

UPPER HUTT CITY



# Southern Hills Environmental Management Study

Landowner consultation results summary | December 2009



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## **Introduction**

The following report provides a summary of the responses received to a survey of landowners within the Southern Hills area of Upper Hutt. The area surveyed was the area defined for the purposes of the Southern Hills Environmental Management Study, completed for Council by Boffa Miskell in July 2008.

From the approximately 1400 questionnaires sent out, 87 were returned. Participants were also given the opportunity to receive further updates on the project, for which 68 participants expressed interest.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts addressing a range of issues related to potential plan changes affecting the Southern Hills area. This consultation will inform the preparation of potential future plan changes affecting this area.

The structure of the questionnaire was as follows:

### **General**

- A. Development On The Hills

### **Existing Rules**

- B. Protected Ridgelines
- C. Earthworks and Vegetation Clearance

### **Potential Rule Change**

- D. Use of Overlay
- E. Extent of Overlay

### **Other**

- F. Recreational Opportunities
- G. Heritage
- H. Any other Comments

## **General**

### **A. Development On The Hills**

The maximum number of responses to this section was 84 for question 1. 83 responses were received for question 2 and 3.

The following questions were asked of the respondents in this section (note: not all questions were answered by all respondents and this has been noted where relevant):

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

The Southern Hills form an important visual backdrop to Upper Hutt  
(1 to 5 rated scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree').

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

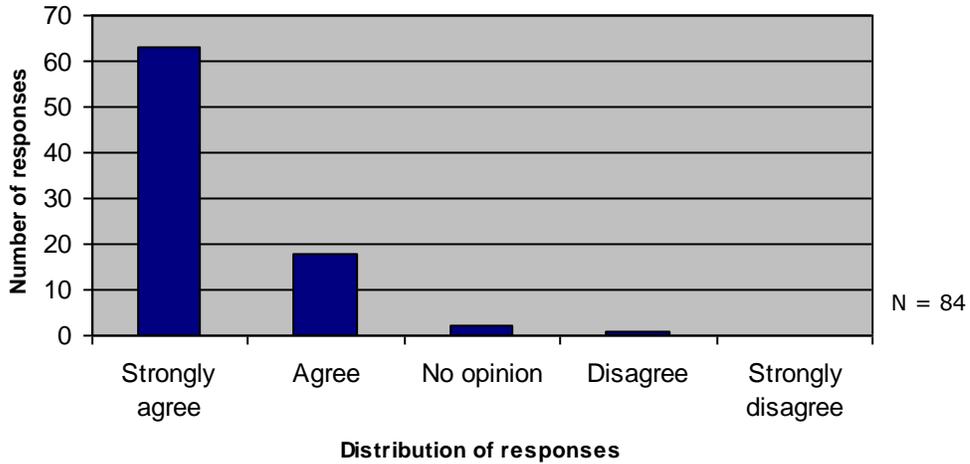
Council should ensure that development within the Southern Hills does not adversely affect the visual amenity of the hills  
(1 to 5 rated scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree').

3. Concerning existing development within the Southern Hills, do you think that:

- a. Existing development sits well within the landscape and is appropriate to its setting?
- b. There are isolated instances where development has already affected the visual amenity of the hills?
- c. Existing development of the hills is excessive and is leading to an erosion of their amenity values?
- d. Other:

**Question 1: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

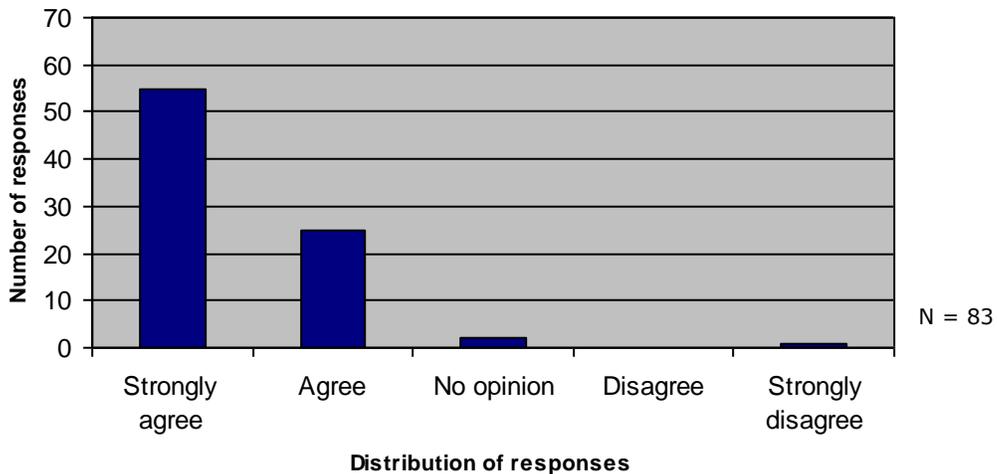
**The Southern Hills form an important visual backdrop to Upper Hutt.**



Answer categories	Responses
Strongly agree	63
Agree	18
No opinion	2
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0
Total	84

**Question 2: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

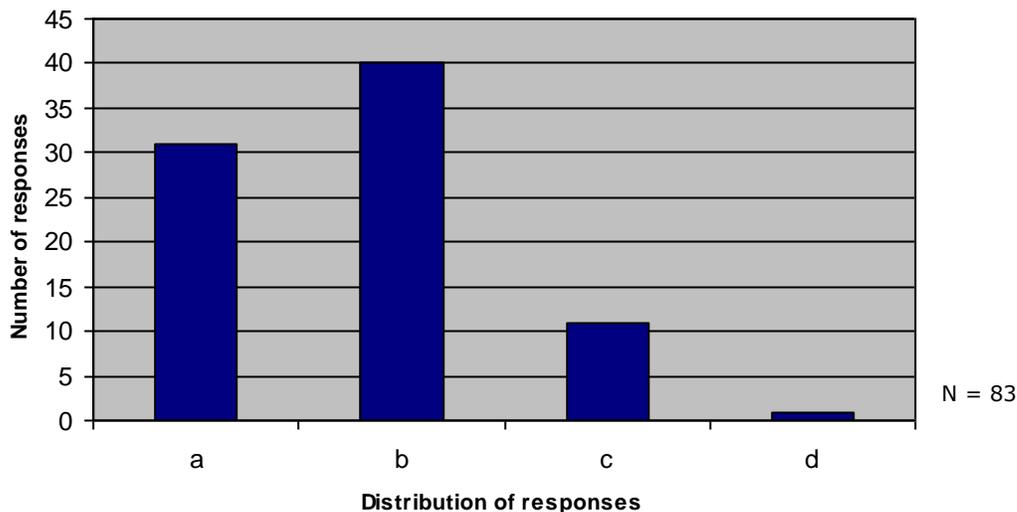
**Council should ensure that development within the Southern Hills does not adversely affect the visual amenity of the hills.**



Answer categories	Responses
Strongly agree	55
Agree	25
No opinion	2
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	1
Total	83

**Question 3: Concerning existing development within the Southern Hills, do you think that:**

- a. Existing development sits well within the landscape and is appropriate to its setting?**
- b. There are isolated instances where development has already affected the visual amenity of the hills?**
- c. Existing development of the hills is excessive and is leading to an erosion of their amenity values?**
- d. Other**



Answer categories	Responses
a	31
b	40
c	11
d	1
Total	83

Legend

- a. Existing development sits well within the landscape and is appropriate to its setting?
- b. There are isolated instances where development has already affected the visual amenity of the hills?
- c. Existing development of the hills is excessive and is leading to an erosion of their amenity values?
- d. Other

Option (d) left room for non-categorised answers which are shown in the original wording below.

- I would not like to see housing built all over it. Plus something different other than pine trees everywhere.
- We are deeply concerned to see housing or constructions that are visible from the valley floor e.g. the house that sits up on the northern eastern hill of Alexandra Rd - who ever gave planning permission for that eyesore!!!?
- I understand Kuku Valley is not included however it forms a large part of the area adjoining upper Blue Mountains Road and Sierra Way. There is significant development being undertaken in the valley that is adversely affecting the habitat of the wild falcons and hawks that live in this area. There are also rare endangered plants in that valley that are having land fill tipped on them.
- Area of earthworks at the base of the Southern hills behind General Motors and behind Dunlops has created permanent damage to the integrity of the hill side. These are just two of the more recent developments that come to mind.
- Not aware of what developments are in my area and those that might be going on north of Silverstream. Extremely important that heritage sites, ecosystems are preserved as they are reason for many people living in Upper Hutt.
- Housing on the tops of hills i.e. the skyline is wrong and looks ugly. No more of it should be allowed regardless of who the owner is and their so called standing in the community - these people more than ever should know better.
- "Excessive" is a subjective word. My opinion is that some recent allowed developments have had a major detrimental impact - the extent of the impact perhaps being disproportionate to the number of cases. What cannot be overstated is the impact a single, or few, property developments can have on a ridge line or similar area.
- Quite concerned about the development happening behind the racecourse, you can't help but think that they will and probably will!!! Push further into the hills!!!
- The existing housing is quite complementary to the hills, but the excavation high on the southern end is an eyesore.
- There has been some building on the ridgeline that has an adverse effect on the visual state of the hills. Visual ridgeline impact must be protected.
- Earlier development of the hill area was on the whole sympathetic to the landscape. However this is not the case with some recent development where houses are not sitting unobtrusively in the environment and with an excess of "Golden Home" type properties sitting on flattened and cleared sections.
- The removal of trees a few years ago above our property in Chichester Drive in Silverstream was a disaster. Not only did it leave an ugly scar on the landscape, we have had huge problems with water run-off ever since. We have spent thousands on drainage over the past 5 years and there are still springs popping up in the area. I attribute the run off and drainage issues solely to the unnecessary removal of a large block of trees from the site.
- Tasteful development can actually enhance the landscape and the visual effect will be minimal at the most!
- Hillside have been "hacked off" in the process of developing the newest areas of Kingsley Heights. Sections have been sold and built on which, instead of being roughly level and useable, are actually parts of the hacked-away hillside: corner property pins are visible many meters up the steep sides of the excavated hills. While such was, apparently, in conformance to the Counsel's rules at the time of development, there can be little disagreement that the resulting visible "scars," with no planting and no structural reinforcement against erosion of tremor, are unpleasant to view, useless legal property fictions for the homeowners, and potentially dangerous---subject to slippage from rain or tremor. The severe eye sores presented by these sections are attested to by the lack of homes built where the hacked-hills dominate the view. Whether the product of old rules or not, planting and constructive reinforcement of some nature could, and should, be

done. And, it should be paid for. At least in part, by the developer most to benefit from improving this ugliness.

## Existing Rules

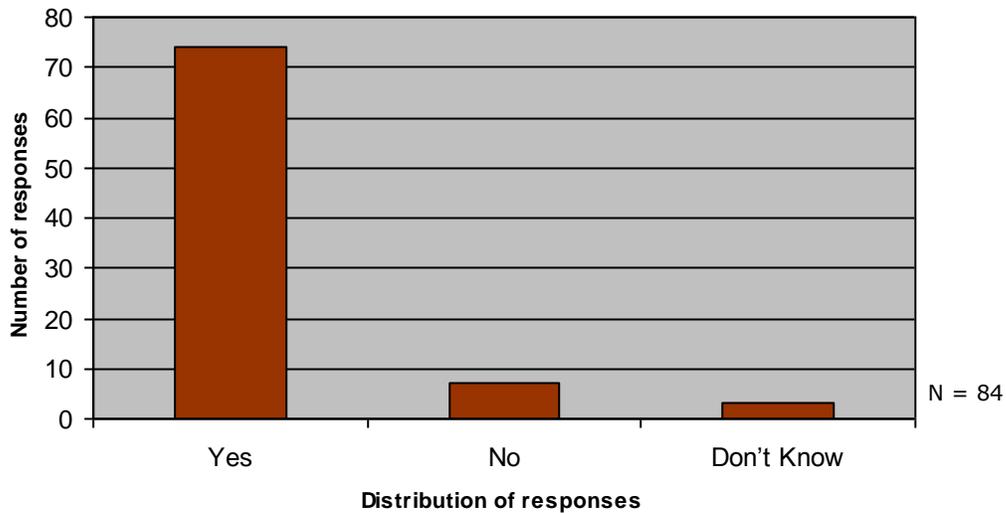
### B. Protected Ridgelines

The maximum number of responses to this section was 84 for question 1. 74 responses were received for question 2.

The following questions were asked of the respondents in this section (note: not all questions were answered by all respondents and this has been noted where relevant):

1. Do you think the Southern Hills ridgeline should be 'protected' from development?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
2. If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, do you think the existing ridgeline protection standards are sufficient?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)

#### **Question 1: Do you think the Southern Hills ridgeline should be 'protected' from development?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	74
No	7
Don't Know	3
Total	84

**The question provided the opportunity for participants to give reasons for their opinion. These are shown in the following.**

**Do you think the Southern Hills ridgeline should be 'protected' from development?**

**Yes**

- I would not like to see housing built all over it. Plus something different other than pine trees everywhere.
- Only 'essentials' need to be on the ridgeline, viz. telecommunications towers - no: housing, buildings, wind turbines, etc
- As long as persons who already own property in the "protected" areas are not too badly affected by changes since their ownership.
- We DO NOT want to see the Blue Mountain Hills covered with housing - already they are far too visible, thus detracting from the natural beauty of the area.
- Additional infrastructure and development would degrade the current value of the local area aesthetically and environmentally.
- Visual impact of protecting top three quarters of ridgeline I consider important when viewed from CBD.
- I agree with others comments regarding the visual value of a clear ridge line backdrop.
- The visual effect as it is is spectacular, and no development is going to improve that.
- To maintain the visual background of Upper Hutt
- What is more ugly than to look up at the rising full moon or watching the dawn break only to see some big flashy house staring back to you - it should not be allowed - there is plenty of land that could be subdivided and developed on the flats, why ruin the hills. Not to mention how this also changes the natural water flow off the hills which from experience of other councils around NZ should be enough to discourage the UHCC
- Look at what Council have agreed to around the old GM building. It is a bloody mess.
- Where development protrudes above the ridgeline when seen from the valley floor it is much more noticeable and obtrusive.
- The ridgeline provides a nice natural backdrop for the city and would be spoilt if dotted with houses.
- Ridgeline development is the most invasive development that can occur on the hills.
- Because one of the things we enjoy about Upper Hutt is the bush-clad hills so close to the city. Residential or other development of these areas would erode this.
- But the "protection" comes at a cost to the landowner. "Protection" without compensation is unfair since it restricts or prohibits the use of the land for what was permitted when the land was purchased and is currently permitted.
- The selfish development of some, imposes "visual pollution" on the majority, and erodes that visual harmony of the hills. Once developed this asset has gone forever.
- I qualify this by saying the ridgeline should be protected from inappropriate development, i.e. that is not sympathetic to the environment, is visually obtrusive and that excessively alters the natural contours and existing vegetation.
- An unbroken ridgeline ideally showing indigenous vegetation is a major aspect of landscape character and visual amenity.
- It has already been the case that removing the pine trees from the reserve area in the beginning of Kingsley Heights has had an adverse effect with regard to erosion and members of the public using this area as a parking lot and rubbish dump that nearby residents have had to contend with.
- It is a strong skyline feature to the city of Upper Hutt and I would hate to see it taken over by residential housing.
- Ridgeline should be protected from development but development should be encouraged within the ridgeline-NOT a massive change as occurred to Craig's Flat.
- To protect continuity of the hill backdrop.

- Having travelled extensively overseas retaining natural landscapes within urban areas has become a more important issue.
- To avoid what has happened on the Whitby hills next to the Pauatahanui inlet.
- Our bush line is unique and part of Upper Hutt's natural beauty. Development will leave the hills scared.
- It is very pleasant and peaceful to see the hills without buildings disturbing the interface between air and land.
- Because the worst, most severe aspect of development occurs when it is in silhouette in a high place.
- Can't really impose on other land owners. But from our own land we have no desire to develop ridgeline
- Upper Hutt City is situated in a very scenic area, why should we wish to destroy this?
- To maintain LTCCP outcomes 4.1 and 4.2 (Ref. Management Study 1.5.6).

## **No**

- There are many areas where development can occur without any impact. I feel that it is more appropriate for Council to put controls in place that minimize visual impact e.g. where to site a house, how big / high it will be etc rather than take the simple approach of banning all development on the ridgeline.
- A skyline or restaurant (say at Cannon point) could be an asset to the city without distracting the sky line adversely and could increase tourism to our area.
- 'Protecting' the ridgeline from development would remove the opportunity for proposals to be considered and determined on their merits. The above question implies removing the ability to develop land along the ridgeline which in many places has a rolling – flattened plateau. For example, 'protecting' 150m either side of the ridgeline from development at Stages 1-4 Mt Marua would have prevented that development from occurring. At Mt Marua the main road and many of the building platforms occupy the rolling – flattened plateau adjoining the ridgeline. Other than for one isolated example of a buildings at the eastern most spur of Mt Marua (and lessons can be learned from that example – it both hangs over the outer edge of the spur and projects the skyline), those subdivisions and built form are unobtrusive on the skyline to the natural and ecological features and landform of the Southern Hills. The various stages of Mt Marua have covenanted in perpetuity large areas of re-generating indigenous vegetation and provided public access to the ridgeline (at no cost to the City) where previously there was no protection. Stages 3 and 4 Mt Marua are only recently established and are also unobtrusive as a back drop to the valley floor. The above shows that it is possible and appropriate to accommodate sensitive development on the ridgeline that is responsive to ecological and landscape values and the landform character. Rather than 'protecting' the ridgeline from development the focus could turn to managing the sustainable development of the natural and physical resources of the Southern Hills so that:
  - built form and development can be accommodated anywhere on the Southern Hills ridgeline so long as it is demonstrated that the development and built form be unobtrusive on the skyline;
  - built form, layout of development and earthworks are designed and managed in a sensitive manner responsive to the local natural features, ecology and landform;
  - development is sensitive to natural and ecological values, and retains and enhances vegetation of value;
  - contributes to providing public access linkages towards an overall network;
  - respects 'identified' and/or definable heritage items
  - opportunity for design solutions are managed through the assessment criteria

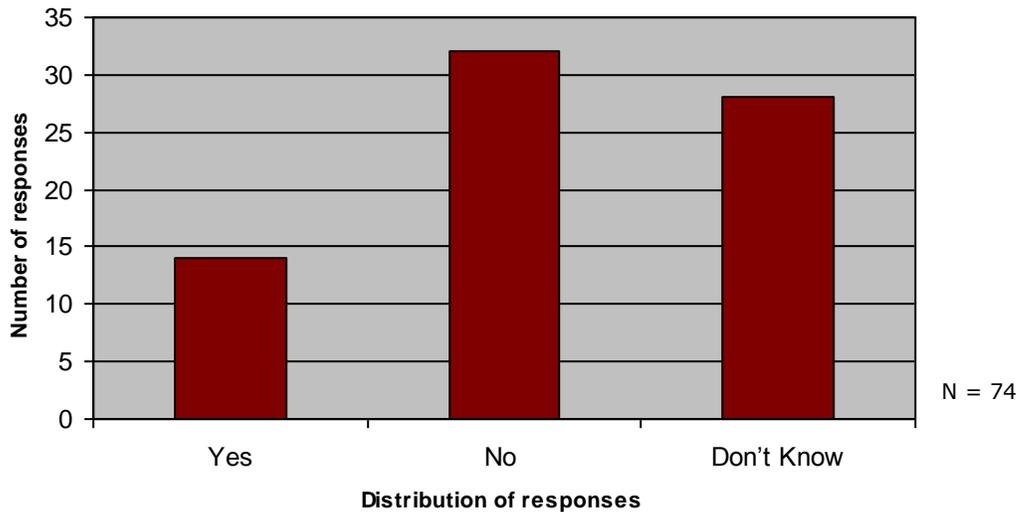
The above could be managed through amending the current rules making any development on the skyline a Discretionary Activity (Restricted) with the limits to discretion specified.

## **Don't Know**

- Can't really impose on other land owners. But from our own land we have no desire to develop the ridgeline.

## **Question 2: If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, do you think the existing ridgeline protection standards are sufficient?**

Note: This question only refers to participants who answered 'yes' to the previous question. Therefore, the total number of responses is 74.



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	14
No	32
Don't Know	28
Total	74

## **Do you think the existing ridgeline protection standards are sufficient?**

### **Yes:**

- I would not like to see housing built all over it. Plus something different other than pine trees everywhere.
- Where residential development is proposed measures should be put in place to ensure that there is sufficient flat land for building, parking etc. Steep sites where it is necessary to do earthworks and large retaining works to create this flat land need to be more strictly controlled to ensure future slippage and runoff water is not a problem. Development of sites where this cannot be assured should not be developed.
- at this stage
- Provided they are strictly enforced.

- Something must be working well to keep the ridgeline in its current lovely state.

**No:**

- The occasional house has already 'damaged' the ridgeline - this should not happen again, ever.
- We DO NOT want to see development along the western ridgeline by the Silver Stream railway for the same reason given in 4.
- Some buildings "stick out" of the ridgeline, detracting from the natural appearance.
- The idea would be to see little or no man made structures on ridgeline.
- There are instances of the ridgeline being completely dominated by new construction, especially in the Mt. Marua area.
- It appears that the level of protection is determined by the city council's agenda at that time.
- There are houses on the tops of hills above Plateau Road now which look just plain ugly - I'm not saying that the house itself is ugly but it just looks wrong perched up on top of the hill. And no - I have no idea who owns it nor do I care about that - its that fact that the skyline should remain just that.
- I think your report is starting to better acknowledge the 'value' of a ridgeline, and the impact even isolated or limited developments can have. However, it will require a determined and insightful Council to protect the ridgelines for future generations - the developers will come with beautiful designs / concepts that must be rigorously tested, requiring modelling (3D etc) of impact from multiple angles / aspects.
- It seems that the land value often over-rides the aesthetic value of the areas concerned. This has resulted in land in the Southern Hills being sold to developers and where once there was bush there are now sub divisions.
- The current regulations permit the development on the ridge line in some circumstances. If the visual aspect is not from State Highway 2 then development can occur. This is a foolish oversight that permits the erosion of protection of this asset for future generations. This lax rule requires immediate action to protect the ridgeline.
- Many existing houses constructed on the ridgeline do not blend into the ridgeline and are very visible from the valley areas. Recent subdivisions have resulted in cut and fill type development with houses constructed that are not sympathetic to the natural contours of the ridgeline. (We personally own a ridgeline property but can understand those who wish to leave the ridgeline undeveloped as although we made an effort to ensure our property blended into the landscape when constructed, most other ridgeline properties in our area do not.)
- There are scars along parts of the ridgeline which are unrightly (if not specifically used as firebreaks).
- There needs to be something done to ensure that when vegetation is removed from an area that a firm plan is in place to replace it and to ensure that members of the public are not able to decimate the area in the mean time.
- Because it allows the Upper Hutt City council to make amends without community participation.
- Anything affecting the ridgeline should definitely be a discretionary activity.
- From where I live I can clearly see a new house that intrudes on the viewable ridge line.
- Saw already area's devoid of vegetation and subject to corrosion.

**Don't Know:**

- Not sure what they are would help to have a brief statement of this with question. I am wanting to contribute to questionnaire but do not have time to read all material + additional site provided.
- Don't know enough about the standards, but I hope they are sufficient.

- Not entirely sure. Seems mostly to be effective except for the occasional inappropriate development (specifically the excavation high at the south end. This can be seen clearly from Silverstream railway station.
- I believe the standards to be poorly defined and as a consequence, poorly understood. I own land which lies to the east of the ridgeline, but am uncertain as to how it is affected by this ridgeline "protection".
- Not if they allow what happened to us to happen again or to others.
- Because I have no idea what UHCC's existing standards are. Resource consent does not guarantee continuing protection.
- Zoning rules change (i.e. Hulls Creek area) unless zoned scenic reserve what guarantees have we?

### **C. Earthworks and Vegetation Clearance**

The maximum responses received to this section were 83 for questions 1 and 3.

The following questions were asked of the respondents in this section:  
(Note: not all questions were answered by all respondents and this has been noted where relevant)

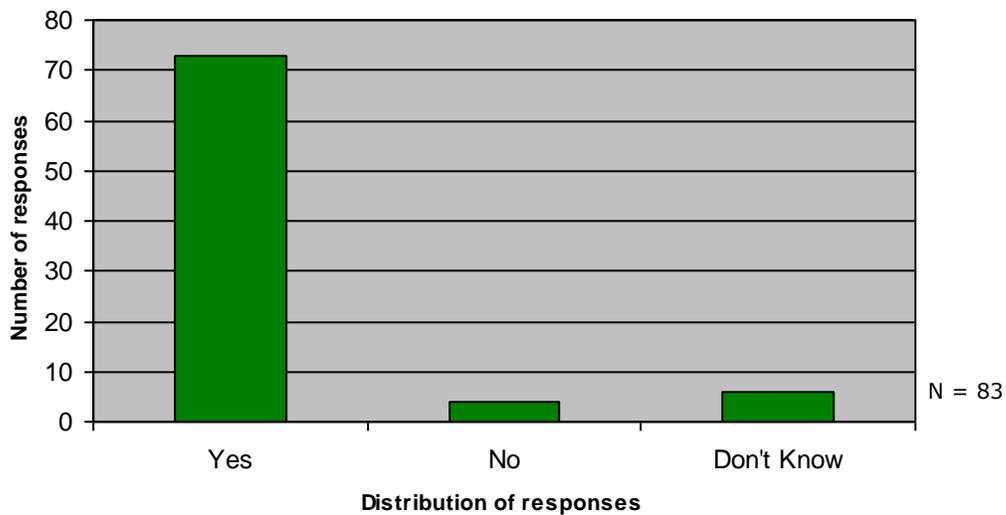
1. Do you think that earthworks should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
2. What area of earthworks should be permitted before Resource Consent approval is required?
  - a. No earthworks permitted;
  - b. Up to 50 square metres;
  - c. Up to 100 square metres;
  - d. Up to 150 square metres (the current limit);
  - e. More than 150 square metres.
 Comment:
3. Should more restrictive earthworks controls be placed on areas identified as being of high ecological, landscape or visual value?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
4. Do you think that vegetation clearance should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
5. Should a threshold be set above which Resource Consent is required as is done for earthworks?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
6. What should that threshold be?
  - a. no vegetation clearance permitted;
  - b. up to 50 square metres;
  - c. Up to 100 square metres;
  - d. Up to 200 square metres;
  - e. Up to 500 square metres;
  - f. More than 500 square metres.

7. If you answered yes to question 4, should controls on vegetation clearance:
  - a. be limited to indigenous vegetation?;
  - b. apply to exotic vegetation also?

Note: The removal of pest or noxious species will be exempt from any controls.

8. Should more restrictive vegetation removal controls be placed on areas identified as being of high ecological, landscape or visual value?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)

**Question 1: Do you think that earthworks should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	73
No	4
Don't Know	6
Total	83

**Do you think that earthworks should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?**

**Yes:**

- Earthworks have a habit of getting out of hand with slips and other damage - has to be regulated, 'approved' and overseen.
- To provide a mechanism for a consultation process with local residents.
- Vegetation clearance at the top of Wallaceville Hill has created an ugly "patchwork". The clearing work seems to have been done with no real thought to future regeneration of the forest cover and the land must be marginal for grazing purposes at best. This area has

- suffered several significant landslips in the past month and this scrub clearance ignores the instability of this land.
- RMA is a very important act that protects the environment and majority of applications proceed with little problem. Only disliked by those who seek to push the boundaries of what should be possible and want to go beyond by what is reasonable.
  - There is a strong possibility that earthworks in this area will cause banks to slide and bring excess water down through the valleys.
  - Without managing it through the resource consent process how else would the UHCC stop the over development of a natural beauty like the skyline of the southern hills - one only has to look across at Riverstone/ Craigs Flat to see what on eye saw could become of the southern hills if we allow mindless greedy development.
  - The Southern Hills should be preserved and not destroyed for the sake of development.
  - A few years back approximately ten or so we had substantial erosion due to felling of vegetation in the southern hills area which resulted in flooding of houses in the lower valley.
  - This needs to be adequately justified, and agree to by Council.
  - Work must be harmonized with the natural contours, visual aspect and environmental impact.
  - That will control where houses will be sited etc and how much impact will occur on the environment.
  - Once even quite small earthworks are undertaken it is very hard to reverse and costs time and money to do so.
  - It would have to be a proposal before a consent would be given as with buildings.
  - To protect the environment.
  - Gives a timeframe to reconsider the impact of a development.
  - This ensures "cowboy developers" cannot destroy property and endanger existing adjacent land. Once land is removed it cannot be replaced!
  - Modern technology enables total flattening of any land contours and removal of all vegetation to form a featureless landscape.
  - Alexander Rd. development is totally inappropriate. Where were the controls on carving into the hill side? Why did Council not stop that happening? Who is monitoring activities of developers?
  - Inappropriately designed earthworks have potential to have adverse effects on any one or more of the following: landform and broad landscape values, visual amenity such as scarring of the landscape, natural values, ecology, water quality, erosion and stability. It is therefore appropriate that earthworks that exceed Permitted Activity standards are controlled through the Resource Consent process.

**No:**

No comments were made for this category.

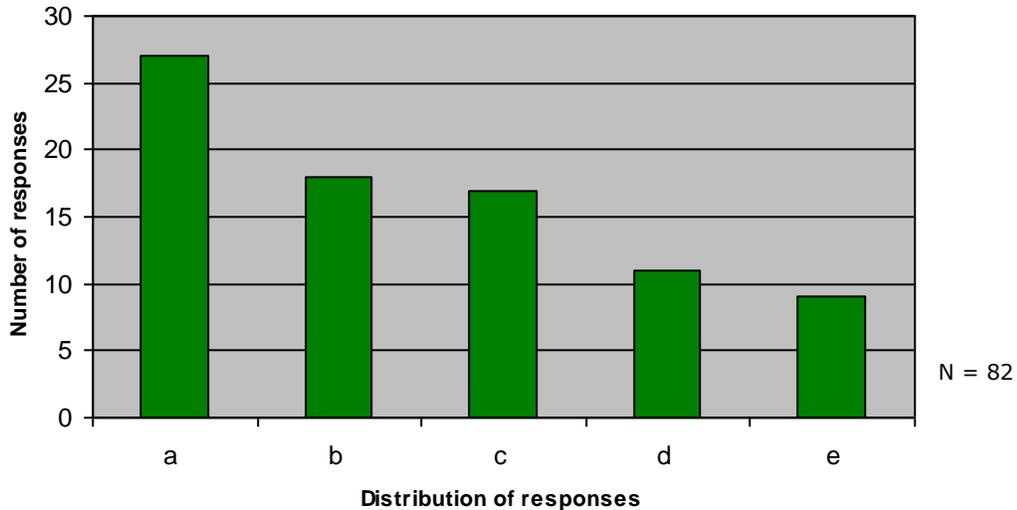
**Don't Know:**

- More information would need to be made public in this process.

**Question 2: What area of earthworks should be permitted before Resource Consent approval is required?**

- a. No earthworks permitted;
- b. Up to 50 square metres;
- c. Up to 100 square metres;
- d. Up to 150 square metres (the current limit);
- e. More than 150 square metres.

**Comment:**



Answer categories	Responses
a (0)	27
b ( $\leq 50$ )	18
c ( $\leq 100$ )	17
d ( $\leq 150$ )	11
e ( $> 150$ )	9
Total	82

- Legend
- a. No earthworks permitted
  - b. Up to 50m<sup>2</sup>
  - c. Up to 100m<sup>2</sup>
  - d. Up to 150m<sup>2</sup> (the current limit)
  - e. More than 150m<sup>2</sup>

**This section allowed for comments to be made. These are provided in the following with the associated answer category.**

**What area of earthworks should be permitted before Resource Consent approval is required?**

**No earthworks permitted:**

- 50 square meters on the ridge can be a small strip of bare land spoiled for the next generations.
- We are dealing with hillsides which as anyone who has a limited knowledge knows are prone to slippage. All work should be carried out under supervision otherwise we will have calamities in years to come.
- A visual impact assessment should be carried out before permission is granted, for each development.
- No earthworks permitted except those done by hand.

**Up to 50 square metres:**

No comments were made relating to this category.

**Up to 100 square metres:**

- This will ensure that only minor earthworks can be done without the knowledge of Council.

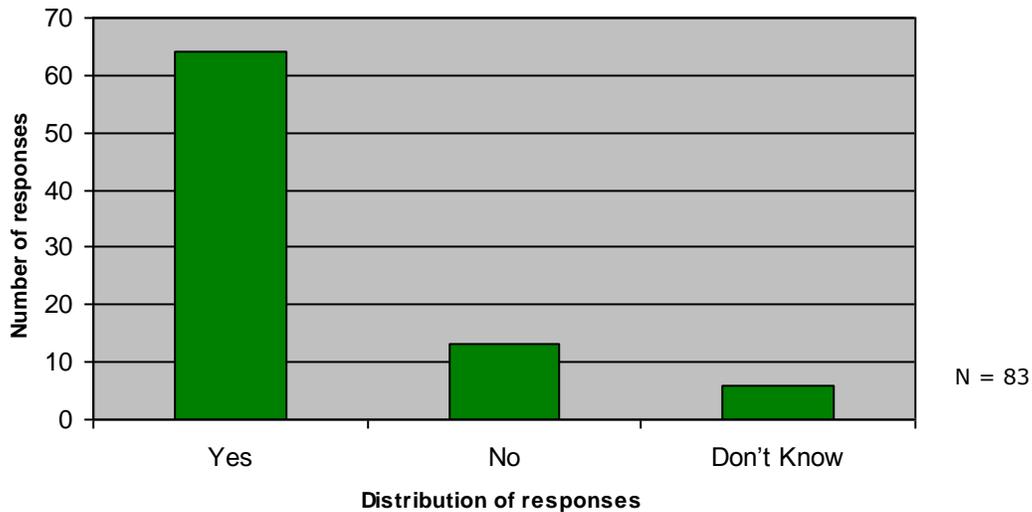
**Up to 150 square metres (the current limit):**

- The current limit is ok. But any application for resource consent should automatically make neighbours affected parties.
- The current 150 square metre standard appears to work as a Permitted Activity threshold. Current examples of earthworks that are visually prominent to public view are not so because of the current 150 square metre Permitted Activity threshold but due to the inappropriate design response of those earthworks not integrating with the surrounding landform, and also because the inappropriate design of the earthworks means it is unlikely that any mitigation measures are likely to succeed e.g. steepness and height of batter slopes or stripping back to base rock means hydro-seeding and/or planting and landscaping are not practical. The Permitted Activity threshold does not need to be increased as these matters can currently be assessed and considered as part of the Resource Consent application process.

**More than 150 square metres:**

No comments were made relating to this category.

**Question 3: Should more restrictive earthworks controls be placed on areas identified as being of high ecological, landscape or visual value?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	64
No	13
Don't Know	6
Total	83

**This section allowed for comments to be made. These are provided in the following with the associated answer category.**

**Should more restrictive earthworks controls be placed on areas identified as being of high ecological, landscape or visual value?**

**Yes:**

- Need for management plans for erosion control and the like.
- On both Mangaroa Hill road and Wallaceville Hill Road, there are examples of landowners bulldozing deep cuttings to provide drive-on access to above the road properties. In the case of Wallaceville Hill the access does not appear to have been used but has left a permanent scar and potential instability to the hillside. There is also an unsightly bulldozed track immediately above a large slip that came down in a recent storm. Did this track cutting contribute to the slipping hillside?
- Ecological/visual areas need protecting. trees of significance e.g. Rimu/beech need preserving and developments need to be inclusive of this i.e. instead of clear and build, projects need to incorporate these and other trees = instant landscaping.
- Again - when will this country learn that it has its beauty from the hills - it's the trees that give the main stability to these hills - We can't keep taking away what has made Upper Hutt the beautiful valley city that it is.
- How else can you control; the impact. Even a 50 sq mtr earthwork can have a high visual impact, and once the work is carried out cannot be quickly or easily repaired It may be 'tough' on landowners, but it is an example of where we all need to accept responsibility from land ownership beyond personal advantage / gain.
- This is essential.
- Again, the same reasoning needs to be applied as mentioned above. I have ticked yes so as to cover off any greenfields developments.
- If we are not careful these areas will be developed and it will be too late to reverse the process.
- In areas of high value, earthworks should be restricted to a minimum e.g. designated house sites and access ways only.
- To minimise impact on these important areas!
- Development should be encouraged within the natural terrain of the hillsides within reason.
- Because they "scar" the landscape.
- Unspoiled nature close to towns start to be a rarity.

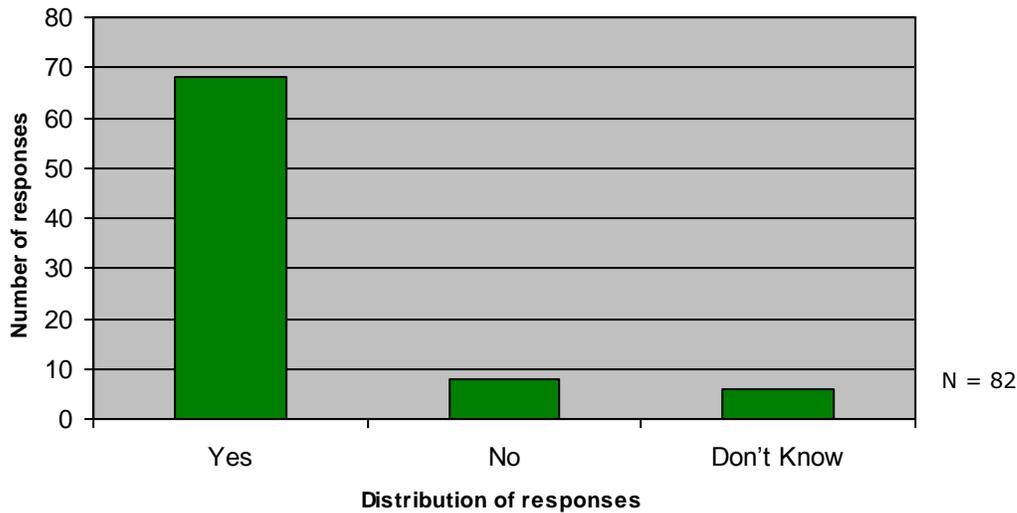
**No:**

- This area is covered in gorse!!
- It is not necessary to impose more restrictive earthworks or vegetation protection controls in areas of high ecological, landscape or visual value, because the current provisions appear to be working. Any earthworks above the current 150m2 threshold currently requires resource consent, and any Assessment of Effects on the Environment (AEE) in any Land Use or Subdivision Resource Consent application should assess and respond to relevant ecological, landscape and visual values. If an AEE in a Resource Consent application does not adequately assess these matters Council is able to request additional information as part of the resource consent application process.

**Don't Know:**

- Once a site is damaged it cannot be replaced.

**Question 4: Do you think that vegetation clearance should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	68
No	8
Don't Know	6
Total	82

**Do you think that vegetation clearance should be controlled in the Southern Hills through the Resource Consent process?**

**Yes:**

- Visual scaring and the changes in vegetation type has significant on visual pollution and is enduring for generations.
- This will again ensure that development will only occur with Council's knowledge. It will also be of benefit if the Consent process is more of a notification process that Council can ratify if it fully complies. It should not become a mountainous exercise in which the applicant needs to jump through hoops to get approval!
- To preserve the ecology and biodiversity as well as the heritage and visual amenity values - priceless!
- Maintaining vegetation is essential if we wish to keep the natural hillside aspects. Developments should be within the confines of existing vegetation as much as possible
- Someone has to manage it
- To protect the environment.
- Because vegetation clearance removes habitat for wildlife.
- You can't replace a full grown land mark tree.
- The vegetation cover is the salient feature of the hills. Unfortunately some developers regardless of the appearance or possible problems such as future erosion, strip bare the land in order to make a quick dollar.
- Some native trees take decades to mature. We need both mature and regenerating trees to ensure continuity.

- Because if not under resource consent, then no controls will apply.

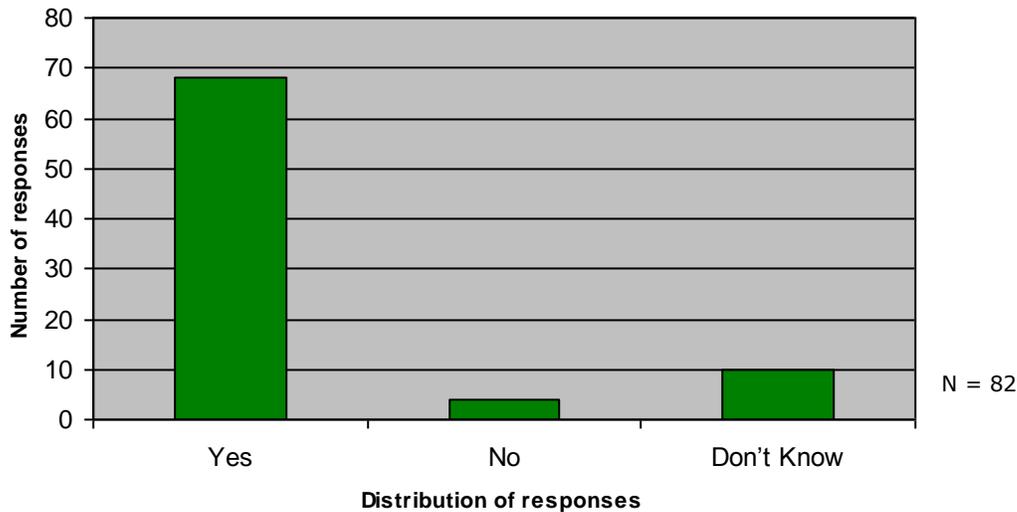
**No:**

- Because there are safety issues. Branches need to be trimmed and we shouldn't have to get permission all the time for these works. Council clearance of reserve areas bordering private properties is inadequate. We have to fight against gorse coming onto the property from the bush.
- If Council considered controlling vegetation clearance through the resource consent process the owner considers that this should only apply to areas specifically identified with high ecological value. The owner notes that voluntary protection through covenant as part of the subdivision resource consent process has achieved good outcomes in protecting regenerating indigenous vegetation at Mt Marua. This has been achieved at all stages of subdivision at Mt Marua as part of the subdivision resource consent process, with the vegetation protected and covenanted as an integral part of the design of the subdivision addressing the environmental effects of the proposal, and not as a result of prescriptive vegetation clearance rules in the District Plan. Longer term management of existing pine plantation forestry on the Southern Hills is also an issue e.g. there is an existing pine plantation on Barretts Block at Mt Marua. If such forestry is not managed appropriately or allowed to be harvested it eventually becomes hazardous to potential residential areas as the pines age and become unstable or susceptible to wind throw, such as is occurring in Pinehaven.

**Don't Know:**

No comments were made for this category.

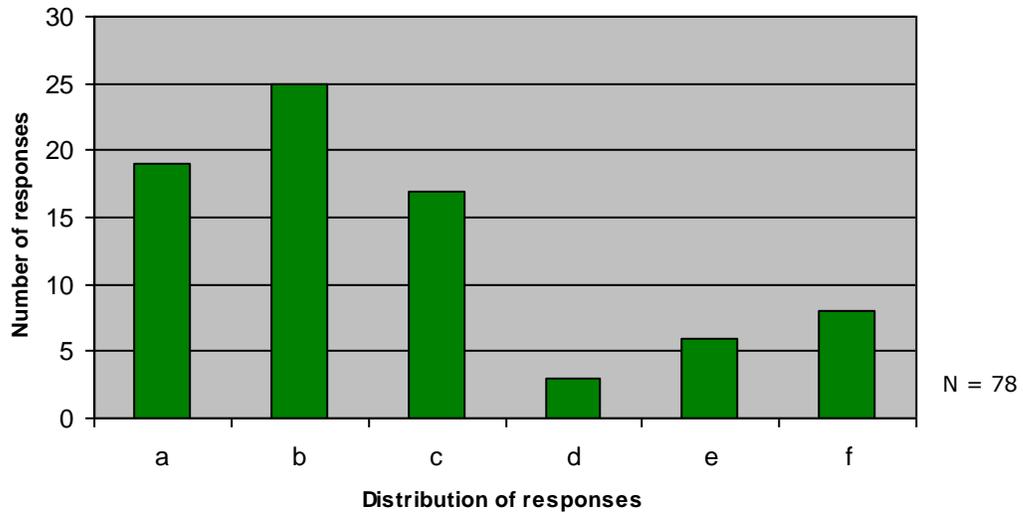
**Question 5: Should a threshold be set above which Resource Consent is required as is done for earthworks?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	68
No	4
Don't Know	10
Total	82

**Question 6: What should that threshold be?**

- a. No vegetation clearance permitted;**
- b. Up to 50 square metres;**
- c. Up to 100 square metres;**
- d. Up to 200 square metres;**
- e. Up to 500 square metres;**
- f. More than 500 square metres.**



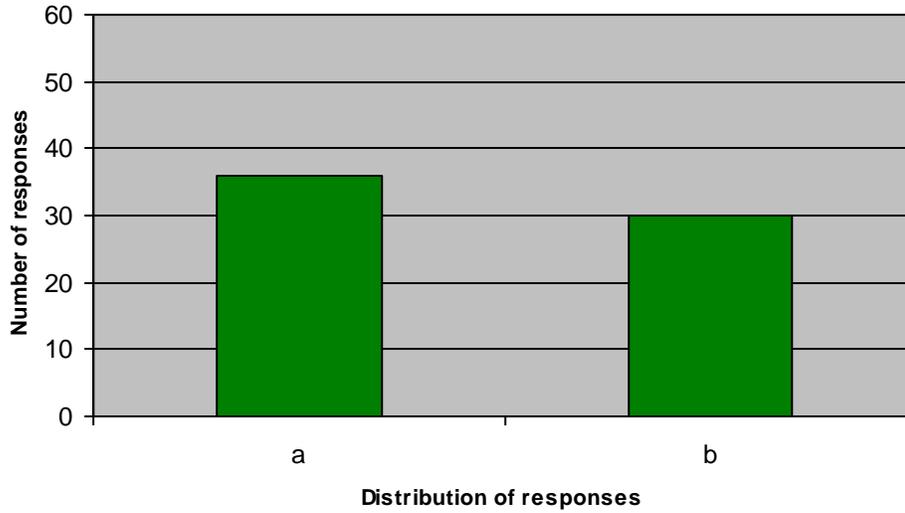
Answer categories	Responses
a	19
b	25
c	17
d	3
e	6
f	8
Total	78

Legend

- a. No vegetation clearance permitted
- b. Up to 50m<sup>2</sup>
- c. Up to 100m<sup>2</sup>
- d. Up to 200m<sup>2</sup>
- e. Up to 500m<sup>2</sup>
- f. More than 500m<sup>2</sup>

**Question 7: If you answered 'yes' to question 4, should controls on vegetation clearance:**

- a. Be limited to indigenous vegetation?; or**
- b. Apply to exotic vegetation also?**

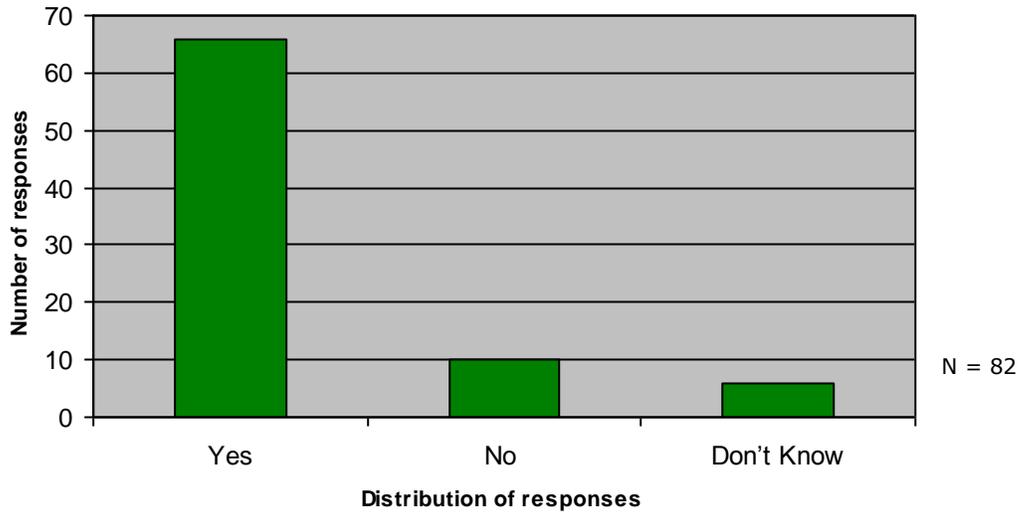


Answer categories	Responses
a	36
b	30
Total	66

- Legend
- a. Should controls on vegetation clearance: Be limited to indigenous vegetation?; OR
  - b. Apply to exotic vegetation also?

Note: The removal of noxious species will be exempt from any controls.

**Question 8: Should more restrictive vegetation removal controls be placed on areas identified as being of high ecological, landscape or visual value?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	66
No	10
Don't Know	6
Total	82

**One comment was made to this question.**

**Comment:**

It is not necessary to impose more restrictive earthworks or vegetation protection controls in areas of high ecological, landscape or visual value, because the current provisions appear to be working. Any earthworks above the current 150m<sup>2</sup> threshold currently requires resource consent, and any Assessment of Effects on the Environment (AEE) in any Land Use or Subdivision Resource Consent application should assess and respond to relevant ecological, landscape and visual values. If an AEE in a Resource Consent application does not adequately assess these matters Council is able to request additional information as part of the resource consent application process.

## Potential Rule Changes

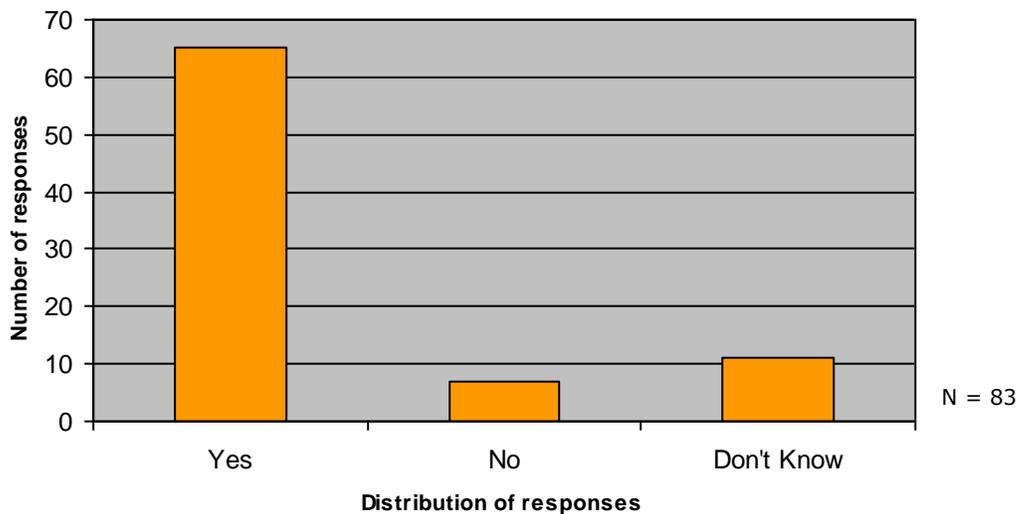
### D. Use of Overlay

83 responses were received to this question.

The following question was asked of the respondents in this section:

1. Do you agree with the creation of an 'overlay' to identify those areas of high ecological, landscape or visual value as identified in the study?

#### **Question 1: Do you agree with the creation of an 'overlay' to identify those areas of high ecological, landscape or visual value as identified in the study?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	65
No	7
Don't Know	11
Total	83

**This section allowed for comments to be made. These are provided in the following with the associated answer category.**

#### **Do you agree with the creation of an 'overlay' to identify those areas of high ecological, landscape or visual value as identified in the study?**

##### **Yes:**

- I believe that this is a common sense and transparent way of indicating specific area of control and community interest over a "shared" asset.
- To increase vigilance and preserve the "naturalness" to the greatest possible degree.
- To retain existing landscape as much as possible.

- To increase vigilance and preserve the "naturalness" to the greatest possible degree.
- Acknowledges different requirements within a larger area.
- I hope clear guidelines would protect these areas identified.

**No:**

- Not fair to change restrictions for people who currently own properties.
- **Summary of a response too long to quote in full detail:**

The respondent is not philosophically opposed to the Overlay Approach but has reservations that implementation of an Overlay may be perceived by the general public as giving the land some level of 'quasi-public open space status'. He also mentions that an Overlay could mean different things to different parties and the proposed plan change would need to carefully balance two interests, public interest and public access opportunities together with protection of owner rights. Furthermore, the dilemma of the Overlay approach would be that it would create boundaries. This would potentially make it more difficult to obtain consent for appropriate, sensitive and unobtrusive built development within the boundaries of the Overlay area. The public could perceive the potential effect of an Overlay as overriding any development rights of the underlying Zone. The suggested alternative approach is to change the Controlled Activity status on buildings and structures on protected ridgelines to Discretionary or Restricted Discretionary Activities. This would allow a more effective re-focus on the assessment of specific merits, design, and response of any proposal to the landform and skyline of the Southern Hills.

**Don't Know:**

- I'm not sure that I totally understand this concept.
- We think the overlaid maps are not exact and would require some clarification before we could accurately comment
- Do not fully understand the overlay concept. Would like to see it explained further. Would like to see the "rural" aspect and atmosphere of Upper Hutt maintained.

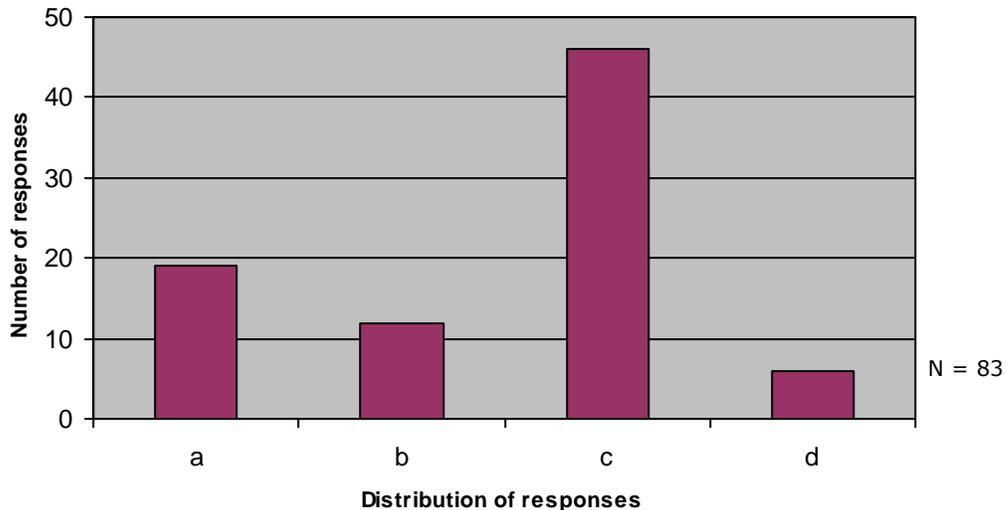
### **E. Extent of Overlay**

83 responses were received to this question.

The following question was asked of the respondents in this section:

1. If an overlay was to be created, how should its boundaries be determined?  
(based on the three options identified in this consultation document)
  - a. Using the entire study area;
  - b. Using the high value areas as identified within the study area:
  - c. Using the high value areas as identified within the study area, but with modified boundaries to more logically follow property boundaries;
  - d. None of the above.  
Why?

#### **Question 1: If an overlay was to be created, how should its boundaries be determined?**



Answer categories	Responses
a	19
b	12
c	46
d	6
Total	83

Legend  
How should the boundaries of the potential overlay be determined?

- a. Using the entire study area
- b. Using the high value areas as identified within the study area
- c. Using the high value areas as identified within the study area, but with modified boundaries to more logically follow property boundaries
- d. None of the above.

**This section allowed for comments to be made. These are provided in the following with the associated answer category.**

**If an overlay was to be created, how should its boundaries be determined?**

**Using the entire study area:**

- So that the area under study is considered as a whole.
- I appreciate the pros / cons and cost implications of the restrictive options, but at this initial stage I believe Council should be taking the conservative approach.
- Again I am really not sure about this but have selected (a) on the basis that this seems to be the option that is most likely to prevent the sort of problem I have described above.
- To preserve for forestry the green backdrop and related ecological and environmental treasures.
- So that control can be maintained by Council.

**Using the high value areas as identified within the study area:**

- Current boundaries should not shape the area that requires to be managed. A "greens field" approach needs to be taken.
- The boundaries should finish where the areas move into a differing zone/area e.g. bush opening up to pasture land or Rural Hill land being moving onto Rural Valley Floor. These transitional areas should be marked and for extended areas (not just for a few hundred meters and then revert back to previous zoning).
- Property boundaries do not follow ecological and natural values but sometimes follow physical features. Property boundaries are usually characterized by straight lines intersecting at angles compared to ecological and landscape values which are the combination of natural and physical characteristics and almost never are defined by straight lines. If an Overlay approach is adopted specific rules on land use management will apply within the boundaries of the Overlay area. If the Overlay boundaries were to follow cadastral property boundaries a potential outcome is that land use activities like vegetation management and earthworks would follow regular boundaries defined by straight edges, and this is likely to result in unnatural edges and patterns in vegetation and development on the hill backdrop which would have adverse effects on the landscape character and visual amenity of the hill backdrop.

**Using the high value areas as identified within the study area, but with modified boundaries to more logically follow property boundaries:**

- The boundaries would need to be set based on the value of the areas. E.g. the Maungaroa swamp appears to me to be a significant area of ecological value. This area should be included alongside the ridge that runs parallel to the swamp because I suspect the two are inter-dependent in terms of supporting wild-life and fauna.
- I don't think heavy restrictions need to be applied to areas that are already heavily surrounded by residential properties but restrictions should be applied to greenfield developments.
- There are some errors on the maps. These need to be corrected prior to enactment.
- I am unsure from the visuals available online if our property is considered to be part of the high value area and would like clarification on this.
- Try to retain as much natural untouched areas as possible or areas where vegetation has re-established itself.

**None of the above:**

- We would choose any option that prevented or discouraged further building in this area to preserve the current character, ecology, wildlife and views.
- Until we are sure of the areas as we answered in 14 above.

## Other

The final questions were not part of the current District Plan change proposal relating to the Southern Hills area, and require more consideration before any work is undertaken. However, the survey used the opportunity to seek landowners' general views prior to commencing work in these areas.

In respect of recreational opportunities the questions below sought the general opinion on the concept of developing a recreational network such as for walkers and cyclists by the landowners. No further consideration has been given to how, where and when such a network could be developed.

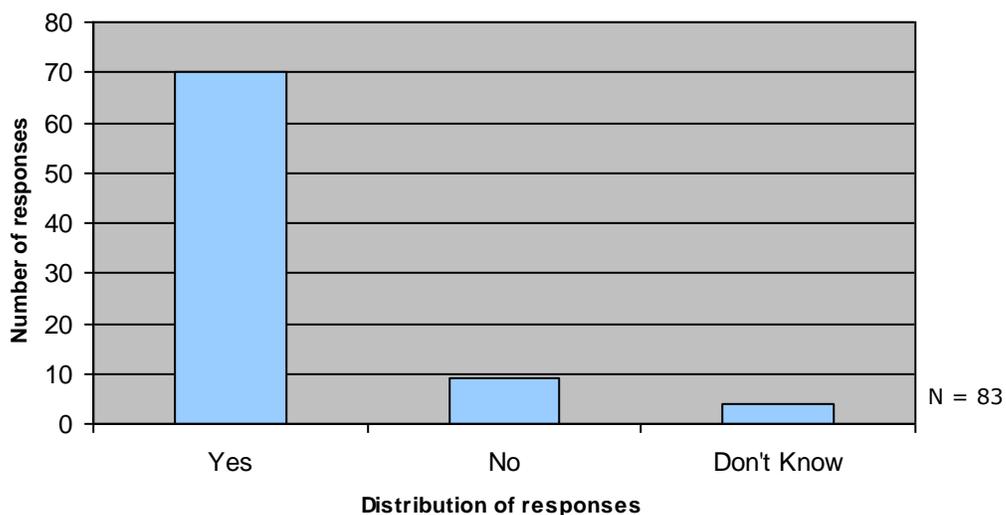
### **F. Recreational opportunities**

The maximum number of responses was 83 for question F2.

The following questions were asked of the respondents in this section:

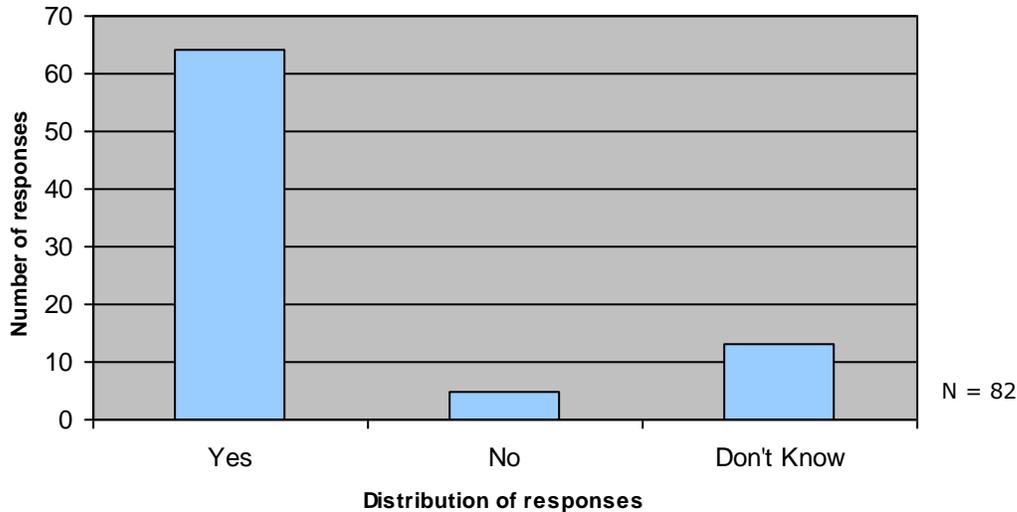
1. Do you consider there are opportunities for enhancing public access to the Southern Hills?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
2. The Council owns or has designed a number of reserve areas within the Southern Hills. Do you consider there is an opportunity to link these areas in order to provide a network along the length of the hills?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)

#### **Question 1: Do you consider there are opportunities for enhancing public access to the Southern Hills?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	70
No	9
Don't Know	4
Total	83

**Question 2: The Council owns or has designed a number of reserve areas within the Southern Hills. Do you consider there is an opportunity to link these areas in order to provide a network along the length of the hills?**



Answer categories	Responses
Yes	64
No	5
Don't Know	13
Total	82

**This section allowed for comments to be made. These are provided in the following with the associated answer category.**

**The Council owns or has designed a number of reserve areas within the Southern Hills. Do you consider there is an opportunity to link these areas in order to provide a network along the length of the hills?**

**Yes:**

- The hill 'trails' and links could ultimately emulate the river trail which gets better all the time - why not?
- The walkers and cyclists need to be kept at a safe distance. Already we have experienced for some years unwanted and unsafe close encounters with cyclists along the river track between Stokes Valley and Trentham Park. Some cyclists have deliberately 'gunned' for walkers believing the walkers were a nuisance.
- Links could be made into the Southern Hills above Pinehaven, and form a continuous amenity area all the way down to Cape Palliser almost for walkways and recreation.

- My interest is particularly in the ridge behind our property in Gorrie Road. The ridgeline is currently grazed. I have been told by Council officers that this land may be linked to Maidstone Park at some stage. The ridgeline would make a great walkway/cycleway.
- There seems little point in preserving the areas for purely visual enhancement when they can also be used for recreation.
- The beauty of these existing areas needs to be protected so as to be enjoyed by the whole of the city. These areas are where any development needs to be looked at very, very carefully before being allowed to go ahead.
- If the hills are to be preserved from development because of their aesthetics to Upper Hutt then it is only logical that they should be accessible for recreational purposes. Walking and mountain biking have become very popular and are a logical use. Not sure about off-road motor vehicles but I would not discount this entirely. In fact, it might be a good idea if done carefully.
- The rights of landowners need to be respected in realising these opportunities.
- I strongly support the development of controlled community use. I also strongly believe that the City must reinforce the reserve behind the Trentham Rifle Range area to protect this national and international range facility.
- Walking tracks only, separate cycle and horse tracks and no motorised vehicles allowed as these destroy vegetation and disturb both wildlife and the peace and quiet that characterise this area.
- I feel there are land owners who will be willing to work with Council along these lines - but it will need to be a two way approach of give and take for both landowners and Council!
- Initially, by clearing existing neglected reserves & footpaths.
- Designated cycle/walkways
- Parking and road traffic for these areas needs to be considered as there may be a risk of populated areas in this vicinity having to content with higher vehicular traffic and this would be detrimental to those who live in the area and enjoy the peace and quiet for which they have built.
- A maintained track bordered by bush is all that is needed if the existing landscape is maintained.
- To enhance the lifestyle of Upper Hutt residents.
- I done properly and promoted correctly this could attract tourists to the area. Making Upper Hutt more of a recreational attraction.
- Yes link them all up and promote a walking track along the hills.
- Recreational opportunities for horse-riding should also be considered.
- There should be no private roads on the Southern Hills. All existing roads (including "gated" roads) that service more than 3 properties should be converted to public roads. Any subdivision should be done in such a way as to link the various communities along the ridge line.
- The use of Reserve Fund Contributions could be used over time to purchase and develop walkway linkages between sites in accordance with an overall public access strategy.

**No:**

- The soil in most parts of this area seems poor, and of limited depth, with a clay base. Public access to these areas may result in excessive erosion.
- Prime focus should be the river track.

**Don't Know:**

- Any intrusion of the public would destroy the uniqueness of the area.
- When creating public access thought should be given to intrusion of privacy of existing near by properties and disturbance of bird life.

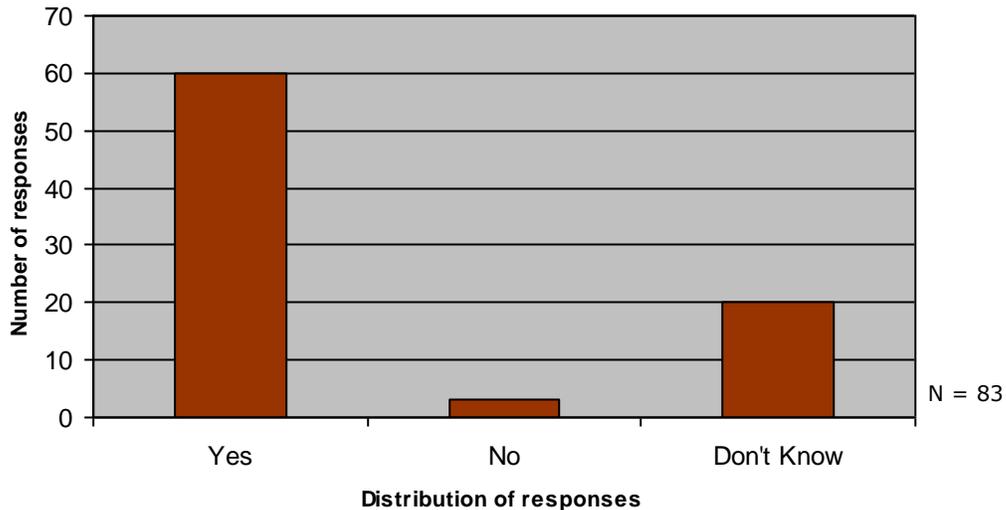
### **G. Heritage**

83 responses were received to this question.

The following questions were asked of the respondents in this section:

1. The study suggested the addition of Wallaceville Cemetery to the Schedule of Heritage items in the Upper Hutt District Plan. Do you support that addition?  
(Answer categories: yes/no/don't know)
2. Are you aware of any other feature within the Southern Hills that could be a heritage item?

#### **Question 1: The study suggested the addition of Wallaceville Cemetery to the Schedule of Heritage items in the Upper Hutt District Plan. Do you support that addition?**



<b>Answer categories</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	60
No	3
Don't Know	20
Total	83

**Question 2: Are you aware of any other feature within the Southern Hills that could be a heritage item?**

- Witako Reserve (now Maori land) - this important quite large area of beech forest just has to be saved for ever. Other than pest control not a lot needs to be done to it - it largely self manages, esp. now the worst of the pine trees have been removed. I.e. no great expense needed here: JUST PRESERVE IT, please.
- Kuku Valley and the Magazines, the Rifle Ranges should be protected from development and closure. The swamp area at the back of the Fendalton Reserve should be protected as it hosts rare plants. The unnecessary drainage ditch there should be restored. The swamp is lower than surrounding properties.
- There is a disused train tunnel on the Upper Hutt side of the Southern Hills behind Montgomery Crescent. This tunnel is part of the old rail route to the Wairarapa. There are interesting culverts and a steam train watering spot at the tunnel entrance (so I have read). Access to this tunnel is overgrown and very few people know it exists. The cuttings and embankments are still intact but overgrown but could be made into a walkway/cycle way relatively easily.
- Pinehaven Community Hall
- The tunnel dug from the Mangaroa Valley to the Upper Hutt Valley for the purpose of supplying water.
- The railway operated by the historic railway society and the old rail bridge over Silverstream creek south of the Silverstream railway station.
- Old railway alignment and tunnel above Montgomery Crescent? Might make a nice walk or bike ride, lookout area etc.
- Tunnels from the old railway
- The Cruickshank railway tunnel and the formed path to that tunnel.
- Cruickshank Rail Tunnel

**Summary**

Participants referred to the following features as potential heritage items:

- Witako Reserve
- Kuku Valley and the Magazines
- the Rifle Ranges
- swamp area at the back of the Fendalton Reserve
- Pinehaven Community Hall
- tunnel dug from the Mangaroa Valley to the Upper Hutt Valley for the purpose of supplying water
- old railway tunnels such as Cruickshank Rail Tunnel

## **H. Any other comments**

This section allowed the participants to state any other comments they would wish to make.

30 responses were received to this question:

- I would like to see the end of all pine forest around the hills. I get sick of having to clean up all the mess from it, all around my property. Blocked guttering, yellow dust, pine needles.
- I am a volunteer pest poisoner of this area - these programmes have to be kept up I am also a mountain biker and walker and know some of these areas well - I am glad the Council is doing this study.
- Good work council. An underrated area that it is getting the attention it needs.
- Would welcome any council assistance in removing noxious species and re-planting in natives. Would also appreciate the council doing its part in keeping land under their aegis free from noxious species.
- I think it's great that runners and cyclists have access to Blue Mountains Road however, for the most part do not treat the area with respect (it is a road designed for vehicles, not push bikes and is a serious accident waiting to happen). Furthermore if access to the public is to continue public toilets should be installed on the loop to avoid the residents having to witness or come across the result of the public defecating.
- Recent pest control measures by the Regional Council are appreciated. I believe possum numbers in the area are now low. I am disturbed to see a significant area of beech forest in my neighbourhood being undergrazed by farmed goats. The goats have eaten all the undergrowth. In my short time living in the neighbourhood I have seen a number of ancient beech trees blown over and because there is no undergrowth or emerging young trees, there are slips developing and grass and weeds growing where there would be re-growth of the forest were it not for the browsing by goats. Any future ecological management should include controls on stock types/ fencing and grazing of sensitive areas.
- Help with question clarification without having to read all the documents- bullet/key points/executive summary.
- Way off from anything above but has the Council also considered a Dog friendly Park - That is one that is fully fenced and has no vehicles or bikes allowed - I pay a lot of money for my dogs to be registered - what apart from empty plastic bg holders does the council give me in return. I feel very restricted, especially during the summer months as to where I can freely walk my dogs, as I don't like to take them where families are picnicking etc. as often children do not like dogs. All I ask is a small area of one of the existing parks where only dogs/owners are allowed - even if this meant we weren't allowed in other areas at least we'd then have this area to go to and everyone would know that here there would be dogs off the lead but fully fenced so can't run away and can't get hit by ignorant people who do not follow the speed limit especially at Moonshine Park.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I would like to be kept informed, and happy to give further comment / input.
- My overall view is that folk should be allowed to maintain and develop their own personal landscapes without heavy handed oversight by beaurocrats. I am a strong believer in Rodney Hides stance regarding the removal of trees. I think that the vast majority of people are not silly and would not buy into such a beautiful area with the intention of destroying that beauty. If a tree needs to be removed from a property to allow more winter sunlight in and its removal is not going to have any effect on anyone else, they have every God-given right to do as they please on their own land. We have become way, way too PC as a country and used to the nanny state mentality.....we need to re-learn to let people be people and learn to respect one another's decisions around this

- sort of thing. There is no way this type of decision should be dictated to by anyone else....people have a right to do what they want to on their own property.
- Because I live in Maori Bank, we have pine trees growing on the hills behind, at what stage will they be felled and to what extent. It would surely spoil the outlook to living in the area.
  - Very good report and a study well worth doing (i.e. spending money on).
  - Please create an opportunity for feedback on the maps so that local knowledge may correct / modify errors and inconsistencies.
  - Thank you for the opportunity. On this important issue it is heartening to see Council adopt this proactive consultation.
  - The Southern Hills are a fabulous natural resource that should be protected from further development. Whilst our property is in this area we have undertaken to do as little damage to the natural environment as possible and would recommend the council to do likewise. Any change to this area should only be to enhance access for the public to enjoy it without further damage.
  - Dump the Resource Consent process and allow residents to get on with their lives.
  - Where private properties the Reserve land clearer demarcation limits are required. Better control and maintenance of Reserve areas is required.
  - We appreciate the opportunity to have our say.
  - I think all footpaths and walkways should be restricted for walkers to encourage a peaceful and safe environment. There appears to be plenty of area for cyclists already. All dogs should be kept on a leash at all times, to avoid risk to the local ecology.
  - We have been asked in the past for our input on different matters that are of importance to Upper Hutt and to our residential area. Unfortunately, we have not always been contacted before decisions are made and in 25 years, have never once been part of a telephone survey. Wondering about that and making certain that everyone involved or living in these areas is given every opportunity to have all the information available and to give their responses.
  - It's difficult to answer some of the questions, as we have limited information regarding these points.
  - All rule changes to apply only to high value areas.
  - It would be a shame to see the hills butchered and carved up by development. The residential properties along Sierra Way in the Blue Mountains area are good, in that there are quite a few houses up there but they are mostly not visible from the valley floor, because the native bush hides them. This is the sort of thing that should be aimed for if development is to be allowed.
  - Residential development of the lower parts of the western side of the Southern Hills is a far better option than ruining the productive rural land of Maymorn to accommodate the supposed growth the current UH councilors and staff believe is going to occur in Upper Hutt over the next 20 years. The western foothills would be an attractive residential option, being north-facing, adjacent to urban amenities while being accessible to the natural reserves and recreation networks to be developed along the ridgeline. The rural Whiteman's and Mangaroa Valleys should be regarded far more highly for the value they add to Upper Hutt. In the Wellington region alone there is no other area with flat, quality, productive land so close to an urban centre. Why waste it when there is plenty of land available on the urban side of the Southern Hills? The value to those wanting their 10 acre block is only going to increase, and thus Upper Hutt will attract families in a higher socio economic bracket. The land brings in new residents from all around the region, country and indeed the world. It is unique - why destroy this treasured asset by reducing the rural amenity? It seems so absurd, and short-sighted. The rural amenity includes the eastern side of the Southern Hills, where development below 4ha should not occur.
  - Visible structures or tree felling on the ridge line should be defined as "visible from most public roads". Have a maximum viewing angle to which the rule applies. E.g. if the viewing angle to the top of the visible ridge line is more than 30 degrees from level, then

the rule does not apply. There is a very big difference between the visible ridge line and the viewable ridge line.

- Prefer walk ways above cycle paths.
- Questions are crossed off because any answer implies a level of acceptance for your development plans. As these are at the best nebulous in the extreme, this survey is extremely unfair as being premature. As the attached sheet describes, this is no time for poorly planned grandiose schemes to evaluate.
- The study carried out for UHCC correctly identified that the best indigenous forest is in private ownership. That is the reason it exists because the public have not had a chance to destroy it.
- In each plan for Upper Hutt the focus is on urban growth. There is no positive initiative to put a preservation status on any of the remaining stands of mature and regenerating native bush, just what density of housing can we fit on. This seems at variance with the "Clean green" statement in the management report. The council owned "Pinehill" spur, which adjoins the Witako Scenic Reserve, Pinehill Crscent and Evergreen Crescent, could/should on the perimeter with Pinehill Crescent and particularly where it joins the Witako Scenic Reserve. The mature stand of bush at the junction of Alexander Road with the Wallaceville (Hill) Road could/should be given reserve status. There was mention that Upper Hutt City Council would accept land in lieu of development fees, this I now see mentioned as low priority.
- Unfortunately we are of the opinion that the opportunity should be taken to lay down the regulations in the strictest terms possible to remove all discretionary powers from Council staff members. Over the past few years we have seen the results of a local "cowboy" thumbing his nose at Council and carrying out unauthorised earthworks on the hillside above Hobbit Lane. The land was zoned Rural with approval for 3 building sites and the owner made approaches to the Council for rezoning with a view to developing. A major housing subdivision. When this was declined he proceeded to carry out major earthworks of the hillside without gaining necessary authorisation or resource consent. When the Council became aware they put a stop on the work until necessary plans and engineering reports had been deposited and approved. The Council subsequently approved the work already illegally completed in retrospect???

What sort of message does this send out to cowboys of this person's nature?

The contract in my view was poorly supervised by Council judging. By the appearance of the site. There are no batters on large cuts with resultant slippages, the so-called planting promised appear to be gorse and regenerating pine, the gorse of a creek was diverted and the hillside which was completely vandalized has been left with large scars, no foliage and is an eyesore.

The contractor/owner is at present sealing a large driveway onto the property which is more than adequate for three building sites so one suspects he has not given up on his intentions to have a housing developments. – One can only hope that Council officers are not making behind the scenes commitments.

This exercise highlights the necessity for UHCC to bring in rigid regulations to control earthworks on all hillside properties and also to protect and control any removal of vegetation. Apart from land destruction and scarrage, the removal of vegetation results in slippage and water run off onto adjacent properties unless controlled. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this study.