

Appendix 1, Attachment 46 - Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush - Heritage Landscape Review Addendum

Council Submission on PC14

4C-0010.00

Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush

Heritage Landscape Review - Addendum

26 April 2023

CONFIDENTIAL





Project:	Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush Heritage Landscape Review – Addendum
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Background / Purpose

Christchurch City Council is preparing a submission on their recently notified Housing and Business Choice Plan Change (PC14). The aim is to address omissions contained in Council's planning approach for properties that sit within the Riccarton Bush Interface Area, identified as part of Council's PC14 notification.

This Addendum provides additional heritage advice to Council, following the Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush Heritage Landscape Review¹ prepared by WSP in December 2022. This document was used by Council to assist with preparing the extent of the Riccarton Bush Interface Area and the planning controls needed to ensure that Pākehā/European heritage and landscape values of Pūtaringamotu are retained through PC14.

The Heritage Landscape Review identified Pūtaringamotu as a sensitive heritage site and setting, with high landscape, heritage and ecological values. The report noted that the contextual, landmark and historic values of Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush would be adversely affected by the increased building heights initially proposed. Views to Riccarton Bush can also be observed along the driveways and outdoor areas of adjacent residential properties, which foregrounded by residential tree canopies are part of the setting and contribute to the experience of Riccarton Bush while walking adjacent streets. The report found that the increased building height proposed in the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) would obscure and significantly weaken this relationship between Riccarton Bush and its setting. In order to safeguard Pūtaringamotu's heritage values, the report recommended extending Council's initial Concept Interface Area, retaining the existing Residential Suburban Zone (up to 2 storeys), Medium Residential and Special Purpose (School) Zones.

While the report advised to retain the operative zoning of the above areas, the key focus of recommendations was to limit building height in the Interface Area.

Recommendations within the report were limited to those expressed in 2015 BECA reporting on residential character, and as such, did not further specify recommended bulk and location controls. The notified proposal for PC14 only sought to replace all High Density Residential Zone (HDZ) with Medium Residential Zone (MRZ) within the interface area, applying a specific overlay area to future limit building height to two storeys. Without further bulk and location controls, a noticeable change to the views of Riccarton Bush can occur, with potential to obscure visibility of Pūtaringamotu from residents and

¹ WSP (2022), *Pūtaringamotu Riccarton Bush Heritage Landscape Review*, prepared for Christchurch City Council.



passers-by within the Riccarton Bush setting. This Addendum provides additional recommendations to better articulate the conclusions on reporting. The goal is to ensure that the proposed changes in PC14 for the Riccarton Bush Interface Area will not detract from and obscure the values for which Pūtaringamotu is considered outstanding.

Recommended Additional Controls

The supporting information contained in this Addendum addresses omissions in the WSP Heritage Landscape Review and any shortcomings of the proposed built form standards.

Bulk and Location

Residential Activity

Under the MDRS, three residential units per site would be enabled (14.5.1.1.P1). A baseline of three units plus a liberalised subdivision lens with no site density would create opportunities for fast, incremental change to the Riccarton Bush setting. In order to ensure viewsheds of Riccarton Bush can be maintained, a two unit maximum per site is recommended. This recommendation aligns with Rule 14.4 in the operative district plan.

Site Coverage

The proposed MDRS controls for properties within the Riccarton Bush Interface Area allow 50% of the net site area to be covered by buildings which will have a tangible impact on building density and viewshafts. This creates potential for the bulk of buildings to significantly erode Pūtaringamotu as a distinctive element across the skyline. Building site coverage should therefore be restricted to 35% of each site (operative zoning site coverage) for properties that are part of the Interface Area, to ensure retention of viewshafts and visual connectivity between Pūtaringamotu and other planted elements in the landscape.

Height in Relation to Boundary (Recession Planes)

Of primary concern is the impact that buildings two storeys or higher have on the viewshafts and visibility of Riccarton Bush within the identified Riccarton Bush Interface Area. Applying MDRS daylight recession angles have the potential to reduce viewshafts to Riccarton Bush given the angles are significantly more permissive than operative zoning controls. These MDRS angles (or the alternative proposed through Council's Sunlight Access Qualifying Matter) would allow for two storey buildings to be constructed more closely together potentially reducing view shafts and affecting the visibility and presence of Pūtaringamotu. Instead of recommending further restrictions on recession planes, the Heritage Landscape Review (2022) and Addendum have focused on a combination of height controls, setbacks and limits to site density in order to protect the heritage setting.

Minimum Building Setbacks

Beca's 2015 Character Area 7 Report² provided context in the Heritage Landscape Review (2022), noting that the recommendations captured in Beca's report achieve the same visual outcomes necessary to protect the heritage setting of Riccarton Bush. The measures outlined included retaining the defining character elements of this area such as 1-2 storey single family dwellings, minimum 8m setbacks and large side setbacks to retain streetscape quality.

² Beca (2015), Christchurch Suburban Character Area Assessment prepared for Christchurch City Council, Character Area 7: Totara/Hinau/Puriri Assessment.



While front yard setbacks have less impact than side boundaries on views of Riccarton Bush, reduced setbacks as proposed in the MDRS enable buildings to be located much closer to the street thereby changing the frequency of views of Riccarton Bush for passers-by. We therefore recommend a road boundary setback of 4.5 metres for the area that is currently zoned Residential Suburban and 2 metres along any site on Riccarton Road. This is in line with the current operative zoning.

The proposed MDRS minimum building setback of 1m for side boundaries and no setback required for common walls will have a significant impact on viewshafts of Pūtaringamotu currently available between residential properties. It is therefore recommended that the 1m rule be replaced with a minimum 3m setback for internal side boundaries. 3m aligns with the existing minimum legal width for rear accessways from all internal side boundaries. Suburban viewsheds to Riccarton Bush have historically been set by residential accessways and a 3m internal side boundary setback provides protection for viewshafts between properties. These are viewshafts where pockets of Riccarton Bush's native vegetation can be viewed from surrounding streets and from where the broad expanses of trees above roofs across the skyline are also available.

Subdivision Controls

Controlled Activity

The MDRS outlines that no minimum allotment size is required where no vacant allotment created contains a residential unit, has resource consent for a residential unit or is concurrently proposed to have a residential unit via resource consent (Rule 8.5.1.2.C9). This rule has the potential to quickly increase bulk and occupation through incremental change and should not be applied within the interface area.

It is recommended instead that the minimum site density for properties within the Riccarton Bush Interface Area is 450m². This figure allows for some development, albeit limited in an attempt to retain the current grain of density provided with operative zoning and to protect views of Riccarton Bush. This recommendation applies to the Interface Area only (2 storey overlay). Areas that are MRZ only would retain a vacant allotment size of 400m² and no minimum density for existing or proposed dwellings.

Special Purpose (School) Zones.

While much of Riccarton Bush is currently screened by vegetation along the Riccarton Road boundary fence, views of Riccarton Bush are available from both within the school and as glimpses or viewshafts from streets surrounding the residential area. The MDRS sets the building height limit at St Teresa's School at 12m. Given the school lies within the Control Interface Area of Riccarton Bush, it is recommended that operative height controls of 8m are applied to this Special Purpose School Zone. The same outcome for protecting viewsheds of Riccarton Bush is expected within this area, as for the surrounding residential area.