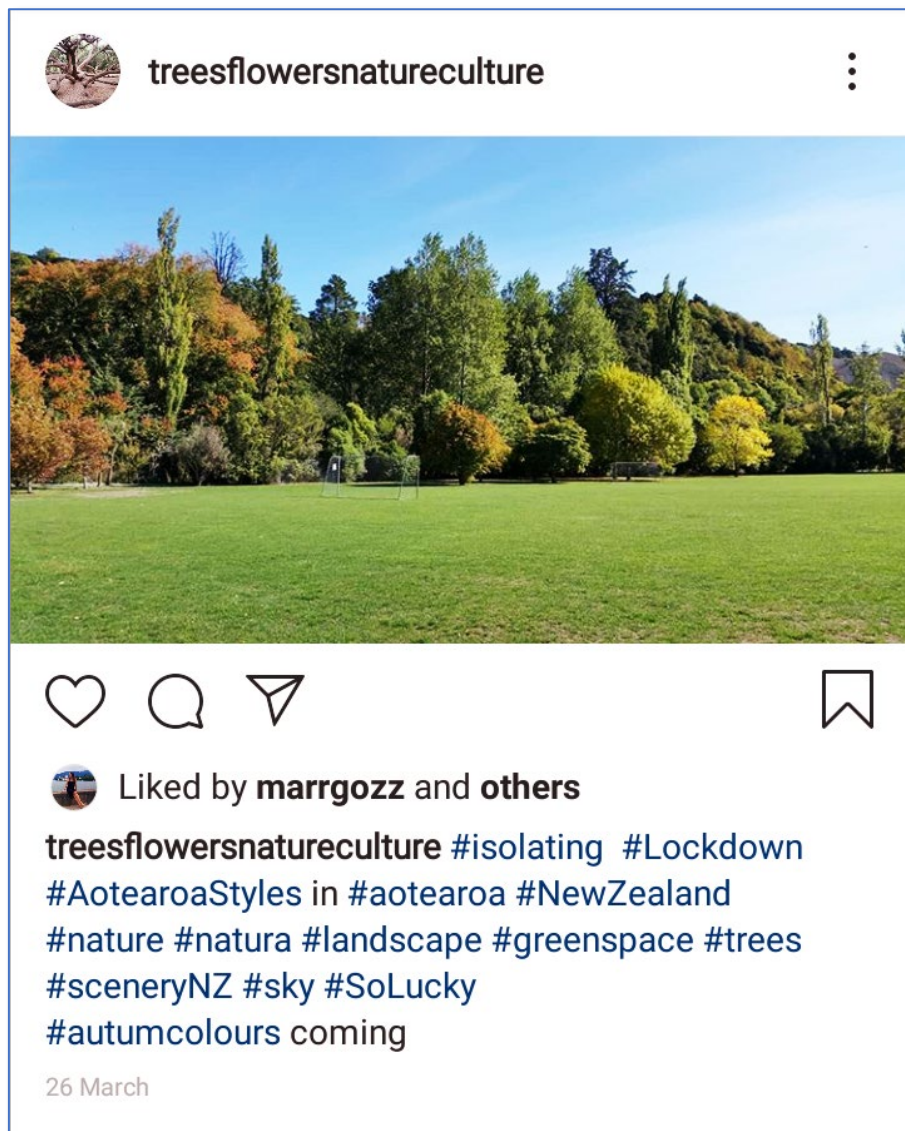


Jennifer Duncan – Written Statement to RMA Submission re: Private Plan Change Request 28

I oppose the PPC 28. The Maitai Valley is **unique** in Nelson. I - alongside thousands of other people - love and value the Maitai & want to protect it for current and future generations to enjoy a beautiful pocket of countryside on the 'skirts' of Nelson.



REASONS:

CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT

The whole Maitai valley is of historical significance to the people of Nelson and is a significant asset to the city.

The valley holds many great memories for many people and is of high value as an amenity area to me and many other people.

I will speak more about **Cultural Significance** on behalf of STM Inc on the 18th.

AMENITY

Dennes Hole, directly adjacent to the PPC site, is one of the top 3 swimming spots in the Maitai River. The valley would no longer be a quiet rural recreation and relaxation space to enjoy.

Structural changes would **destroy the tranquility** and degrade the **natural character and thus the amenity value** of Dennes Hole

Stormwater is highly likely to damage the swimability of Dennes Hole, as well as pollute wildlife habitat in the river.

Stormwater has nowhere else to be discharged except into the river at Dennes Hole. I do not want urban run-off pollutants entering the river.

Consideration of stormwater management should not be left until resource consent stage.

It is unfair to the public to omit this information before a decision is made.

Branford Park would be subjected to months of disruption ruining the **aural and visual amenity** for an extensive amount of time if Wastewater and Water lines are routed along it, and a Pumping Station "*adjacent to Maitai Valley Road*" would degrade the **visual amenity** of the reserve.

The subdivision could take up to 30 years – meaning decades of huge machinery and massive earthworks causing sedimentation, noise and loss of amenity!

30 years disturbance of the ambience of Maitai valley recreation areas

30 years (probably longer) of excessive sedimentation into Kākā Stream, Maitai River and Nelson Haven.

I also note that a figure of 350 was used to calculate wastewater flows while the PPC application is for 750 houses – why was that? ¹

Approving this PPC would set a precedent for further amenity degradation of Maitai Valley

Rural land is a finite resource. In NZ it is the only zone getting smaller due to rezoning from rural to residential. Approving PPC28 is a direct threat to the rural amenity of the Maitai Valley, especially because "*...Nelson City Council [also] has ... plans to develop the Orchard flats area directly across from [PPC28].*"²

Flood Plain modification would damage habitat value of the river AND ruin visual amenity and natural character of the river where I swim. This would be completely unacceptable to me.

Also, a section of Maitai Valley Road is within the flood overlay.

Engineered structures to control and shape the natural environment of the Maitai river, would degrade both wildlife habitat and visual amenity of an extremely popular recreation area.

NEED TO PROTECT & RESTORE NATURE

The PPC site / Kākā Valley is part of a significant 8 kilometre long Biodiversity Corridor for native forest birds and other wildlife, between Nelson and Hira. (More in footnotes: ³).

During COVID lockdown it was evident that native birds were more likely to enter spaces that were uninterrupted by traffic movements – we saw 20 kereru in a flock at the mouth of the valley, and an IG account I follow reported South Island robins in the mid-valley.

Traffic associated with PPC 28 would unnecessarily degrade the area for wildlife.

It is inappropriate to build a subdivision in the middle of a significant biodiversity corridor.

I would like to see the rural zoning protected with covenants to regenerate indigenous biodiversity (both flora and fauna).

I would also like to know if the Kākā area is a threatened environment under LENZ Level IV.

In 2019, NCC made a Declaration of Climate Emergency

I have 10 reasons⁴ why this is important and I'm sure there are more. The key message #1 is:

Humans need to maximise greenfield space and tree plantings to protect our environment.

How many reasons do we need before we humans prioritise actions that minimise climate change?

Papatuanuku's Kākā Stream needs restoration.

It historically flowed through 'multiple channels'. Moving it to the south-west side of the flood plain would NOT constitute 'close alignment' to the original stream location, nor would it in any way remediate the apparently 'man-made' character of the existing stream because it would still be 'man-made'

NEED CLEAR URBAN/RURAL EDGE & ACCESS GREENSPACE FOR WELLBEING

Greenpace provides important health and wellbeing benefits – but our blue and green world is becoming greyer, covered by built environments.

In Nelson, everyone currently has easy - & equitable - access to a rural recreational zone; the Maitai Valley.

In the **2015 Roding & Maitai River Users survey** 96% of people surveyed had come to use the area from beyond the local “Maitai” area. When asked what were the “*best aspects of the Maitai*” 40% of comments reflected the rural amenity of the area.

I want our Council to protect the rural zoning of the Maitai Valley catchment as a valuable asset for Nelsonians’ mental and physical health.

Written in 2012, Nelson 2060 – Framing Our Future says:

- “... sustain those things that gave the Nelson Region its original natural character” p39
- “... protect the natural ecosystems that we depend on...”p9
- “Fifty years might seem a long way away, but we need to plan and act now if we want our children to have choices and enjoy living in Nelson in 2060 ... this is about looking out for everyone’s future.” p7

We need to maintain a clear urban/rural edge.

Nearby ‘Botanical Hill’ is regarded as the geographic centre of New Zealand, & attracts many of Nelson’s tourists to its summit. Currently a variety of views can be enjoyed in *all* directions, from cityscape, to mountain ranges, seascape, to the much-Instagrammed green rural Maitai valley.

I want to protect the rural vista from the surrounding hill-side walking tracks for current and future generations to enjoy.

Subdividing Kākā Valley would push the urban/rural edge further up the valley meaning people would need to take longer and travel further to experience a truly rural space.

I disagree with assessments made in Milne’s Landscape Rebuttal Evidence regarding the extent, value and significance of the river ‘corridor’, the likely visual effects of the proposed subdivision, the impact on the 360 degree view, and who looks at what view for how long or where we experience the ‘gateway’ and his diminutive description of a ‘finger’? of recreational destinations – I would say it constitutes more an arm of recreational land adjacent to the city.

I also note that I am unsure where Denby Park is that he mentioned.

The Boffa Miskell 2018 report reiterated their earlier assessments; the Maitai River has been recognised as a Significant Landscape within the Maitai Valley and Upper Maitai landscape character areas. ... noting that the spatial extent of the Maitai River (which reflect the important sensory and associative landscape values recognised in association Maitai River) has not been defined. I believe this absence of definition should be addressed prior to any decision on the PPC 28.

Rough and Milne (p34, April 2021) noted that **PPC 28 would “change the existing and baseline landscape character of Kākā Valley, from a rural [area] to a residential subdivision.”**

Boffa Miskell also note that “*Botanical Hill, Sharland Hill and Kākā Hill have been identified as areas of visual amenity landscape within Nelson’s backdrop*”.

Some areas are particularly valued by communities for their amenity, and the Maitai Valley is one of those areas that is highly valued by Nelsonians.

Kākā Valley is visible from multiple recreation sites in the Maitai, including tracks beside the river, Olive Hill, Botanical Hill, the Maitai Cricket ground as well as up Sharland Hill.

NCC documents indicate that our city should value the **rural backdrop** - they say things like:

- Retain and enhance the ... rural backdrop
- Maintain a clear and defined urban edge
- New development must enhance Whakatū Nelson's character and amenity values
- Any change will "be appropriate"
- Protect the natural character and landscape values that contribute to the sense of enjoyment and appreciation of rural areas
- [provide for] new rural subdivision .. in a way that will protect amenity values and avoid further fragmentation of rural land
- Retain and enhance the open space, rural, and natural environment values that frame, cross and encircle Whakatū Nelson's urban areas
- Provide appropriate protection for existing ... areas of high amenity open space, rural, and natural environments that frame, cross and encircle Whakatū Nelson's urban areas, and encourage their enhancement over time.
- ...manage these spaces .. to ensure that the contribution they make to amenity and character values is retained and, where possible, enhanced over time.⁵

The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values is a key concern to residents, especially in terms of ... the rural backdrop and in relation to public open space.⁶

NCC's 2016 draft *Regional Policy Statement* Ch.7 Issue 7.4 says that: *"The largely undeveloped slopes and ridgelines that form the immediate backdrop to Nelson City and that are valued by the community for the contribution they make to the City's setting could be compromised by inappropriate subdivision... While these slopes and ridgelines may not be 'outstanding', they are undoubtedly valued by the community for their visual and aesthetic amenity ... Overall, what sets these areas apart are their relatively undeveloped, open qualities."*⁷

Kākā Valley is part of the Maitai Valley; the area provides a rural backdrop for recreation.

It is highly important to me as the backdrop to the view from the cricket ground where I go for relaxation.

- Development within this rural area would compromise the rural character and amenity.
- Aesthetics of the area would be degraded
- Rezoning would remove public access to a **rural** recreational area.
- The urban/rural edge would be pushed further away.
- And - the night sky would be polluted.

The 2005 Boffa Miskell Nelson Landscape Study defined Visual Amenity Landscape as *"An area of landscape with a high degree of visibility and associated amenity value which requires specific recognition."*

Town Belt hills included *"natural visual amenity values gained from the predominantly unbuilt 'green' character of the backdrop as a counterpoint to the highly built up urban area."*

The report informed Council that the Maitai River valley, as the largest of Nelson District's valley systems, had *"significant landscape value, and significant recreational values associated with the Maitai River and associated reserves and open spaces."* Also that the picturesque scenic qualities of the landscape setting contributed to high visual amenity values.

The **2016** Boffa Miskell Landscape Evaluation for the Maitai Valley, **Section C Significant Landscape Features** identified 3 significant landscapes or features, being Maitai Valley, Nelson Haven and Tahunanui Beach.

Landscape Values associated with the Maitai included a rating of High sensory value with **Strong picturesque scenic qualities in the lower reaches**, and **Very High Associative value** especially in the recreational area associated with the Maitai River, open space and associated reserves.

In BM's summary of Potential Landscape values the Maitai valley was rated as **High**.

- NCC have thus been aware of the landscape values of the Maitai catchment since at least 2005.
- The Maitai is Nelson's last remaining non-urbanised valley.
- The 2006 public response to the Nelson Urban Growth Strategy made it clear that there was strong opposition to development in the Maitai. Council acknowledged the public opinion clearly in the report, stating they would not pursue residential rezoning in the Maitai.
- Due to the high level of landscape amenity value the river and its margins should be protected from inappropriate effects of development.
- Council's website currently states: *"The community has given feedback to the Council confirming how important it is that, as Nelson grows, our character and amenity values are looked after."*
- One of the key qualities that has been identified is a clear urban/rural edge.
- We need to protect and treasure our remaining green space. Nelson has the opportunity to do better by protecting what we already have, a rural area that Nelsonians value highly.
- Most cities in the world would fall over themselves to have such an awesome quiet rural space so close by & accessible to everyone.

Chapter 12 of The *Nelson Resource Management Plan - Objective RU2 rural character* requires the **maintenance or enhancement of an environment dominated by open space and natural features**. *RU2.i states that "In addition to natural features, pastoral agriculture ... contribute[s] to the rural character."*

Furthermore, under the heading "Small Holdings Areas", Chapter 12 states that in 2005 an interim measure was implemented to **"avoid further adverse effects on rural character"** in Nelson.

RU2.iii Management of the character of the various parts of the rural environment is important to maintain Nelson's image as a pleasant green environment where there is ready access to passive and recreational activities.

*Protection, and preferably preservation, is seen as important to maintain Nelson's heritage for present and future generations, and for scientific as well as cultural reasons.*⁸

Does that apply to anywhere EXCEPT our largest valley system?

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT ISSUES

The PPC area would generate massive Increase in traffic; thousands of trips per day through the centre of the most popular part of the valley used for recreation.

The increase would have **negative impacts** on the entire city of Nelson, as well as on residents who live nearby and people who use the Maitai for recreation who would experience increased **ambient noise level and loss of nearby rural amenity**. There has been no community consultation on the mooted idea of using the PPC road as a SH6 alternative route.

Increase in traffic would increase safety risks to vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians in the valley which is currently a low-traffic area.

Gibbs Bridge is One-Lane, and the intersection of Maitai Valley Road and Nile Street would need to be redesigned before any work started on the site.

There is a risk that walk & cycle linkages would remain incomplete as they are outside the PPC area.

And 3 sets of Traffic Signals along Nile Street – who pays?

Distance and Gradient are Barriers to Active Transport. There is a very low likelihood of significant numbers of Active Transport uptake.

The PPC proponents have repeatedly made claims that a substantial number of residents who might end up living in the Kākā Bayview subdivision would walk or bike. I disagree. Their document says that the distance is **seven (7) kms from the CBD to the centre of the PPC area** (p25 of the *Traffic Impacts Report* page 25). Provision of active transport connections doesn't magically result in people choosing to use active transport where other barriers exist, such as **elevation and gradient, time constraints, necessity to transport passengers or goods**.

Elevation in the PPC area reaches approximately 230m - 240m, and gradients include plenty of steep hills.

Statistics show that close to 70% of Nelsonians drive to work, only a few travel by bicycle or by foot.ⁱ There is no reason that residents would be different to any other cross-section of our population.

There is also no existing Public Transport to the area.

▪ ⁱ NZTA 2019 stats show that only 4% of kiwis identify as committed bicycle commuters.

WRONG PLACE

Subdivision in this location is unwanted - consultation outcomes have consistently shown “STRONG OPPOSITION” to green-fields development in the Maitai Valley. In response to the NUGS consultation, Nelson City Council made a public commitment: ‘...*not to pursue residential rezoning in the Maitai Valley*’ - there has been no mandate to change this stance.

Kākā Valley is **currently zoned Rural**. It is adjacent to a Rural Smallholding zone, therefore it is not in a transition zone, or next to a residential zone.

A flood plain is not a suitable area for housing in the coldest wettest least sunny part of the valley. The PPC claims that “The lower floodplain area of Kākā Valley ... [is] one of the most suitable areas for development...” 5.1 (T&T- 03/21). I disagree. Apparently sections that receive 3 hours of sunshine or less have been removed from the plan.⁹ Does this mean that 4 hours of sunshine is considered enough? Just the idea of that gives me goosebumps!

In the recent 2022 FDS deliberations a staff member reported that Kākā Valley ranked 82nd out of 209 identified potential urban expansion sites. Why is this area being pushed ahead? By whom?

2019 FDS feedback overwhelmingly showed that “***The most common consideration identified by respondents was the preservation of natural landscapes ... most feedback supported building up ... rather than out. .. strong support for intensification ...***” (FDS Technical report)

The PPC does not prioritise intensification

The 2019 Nelson Tasman Future Development Strategy identified sufficient land for housing in the region without using Kākā Valley. Opportunities for intensification of existing built areas should be exhausted before any more urban sprawl is allowed.

I am one of over 13,000 people who want to protect the Maitai Valley catchment from urbanisation and keep it rural.

Page 75 of the PPC claims that:

- “ *the site is also ...an area that can absorb a relatively large amount of development and without comprising (sic) outstanding landscape values*” [I believe they mean compromising]
and that:
- the development would “*enhance the natural character of Kākā Stream and maintain the values associated with Maitai River.*”

I disagree entirely with both of these assessments because:

1. The rural landscape would become suburban.
2. Urbanisation does not enhance natural character.
3. The values associated with the Maitai River would not be enhanced by urbanisation.

REFERENCES

¹ “For feasibility purposes, the wastewater flows for the Kākā Valley ...have been based on 350 lots.” (T&T-08/21)

² 2.4 (T&T – 08/21)

▪ ³ **Biodiversity Corridor:**

NCC’s Parks and Facilities recommend “multiple corridors of indigenous vegetation retained or restored between the upper slopes of Kākā Hill and the Kākā tributary, Kākā tributary and Atawhai/Mahitahi ridgeline.”

- The Maitai Valley area has received substantial government funding to improve the health of the Maitai River and for ecological restoration of the Maitai.
- Council's Biodiversity Strategy aims to ‘protect and restoring alluvial, riparian and coastal ecosystems of the Maitai Valley’. Kākā Valley is a tributary of the Maitai.
- Land could be regenerated.
- The proponents’ plan contravenes NCC’s strategy of ecological restoration of the Maitai’s tributaries.

1. ⁴ **Climate Change & Emissions Reduction:**

Humans need to maximise greenfield space and tree plantings to protect our environment.

2. Green-field subdivisions have a much higher detrimental environmental impact than intensification.
3. The PPC area is unconnected to any existing services, thus would require entirely new infrastructure, which is an inefficient way to service housing.
4. Increased use of private motor vehicles is likely despite the Council’s commitment to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.
5. The distance from schools shops and services makes it highly likely that each household would own and use at least one, if not two or more motor vehicles.
6. We have obligations to mitigate climate change, as per council’s commitment within the 2019 Declaration of Climate Emergency
7. Greenfield subdivisions have long-term adverse impacts on biodiversity
8. Building on the flood plain does not meet Climate Emergency commitments
9. Climate change is already bringing more severe weather events. Sealed surfaces such as streets, driveways & footpaths cannot soak up the rain as the earth can.
10. Concrete causes up to 8% of global CO2 emissions.

⁵ Draft RPS - May 2016 (A1548587) Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan A1520756 Nelson Plan Draft RPS
<http://www.nbus.co.nz/assets/Our-council/Downloads/Plans-strategies-policies/2016/draft-rps-2016/03-Character-and-Amenity-Nelson-Plan-Draft-RPS-May2016.pdf>

⁶ Draft RPS - May 2016 (A1548587) Page 70 of 181 Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan

⁷ Draft RPS - May 2016 (A1548587) Page 115 of 181 Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan
<http://www.nelson.govt.nz/assets/Our-council/Downloads/Plans-strategies-policies/2016/draft-rps-2016/07-Landscape-Nelson-Plan-Draft-RPS-May2016.pdf>

⁸ Nelson Resource Management Plan, Vol 2, Chapter 12, Rural Objectives
<http://www.nelson.govt.nz/assets/Environment/Downloads/RMP-PDFs/2015-amendments/OPERATIVE-NRMP-VOLUME-2-Chapter-12-Rural-Objectives-Policies.pdf>

⁹ Nicholdson Evidence in Reply (Urban Design) 6 July 2022