

APPENDIX E - LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Siting

- Have regard to surrounding landforms when siting buildings and structures.
- Buildings should be located where they complement or enhance the landform.
- Landforms as backdrops to buildings have a unifying effect.
- Avoid skylines, ridgetops, promontories, important views and other prominent positions, particularly as viewed from public places.
- Locate near a change in a landform, such as at the base of a hill or the edge of a fan and avoid central locations on open terrace plains or wide valley floors.
- Make use of existing vegetation as a background. Additional planting should be bold, large and dense enough to relate to the scale of the building.
- Minimise excavation and reduce the need for large foundations by following the landform with the building and/or stepping the building into the slope.
- Align the building with the land, so the length of the roofline runs parallel to the contour of the land.
- Group buildings and structures together. Link small structures with other structures.
- Keep buildings well back from the road, where possible.

Design

- The scale and form of buildings and structures should be complimentary to the surrounding landscape.
- Relate roof shapes to the lie of the land - reflecting the steepness and direction of the landform.
- Give a sense of unity and identity by keeping building proportions and roof type similar on all buildings in an area.
- Simple forms should be used where the landscape setting is not complicated, such as a valley floor or river terrace. Complex forms are more appropriate where the landscape is more complex, such as a complex hillside.
- Aim for low buildings with a width greater than the height, which helps to "anchor" the buildings to the site.
- Keep the height of the walls similar to the pitch of the roof.
- Avoid visible basements or foundations, where possible, keeping the floor closely related to ground level.

Materials and Colour

- Where possible, materials should complement the landscape or any traditional character of materials in the area.
- Colour of buildings and structures should be derived from those of the surrounding landscape.
- Lighter, brighter colours are generally less acceptable as they stand out from the surrounding landscape.
- Darker or more muted colours tend to blend the building with the backdrop.
- Colours complementary to the surrounds may also be used as accent colours.
- Roof colour should be non-reflective and only one colour.

FENCES, POWER LINES, ETC

- Follow the flow of the landform and avoid cutting across contours.
- Avoid skylines, ridgelines, promontories, dominant features and cutting across views.
- Where possible, locate at the edges of landforms and/or adjacent to existing vegetation or landform, where they can be subordinate to the backdrop.
- Fences should reflect any historical character in design and materials.

TRACKS AND ROADS

- Absorb into the landscape with careful siting to minimise visual impact.
- Follow natural contour lines to reduce the height of cuttings and fill batters, maintain easier grades and reduce scouring and run-off problems.
- Keep earthworks to a minimum. Where cuts must occur, grade back and round off batters to merge into the adjoining landform.
- Locate adjacent to vegetation, slopes or edges of landforms.
- Avoid crossing steep slopes.
- Avoid crossing open spaces. If there are no edges to follow then use large clumps of trees, for example.
- Blend with existing vegetation, avoiding felling where possible.
- Plan and design track drainage carefully.
- Avoid compaction of excavated material, where possible, to retain soil fertility and enhance revegetation.
- Cross waterways carefully, at right angles and narrow points, with simple structures.

TREE PLANTING

Siting

- Follow and complement natural landform patterns and boundaries.
- Build on and merge into existing vegetation.
- Avoid ridgetops, crests, promontories or where planting will obscure or screen important views.
- Avoid planting steeper slopes or where planting will obscure landscape features.
- Avoid planting immediately adjacent to rivers, streams and wetland. Retain buffer areas along margins and existing riverside vegetation.
- Use existing vegetation or enclosing landforms as screens.
- Locate plantings in natural depressions or with dominant landform backdrop.

Design

- Avoid straight line edges to plantings.
- Group plantings, rather than plant individual trees. Avoid small disjointed plantings, in dominantly horizontal landscapes. Use plantings to integrate existing scattered plantings or wildings.
- Group woodlot plantings informally, if possible, rather than in strict lines or rows.
- Vegetation which adds to the natural or historical character of an area should be retained and enhanced with similar planting.
- Group planting of several species can be more appropriate than individual plants or groups of one species.
- Ornamental plantings around the edge are not always the answer to beautification. Good overall planting and design following the natural patterns of the land will usually give better looking results.
- Care should be taken when clearing vegetation, that this is done in sympathy with existing vegetation, landforms and contours.

SIGNS

- The guidelines for structures also apply to signs.
- Roadside signs should be placed where they do not obstruct sight distances around curves, over rises and at intersections.
- Signs should be located so they have a "backdrop" of either vegetation, landform, or a structure.
- Messages should be short and easily read. Layout should be horizontal, and lettering styles should be simple.
- To complement the landscape, signs with horizontal forms are more sympathetic and acceptable in simple landscape contexts, such as river flats, basin floors. Vertical signs are more appropriate where the landscape is more enclosed such as in a narrow river valley. Tall vertical signs that are higher than surrounding structures, or that do not have a backdrop, are to be avoided.

- The colour of signs should be derived from those of the surrounding landscape. The reverse of signs should be painted a dull matt colour.
- Materials should be durable. Posts of signs near roads should be "frangible" by providing a weakened plane where they will break if hit by a vehicle.
- Roadside signs should not be reflective. Large internally lit signs should be avoided.

The following publications provide additional information for people planning to undertake development in the District:

Rural Landscape Guidelines. Series of six leaflets produced by the Land Settlement Board and available from the Department of Conservation.

Lucas, DJ, 1981. Rural Landscape Guidelines for South Canterbury. Geraldine, DJ Lucas.

Boffa Miskell Partners Limited, 1993. Landscape Guidelines for Forestry in the Mackenzie/Waitaki Basins. Report prepared for a steering group as a supplement to the report "Landscape Change in the Mackenzie/Waitaki Basins". Copies available from the Department of Conservation, Christchurch.

Moore, J, 1991. On the Edge - Management Options for Plantation Edges. Ministry of Forestry.

Lucas, DJ, 1987. Woodlots in the Landscape.

Bennett, EH and D Lucas, 1992. Upper Waimakariri Basin Landscape Guidelines. Report prepared for Selwyn District Council.

Bennett, EH and H Russell, 1993. Wanaka - Hawea - Makarora Planning for Landscape Change. Report prepared for Queenstown-Lakes District Council.

Boffa Miskell Partners Ltd, 1994. Ashburton Lakes Landscape Assessment. Report prepared for Ashburton District Council.