

247. See paragraph 2.09 and from paragraph 2.32.

248. The order might change to suit the situation. For instance, in some situations it may suit clarity to describe the proposal and statutory provisions before the existing landscape.

249. An assessment of landscape effects should be proportionate to the scale and significance of the effects that the proposal may have on the landscape, as set out in RMA Schedule 4 (2)(3)(c). (see paragraph 6.10).

250. An executive summary may not be warranted for a memo or short report. See commentary on Executive Summary below.

Assessment of landscape and visual effects

The following is an example of a typical report structure and a brief guide to carrying out an assessment of landscape and visual effects of a proposed activity for a resource consent application. It is an example of a proposal-driven assessment where the proposal, location, and statutory planning provisions are known.

This quick guide is not a template. It is to be read in conjunction with the concepts, principles, and approaches described in the Guidelines which take precedence. Tailor the report structure and method in response to the context, purpose, and policy issues relevant to the assessment as outlined in Chapter 2.²⁴⁷ Unthinking adherence to templates, repetitive use of previous methods, and copying formats of other assessments, are all causes of poor landscape assessment. Rely on a transparent and reasoned approach instead.

Assessment formats

An assessment of landscape and visual effects for a resource consent application might comprise the following structure.²⁴⁸ Such a structure echoes typical formats for an assessment of environmental effects (refer to Schedule 4 of the RMA):²⁴⁹

- executive summary²⁵⁰
- introduction
- methodology
- existing landscape
- proposal
- statutory provisions
- issues (the relevant matters having regard to the context, nature of the proposal/potential effects, and the statutory planning provisions, including any other matters)
- landscape effects (including visual effects)
- recommendations
- conclusion (overall landscape effects).

Introduction

Introduce the situation and purpose of the report. A typical introduction might comprise:

- a brief outline of the situation (for example, an application for a resource consent for a certain activity at a specified location)
- the client who engaged you, your role, and the project team and collaborators
- the purpose of the assessment (for example, to assess the landscape and visual effects, with reference to any special matter such as effects on natural character of the coastal environment).

251. See paragraphs 2.32–2.38 with respect to methodology and method.

252. Consideration should be given as to the appropriate time and situation for site surveys, which should be described in the methodology where relevant.

253. See paragraph 7.03–7.10 with respect to an integrated approach to assessment and design to help avoid potential adverse effects and realise positive effects.

Methodology

Outline the methodology. Your statement may say that it follows the concepts and principles outlined in ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’ and then go on to outline the details of the method tailored for the assessment—having regard to the proposal, context, and relevant provisions.²⁵¹

For a simple project, the methodology statement may be limited to a couple of paragraphs. The first would explain consistency with Te Tangi a te Manu as noted above. The second might be a bullet-point list of tasks, for example:

- desk-top research
- site surveys²⁵²
- engagement with tāngata whenua
- a review of the provisions (i.e. list the plans and policy statements)
- an assessment of certain matters (i.e. list the key matters)
- use of certain techniques or tools (e.g. photo simulations, inventories)
- consideration of measures to avoid, remedy, and mitigate potential adverse effects, and to promote positive effects.

A more detailed methodology statement is warranted for complex projects. In those situations, it will assist succinctness to attach the methodology statement as an appendix and include just a summary in the body of the report.

Proposal

Outline the proposal, highlighting those aspects pertinent to explaining potential landscape effects.

The clearest and most succinct approach may be to: i) introduce the proposal, ii) refer readers to the ‘official’ project description and set of plans/drawings (normally appended to the AEE), and iii) summarise those components most pertinent to landscape matters. The project description in the AEE should be the authoritative version. The purpose of the project description in a landscape assessment, on the other hand, is to help decision-makers (and others) understand the landscape matters.

Explain (if you are part of the application team) the design aspects incorporated into the project to avoid potential adverse landscape effects and to achieve positive landscape effects. Examples of such aspects include selection of a favourable site or route, configuration of the project to the site, and design elements incorporated into the proposal.²⁵³

254. See paragraphs 2.26–2.28.

255. See paragraph 2.29 for an explanation of “other matters”

Relevant statutory provisions

Review and summarise the provisions relevant to landscape matters. Such provisions may comprise:

- objectives and policies pertaining to landscape matters
- development standards that the proposal may breach (and those relevant standards complied with)
- activity status (and the relevant tests) including matters to which discretion has been reserved in the case of restricted discretionary activities
- criteria listed in the provisions (relevant to the activity status) against which to assess effects.

The purpose of reviewing the provisions is to frame the landscape assessment in a way that best assists the decision-maker (and others). Include a statement along the following lines: ‘The purpose of reviewing the provisions is to help frame the landscape assessment. It is not to undertake a planning assessment of the proposal against the provisions.’

For succinctness, set out the relevant provisions in an appendix and summarise only those provisions most pertinent to the landscape matters in the body of the report. Check the review with the planner or lawyer involved with the project.

Check the list of statutory documents.²⁵⁴ In many instances the lower order documents (such as the district plan) will be key because they give effect to the higher order documents. However, the higher order documents may also be relevant in certain instances. These include national policy statements on certain topics such as urban development, freshwater management, indigenous biodiversity, renewable energy generation, and electricity transmission. If an area is within the coastal environment the provisions of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) will be essential. In some instances it may be relevant to refer to Part 2 matters, such as s6(b) relating to outstanding natural features and landscapes. However, ordinarily such matters will have been given effect to in the lower order documents which practitioners should refer to first.

Include “other matters”²⁵⁵ where it is relevant to help frame the assessment.

256. See paragraphs 5.15–5.17 on identifying the relevant landscape.

Existing landscape

Identify the relevant landscape - its spatial extent and context. Relevance means the landscape that enables the effects of the proposal to be best understood.²⁵⁶ It is not about precise delineation or boundaries. It is thinking about the appropriate scale and context against which to assess effects. This exercise is also iterative. It is normal to revise your assessment as you refine your thoughts and understanding in carrying out the work. For example, it may become evident that the relevant landscape is broader or narrower as you carry out your assessment.

Describe and interpret the character and values in line with the principles in Chapter 5. Focus on the relevant area and outline its place in the wider context. Focus on pertinent values and attributes. It is never possible to record everything there is to know about a place. A professional skill is selecting and interpreting those attributes and values pertinent to understanding potential effects. Such description will, of course, include

257. See paragraphs 5.35–5.37. It will never be possible to record everything there is to know about a landscape, nor would that be helpful.

information for context. But the purpose is to understand effects. Do not labour irrelevant matters or demonstrate all that you know about a place. Ask yourself whether the description of the existing landscape will assist the decision-makers (and others) to understand and interpret the effects of the proposal. Question the relevance of what you have documented, rather than putting down everything you know or found out.²⁵⁷

Sub-headings in this section of the assessment should reflect both the context and the resource management issues. Do not use standard sub-headings or a checklist of factors which would likely indicate that: i) you are following a template rather than focusing on the relevant matters, and ii) you are not properly interpreting the landscape in an integrated way.



258. See paragraph 6.20 on the importance of describing the nature of the effect as well as its magnitude, and on providing reasons to justify the assessment.

Issues

List the issues to help frame the assessment of landscape and visual effects. The issues arise from the landscape values, the potential effects of the proposal on landscape values, and the relevant planning framework (including any other matters). The issues will be unique to each assessment. Issues might be, for example:

- the nature of the area’s amenity values
- effects on the area’s amenity values
- whether the proposal is or isn’t in the coastal environment
- effects on the natural character of the coastal environment
- whether the proposal is subject to statutory provisions such as overlays for ONF, ONL, significant ecological area (SEA), special character areas, special viewshafts
- effects with respect to a particular set of district plan criteria for a restricted discretionary activity (e.g. criteria relating to streetscape quality, or rural character)
- effects of breaches of development standards (such as height, height in relation to boundary etc)
- whether the effects of a non-complying activity are more than minor.

Landscape effects

Describe the nature and magnitude of effects in keeping with the principles in Chapter 6. Effects are consequences for landscape values of changes to the landscape’s physical attributes. The values are embodied in certain physical attributes. For example:

- reduction in rural character values because development is out-of-keeping with characteristic rural activity type, ratio of open space to buildings, coherence with natural topography etc.
- enhancement of natural values because of stream bank revegetation that connects areas of natural vegetation, fencing and pest control
- maintenance of an urban area’s amenity values because of coherent building height, bulk, grain, appearance, typology etc.
- enhancement of a cultural landscape’s values because physical access and sightlines between related sites are protected
- reduction of an area’s natural wilderness values because of inappropriate structures and activities.

Tailor the sub-headings under this section (as in other parts of the assessment) to the situation. For example, you might tailor the subheadings to the issues you have already outlined.

Describe both the nature and magnitude of effect. Use the 7-point scale at paragraph 6.21 to describe magnitude. Remember that magnitude is only one descriptor to help explain the effect. Magnitude is not the effect. First describe the nature of the effect, then describe its magnitude, and then provide reasons.²⁵⁸

259. Note that a project’s different effects may occur at different spatial scales (see paragraph 6.15). For example, a tall building may have immediate effects on streetscape and wider effects on cityscape.

260. See paragraphs 6.08–6.09 on ‘what are visual effects’ (a subset of landscape effects) and paragraphs 6.25–6.27 on assessing visual effects.

261. See paragraphs 6.54–6.56 on the uses and pitfalls of potential visibility diagrams.

Be aware of the following pitfalls:

- Over compartmentalising landscape effects. Landscape values often arise from the interplay of physical, associative, and perceptual attributes. Interpret effects in the same way.
- Not identifying the relevant landscape. If not assessed at the appropriate spatial scale and context, the effects could be diluted across too broad an area or concentrated on an unreasonably narrow area.²⁵⁹
- Conflating change with effects. Landscape management is not based on maintaining the status quo except in some situations. Focus on effects on landscape values—not landscape change.
- Overlooking positive landscape effects. The definition of effect includes positive effects, and decision makers have regard to positive effects in addition to adverse effects. It is important that the nature and magnitude of positive effects be included in an assessment.
- Overlooking potential values. Achieving environmental improvement is important in addition to avoiding, remedying, and mitigating adverse effects. As well as maintaining existing values, look to potential improvements in landscape values.
- Overlooking specific statutory context—for example, not checking if the site is in the coastal environment and therefore covered by the NZCPS.
- Overlooking the anticipated outcomes and other relevant provisions in the statutory documents. Plans often envisage substantial change, especially for urban areas where intensification and a different urban form might be sought.

Visual effects

Undertake an assessment of visual effects—the effects on landscape values as experienced in views.²⁶⁰ The common method is to:

- identify the ‘visual catchment’ (where the proposal will be seen from)
- identify typical ‘audiences’ (who will see the proposal)
- describe the nature and degree of effects on landscape values in views from certain viewpoints (e.g. affected properties, representative public viewpoints).

Describe the visual catchment. ZTV diagrams and maps of visual catchment may be useful in some situations. The point of such analysis is to help identify the spatial extent of visibility. Use judgement as to whether such analysis will be useful in understanding effects. Often the locations from which visual effects will be experienced are close to a proposal and obvious. Effects are likely to be least near the margins of visibility. Deciphering such margins may therefore not be useful. Determining actual visibility will also require field work to ground-truth desk-top analysis.²⁶¹ Remember that seeing an object does not in itself constitute an adverse effect.

Describe the groups of people associated with the area from where the proposal will be seen—the ‘audiences’ or potentially affected people. For instance, people living on properties in the area, passers-by on roads, users of a beach, residents of settlements. While it was previously common to assign a sensitivity rating to audience types (e.g. residents as more sensitive than passers-by), it is better to simply describe the audience. Residents, for example, are likely to cover a range of sensitivities to certain activities and they are better placed to describe that themselves. Likewise, ‘sensitivity’ depends on the relationship between the person and the proposal and the context (a passer-by may be very sensitive to adverse effects on the heritage character of their own town centre but not be sensitive at all to effects on a nearby retail strip, for example).

Select viewpoints to represent places the proposal will typically be seen from.

- Consideration of private views typically focuses on views from houses, although it is worth acknowledging that people may also enjoy views from other parts of their property. A common technique is to interpolate effects based on a combination of desk top analysis and observations from public places (such as road-side). Be clear in explaining this if this is the method used. Such assessments are often tabulated for individual properties or groups of properties.
- Public views will typically be from roads/footpaths, key intersections, and other public places such as parks, walkways, town squares.
- Selection of viewpoints requires judgement, remembering that the purpose is to describe the visual effects spatially. For substantial applications it is helpful to agree a common set of representative viewpoints with other landscape assessors involved with the project (such as a council peer reviewer). Remember that representative viewpoints are just that—views and effects are not limited to those locations. On the other hand, such viewpoints are often selected to illustrate where the greatest effects will be experienced. It is necessary to use judgement and provide reasons when interpreting representative viewpoints and coming to a finding on the visual effects. Do not use averaged scores from such viewpoints as an overall measure of effect. Such an approach is misleading because the score would be a product of viewpoint selection rather than overall effect.

Describe the nature and degree of effect from each viewpoint. Remember that visual effects are a subset of landscape effects—they are effects on landscape values as experienced in views. They are one method to help understand landscape effects. It may be helpful to approach this exercise as a combination of: i) the extent to which something contributes to or detracts from landscape value, and ii) the visual dominance/prominence based on certain parameters.





262. Dominance is a measure of scale—the extent to which a landscape is subsumed by something, while prominence is a measure of its contrast with the surroundings.

263. See the section on conditions paragraphs 7.11–7.13.

- For example, a development that is in keeping with the landscape character may have no adverse effects on landscape values even if it is highly visible and a noticeable change to the view. Conversely, a development that is completely out of place with the values of a landscape may have a significant adverse effect even though it may occupy only a relatively small portion of a view. Focus on effect, not change.
- Parameters influencing dominance and prominence²⁶² include, but are not limited to: distance, orientation to viewpoint, extent of view occupied, backdrop, perspective depth (complexity of the intervening foreground and middle ground) and nature of the viewpoint (such as its context, type, and significance).

As with landscape effects, visual effects relate to landscape values. Visibility and change are not effects in and of themselves.

Recommendations

In addition to the measures that are integral to the proposal, and described earlier, explain the subsequent measures recommended to remedy or mitigate (reduce) residual adverse effects. Describe such remediation and mitigation following the assessment of effects and explain the extent to which the measures would address those effects (i.e. what the effects would be without and with mitigation—it should be clear the extent to which your conclusions rely on such measures).

Explain also, the subsequent measures recommended to remedy or mitigate (reduce) residual adverse effects. Describe such remediation and mitigation following the assessment of effects and explain the extent to which the measures would mitigate the effects (i.e. what the effects would be without and with mitigation).

Recommend conditions to ensure the design and mitigation measures are carried out as intended. Explain the reason for the conditions, the outcomes intended, and the required action. Conditions are not construction specifications though. Their purpose is to achieve resource management outcomes. Focus on specifying those outcomes in a way that they can be measured and enforced. Take care to write effective conditions: poor conditions are often the weak link in achieving the outcomes described in assessments.²⁶³

Conclusion

Reach an overall professional opinion on the landscape effects generated by the proposal. Weigh the individual effects together in the context of the landscape values and statutory provisions. Make a professional assessment on the extent to which they are acceptable in terms of landscape values—including those landscape values anticipated by the provisions. As with all professional opinions, explain with reasons.



Top: Lake Ōkātina
Image: Simon Button
Below: Crail Bay, Marlborough
Image: David Irvine

264. Typically not more than one page.

Executive summary

Finally, write the executive summary which is added to the front of your report. Such summaries are warranted on all but brief reports and memos. As a guide, a report over 20 pages is likely to warrant an executive summary.

The conclusion and executive summary differ:

- The conclusion is a short²⁶⁴ overall finding with the principal reasons.
- The executive summary is the key points of each section of the assessment (i.e. the key points of the: i) existing landscape values, ii) issues, iii) landscape and visual effects, iv) design measures/mitigation, and v) conclusion). One technique is to include a summary at the end of each section and gather these into the executive summary.



—Nadine Anne Hura (2018).
‘The ever-shining star of
Nuhaka’ in ‘The Spinoff’

‘There is a way of looking where, if you're not
paying attention, you won't see anything at all’



265. See paragraphs 2.09–2.12 and paragraphs 2.32–2.38.

266. See paragraphs 5.31–5.34 on tailoring criteria to suit the project's purpose, and the potential pitfalls of criteria.

Area-based landscape assessment

The following is an example of a typical report structure and a brief guide to assessing the landscape resource of an area. It is an example of a policy-driven assessment. Such assessments are usually carried out at a district or regional scale for a variety of resource management policy purposes.

A common brief, for example, is to identify the landscape resource of an area (its character and values) including any outstanding natural features and landscapes (ONF/ONL) and other significant landscapes. Such a brief will require the landscape assessor to assess landscape character and values (Chapter 5), anticipate potential future effects on landscape values (Chapter 6), recommend policy measures to manage landscape values (Chapter 7), and make specific assessments of ONF/ONLs (Chapter 8).

This quick guide is not a template. It is to be read in conjunction with the concepts, principles, and approaches described in the Guidelines and which take precedence. Tailor the report structure and method in response to the context, purpose, and policy issues relevant to the assessment as outlined in Chapter 2.²⁶⁵ Unthinking adherence to templates, repetitive use of previous methods, and copying formats of other assessments, are all causes of poor landscape assessment. Rely on a transparent and reasoned approach instead.

Assessment formats

A regional or district landscape assessment might comprise the following structure:

- introduction
- methodology
- regional (or district) landscape character and values
- evaluation of regional (or district) landscapes including outstanding natural features and landscapes, and other significant landscapes
- managing the landscape values (managing the landscape resource).

Introduction

A typical introduction might comprise:

- the purpose for carrying out a regional or district-wide review (e.g. to understand and document the district's landscapes, and to identify ONF/ONLs and other significant landscapes)
- explanation of the concept of 'landscape' (see chapter 4), and what is considered when assessing a landscape's character and values. It may include explanation of any criteria that have been tailored to suit the project's purpose.²⁶⁶

267. The sections of the RMA most relevant to these types of assessment are likely to be s7(c) and s7(f)—the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment including amenity values; s6(b)—the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development; and s5—the promotion of sustainable management of natural and physical resources, and the meaning of sustainable management set out in s5(2). In addition, s32 is especially relevant to the plan preparation process itself.

268. Such provisions will change with the new resource management legislation. For example, the consultation draft of the Natural and Built Environments Bill section 8 would require that the national planning framework and all plans must promote (amongst other things) the following environmental outcomes (c) outstanding natural features and landscapes are protected, restored, or Improved, (e) in respect of the coast, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and their margins,—(i) public access to and along them is protected or enhanced; and (ii) their natural character is preserved, (h) cultural heritage, including cultural landscapes, is identified, protected, and sustained through active management that is proportionate to its cultural values.

269. This provision will change under the new resource management legislation. The consultation draft of the Natural and Built Environments Bill, for example, would require that the national planning framework and all plans must promote (amongst other things) the following environmental outcomes “(f) the relationship of iwi and hapū, and their tikanga and traditions, with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga is restored and protected. Outcomes also include (g) the mana and mauri of the natural environment are protected and restored, and (h) cultural heritage, including cultural landscapes, is identified, protected, and sustained through active management that is proportionate to its cultural values.”

— the plan or policy statement preparation process—especially public input to the process—and sections of the RMA most relevant to landscape matters.^{267 268}

A policy-driven assessment is likely to have a wider audience and input than proposal-based assessments. Therefore, it is even more important to explain ‘landscape’ in language accessible to lay people.

Methodology

To improve readability and flow of area-based landscape studies (given their wider audience), append the technical methodology statement and write only a succinct and plain language summary in the body of the report.

The methodology statement may state that the approach adopted is consistent with the landscape concepts and principles set out in ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’ and then explain the method tailored to the region or district and the purpose of the assessment (see paragraphs 2.32–2.41).

The method might list such matters as:

- the method and matters covered in the desk-top research and field work
- collaboration with tāngata whenua
- consultation with the community and stakeholders.

Collaboration with tāngata whenua is necessary to fully assess the landscape of a region or district. Such assessment may be carried out parallel to (and cross referenced with) separate assessments undertaken by tāngata whenua with respect to other RMA provisions such as s6(e)—the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.²⁶⁹

Consultation with the wider community is also essential but there are different ways in which it might be undertaken. Such methods may include, for example: the use of stakeholder workshops, community charettes, co-design, online tools, public meetings, and formal submissions. Communities may be engaged in preparing the assessment or, alternatively, a draft assessment may be carried out first as a tool for engagement with communities.

The method may include collaboration with a geoscience specialist with a view to identifying ONFs with geoheritage values (see paragraphs 8.13–8.14).

270. Sometimes referred to as ‘landscape characterisation’

271. See paragraphs 5.23–5.24.

272. See paragraphs 5.18–5.20 with respect to mapping landscape boundaries. See paragraphs 8.24 and 9.17 with respect to mapping boundaries of ONF/ONLs, the coastal environment, and the margins of lakes and rivers.

Assessment of landscape character

Analyse, describe, and interpret landscape character²⁷⁰ in line with the concepts and principles outlined in Chapters 4 and 5 of the Guidelines. Typical methods include: i) explaining the story of the region or district’s whole landscape, ii) analysing the components, and iii) mapping the region/district into distinct landscape character areas.

- Analyse and describe the whole regional or district landscape. This exercise will analyse each of the landscape dimensions: physical, associative, and perceptual. For example, it will likely include a description of landforms in terms of their formative geological and geomorphological processes; vegetation and ecological patterns; and the history of land use, settlement, and modification. It will address narratives associated with the area and with specific features. It will analyse the perceptual and experiential qualities. This exercise may be done as layers (reflecting the dimensions and typical factors listed in paragraph 4.29 for example), or as themes, or through other approaches. The methodology statement should explain the method used. Draw on a wide variety of sources.²⁷¹
- Interpret how the landscape components come together as character—the combination of landscape attributes (characteristics and qualities) that makes the region/district distinct. Provide an historical explanation of the landscape’s nature and the relationship of people with it.
- Map the region/district into distinct landscapes or landscape character areas. A hierarchical model may be used (similar to a genus-species approach) where the region/district is divided into high-level landscape character types, each of which contains different landscape character areas and landscapes.²⁷²

Evaluation of landscape values

Evaluate the landscape values for each landscape character area or landscape (the reasons the area is valued, including potential value) and describe the physical attributes on which such landscape values depend (the attributes that embody the values). In practice, this will typically be done in an iterative way in conjunction with assessing the character of an area. As described at paragraph 5.28, interpretation of a landscape’s character will point to its values and evaluation of a landscape’s values will point to the attributes on which those values depend.

The purpose of identifying the values and attributes of the whole region/district is to: i) provide the context for evaluating outstanding natural features and landscapes (and other significant landscapes), and ii) inform the management of the whole landscape resource rather than just a few special places.

273. See paragraphs 8.24–8.25 with respect to considerations when mapping boundaries.

274. See paragraphs 4.41–4.48 on different landscape types.

275. As noted above, significant landscapes may include special landscape character areas, urban precincts, designed landscapes, cultural landscapes.

276. See paragraph 2.29 for explanation of “other matters”.

Evaluation of outstanding natural features and landscapes

Identify and evaluate potential outstanding natural features and landscapes as outlined in Chapter 8. Such evaluation is typically carried out as a separate step after assessing the character and values of the whole landscape resource.

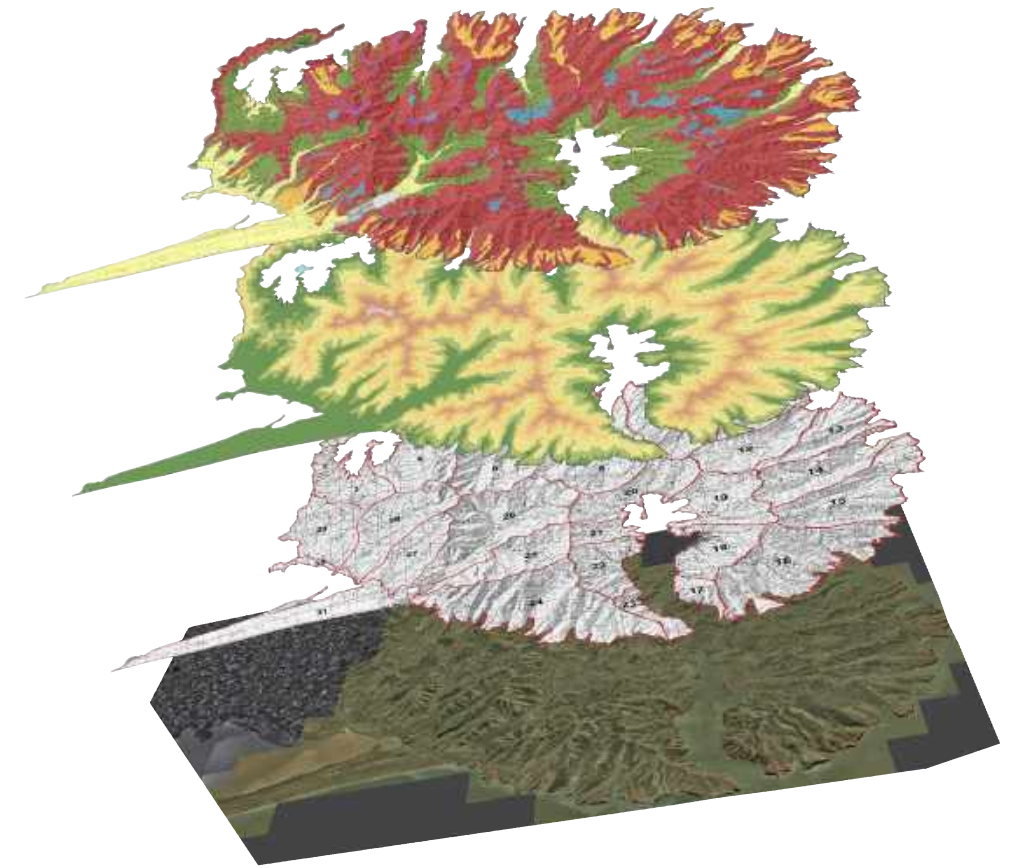
- Identify potential ONF/ONL ‘candidates’. Such natural features and natural landscapes will emerge from the regional and district character assessment. Identify a sufficiently broad selection of candidates to ensure all potential ONF/ONLs are captured (this will likely mean some candidates will not ultimately be considered outstanding).
- Describe the character and values of each candidate natural feature and natural landscape, drawing on the character and values of the context.
- Delineate the extent of each candidate outstanding natural feature or outstanding natural landscape, ensuring legible boundaries coherent with the landscape.²⁷³
- Confirm that the candidate is sufficiently natural to qualify as a natural feature or natural landscape.
- Evaluate whether the candidate is outstanding (see paragraphs 8.05–8.08 and 8.20–8.23). Provide reasons with reference to landscape character and values. Confirm and map the spatial extent.

Evaluate other special or significant landscapes. These include landscapes that are significant but not outstanding, and modified landscapes that may be significant but are not sufficiently natural to be considered natural landscapes. They may include special urban precincts, special rural landscapes, designed landscapes, and cultural landscapes made up of a network of elements within a broader landscape.²⁷⁴

Management of the landscape resource

Key tools for policy-driven assessments to manage landscape values include planning provisions and non-statutory policy documents.

- Statutory planning provisions include the objectives, policies, rules, and criteria that become part of regional policy statements/ plans and district plans. Potential tools include, for example: i) identification of special areas such as ONFs, ONLs, and other significant landscapes,²⁷⁵ ii) input to objectives and policies for zones and overlays, iii) input to subdivision rules, activity status, development standards, and land use rules, iv) criteria against which applications for resource consent applications are considered.
- Non-statutory provisions include: i) landscape character studies on the landscape resource, ii) guidelines, iii) management plans. Such non-statutory provisions might be considered in resource consent hearings as “other matters”.²⁷⁶



Above: Landscape Layers,
Banks Peninsula Study
Diagram: Boffa Miskell

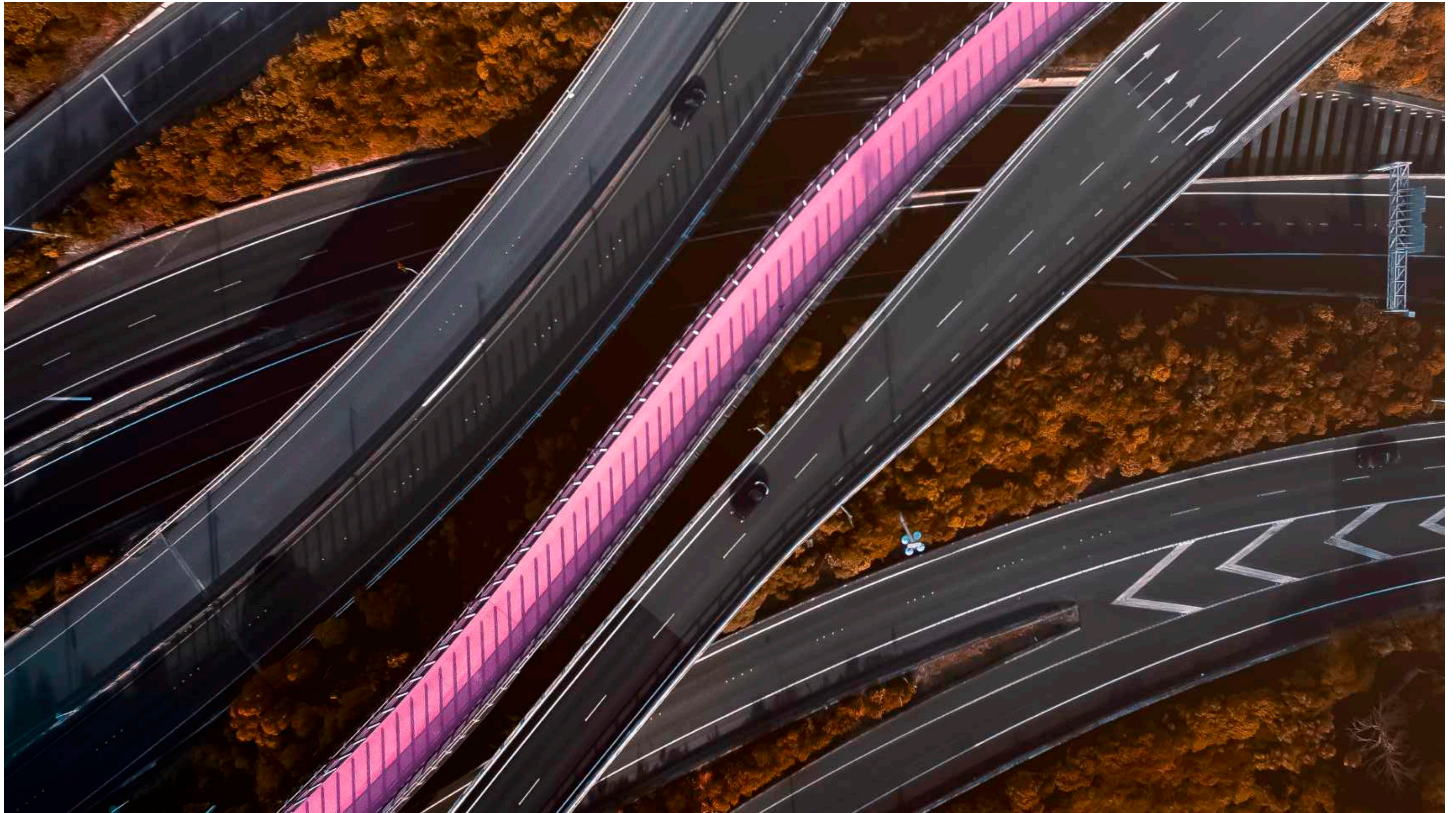
Statutory planning provisions will go through a plan preparation process which has specific RMA requirements including the process set out in Schedule 1 and the requirement to consider the proposed provisions in a strategic way as set out in s32.

Recommended measures should relate to the identified values and attributes. For example, RMA s6(b) requires protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. Inappropriateness is gauged in terms of the landscape values that are to be protected. Therefore, identify the values and recommend management measures to protect the physical attributes on which such values depend (for example, restrictive activity status for certain activities and criteria against which to assess applications).

Other landscapes (e.g. 'significant' or 'special' landscapes, and 'ordinary' landscape character areas) are managed under different policy provisions typically contained in regional and district plans/ policy statements to give effect to s7(c) and s7(f)—i.e. to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment including amenity values.

Landscape management can be an effective tool to manage multiple outcomes because the concept of landscape integrates physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions. For example, well-crafted landscape provisions might lead to positive outcomes for a landscape's biophysical, functional, aesthetic, and cultural values collectively. To be useful, though, such provisions would need to pursue multiple goals rather than single outcomes, and to allow for landscape change in response to a variety of environmental, social, cultural, and economic processes. Provisions that are not informed by an understanding of the processes and activities behind the landscape, or that seek to maintain the status quo, are likely to be less useful in this regard.





The cycle has been completed

Kua hua te marama

