

**From:** "Rhonda Norden" <Rhonda.Norden@npdc.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Wed, 1 May 2024 15:23:08 +1200  
**To:** "Rhonda Norden" <Rhonda.Norden@npdc.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** Planning Assessment to accompany updated Landscape Visual Effects Assessment

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**From:** Zoe Anderson <[ZAnderson@tonkintaylor.co.nz](mailto:ZAnderson@tonkintaylor.co.nz)>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 12, 2024 10:01 AM  
**To:** Nicola Laurenson <[nicola@laurensonplanning.co.nz](mailto:nicola@laurensonplanning.co.nz)>; Richard Watkins <[Richard.Watkins@npdc.govt.nz](mailto:Richard.Watkins@npdc.govt.nz)>; Kieran Horton <[kieran.horton@trc.govt.nz](mailto:kieran.horton@trc.govt.nz)>; Kim Giles <[Kim.Giles@trc.govt.nz](mailto:Kim.Giles@trc.govt.nz)>  
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**Subject:** RE: Application No LUC23/48354 - Weld Road Pathway and Ahu Ahu Bridge

Kia ora all,

I hope you're well. As per my previous email, please see the planning comments below which correspond with the LVEA Addendum and updated LVEA (amended visual effects assessment scale) provided to NPDC by Nigel on Friday. The files are also linked below for TRC.

**Files:** <https://transfer.tonkinandtaylorgroup.com/message/5TLfZnJ8lpirtklsXr3zT2>

The key purpose of the LVEA updates was to incorporate the Te Tangi te Manu (landscape assessment guidelines), which were released following the original preparation of the LVEA submitted as part of the Weld Road Pathway and Ahu Ahu Bridge Consent Application to NPDC and TRC.

Based on the Te Tangi te Manu seven-point scale, Renee Davies (landscape architect) concludes that the proposal will give rise to landscape effects that are assessed to be of a **moderate** degree and visual effects that range between **very low** and **moderate**. The explanation for this conclusion provided in the LVEA remains relevant, as does the planning interpretation provided in the Weld Road Pathway and Ahu Ahu Bridge – Assessment of Effects on the Environment prepared by Tonkin + Taylor, dated 20 October 2023. **The reasoning for this stance is as follows:**

#### **LVEA Peer Review**

##### Landscape considerations:

The LVEA peer review undertaken by Richard Bain, dated 30 November 2023 agrees that per the Te Tangi te Manu matrix, the proposal will result in **moderate** landscape effects. However, Section 4.2 goes on to state that “moderate equates to more than minor (RMA)” using a diagram provided on page 151 of Te Tangi a te Manu (snip below) and quoting text which supports a direct interpretation.



However, Page 151 of Te Tangi a te Manu states “Where the line might be drawn between the three categories might not be easily determined. There are different interpretations within the profession as to where the boundaries of such categories precisely fall.” It also states this assessment usually falls to planners.

Given Renee did not determine the planning interpretation as part of any expert material, applying this as a direct scale does not seem appropriate. Accordingly, I re-iterate the following landscape considerations/ management from a planning perspective:

- As in Section 6 of the LVEA addendum, there is public support for this walkway, and on this basis NPDC proceeded to commission a proposed design that helped minimise adverse effects, including on landscape values. This management includes:
  - The works being generally low profile, as seen in the LVEA Appendix A- Visual Simulation and other supporting imagery of the proposed Ahu Ahu Bridge included in the LVEA Addendum;
  - Retaining the integrity of the headland including cliffs and vegetation which forms a natural backdrop to the proposed structures;
  - The revetment helping minimise erosion of the cliff and stream thereby better maintaining the existing landscape character; and
  - Preparing a Landscape Restoration and Planting Methodology, helping maintain a vegetated edge along the headland behind the shared path.
- Overall, as stated in Section 8 of the LVEA, the character and style of the proposal is considered to be appropriate and sympathetic to the local area. It will not detract from the overall quality of the natural environment. Accordingly, it is concluded that after avoidance and mitigation measures outlined above that the adverse effects of the proposal on landscape character are no more than minor.

Visual considerations:

The LVEA peer review combines the visual effects with the landscape effects. Renee has separated out the Visual Effects in Table 1 of the LVEA Addendum. This approach shows that in two instances the Medium – Long Term effects are considered to be Moderate (Viewing Audience A – Shared pathway and Viewing Audience B – Shared Pathway). Accordingly, I re-iterate the following visual considerations/ management from a planning perspective:

- As in Section 6 of the LVEA addendum, there is public support for this walkway, and on this basis NPDC proceeded to commission a proposed design that helped minimise these adverse visual effects including;
  - Ahu Ahu Bridge appears similar to the previously existing bridge with the exception of some additional structural height at the abutments and associated timber ramps up to the bridge;
  - Visual impact of the revetment from a distance is reduced as the structure recedes against a strong natural backdrop;

- The chosen design for the revetment has made concessions around feasible RL height of the pathway to ensure the least possible visual intrusion will result, despite an increased risk of overtopping when compared with a taller structure;
  - Use of sympathetic materials (notably, Ahu Ahu Bridge will be a mix of timber and steel while the revetment will primarily be made of locally sourced natural volcanic rocks); and
  - The concrete pathway will be treated with a black oxide to reduce reflectivity and allow it to integrate better with the natural rocks in the structure and surrounding foreshore.
- Overall, as stated in Section 8 of the LVEA, Ahu Ahu Bridge is anticipated to be visually similar to the previous structure, and the revetment materials are not inconsistent with the visual expectations of the coastal environment, the level of adverse effects of the proposal on the visual amenity are considered to be no more than minor.

#### High natural character:

Section 4 of the LVEA Addendum is summarised as follows:

The LVEA peer review highlights that an assumption cannot be made about the Regional landscape study not identifying high natural character. However, on the Coastal Plan maps 2023, the areas in question are not identified as having high natural character. Therefore, it is not appropriate for this to be considered as part of the conclusion of the review.

#### Conclusion:

Based on the comments above, we do not believe that the effects provided in the LVEA assessment directly correspond to the need for public notification (i.e., a minor or more than minor adverse effect). Overall, as concluded in Section 5.9 of the Assessment of Effects on the Environment prepared by Tonkin + Taylor, when considering the existing character, values and locational context of the site, as well as the constrained scale and temporary duration of construction works, and the range of proposed mitigation measures, it is considered the actual and potential adverse effects from the proposal as a whole (both the shared pathway/ revetment and Ahu Ahu Bridge) to be no more than minor. In addition, the works offer substantial positive effects through the protection of an important archaeological site and site of significance to iwi, as well as provision of public access along the coastal foreshore.

We would be more than happy to arrange a meeting with the relevant parties to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

Ngā mihi | Kind regards,

**Zoe Anderson** she/her | **Planner**

BUrbPlan(Hons), MNZPI

**Tonkin + Taylor - Together we create and sustain a better world**

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 **Tonkin+Taylor**

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**Subject:** RE: Application No LUC23/48354 - Weld Road Pathway and Ahu Ahu Bridge

Kia ora all,

As Nigel has provided in his email, Renee has kindly prepared an LVEA Addendum and updated LVEA (amended visual effects assessment scale). We are currently in the process of finalising the corresponding planning comments/ input in relation to the updated LVEA assessment. This input will be provided tomorrow.

Thank you,

Ngā mihi | Kind regards,

**Zoe Anderson** she/her | **Planner**

BUrbPlan(Hons), MNZPI

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