These elements provide continuity with the wider landscape character and will assist in maintaining the legibility of the landscape beyond the immediate change in land use.
28. Following the change in zoning, the visual amenity of the site and its relationship with the surrounding properties will change from that associated with an open, undeveloped peri-urban landscape to that associated with a residential environment. I accept that, as a result of PC5, the openness and low-density character of the site will be lost, and that this change will be primarily, but not exclusively, experienced by the residences at 4, 6, 8 and 10 Fairway Oaks Drive.
29. However, a change in visual amenity should not necessarily be characterised as a loss of visual amenity. The General Residential Zone provides for residential character and amenity to develop within the zone, guided by the relevant policy framework and associated development standards. In my opinion, the resulting residential landscape will result in different visual amenity characteristics rather than representing a complete loss of visual amenity.

30. I therefore consider that the principal landscape effect is a transition from one form of landscape character and visual amenity to another, within an area that is already experiencing a transition from rural to urban development.
31. The proposed General Residential zoning is also relevant to the assessment of landscape and visual effects experienced by the adjoining Fairway Oaks Drive properties. These properties are already located within the General Residential Zone and form part of an established residential landscape and visual environment. PC5 would extend the same zoning and associated residential development framework to the adjoining site, rather than introducing a different or anomalous land use into the existing residential context. In my opinion, this continuity provides for a consistent extension of the existing residential landscape character.
32. While PC5 will change the outlook currently experienced by the adjoining properties, the resulting residential landscape will be consistent with the character and amenity framework within which these properties already exist. I consider this reduces the degree of contrast between the proposed development and its receiving environment and is relevant to the assessment of the magnitude of visual change. In my opinion, the effect is therefore more appropriately understood as a change in visual amenity associated with the extension of an existing residential environment, rather than loss of landscape amenity.

Section 42A Report

33. I have considered the landscape evidence of Simon Button and agree with his conclusions that the site is modified and overall exhibits low natural character values, with effects on landscape values being low, and effects on natural character rating as low- moderate (albeit with effects on landscape values of the site as a whole being low in context in my opinion, as recorded in the RFI response).
34. However, I disagree with the conclusion that PC5 would result in a 'notable departure from the visual amenity values anticipated by the current zoning' to a moderate degree', (paragraph 4.2 of his evidence) and the recommendation for additional design controls, a landscape framework plan or structure plan.
35. I agree with Mr. Button that the existing undeveloped nature of the site provides a degree of openness to the outlook, particularly from 4, 6, 8 and 10 Fairway Oaks Drive, and that this outlook will change as a consequence of PC5. I therefore accept that there will be an adverse visual effect experienced from these properties. My disagreement is with the characterisation of that effect as

moderate and with the necessity for controls specifically directed at retaining the visual amenity provided for by the existing rural zoning.

36. I consider it important to distinguish between a departure from the visual amenity anticipated by the current rural zoning and an adverse landscape or visual effect arising from the proposed development. The fact that the current zoning anticipates a degree of openness does not, in my opinion, establish that the existing outlook is a landscape value that must be retained following an appropriate transition to residential zoning. The proposed General Residential zoning will result in a different landscape character and a different form of visual amenity. The question is whether the resulting residential landscape and its relationship with the existing dwellings would be inappropriate or result in an unacceptable adverse visual effect.
37. I also note that the General Residential Zone already applies to the surrounding residential environment and provides for the Medium Density Residential Standards. The development capacity enabled by PC5 is therefore not an anomalous form of urban development when considered in the context of the surrounding General Residential Zone. In particular, the potential for development of up to three storeys is an established characteristic of the underlying zoning of Fairway Oaks Drive. While this does not mean that visual effects associated with PC5 can be disregarded, it is relevant to the assessment of the future landscape character.
38. I have considered the proposed setback and vegetative screening controls recommended by Mr Button at paragraph 3.16. While such measures may reduce the visual prominence of future buildings when viewed from the Fairway Oaks Drive properties, they do not in themselves retain the existing sense of openness. Rather, they substitute an open low-density outlook with a vegetated or filtered outlook, with residential development potentially visible beyond.
39. I do not consider that an additional landscape setback and screening requirement is necessary to achieve an appropriate residential interface, particularly where the purpose of such a setback would be to retain an existing sense of openness that is inherently changed by the transition from the current state to residential use. Introducing an additional setback at this interface would establish a different development response from that applying to other adjoining General Residential boundaries.
40. Overall, I agree with Mr. Button that PC5 will result in a noticeable and adverse change in visual amenity for the four adjoining properties, principally through a reduction in their existing open outlook. However, having regard to the low rural landscape values of the site, its peri-urban context, the surrounding residential environment, the landscape character anticipated by the proposed General

Residential zoning, and the absence of a material effect on the wider Te Moana landscape character and sense of place, I consider the resulting visual effect to be low rather than moderate, and additional controls to be unnecessary.

Conclusions

41. Overall, in my opinion PC5 will result in low effect on landscape values. This reflects the location and modified nature of the site, in a peri-urban landscape context with limited rural landscape character.
42. I consider that PC5 will result in a change to the visual amenity experienced from the adjoining properties, including a loss of the existing sense of openness associated with the undeveloped site. However, in my opinion, this should not be characterised as a loss of visual amenity in its entirety. The existing amenity associated with openness and an undeveloped outlook will be replaced by the different character and amenity associated with a residential environment. Additional controls to manage the boundary between the site and adjacent residential zoning on Fairway Oaks Drive would result in an unnecessary inconsistency between residentially zoned boundaries.
43. Therefore potential landscape and visual effects of PC5 can be appropriately managed within the existing planning framework, and in terms of landscape matters the proposal should be accepted.

Benjamin Ormsby

2 September 2026