




The Wairarapa Landscape Study



Greater Wellington Regional Council, and Masterton, Carterton and South Wairarapa District Councils are jointly preparing a landscape study of the Wairarapa.

We need the community to tell us:

What landscapes make Wairarapa special and why?

How should they be recognised and managed?

Public consultation begins in May

20th May 2010

Public meeting, Masterton District Council
Frank Cody Lounge: 5.30-7.30pm

25th May 2010

Public meeting, Greytown Town Centre:
5.30-7.30pm

27th May 2010

Public meeting, Martinborough Town Hall:
5.30-7.30pm

Why have a landscape study?

Currently there is uncertainty around which landscapes are important within Wairarapa. This means anyone wanting to develop land may have to determine, firstly, if the development or land use is within an important landscape. And, if it is, how they propose to mitigate any adverse effects on the landscape values that have been identified.

This can be a contentious, time-consuming, expensive and frustrating process for all involved. The study is using natural science, aesthetic values and community feedback to identify important landscapes. When finished, it will provide certainty for landowners and the wider community about the location of special landscapes in Wairarapa and how the community values them. This information can then be used to identify what sort of development, guidelines, or controls are most suitable for managing a particular landscape.

Statutory requirement

The study will also satisfy statutory resource management requirements as stated in the proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan and the proposed Greater Wellington Regional Policy Statement. Together, these documents require that an assessment of the landscape values across

Wairarapa is undertaken and that outstanding natural features and landscapes and significant amenity landscapes are identified in both district and regional plans in consultation with landowners, iwi, stakeholders and the wider community.

Who is responsible for the study?

The four councils are jointly responsible for managing the completion of the study. Environmental planning firm, Boffa Miskell, is carrying out the project work. To assist with the study, a Project Steering Group has been formed, with representatives from the four councils, Wairarapa Federated Farmers, Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Rangitane o Wairarapa and Boffa Miskell.

How is the study being done?

The Wairarapa Landscape study comprises two main parts.

Part 1: Wairarapa Landscape Character Descriptions

This involved describing and mapping the character of those landscapes that make up Wairarapa. The objective was to provide a comprehensive description of the landscape character of Wairarapa to use as the starting point for the subsequent evaluation stage of the study.

Wairarapa Landscape Character Descriptions, has been completed and can be viewed online at www.cartertondc.co.nz/wailandscape.

Part 2: Landscape Evaluation for identifying 'special landscapes'

This involves identifying and mapping the outstanding natural features and landscapes, and the significant amenity landscapes. These

will be identified and mapped in consultation with land owners, iwi and the community. Central to this process is finding out which landscapes the community values most, why they are highly valued and why they might be worthy of particular recognition and care.

Community consultation and engagement is essential to the study and is now underway (see 'About Community Consultation' below).

ABOUT LANDSCAPES

What is a landscape?

The term landscape refers to the physical nature of the environment and how people see or feel about that environment. It is accepted that people have varying opinions about the same landscape. A landscape is made up of both land and water, including rivers, lakes and the sea. Each landscape has its own character made up of landform, land cover, wildlife, anything made by people and the history of the land's use. The shape of the land, the nature upon it and its history of use.

Why are landscapes important?

Landscapes play an important role to a community and the nation. They contribute to our quality of life and help form our identity. They support a range of economic activities including farming, forestry, horticulture, tourism and conservation. They link us to our history and culture, and this is expressed in the Maori term "tangata whenua" – meaning people of the land. Our landscapes are critical to the identity of Wairarapa and some of them are more sensitive to change than others and therefore need additional management.



What are 'special' or highly valued landscapes?

The significance of Wairarapa's landscapes will be assessed at two broad levels - 'outstanding natural' and 'significant amenity'. This is a somewhat subjective process because it is about the values that people attach to their landscapes. It also requires that Wairarapa's landscapes be compared, in order to identify those that are considered special.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes

An 'outstanding' natural feature or landscape is one that 'stands out' or is 'pre-eminent' amongst other natural features or landscapes in the district. While evidence of human presence and activity may be apparent, natural components dominate.

Significant Amenity Landscapes

These are landscapes that are either, predominantly natural landscapes that are special but not as exceptional as an outstanding natural landscape, or they could be landscapes, that despite modification, are still considered special or exceptional due to aesthetic, cultural or other relevant factors.

Don't we already have outstanding natural features and landscapes in the

Combined District Plan?

Yes, there are several identified. However, as part of the recent district plan review the Wairarapa councils committed to carrying out a comprehensive landscape assessment of the whole of Wairarapa, which includes a review of the outstanding natural features and landscapes currently identified. The assessment may result in the addition of new areas or redefining the boundaries of existing outstanding natural features or landscapes, as well.

ABOUT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

How can I be involved?

Landowner, iwi, community and stakeholder consultation and engagement is a critical part of the evaluation stage, and input is now being sought. You are invited to attend one (or more) public consultation meetings.

When are the public consultation meetings?

Two rounds of consultation are planned:

Round One Public Consultation

This round is to identify which landscapes the community values highly and why they are highly valued. The schedule of consultation



meetings, which will be facilitated by Bob Francis, is as follows:

- 20th May 2010, Public meeting, Masterton District Council, Frank Cody Lounge: 5.30-7.30pm
- 25th May 2010, Public meeting, Greytown Town Centre: 5.30-7.30pm
- 27th May 2010, Public meeting, Martinborough Town Hall: 5.30-7.30pm

No specific preparation is required; come along, we look forward to your input.

Round Two Public Consultation

In this round, feedback will be sought on the draft mapping of areas that have been identified as being highly valued. This could alternatively be called the 'lines on the maps' stage and the objective is to finalise the mapping. The Round Two consultation meetings will occur in July-August, and a schedule of the meetings will be publicised well in advance.

How will my feedback be used in the study?

Your feedback, and that of all those who participate, will be one of the criteria that will be considered in identifying outstanding natural features and landscapes, and significant amenity landscapes. It will be considered alongside a number of other evaluation criteria, such as natural science, aesthetic values and shared and recognised values.

Feedback gathered from the public consultation will not only help to identify special landscapes in Wairarapa, but will also help in mapping those special areas by providing detailed local knowledge.

ABOUT OUTCOMES OF THE LANDSCAPE STUDY

What will come out of the study?

If required, the Wairarapa Combined District Plan may be amended or expanded to define the identified special landscapes and include provisions or guidelines for their management. Any such amendments will be subject to a statutory plan change process, which will involve further public participation and opportunity for discussion and comment.

District plan changes are not part of this study and are a quite separate process. Nevertheless, the information gained from the community consultation will assist with determining how to manage the landscape values associated with the special landscapes identified. The current plan provisions may be adequate, or new or amended provisions may be required.

How will the outcomes potentially affect what I can do on my property?

This will depend on the outcomes desired by the community for the special landscapes. It will also depend on the type of planning mechanisms that would be considered effective and appropriate for managing change within these areas.

In the first instance, the current policies and rules in the district plan for special landscapes will be reviewed to examine whether they are appropriate or need to be adjusted (i.e. they may be found to be too lenient, too stringent or about right). Any changes to the district plan will be subject to a full consultation process, so there would also be opportunities for involvement if this occurs.

FIND OUT MORE

How can I find out more?

If you are interested in finding out more about the Wairarapa Landscape Study, or cannot attend a consultation meeting and would like to share your thoughts, you will find further information online at www.cartertondc.co.nz/wailandscape.

Alternatively, you can contact Sue Southey, district planner, based at Masterton District Council

Ph: 06-370 6300 or email sues@mstn.govt.nz

