

# Horowhenua - Rural Subdivision Design Guide

[www.horowhenua.govt.nz](http://www.horowhenua.govt.nz)

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# How to use this Design Guideline

## Document Structure

This Design Guide is organised into the following five sections:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Process**
3. **Outcomes**
4. **Guidelines**
5. **Appendices**

**The Introduction** section provides background information and explains terms used in this document.

**The Process** section sets out the process steps that anyone considering undertaking a subdivision should follow before lodging a subdivision application.

**The Outcomes** section sets out the end goals that applicants should be aiming for when designing a subdivision development.

**The Guidelines** section provides details on design methods and practical solutions that would assist in achieving the end goals set out in the Outcomes section.

**The Appendices** include the detailed road section requirements, useful references and sources of information to assist in the subdivision design process.



## Purpose

This Design Guide is relevant to all rural zoned properties in the Horowhenua District Plan. The Design Guide has been developed to provide guidance for those undertaking subdivision within the rural environment. The Design Guide provides a set of outcomes and guidelines to inform landowners, developers, potentially affected people and the wider community about rural subdivision development expectations within the Horowhenua rural environment.

The Design Guide does not seek to impose rules on new development, or to prescribe specific design solutions. Rather, it offers a flexible framework within which developers and surveyors can work. Based on the existing character of the rural environment, this framework identifies key subdivision design principles to assist the integration of new subdivision development into the surrounding context and to enhance the character of the area. This means that while development proposals are expected to demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the character and quality of the area, there is flexibility in terms of detailed design.

The illustrations in the guide are intended to further clarify principles and outcomes outlined in the text, and are not intended to represent actual design solutions.

**Advisory Note:** *It is noted that the Design Guide covers a wide range of issues. Not all issues addressed in this Design Guide will apply to every subdivision, therefore, some of the guidelines will not be applicable. For example, if there are no waterbodies within, adjacent to or near the subject site, the applicant would not be expected to demonstrate that the subdivision design is in accordance with the guidelines relating to waterbodies.*

## How it Applies

The Rural subdivision rules require that subdivisions are designed in accordance with the Design guide for Limited Discretionary, Discretionary and Non-Complying subdivisions. It will still be relevant and beneficial to Controlled Activity subdivisions, although a Controlled Activity application can not be declined on the basis that it is not in accordance with this Design Guide.

To demonstrate that the subdivision design is in accordance with the Design Guide, applicants need to demonstrate to the Council that the subdivision is in accordance with the following:

1. The **Process** of the Design Guide.
2. The **Outcomes** of the Design Guide.
3. The **Guidelines** of the Design Guide.

Read through the Design Guide so you are familiar with the format and content of the document and then begin by working through the process steps as set out in Section 2.

You will find it useful to refer to Section 4 throughout the Design Options phase of the process steps.

# 1.0 Introduction

The Design Guide serves as a method to implement the objectives and policies of the Horowhenua District Plan (HDP) in relation to rural subdivision. There are a number of objectives and policies in the HDP (mainly contained in Section 2 of the Plan) that are relevant to rural subdivision. By using the Design Guide in the design of subdivision development, consistency with these objectives and policies can be achieved.

It is important for applicants, developers, and surveyors to consult with the Council at an early stage of the development. Careful planning and consideration of alternative design solutions prior to submitting an application should increase the chances of obtaining subdivision approval and can have the added benefit of reducing uncertainty and the timeframe for processing the subdivision application.

Multiple lot subdivisions require more careful design considerations than single lot subdivisions as they have the greatest potential to generate adverse effects on the environment. Although the size and scale of a subdivision will mean that not all aspects of the Design Guide will always be relevant, the principles of the design approaches and techniques can be applied to the even the most basic of subdivisions.



## Design Considerations

Some of the key design considerations highlighted in this guide are:

- ✓ Designing the subdivision appropriately with the existing rural landscape character in mind.
- ✓ Enhancing the natural and rural character of a particular landscape.
- ✓ Designing subdivisions including individual allotments that are sympathetic to the natural landforms of the site.
- ✓ Reducing the effects of urbanisation of the rural landscape by avoiding urban patterns of development.
- ✓ Integrating natural features such as existing trees, waterways, areas of indigenous vegetation into the subdivision design.
- ✓ Reducing discordant types of human modifications such as earthworks for roads, access and building sites.
- ✓ Siting buildings/building sites sympathetically and unobtrusively in the rural landscape.
- ✓ Incorporating and protecting areas of ecological importance such as native vegetation and waterways as part of the subdivision.
- ✓ Providing appropriate planting as part of the subdivision.



## What are Amenity Values?

Amenity values is a subjective term which is defined in the Resource Management Act. Amenity Values are the natural and physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational attributes.

In a rural context Amenity Values can be:

- ✓ Views to and of a natural landscape with native bush, a river, lake, or snow capped hills
- ✓ Accessible public open space
- ✓ Recreational facilities
- ✓ Fresh air and the absence of foul smells or excessive dust
- ✓ Qualities such as privacy or quietness
- ✓ Views of undeveloped horizons of skylines
- ✓ The absence of perceived environmental detractors
- ✓ The absence of traffic
- ✓ Natural and unmodified landscapes

▶ Identification of what makes up the amenity values of an area is an essential step in minimising any potential adverse effects of a subdivision.



## What is Landscape Character?

Landscape character is the combination of traits and qualities distinguishing the individual nature or peculiarities of any particular area of land. A landscape is the visible expression of the physical, biological and cultural process occurring at a particular place. Landscape character is influenced by the inter-relationship of land use, the land form, land cover, together with other aspects such as the visual qualities that an area may have.

In New Zealand the landscape character ranges from the pristine, natural and unmodified end of the spectrum to the highly modified and artificially built end of the spectrum.

Within Horowhenua the rural environment consists of strongly defined landscapes that have clear distinctions between the natural character such as areas of mature indigenous vegetation within the Tararua Ranges, and the built and modified environment such as the flood protection works along the Manawatu River.

## What is Natural Character?

Natural character can be summarised as that which has been established by nature. The degree of naturalness or natural character is a reflection of the natural processes rather than human activities or influences.

The preservation of natural character requires the maintenance of the viable functioning of natural processes and systems as well as the visual attributes of 'naturalness'. Essentially the natural elements, patterns and processes must all be present to some degree if an area is to have natural character. The extent of naturalness will depend on the context and scale, however it is recognised that there must be a clear predominance of natural elements.

Artificial elements should certainly not dominate and should contribute very little to the scene. Where artificial elements are necessary or present they should be incorporated into natural patterns to reduce the impact of their presence on the natural character of an area.



## What is Rural Character?

Rural Character is strongly influenced by the type and intensity of rural activities taking place. Whilst natural elements will generally be present they are often dominated by patterns and processes arising from human activity. Rural landscapes are inhabited landscapes and therefore differ from 'natural' landscapes where human presence is minimal or absent.

In the rural environment these human processes are typically those associated with primary production such as cropping, farming and forestry activities. The process of subdivision and the resulting residential development has the potential to interrupt these rural processes and introduce conflicts between rural activities and rural lifestyle ambitions. Generally it is the rural character and the attraction of living within the rural environment which is the main reason why there is strong demand for rural subdivision.

## General Attractions of Rural Subdivision

The general attractions of rural subdivisions include:

- ✓ Space and privacy
- ✓ Convenient location to town or work opportunities
- ✓ Land with character and contour
- ✓ A natural aspect with views to mountains, lakes, rivers, areas of woodland, bush or farmland
- ✓ A rural lifestyle associated with a slower pace of life
- ✓ The ability to develop self sufficiency or farming interests
- ✓ Rural amenity values, uncluttered vistas, absence of urban noise and traffic movements, presence of rural activities.



## General adverse effects on the rural character from subdivision

Rural character is an asset and is a desirable quality appreciated by many people. Ironically it is often through creating subdivisions for those who want to be able to enjoy the rural character and benefits of living in the rural environment that leads to the rural character being compromised.

Adverse effects on the rural character from subdivision can include:

- ✘ The change in the balance between built elements and natural elements
- ✘ Loss of naturalness
- ✘ Loss of openness
- ✘ Increased traffic movement and noise
- ✘ Loss of privacy
- ✘ Potential for reverse sensitivity
- ✘ Screening of special or natural features with buildings and structures
- ✘ Loss of, or degradation of important natural features
- ✘ Obtrusive earthwork scars on highly visible or elevated landscapes.



## Maintaining Rural Character

Maintaining rural character when undertaking a rural subdivision is one of the challenges. To achieve, this rural subdivision and development must be responsive to the rural character qualities previously raised.

The following are some basic considerations for subdivision in a rural landscape, to assist in maintaining rural character:

- ✘ Avoid sensitive ecological areas or landscapes
- ✘ Areas subject to natural hazards should also be avoided
- ✘ The scale and intensity of development needs to be consistent with the capacity of the locality to absorb the development without losing its rural character
- ✘ Building design and its relationship to its surroundings can be seen as an issue of coherence and harmony. It is relevant to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values
- ✘ Roads, accessways and driveways should follow contours and respond to natural features such as trees, wetlands or changes in level together with property boundaries that relate to existing features to soften the appearance of new development
- ✘ Minimise alterations to natural landforms and processes.



## Making the Most of Existing Features

Sensitive subdivision design through integrating the existing and special features of a site has many advantages.

There are many successful techniques for responding to the special characteristics of a site or area.

These can include:

- ✓ Protection and enhancement of existing waterways
- ✓ Provision of walkways or esplanade strips along waterways
- ✓ Linking the subdivision to walkways, cycleways, parks, reserves or other community facilities
- ✓ Protection of attractive views to and from the site
- ✓ Protection of any rare and threatened animal or plant species on the site
- ✓ Protection and enhancement of areas of indigenous bush or natural habitats
- ✓ Connecting areas of indigenous bush
- ✓ Establishing long term protection of areas with high ecological values
- ✓ Retention of existing trees for shelter, privacy, or as focal points creating interest or identity
- ✓ Protection of heritage, archaeological or cultural sites.



## Which Rural Land Type?

The Horowhenua's rural area is a varied environment with three broad land types: being the distinctive coastal sand country characterised by sand dune formations and natural features; the inland plains and river terraces comprising flat fertile land; and the hill country that forms the backdrop to the District.

### Coastal Sand Country

The coastal sand country forms the western edge to the Horowhenua. The key characteristics of the coastal sand country are the dune formations, including the fragile and dynamic foredunes through to the more stable and defined inland dunes, the interdunal flats and wetlands and coastal lakes. These features are highly valued and contribute to the character and identity of the Horowhenua. It is important the nature, intensity and design of any subdivision recognises and is integrated with this character.

### Inland Plains and River Terraces

The inland plains and river terraces are located centrally within the district. The inland plains have a characteristic of flat to gently rolling landform with river terraces. The overall landscape has a "green", vegetated, farmed character reflecting the fertile soils and their productive use. The existing landholding and land use creates a patchwork effect across this landscape. Subdivision is to be carefully managed to protect the productive use of this land resource, while also providing the ability to provide for discrete small scale rural living.

### Hill Country

The hill country provides a backdrop along the eastern edge of the Horowhenua. This backdrop is characterised by steep hills with a mixed large scale land use pattern, with dry stock grazing, plantation forestry and remnant and regenerating indigenous vegetation predominating. As a backdrop, any subdivision needs to consider the highly visible nature of new access, earthworks and buildings.



Coastal Sand Country



Inland Plains and River Terraces



Hill Country



Horowhenua's  
Landscape  
Types

# 2.0 Process

## Process Steps

### 1. Research

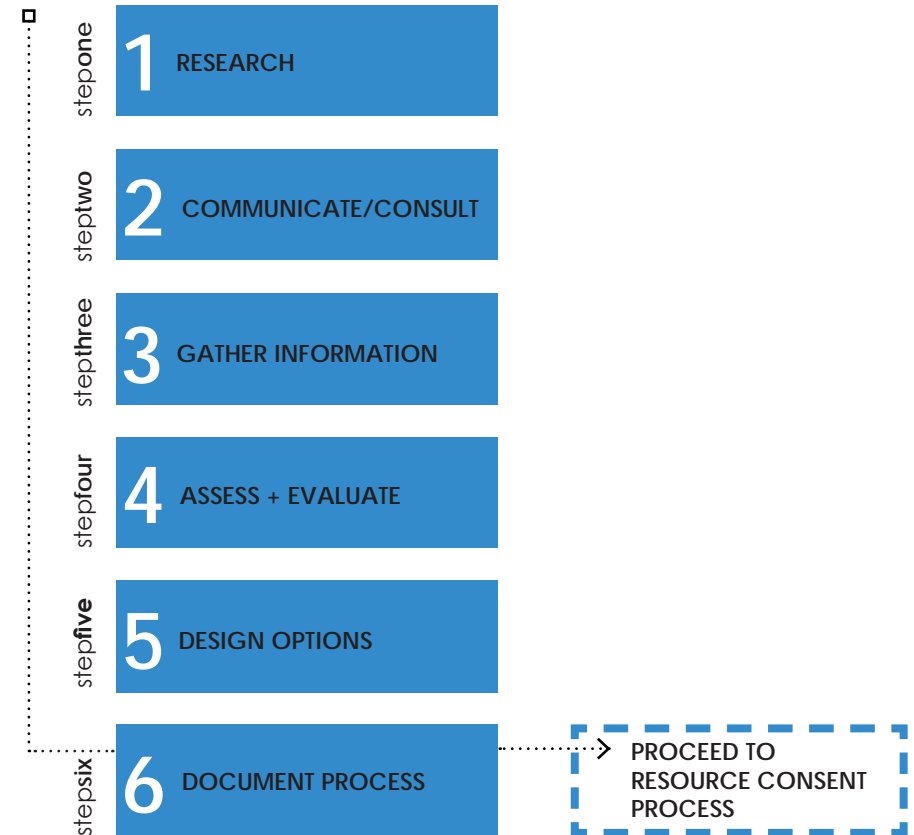
- Read the Design Guide, including all outcomes, guidelines and landscape advisory notes.
- Identify consent requirements, for both subdivision and landuse consents.
- Identify any encumbrances registered on the certificate of title such as covenants or consent notices.
- Visit the site including the surrounding area and become familiar with it in the context of the Design Guide.

### 2. Communicate and Consult

- Discuss your development ideas with Council staff and other potentially affected parties. It may be necessary to meet with the Council Officers more than once to develop a suitable design that can be lodged as a resource consent application.
- Consider your neighbour's interests. Discuss your development with them especially if your application is likely to be notified. You may find they have some really worthwhile local knowledge or ideas that could help your development.

### 3. Gather Information and Research

- Use the outcomes of this design guide as a checklist for collecting the right kind of information, and to determine which topics may require further research and investigation.
- In particular, ensure that the following requirements have been identified, recorded and mapped:
  - Landscape character and amenity attributes of the site and the surrounding landscape such as topographic features, coastal features, rural amenity values, vegetation patterns, landscape character attributes (including the land use, land cover and land form of the site) or other aesthetic qualities. Drainage features of the site and surrounding landscape, including surface water bodies, flood risk areas, ponding areas, topographical drainage patterns and coastal margins.
  - Social-cultural attributes, such as existing buildings, current and historic land use, heritage, archaeological and cultural sites, and local or community facilities including parks and reserves.
  - Productive land values of the site, such as soil type, topography, aspect and water.
  - Attributes that are relevant to the on-site disposal of wastewater – such as soil permeability, groundwater depths, slope and topography, aspect and surface water bodies.
  - Attributes which are relevant to the provision of infrastructure services – such as highways, roads, access-ways, stormwater management features, water supply and public amenities.
  - Attributes relevant to the development of the site – such as transmission lines, stop banks, railway lines, natural hazards, neighbouring buildings and land uses.



#### 4. Assess and Evaluate

- Assess the information collected using the development outcomes in this Design Guide.
- Map and describe areas of the site where land development would potentially result in adverse environmental effects because of environmental constraints. This information is termed “constraints” information.
- Map and describe areas of the site where development could occur without adverse environmental effects that are more than minor. This information is termed “opportunities information”.
- Overlay the constraints information with the opportunities information from above. Use a map or maps to show areas that may be developed and areas that should remain undeveloped in terms of the outcomes of the Design Guide.

#### 5. Design Options for Subdivision and Development

- Determine possible building location areas and allotment boundaries using the areas identified as opportunities for development. Apply the guidelines of the Design Guide when choosing sites and determining boundaries.
- Identify road, access, service infrastructure, stormwater and wastewater management options using the guidelines of the Design Guide.
- Draft possible design options for a subdivision and development proposal.
- Compare each design option against the design outcomes of the Design Guide.
- Select a preferred design option based on consistency with the outcomes and adherence to guidelines of the Design Guide.
- Generally the preferred design should avoid any adverse effects on amenity values, visual and environmental qualities, outstanding landscapes, natural features, natural habitats, and landscape character.

#### 6. Document the Process

- Compile all of the documentation used in the process of design, including the information gathered, the assessment and evaluation process, the process of subdivision and development design.
- Explain and provide reasons for the preferred option.
- Submit all the process documentation together with the application to the Council.



# 3.0 Outcomes

## Subdivision Development Outcomes

The outcomes sought by this Design Guide are set out below. These are that the subdivision and development will:

- ▶ Maintain and enhance the landscape character and rural amenity values of the rural environment.
- ▶ Avoid adverse visual amenity effects.
- ▶ Preserve highly productive soils (Class 1 and 2 Highly versatile soil) for present and future rural productive uses.
- ▶ Avoid potential cross boundary conflict between productive and residential land uses by separation and buffer areas.
- ▶ Recognise and provide for natural drainage characteristics of the site will be retained or enhanced.
- ▶ Riparian margins of rivers and significant waterways will be protected and enhanced.
- ▶ Avoid adverse effects on the ecological values of the Manawatu, Ohau, Tokomaru Rivers and Waikawa Stream environments.
- ▶ Include water conservation measures including rainwater storage, stormwater retention and wastewater recycling.
- ▶ Include wastewater management to ensure that there will be no adverse effects on soil, groundwater or other natural resources that are more than minor.
- ▶ Demonstrate the layout, building site areas, and access will maintain or enhance the visual amenity, landscape values and character of the site.
- ▶ Include vegetation and plantings to maintain or enhance the visual amenity and character of the landscape.



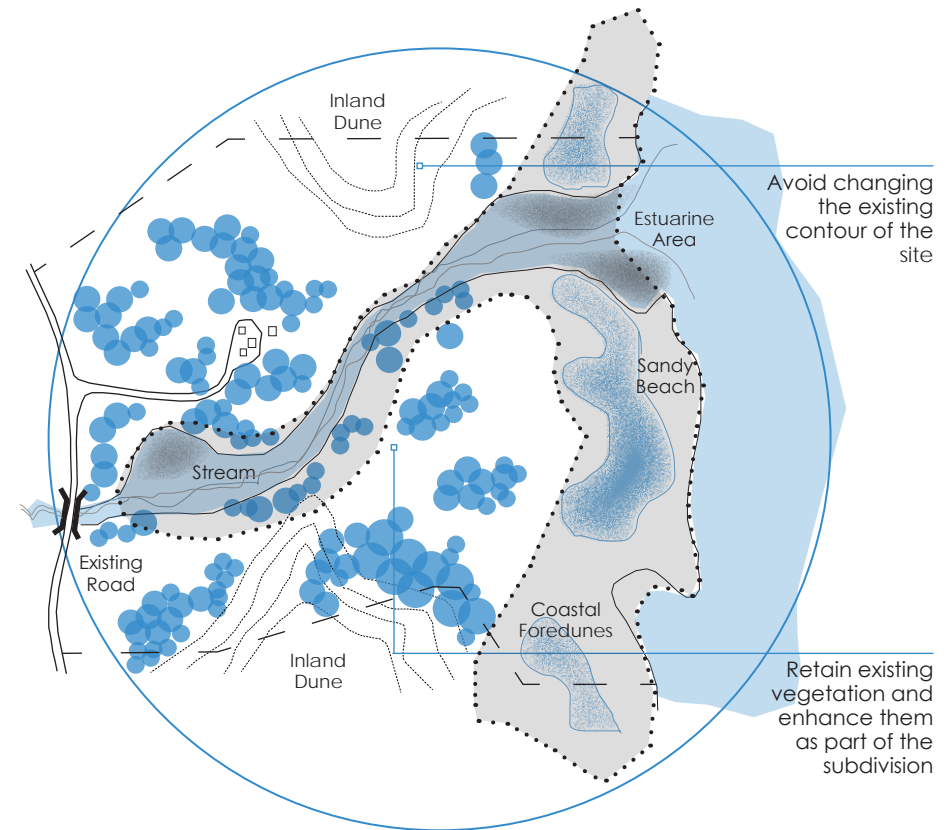
- ▶ Protect and enhance wetland areas, natural habitats and remnant areas within the subdivision.
- ▶ Reflect scale and intensity that is in keeping with the nature of the rural landscape.
- ▶ Maintain a rural character that avoids urban forms and patterns of development.
- ▶ Manage earthworks that avoid adverse effects on the landscape and land stability.
- ▶ Preserve the natural character of the site and in particular that of any outstanding landscape or natural feature.
- ▶ Avoid areas where there is a significant risk from natural hazards.
- ▶ Protect and preserve any archaeological, heritage, or cultural values within the subdivision site.
- ▶ Demonstrate that the subdivision will result in the sustainable management and efficient use of land.






# 4.0 Guidelines

## Landforms and Contours

- 1 Consider contouring any necessary earthworks on site to harmonise with the surrounding landforms.
- 2 Avoid changing the existing natural landforms.
- 3 Use the existing landforms (such as sand dunes or terraces) and vegetation as a backdrop for new building sites.
- 4 Consider clustering new building sites within the contours of the land avoiding ridge or dune tops and exposed slopes to ensure that the development does not detract from the surrounding natural landscape character and to maintain the open rural character.
- 5 Carefully consider the use of gully and catchment areas for new lots as these areas can be ecologically sensitive but can offer opportunities for ecological enhancement as part of a subdivision to add character and value.
- 6 Look at the existing roading, agricultural, vegetation, development and drainage patterns in the broader landscape and use these to guide the design of the subdivision.
- 7 On flat sites at the foot of a hill or terrace consider locating new building sites near the base of the hill or terrace. This will provide a backdrop to the buildings and help retain rural open space on the flat land.
- 8 On Elevated, Hill or Dune Country sites, make the subdivision fit the land. Consider varying and adjusting allotment sizes to fit the landforms and contours.
- 9 Provide roads and access that curve with the landform and avoid hill or dune tops to ensure a good landscape fit.
- 10 On rolling or sloping land avoid straight roads that visually disrupt the landform. A uniform subdivision layout can obliterate the existing landform character on these sites.



### Landforms, Contours and Landscape Features

- Riparian Vegetation 
- Area with High Natural Character 
- Existing Woody Vegetation 

## Landscape Features

- 1 Natural or physical features such as sand dunes, streams and shelter belts on the site should be enhanced as part of the subdivision.
- 2 Avoid felling any trees or removing any features until it has been carefully considered how they might be used to enhance the subdivision.
- 3 Try incorporating existing landscape features into the layout of allotments and roads. Use existing trees as focal points for entrances, roads, cycle ways and paths.
- 4 Identify and locate protected features within the site such as heritage, archaeological, cultural and ecological sites of importance.
- 5 Streams and waterways can be attractive features and should be enhanced as part of the open spaces in the subdivision.
- 6 Locate sites for new buildings so that existing landforms, shelter belts and trees provide shelter from wind and rain.
- 7 Look for attractive views from your subdivision to the surrounding landscape and try to incorporate these into the subdivision.
- 8 Consider the provision of a Conservation Lot as part of the subdivision where the site contains an area (greater than 5000m<sup>2</sup>) of indigenous vegetation or wetland.



Enhance natural features such as waterways as part of the subdivision



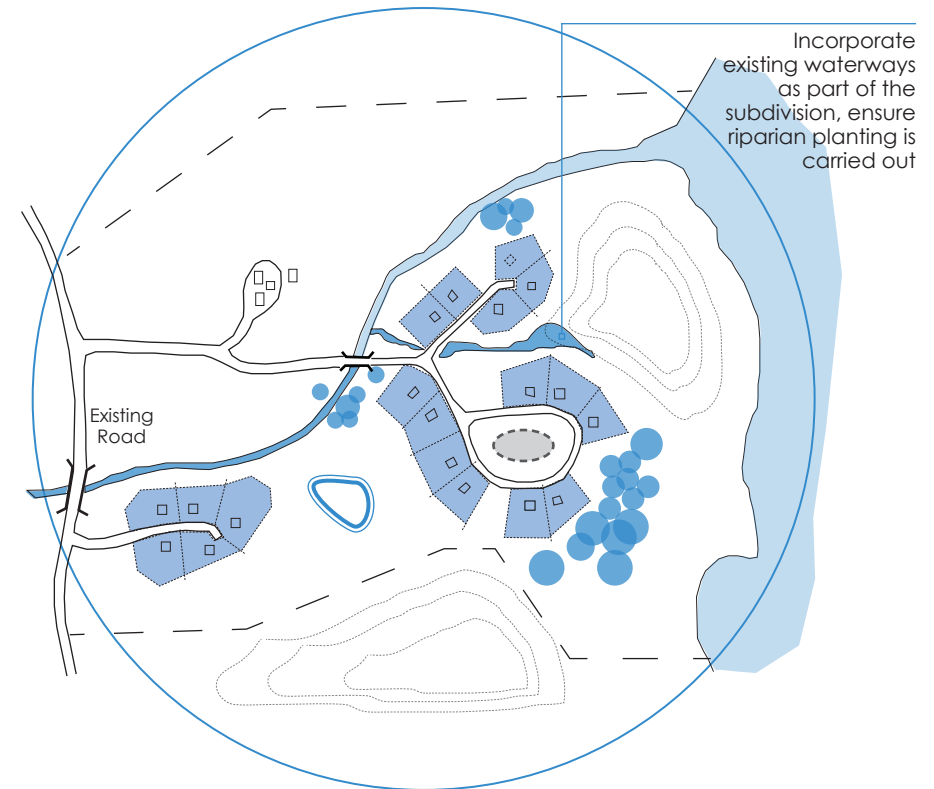
Avoid changing the existing natural landforms



Locate sites for new buildings to gain shelter from existing landforms and vegetation

## Water, Drainage and Stormwater

- 1 Consider creating an esplanade reserve or access strip along a waterway.
- 2 Ensure that riparian planting is carried out along any river or stream. Generally 10 metres of planting each side is recommended, however the steeper the land adjacent to the stream the faster the runoff so a wider riparian strip will be necessary.
- 3 Use appropriate species for riparian planting – the Environmental Guidelines for Rural Living (2001) provides guidance for the different environments within the Horowhenua.
- 4 Minimise the 'hard' stormwater management network (such as pipes and culverts) through the use of swales and rain gardens for collecting, channeling and soakage of stormwater runoff from roads and paths.
- 5 Ensure that the appropriate ecological input is provided for the size, configuration, edge, slope, plant material, management and maintenance of any wetland to be utilised for stormwater management.
- 6 Consider enhancing natural systems such as wetlands, waterways and low lying areas for their habitat value and as part of recreational networks.
- 7 Retain the natural drainage characteristics of the landscape including drainage contours, wetlands and streams and integrate them into the network for stormwater management.
- 8 Consider the use of on-site stormwater detention in the management of stormwater to enhance ground water replenishment and/or to provide an alternative source of non-potable water for a range of uses including firefighting and irrigation.
- 9 Use low impact stormwater design solutions.
- 10 Fence off riparian margins to prevent stock access to waterways.
- 11 Avoid earthworks in close proximity to surface water bodies.
- 12 Provide separation distances between the margins of waterways and building development.



### Water, Drainage and Stormwater

- Riparian Vegetation Adjacent Existing Waterway
- Potential Location for On-site Stormwater Storage
- Area Suitable For Combined Sewage Treatment

## Wastewater

- 1 Ensure that the disposal field of any wastewater system is located on terrain that is suitable for the disposal of wastewater in terms of soil permeability, drainage, slope, groundwater depth, waterways proximity and aspect.
- 2 Locate disposal systems so that they do not compromise or become compromised by existing or proposed features including waterways, road and buildings.
- 3 Encourage effluent disposal fields to be planted and landscaped through thoughtful siting of the disposal fields. The Environmental Guidelines for Rural Living (2001) provides a list of species that are suitable for filtration planting.

## Water Supply

- 1 Encourage water conservation principles such as rainwater storage and stormwater detention in the design and layout of the subdivision.
- 2 Collect and store rainwater from roofs of buildings and impermeable surfaces.
- 3 Consider specifically collecting and retaining stormwater for non-potable uses such as irrigation and firefighting.



Consider on-site stormwater detention



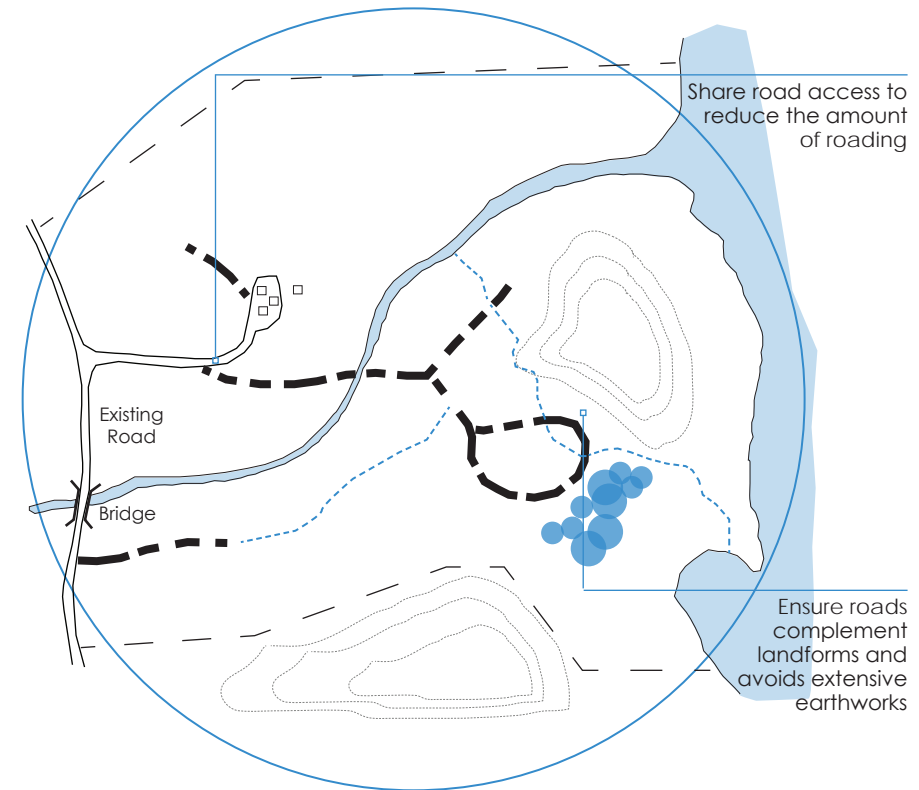
Ensure riparian planting is located along any river or stream



Minimise 'hard' stormwater solutions

## Roads, Transport, Access and Fencing

- 1 In providing new roads, consider the function of the road network as to whether it is to be an arterial road, a collector road, local road or accessway and reflect this in the design to avoid roads that are over-scaled relative to their purpose and traffic volumes (Refer to the Road Sections in the Appendices and HDC Minimum Engineering Standards).
- 2 Ensure that road reserve areas are of sufficient width to accommodate the provision of stormwater swales and rain gardens (where ground conditions are suitable), a shared walking/cycle path off the road or planting.
- 3 Footpaths and cycleways do not need to follow roads. Consider making these meander along waterways or past areas of interest with good views of the broader landscape.
- 4 Ensure that roads and accesses to buildings complement the landforms, avoiding extensive earthworks or earthworks that cut across natural patterns of land leaving visible scars.
- 5 Ensure that vehicle access does not accentuate buildings or building sites by leading the eye to them.
- 6 Consider the location of buildings and building sites together with their access to minimise the length of roading or driveway required.
- 7 Provide shared access to reduce the amount of roading required and also to reduce the number of entrances onto the roading network.
- 8 Provide right-of-ways with sufficient legal width to accommodate any future subdivision.



### Roads, Transport, Access and Fencing

- Possible Road Access — — — — —
- Possible Pedestrian/Cycle Access - - - - -

- 9** Take into account the design of the road in terms of traffic safety and desirable traffic speeds (wide, straight roads will encourage faster speeds than a narrow curved road).
- 10** Provide for the transport needs of rural productive land uses in the design and layout of roads and access.
- 11** Minimise pole mounted street lighting by restricting its use to intersections of arterial or collector roads.
- 12** Ensure that fencing is limited to what is functional to retain views and the open rural landscape character, consider planting hedges and trees as alternative means to fencing. Where fencing is provided, encourage permeable fencing.
- 13** Consider private covenants to control the location, design, colour, materials and height of fences.



Ensure road reserves areas are of sufficient width to accommodate stormwater swales



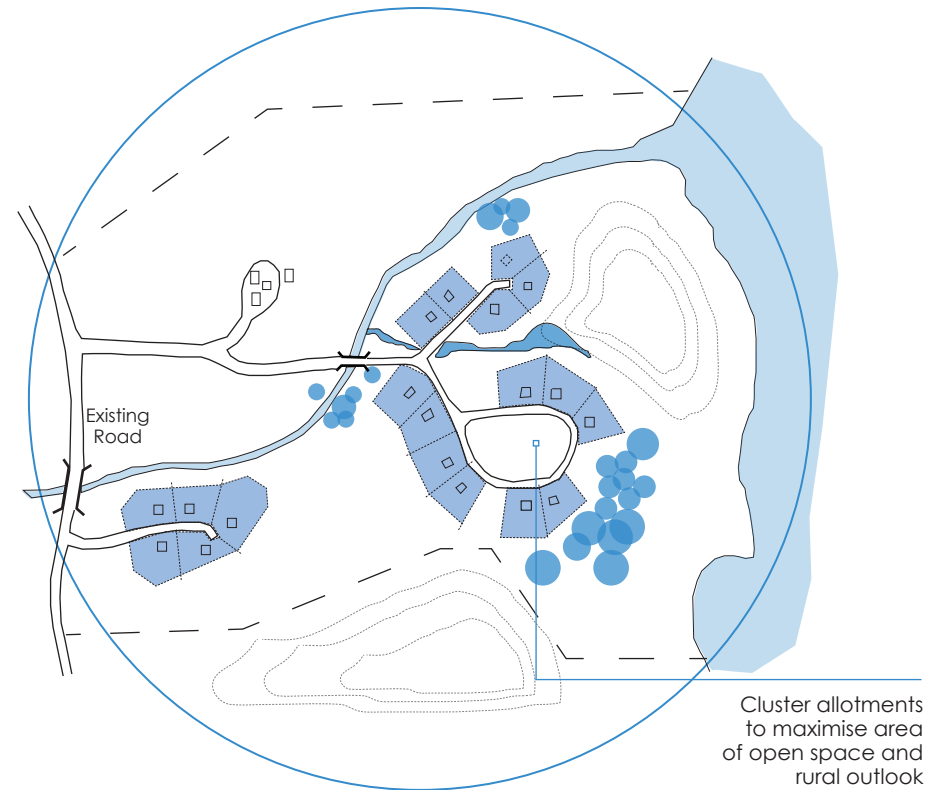
Ensure roads complement existing landforms and vegetation






Avoid roads in locations that require large cut and fill areas

## Allotment Layout and Boundaries

- 1 Provide a variety of allotment shapes and sizes, which are in keeping with landscape values, the topography of the site and the landscape character of the surrounding environment.
- 2 Look to determine allotment boundaries based on natural landscape contours and geographic features.
- 3 Determine allotment boundaries with a view to minimising the potential for adverse cross-boundary effects between current and future rural productive uses.
- 4 Ensure that highly versatile land is not fragmented by allotment boundaries in a manner that would prevent it from being utilised for existing or future productive land uses.
- 5 Ensure that allotments for primary production on highly versatile land are of a practical shape suitable for primary production activities.
- 6 Consider the siting of boundaries to ensure that impermeable fences are not sited in elevated and prominent locations against the backdrop of the skyline.
- 7 Ensure allotments containing existing buildings can accommodate all existing services.
- 8 Where large balance lots are provided as part of the subdivision ensure that the layout and design of the balance lot complements the other lots in the subdivision.
- 9 Where a Conservation Lot is provided as part of the subdivision, consider providing a buffer area between the protected feature and the allotment boundary.



### Allotment Layout and Boundaries

- Proposed Allotment Locations 
- Existing Contours/Coastal Sand Dunes 
- Existing Vegetation 

## Planting and Vegetation

- 1 Use planting to not only mitigate the adverse effects of development but also to positively enhance the site or landscape.
- 2 Ensure that remnant or regenerating areas of native vegetation or larger exotic trees are retained within the subdivision layout.
- 3 Look to integrate existing trees and new vegetation within the development to provide focal points or provide privacy or shelter for buildings. Existing vegetation can give 'instant' maturity to a subdivision.
- 4 Consider the provision of planting within the subdivision development that will provide a vegetation 'framework' providing definition to building sites and screening between properties.
- 5 Ensure that trees and plant types are appropriate for the local conditions – the Environmental Guidelines for Rural Living (2001) provides a list of species that are suitable for the different environments within the Horowhenua. Avoid species which do not reflect the typical vegetation character of the area.
- 6 Provide a range of plant species to encourage increased biodiversity.
- 7 Ensure the layout of plants reflect the existing patterns in the landscape. These may be the geometric patterns of paddocks, or curves that follow a river or the contours of ridges and gullies. Provide naturalistic planting patterns on sloping landscapes, whilst geometrical planting patterns are more acceptable on flat landscapes.
- 8 Look to include native plantings in those areas where the planting can extend existing areas of native bush.
- 9 Consider extending adjacent nearby clusters of trees into the subject site as part of the subdivision design to help the subdivision appear as part of the existing landscape.
- 10 Consider the use of covenants to control the protection of existing trees and the plant species that can be used near areas of native vegetation.
- 11 Consider providing a Conservation Lot as part of the subdivision.



Determine allotment boundaries based on the natural landscape contours and site features



Retain existing trees and vegetation to give instant maturity and identity to a subdivision



Avoid planting that does not reflect the existing patterns of the landscape

## Building Sites, Buildings and Structures

1 Avoid siting buildings or building sites where the sky would be the backdrop, locating buildings against a backdrop (such as sand dunes and terraces) can reduce the visual impact of a building on the rural landscape.

2 On sloping sites buildings should be sited down the hill side with a low profile to minimise the visual effects and avoid buildings being sited against the skylines. The urbanising effect of buildings and structures is more pronounced when they are sited in highly visible or prominent locations.

3 Consider grouping or clustering the building sites together rather than distributing them across the whole site to reduce the amount of roading and to provide open outlooks.

4 Avoid linear clusters that would give the visual appearance of an urban setting.

5 Where planting is a feature of the site or landscape, integrate houses into shelter plantings to help preserve the natural character.

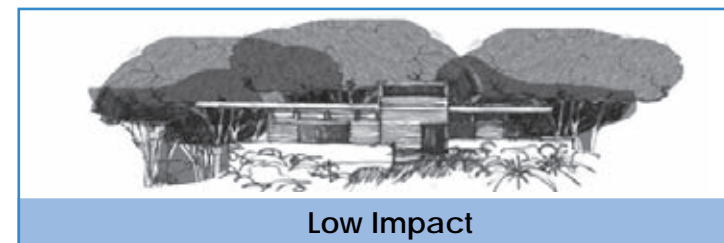
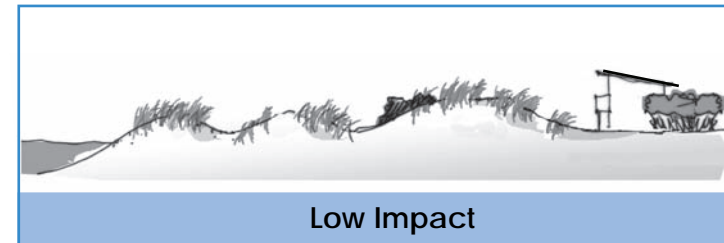
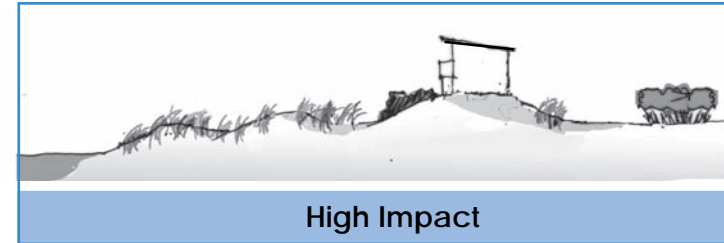
6 Align buildings and building sites with the lie of the land not boundary fences.

7 Ensure that excavation required for building sites is minimised so that any building does not appear to interrupt the natural shape of the land.

8 Provide indirect access to buildings to enhance screening and privacy.

9 Consider the use of private covenants to control:

- The location of dwellings;
- The style, design and character of building;
- The use of recycled building materials;
- The use of alternative and renewable forms of energy;
- The use of sensitive exterior materials and colour schemes for new buildings.



- 10** Consider the location of building sites to take advantage of site features such as shelter, privacy, outlook and sunlight.
- 11** Ensure where there is public access to open space networks that there are building sites with outlooks to that open space to provide passive surveillance.
- 12** Require that in coastal locations building sites and ancillary structures such as water tanks are not in prominent positions when viewed from public spaces such as roads and the beach foreshore.
- 13** Consider the potential from deriving some compatible productive uses (such as trees or vineyards) from the land by providing larger, possibly shared public spaces unencumbered by buildings.
- 14** Ensure that building sites, buildings and structures are not in close proximity to natural hazards, particularly near waterways and areas of land instability.
- 15** Ensure that building sites are located in positions that would avoid, remedy or mitigate the potential for adverse cross boundary effects (reverse sensitivity) with productive land uses.
- 16** Avoid siting new buildings in areas where it would compromise the productive potential and lifesupporting capacity of highly versatile land.



Cluster building sites together, to maximise open space and rural outlook



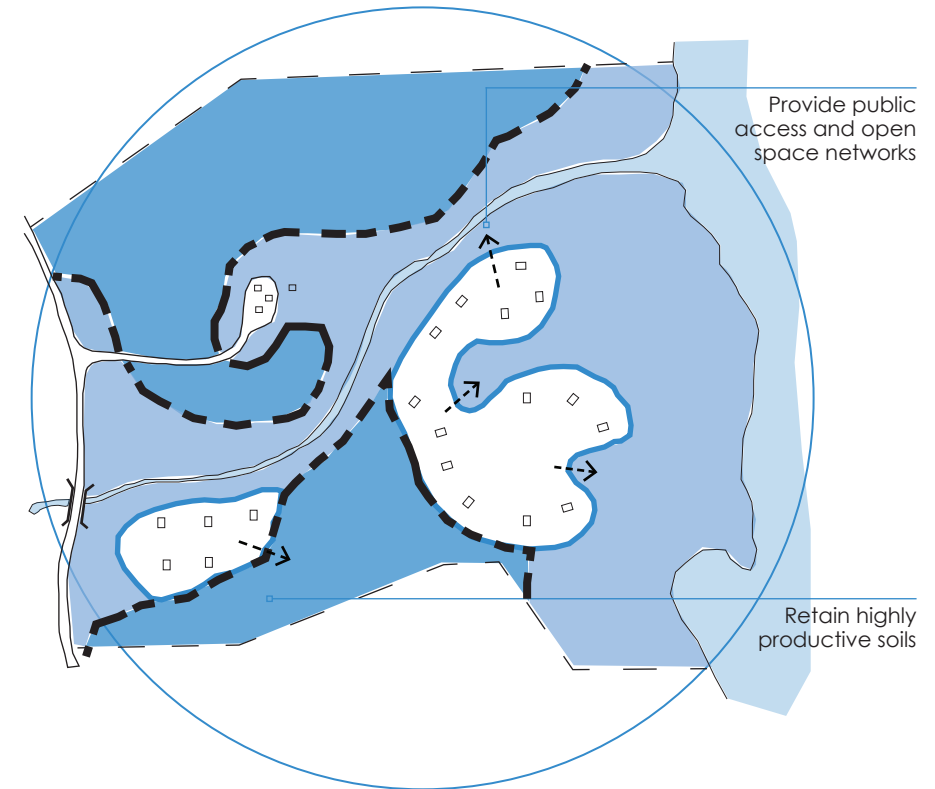
Site buildings into the existing landforms to gain shelter and privacy



Avoid locating buildings on prominent skylines

## Highly Versatile Land

- 1 Retain land that has high productive values (highly versatile soil) for present or future productive land uses.
- 2 Separate and/or buffer existing and future potential rural productive activities from residential land use activities.
- 3 Ensure that highly versatile land is retained in unfragmented landholdings, to maximise existing and future opportunities to use the land for rural productive purposes.
- 4 Ensure that the productive potential of highly versatile land is not compromised through the siting of new boundaries or buildings.
- 5 Remove and replace quality topsoil from underneath buildings or areas to be hardsurfaced to places on the site where it may be re-used for rural productive purposes.



Highly Versatile Land, Conservation Land and Public Access

- Highly Productive Farm Land
- Land for Protection or Enhancement
- Land Suitable for Development
- Possible House Locations
- Public Access

## Recreation, Conservation, Open Space and Public Access

- 1 Consider the use of natural features such as wetland areas, waterways, gullies, coastal margins, ridgelines and hilltops, for open space networks and public access.
- 2 Consider how open space networks and associated improvements may provide ecological benefits such as opportunities for linking between habitat areas.
- 3 Consider providing large contiguous open spaces in common ownership with low maintenance landscape treatment as part of the subdivision.
- 4 Seek to provide public open space areas for recreation, conservation and/or amenity to encourage social interaction and healthy livable communities.
- 5 Ensure the design of open space has taken into account the impact of the sun and wind on the open space and how the space will be used.
- 6 Provide sight lines from open spaces and public access ways to rural outlooks or to features such as the coastline or Tararua Ranges.
- 7 Integrate open space areas with other design outcomes, such as effective stormwater management, riparian enhancement and landscape protection.

## Long Term Management

- 1 Clearly define ownership and management responsibilities of shared or public areas within the subdivision.
- 2 Consider the development of a management plan detailing the long-term maintenance and use of the land where there is shared ownership of an unbuilt area.
- 3 Clearly define the long term ownership, management, maintenance and funding responsibilities of infrastructural services such as water supply and waste management systems.



Use natural features such as wetland areas for open space networks and public access



Retain land that has high productive values

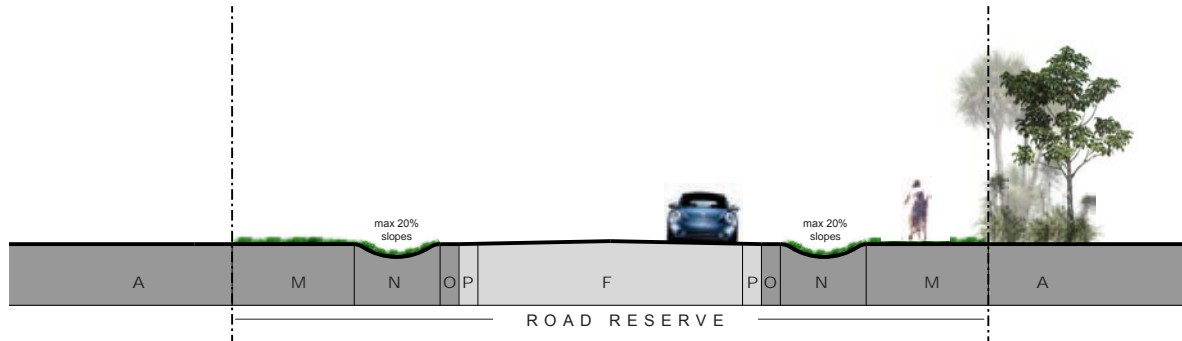


Clearly define ownership and management of shared and public areas

# 5.0 Appendices

## Road Section Details

### Rural Collector 8m Carriageway



Note:

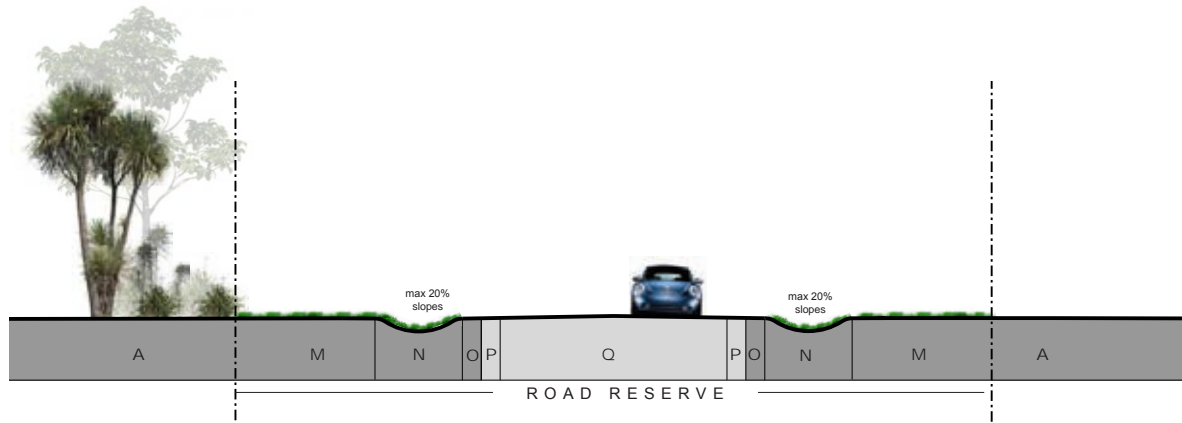
Tree root barriers to be considered in detail design to avoid service / construction conflicts. All trees subject to specific HDC approval or requirement.

Carriageway in accordance with HDC MES

- A - parcel
- F - 7m carriageway (8m inc. sealed shoulder)
- M - landscape berm with 1.8m wide cyclepath to one side of carriageway only - to be min. 1.5m from parcel edge.
- N - grassed swale centre to be min. 2m from edge of seal
- O - 0.5m shoulder (not sealed)
- P - 0.5m shoulder (sealed)

total road reserve dimension - 20m

### Rural Local 6m Carriageway

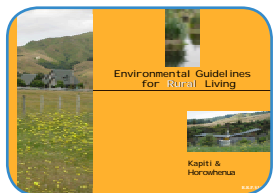


- A - parcel
- M - landscape berm
- N - grassed swale centre to be min. 2m from edge of seal
- P - 0.5m shoulder (sealed)
- O - 0.5m shoulder (not sealed)
- Q - 5m carriageway (6m inc. sealed shoulder)

total road reserve dimension - 20m

Scale 1:200 @ A4

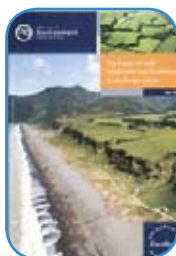
## Reference Documents



Environmental Guidelines for Rural Living – Kapiti & Horowhenua (2001)



Landscape Assessment of the Rural Environment of the Horowhenua District (October 2008)



The Impact of rural subdivision and development on landscape values (July 2000) MFE

### For More Information

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