

Lay presentation for Save the Maitai Inc

11 July 2022

Introduction

My name is Tony Haddon and I have lived in Ralphine Way, on the edge of the proposed subdivision, for 33 years. Until recently I regarded Kākā Valley as a kind of back yard. I have walked through the area and on the hills above it many times - I know it intimately. A lifelong outdoorsman, I am reasonably familiar with most native flora and fauna in this area.

I have read most of the information that has been lodged in relation to PPC28, including the most recent Structure Plan in Mr Milne's evidence so that I understand what type of development is proposed. I have also seen the indicative masterplan provided with the applicant's rebuttal evidence.

This presentation will focus on my concerns regarding the proposed subdivision, including overlooked indigenous flora and fauna, the inadequacy of the botanical survey, destruction of vegetation by the developers, the senselessness of harming the Maitai Valley and river via urban sprawl at the same time as we spend large amounts of time and money in efforts to restore the same area, the negative effects of stormwater being discharged into the popular swimming and picnic spot at Dennes Hole, and a brief comment about the Kākā Valley microclimate.

Indigenous fauna

1) C5 : Ecology Tonkin & Taylor Table 3.1: List of indigenous bird species observed on site

Common name	Conservation status
<i>Black back gull</i>	<i>Not Threatened</i>
<i>Fantail</i>	" "
<i>Grey warbler</i>	" "
<i>Harrier</i>	" "
<i>Pukeko</i>	" "
<i>Silvereye</i>	" "
<i>Tui</i>	" "
<i>Weka</i>	" "

2) Species I have regularly observed in Kaka Valley that have not been noted above:

Falcon Karearea	Threatened
Pipit Pipitea	At risk/declining
Wood pigeon Kereru	Not Threatened (under review)

White faced heron Matuku	“	“
Bellbird Korimako	“	“
Paradise shelduck Putangitangi	“	“
Spurwing plover	“	“
Morepork Ruru	“	“
Kingfisher Kotare	“	”
Shining Cuckoo Pipiwharauoa	“	“

3) Same report as at 1) above, 3.1.3 Lizards

No indigenous lizard or frog species were observed at the site during the site visits of 12 and 13 December 2019. Two indigenous lizard species have, however been identified on databases as inhabiting the habitats across the site.

4) My observation of lizards in Kaka Valley:

Skinks in Kākā Valley (species unknown), and a gecko (probably *Hoplodactylus maculatus*) are occasionally seen at 2 Ralphine Way. I am aware of one anecdotal sighting of a green gecko near Kākā Hill summit.



5) NCC Further Information Request August 21 :

*“The area is probably a lizard habitat as the Maitai Valley has been identified as containing Nelson Green Gecko Habitat...Habitats for indigenous fauna and indigenous fauna protection is very weak in the operative NRMP, ...the requirements of the Wildlife Act 1953 is not reflected in operative permitted activity standards
Please address and consider incorporating provisions relating to lizard protection into the Structure Plan”*

6) My comment:

The PCR does not appear to have addressed lizard protection, other than acknowledging there may be a number of lizard species present. This should be addressed before further consideration is given to PPC28

7) Long Tailed Bats

The Long Tailed Bat has been recorded in South Maitai (8km from Kākā Valley) and at the Nelmac Nursery in the Wood (1.4 km from Kaka Valley). There are pockets of mature native forest containing large old trees on

the eastern flank of Kākā Hill, in Sharlands Valley, less than a kilometre from the Kākā Valley. These pockets of forest could host bat populations.

PPC28 does not incorporate any provisions relating to bats being encountered during the construction stage, if the subdivision goes ahead.

8) Powelliphanta snails

The PCR acknowledges the possible presence of powelliphanta snails, but again does not incorporate any provisions relating to snails being encountered during the construction stage, if the subdivision goes ahead.

PPC28 needs to account for its likely effects on wildlife before any further consideration can be given to it.

Overlooked indigenous plants

9) The applicant's legal analysis on the section 42A reports states: "[9] The recently undertaken higher resolution ecological assessment by the Applicant's terrestrial ecologist (Ben Robertson) provides the basis for more detailed spatial resolution in an overlay of the structure plan to"

a] This assessment fails to identify at least six indigenous plant species (not counting smaller ferns) present within the area below identified as "mixed māhoe-exotic scrub". In fact this gully area supports Lemonwood, a *Cyathea* sp, Putaputaweta, Seven Finger, mature and juvenile Titoki, and a large Pukatea that has been nominated for inclusion in the Nelson Plan as a notable tree, along with the Kahikatea identified in the structure plan.

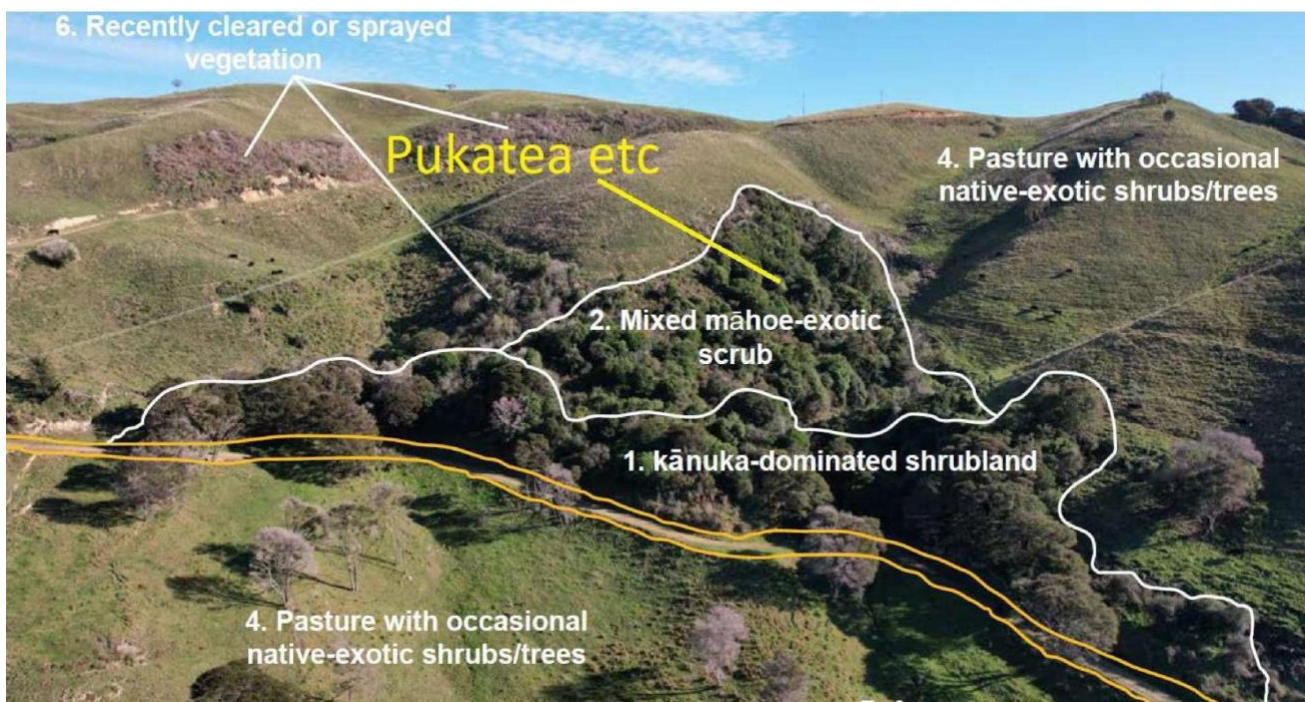


Figure4.1 The Supplementary Terrestrial Ecological Values Assessment... (part of Ecology JWS)

- b]The omission of these plants from this assessment, and consequent misrepresentation of this area, calls into question the adequacy of the survey .
- c]Kaihua (NZ Jasmine or Parsonsia) is present amongst the scattered kanuka elsewhere. Until very recently this gully by area 2 and the adjacent gully to the north contained a number of Kotukutuku (Tree fuschia). However, these plants were exposed to stock as a result of the scrub clearance operations undertaken by Bayview contractors and have been eaten.

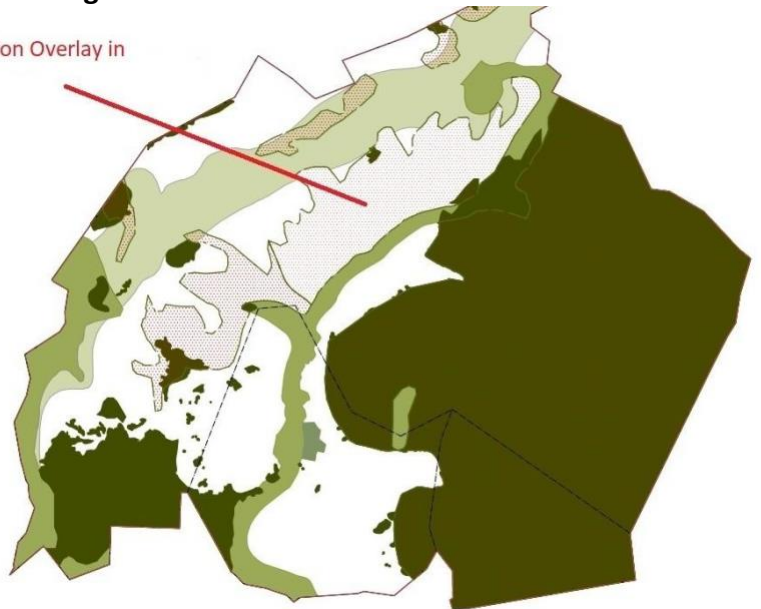
d]C5-Ecological Opportunities and Constraints Assessment: 3.1.1.5 Wetlands

.....” This wetland is dominated by pasture plant species and exotic rushes and is flanked by gorse and manuka scrub.” - This is kanuka, rather than manuka.

Problematic clearance of vegetation

10) EV14(2)APP-Tony Milne-Graphic Attachment-Page 9

This area shown as Revegetation Overlay in Rural Zone





a) Part of the revegetation area as indicated above (June 2022)



b) Revegetation area in 2020, after stage 1 clearing and prior to stage 2



c) Revegetation area in 2019 prior, to stage 1 clearance. Many mahoe shrubs and small trees are visible

- d) *Table 5.1 - Supplementary Report, attached to the Ecology JWS : “regenerating mixed mahoe-exotic scrub” - “High” ecological value “*

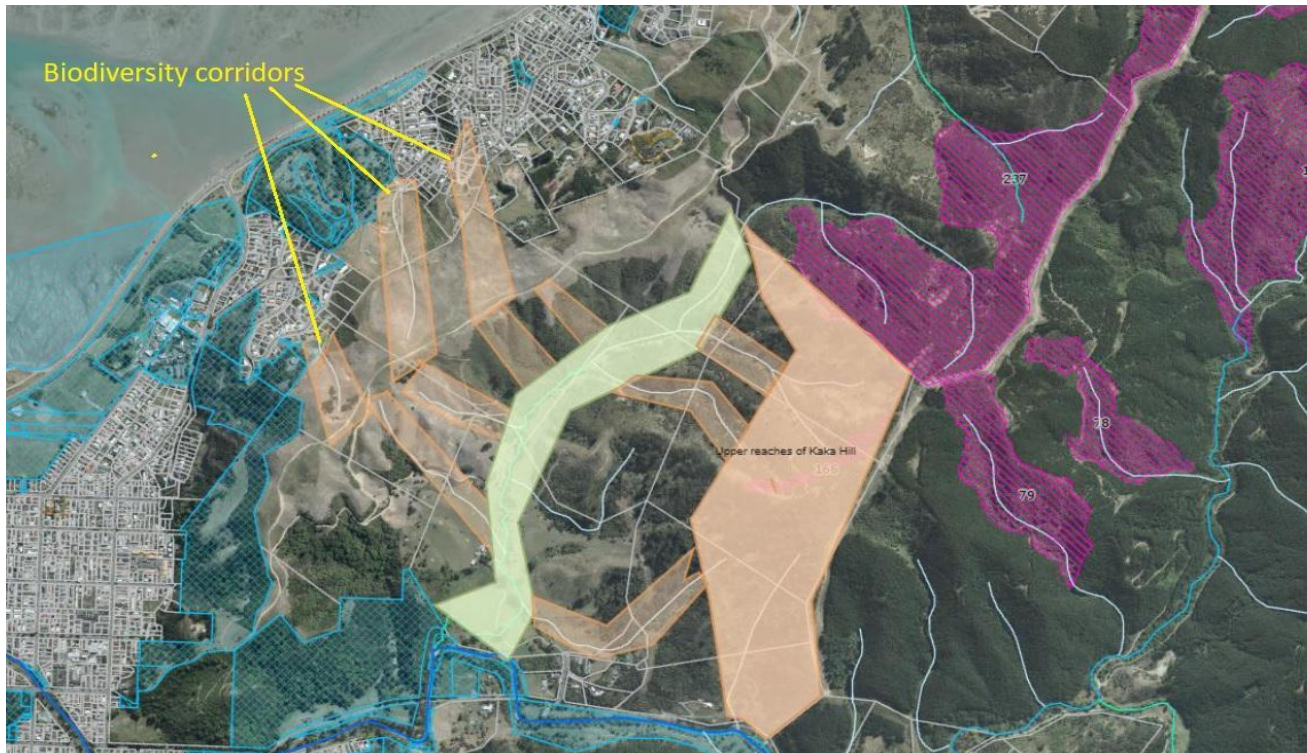
The bulldozing of this area, as recently as March/April 2021, is premature given the outcome; that is, designation of this area as “Revegetation rural zone”. If the area had not been cleared, minimal work would have been required to facilitate native regeneration (i.e., some weed control); however, extensive long term work is now required to replace the 40 years worth of regeneration that has been destroyed.

This clearance highlights how out of step the development that would be enabled by PPC28 is with the community’s and council extensive work restoring and enhancing the Maitai Valley’s natural environment, of which the Kākā Valley is a critical part, and with the Nelson Biodiversity Strategy. Both discussed below.

Wildlife corridors

- 11) The structure plan shows a corridor connecting the SNA area northeast of the valley to the Kākā stream riparian strip. The request for further information by Gina Sweetman (letter of 3 August 2021) recommends more direct east–west linkages among Kākā Hill, Kākā stream, and Stanley Whitehead

Reserve. (App. 2 below) We agree with this recommendation, particularly in light of the ongoing revegetation plantings over the length of the Maitai Valley.



The proposed subdivision will lead to degradation that hinders efforts toward restoration

11)

- a] **Project Maitai:** \$400,000 spent on restoration of the Maitai River during 2014–2018.
- b] **Project Mahitahi :** Project Mahitahi is a \$3.7 million project that aims to restore the Maitai River over a five-year period from 2020, aiming to plant 125,000 trees, restore 1.3 hectares of wetlands, and create an 8 km long food corridor for native wildlife, from the mountains to the sea. Funding is provided by the Ministry for the Environment and the Department of Conservation's Kaimahi for Nature Fund.

Nelson City Council - "In the last year [2021] Council's Project Mahitahi project, backed with Jobs for Nature government funding has planted 30,000 native trees, trapped more than 1000 possums, set up and monitored 98ha of trapping network for rats and mustelids, and tackled 26ha of pest plants. This restoration of the ecosystem of the Maitai Valley is admirable and builds on work that landowners and Friends of the Maitai have been doing for many years"

Nelson deputy mayor Judene Edgar said the work of planting 25,000 trees this year was a "significant effort".

“Planting made a big difference to the community through recreational and social benefits, mental health benefits, and climate resilience” she said.

Friends of Maitai volunteer Alison Horn said they started planting around the area seven or eight years ago, and the difference was notable.

“The birds have come back, once the flaxes started flowering, there were tūi and there's weta. It's just a good thing and once we get our heads out of the weeds and have a look round we sometimes wow ourselves, and it's like ‘goodness me this is all worth it’

c] Arbor Day Foundation:

“The Arbor Day Foundation is an American nonprofit organization dedicated to planting trees. The foundation has more than one million members and has planted more than 350 million trees in neighborhoods, communities, cities and forests throughout the world.”

The Arbor Day foundation has provided \$107,000 for the planting of 32,000 native trees and plants in the Maitai/Mahitahi Valley. This funding is in addition to Project Maitahi spending.

d] Nelson Biodiversity Strategy - initiated and developed 2007 by a group of partner organisations (now 32), ranging from Forest and Bird to Federated Farmers.

- i)** *“The purpose of the strategy is to create a biologically rich and sustainable future for Nelson through aligned action on biodiversity. “* - The applicant's actions to date show little awareness or alignment.
- ii)** *“Ecological health, mauri and wairua of natural ecosystems are sustained and native biological diversity is restored, enhanced and, where appropriate, connected.”* - PPC28 would create a disconnect.
- iii)** *“The community has the living resources it needs”* The open space and recreational amenity of the Maitai that other witnesses are testifying to is a valued resource that must be retained for future generations.
- iv)** Countless hours have been spent planning this Maitai restoration and re-vegetation and project. Over \$4.2 million of public money has been committed to it. There has been enormous effort by many members of the community over many years.
- v)** Now, there is a proposal to construct a new suburb in the middle of the anticipated wildlife corridor. Such a massive subdivision would lead to destructive outcomes for indigenous fauna and would render useless much of the hard work of previous years by many people that aimed to protect wildlife and improve the valley as a wildlife habitat.
- vi)** I'd like to point out that none of the stream or ecological enhancement work proposed by PPC28 is dependent on re-zoning approval, it could all happen equally well or better with any development under current zoning.

Stormwater and sediment discharge into Dennes Hole

12)

- a] Save the Maitai Inc has provided expert evidence on stormwater, these comments are based on my own reading of expert evidence and personal experience with the area.
- b] The applicant describes their proposed stormwater, runoff, and sedimentation treatment systems variously as being good practice, best practice, best practical, best practicable, and a minimum of best practicable.
- c] EV9-APP para (16) “....*potential sediment related effects can be acceptably minimised*...” - “acceptably minimised” is repeated through the report. Acceptable to who? There is little evidence to suggest that sediment, stormwater and runoff will not contaminate the river, which is a major concern given that so many people are working so hard to improve the water quality.
- d] Paragraph (82) suggests that during the earthworks and construction phase, Kākā Stream will discharge sediment into Dennes Hole during storm events. This further suggests that monitoring of Dennes Hole may be desirable.

Does this suggest the necessity for periodic machine removal of sediment from Dennes Hole?

Unforeseen accidents, design shortcomings, and construction inadequacies can all occur in such projects.

This would apply not only during the earthworks and construction phase, but in perpetuity....

Everything that could be discharged, spilt, thrown away, or washed off every single hard surface in an entire new suburb would end up in Dennes Hole.

Microclimate

13)

- a] The seven sections in the existing Ralphine Way subdivision were stage 1 of a subdivision of Kākā Valley approved in 1979. Stage 1 took 10 years to sell. As a result stage 2 was never built. The Maitai was regarded at the time, as now, as a cold place. In winter frost conditions the Ralphine Way properties have the benefit of a katabatic airflow down the Maitai Valley. Kākā Valley does not have this airflow and the flats are regularly frosted.
- b] Houses built on the valley flats will require more heating than in most other areas of Nelson. I question if this is a desirable attribute.





Conclusion

- 14) I am asking for Plan change request 28 to be rejected because:
- a] of the negative impacts on indigenous flora and fauna.
 - b] it is contrary to ongoing efforts to restore the health of the river and wildlife.
 - c] the Maitai River is too precious to too many people to allow any possibility of this happening.
 - d] if this subdivision were to go ahead, we would lose much more than we would gain.
 - e] this is not just my opinion: the community has expressed this view every time it has been consulted on the issue of urban sprawl into the precious Maitai Valley.
 - f] In my opinion as a close neighbour of PPC28 and retired master builder I do not think the cold winter microclimate of the valley flats is suitable for housing.

Thank you for your time, patience, and expertise.

Appended hereto : Gallery of plant species missed by the applicant's survey. Pgs 1 - 10