

24 July 2024

Hutt City Council
30 Laings Road
Private Bag 31912
Lower Hutt 5040

Attn: Dan Kellow
Dan.Kellow@huttcity.govt.nz

Request for more Landscape and Visual information – Eastern Hills Reservoir Notice of Requirement

Dear Dan,

Please find below our response to your letter dated 18 May 2024 requesting additional information on landscape and visual effects. Our Landscape Architect has provided the following information in reply to the peer review carried out by Linda Kirkmeester on behalf of Hutt City Council.

Please extend the assessment to a broader context i.e. extend the ZTV map to include the areas to the western hills and north of the site or justify why a broader assessment isn't required. This is requested as the 20m cut height means the viewshed is likely to extend beyond the 8m offset used for the ZTV map.

The Landscape and Visual Assessment focused on viewing the reservoir from publicly accessible locations east of State Highway 2.

Viewpoints from the Western Hills were not considered due to their distance from the site. Accordingly, it is considered that the earthworks will not be visible, particularly following remedial planting. Views northwest of the site were also discounted, as when attempts were made to view the site along roads east of, close to and parallel to the State Highway, views were screened by 2-3 storey apartments (located side-by-side with very few gaps between). It is therefore considered that public views from this location won't be available. Views for motorists travelling along State Highway 2 and the Hutt Valley Railway Line from Wellington through to Upper Hutt will be transient viewers and as such cannot be considered affected to an unacceptable level by the Proposal, due to a shorter length of viewing time.

Views from north of the reservoir site in the light industrial area adjacent to Naenae Road and Vogel Street, are predominantly occupational, as shown in Figure 1 below. Viewpoints have not been assessed from this area as any adverse effects experienced by occupational viewers are generally considered acceptable. The viewing audience are typically within the receiving environment from 9am to 5pm, engaged in working activities that do not permanently occupy the buildings. Any visitors to these buildings, such as customers or visitors, will only be there for short periods of time and are not considered subject to the visual effects associated with the construction of the reservoir. A photograph looking north from the site of the proposed reservoir is included below (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Looking north from proposed reservoir site

Please include distances on the ZTV (500m circles from site) and confirm the distances for Viewpoints 1-4.

We have included 500m circles from the site and confirmed the distances for Viewpoints 1-4 in the updated drawings which are attached.

Please comment on the potential visual effect from areas north of the site, including effects of the pipeline and vegetation clearance (include photographs from the Site looking north). Please include an additional viewpoint for this location.

We have included a new viewpoint from Balgownie Grove immediately north of the site and a visual simulation of the pipeline and vegetation clearance. The attached memo *Landscape and Visual Assessment – Supplementary Information*, illustrates the visibility of the Proposal from Viewpoint 5 and details the visual effects. This viewpoint-specific visual assessment has considered the potential visual effects of the proposed reservoir and associated activity as viewed from Balgownie Grove looking southwest towards the proposed site.

During construction and before mitigation, the potential visual effects have been assessed as **High Adverse** due to removal of a wide band of vegetation and partial visibility of the new reservoir. With mitigation and remedial planting the rating will change to **Low Adverse**, due to revegetation of the pipeline route area with eco-sourced native vegetation.

Please note the comments in relation to planting density and revegetation of the 20m cut face on page 5 of the LVA peer report which comments on proposed Condition 29. Please consider amending the condition in response to the comments.

We are happy to revise the planting spacing from 1.5m spacing to 1.0m spacing on the 20m cut face to enable the planting to establish quicker.

Condition 30 details minimum requirements for the Landscape Concept Plan. We proposed to amend Condition 30 b) so that it reads (added text is underlined):

- b) *Details of the final earthworks levels, including confirming that they will integrate with adjacent topography, and provide appropriate revegetation conditions and include specific details for the revegetation of the cut face;*

Please note the comment from page 5 of the LVA peer review:

"...there needs to be clear collaboration across the project to ensure that vegetation clearance, salvage, stockpiling and its reuse/spread on site is managed appropriately from the outset. It is recommended that a condition be included requiring a management plan for the salvage of indigenous plant material and forest duff (topsoil layer) is included as part of the earthworks stage, to be supervised by the ecologist and landscape architect".

Please consider amending proposed condition 29 in response to the comments. The LVA peer review suggested this ought to be included in Landscape Specifications required by condition 29.

A Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) is already proposed under Condition 36, with Condition 37 outlining what the VMP must include as a minimum. We feel that this requirement would sit better under this condition and therefore propose including an additional clause f) to Condition 37 (added text is underlined):

- f) *Detail how vegetation clearance, salvage, stockpiling and its reuse/spread on site, will be managed under the supervision of an ecologist and/or landscape architect, including the salvage of indigenous plant material and forest duff (topsoil layer) as part of the earthworks stage.*

Yours sincerely



Cathy Crooks
Principal Planner
Connect Water/WSP