



# Te Tai o Poutini PLAN

*A combined district plan for the West Coast*

Prepared for: Hearing Commissioners - Te Tai o Poutini Plan  
Prepared by: Lois Easton, Principal Planner  
Date: 10 December 2024

**Subject: s42A Author Right of Reply Outstanding Matters Hearing**

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## **Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to the questions raised by the Hearings Commissioner during Hearing 23: Outstanding Matters, and for the Officer to propose any further amendments to the notified version of the Proposed District Plan above those recommended in the Officers s42a evidence reports.

## **Hearing Panel's Questions to the s42a Reporting Officer and their Response**

2. The following questions were received from the Hearing Commissioner for the Outstanding Matters topic which sat on 4 December 2024.

### **[1] Can I reconsider the amendments sought by the Department of Conservation to the Overview of the Ecosystems and Biodiversity Chapter, in light of the evidence provided by the Department at the Ecosystems and Biodiversity hearing.**

3. At the Ecosystems and Biodiversity hearing the Department of Conservation ecologist spoke in some detail about the threatened ecosystem types found on the West Coast. With this context, I consider that some of the amendments sought in the submission point S602.063 are useful contextual information for that chapter. I therefore recommend the following amendments to the Overview section of the Ecosystems and Biodiversity Chapter (changes which differ from s42A report highlighted in yellow)

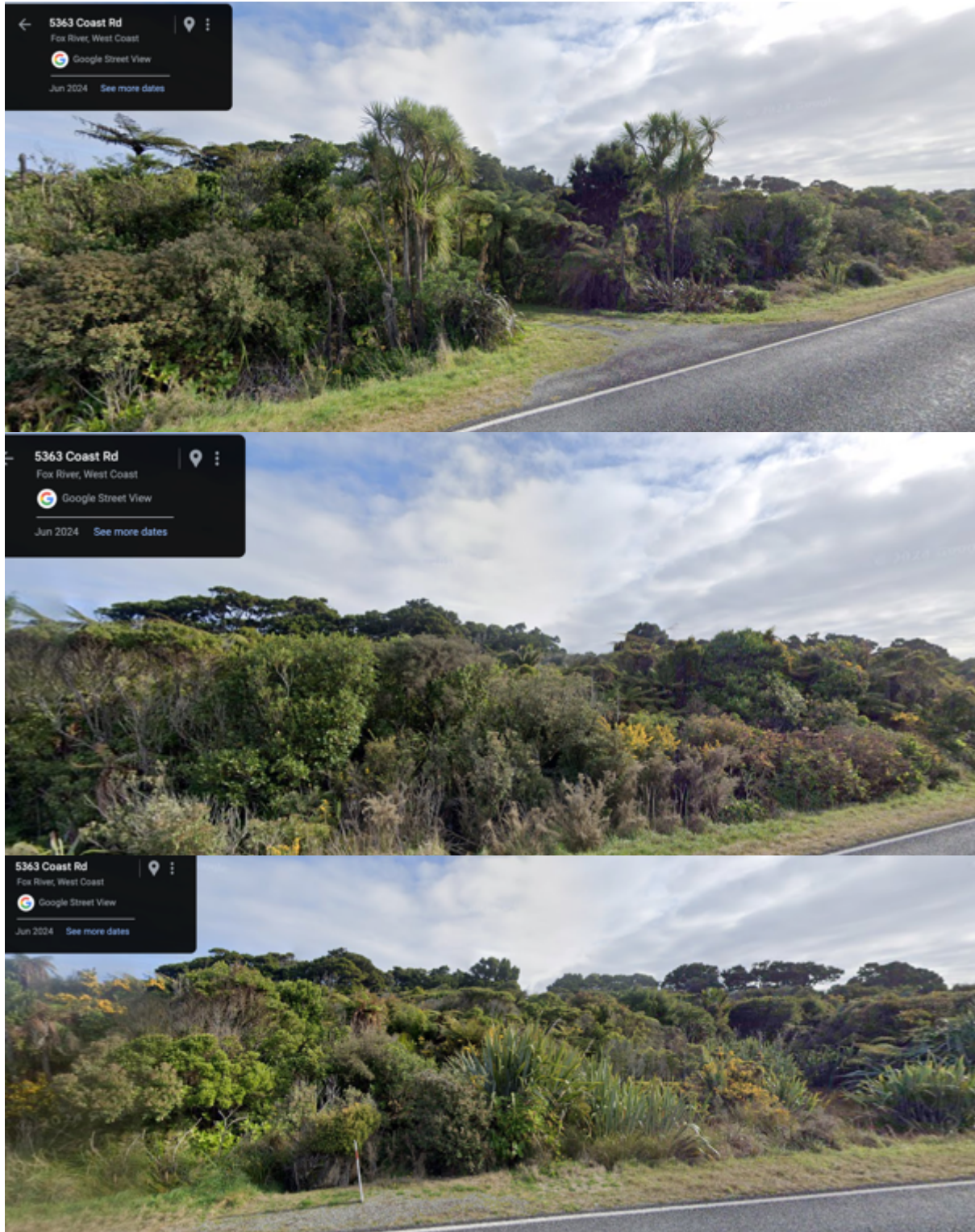
#### Overview

The West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini contains a significant amount of intact natural diversity by comparison with other parts of New Zealand/Aotearoa me Te Waipounamu. Continuous tracts of lowland and coastal forests and freshwater as well as coastal wetlands cover large areas. In many places indigenous ecosystems and habitats extend unbroken from the mountains to the sea.

Approximately 84% of the land area is under the management of the Department of Conservation. In total an estimated 90% of the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini is covered in indigenous vegetation - compared with 24% nationally. While the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini is fortunate to have a wide range of diverse and intact ecosystems and vegetation types, they occur primarily in the uplands and there are some ecosystems and vegetation types not well represented in the protected areas network. These are generally ecosystems found in the lowland areas of the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini, and include threatened ecosystems such as coastal turf and wetlands, and vegetation types such as coastal forest and forests on alluvial terraces.

### **[2] Can I reconsider the submission of Amanda Jenkins in relation to 5363 State Highway 6. Google maps appears to show significant indigenous vegetation clearance on this property has occurred since plan notification. Was this a consented activity? Do my recommendations around retaining the HCNC remain?**

4. I have checked with Buller District Council around consents in existence on the property, and there is a building consent from 2008 but no resource consents. However, on careful examination of google maps, the clearance and dwelling identified at the hearing as being on the property is actually on the adjacent site – 5351 State Highway 6, and the landowner appears to have cleared much of the site of indigenous vegetation. No submission to remove the HNC has been lodged in relation to 5351 State Highway 6 and 5363 State Highway 6 remains unmodified. The photo below shows a series of June 2024 Google Streetview pictures of the property at 5363 State Highway 6.




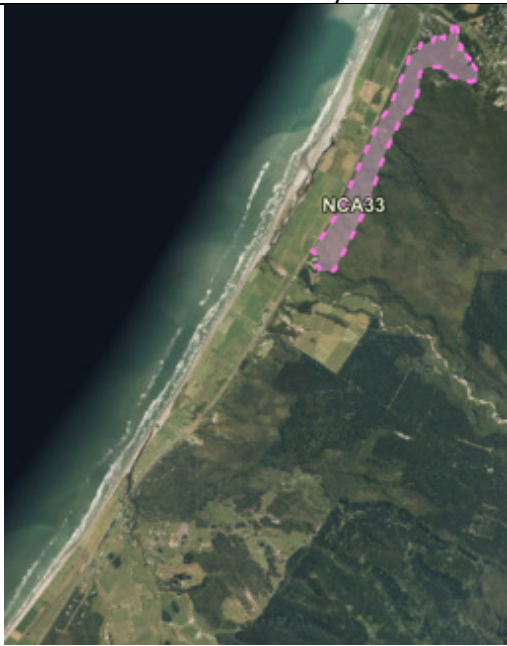




5. On this basis I do not alter my recommendations around the HCNC on this property.

**[3] In relation to the submission of Kiwirail where is the network affected by landscape and natural character overlays?**

6. While I have not recommended accepting the Kiwirail submission point (442.096) that ONL/ONC/HNC areas should be removed from the network, I note that the Bridget Gilbert review recommends the reduction of some of these overlays in locations which affect Kiwirail. The overall net effect is a reduction in areas of the Kiwirail Areas where Kiwirail network is impacted by ONL/ONC/HNC Overlays

Notified Plan	Recommended Amendments (Bridget Gilbert Oct 2024)
 <p data-bbox="204 1144 735 1205">Arahura River and approaches – High Natural Character</p>	 <p data-bbox="866 1211 1318 1240">Arahura River – HNC Overlay reduced</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1888 740 1917">Chesterfield Terraces-High Natural Character</p>	 <p data-bbox="866 1883 1385 1939">Overlay no longer across rail-lines though still covers small bushy area of designation.</p>

**Notified Plan**

**Recommended Amendments (Bridget Gilbert Oct 2024)**



Paroa Lagoon – High Natural Character



Overlay no longer affects rail corridor – pulled back to the other side of the State Highway



Ikamatua-Tawhi -Outstanding Natural Landscape






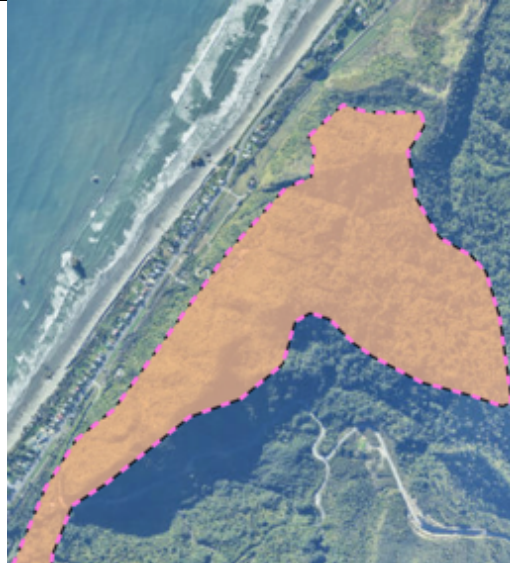
Overlay no longer affects rail corridor – pulled back away up the hill



Buller Gorge – Designation and Rail corridor length passes through Outstanding Natural Landscape and Outstanding Natural Feature

No change



Notified Plan	Recommended Amendments (Bridget Gilbert Oct 2024)
 <p data-bbox="204 539 831 633">Lower Buller Gorge – Designation and Rail corridor length passes through Outstanding Natural Landscape and Outstanding Natural Feature</p>	<p data-bbox="847 257 1390 633">No change</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 875 831 943">Orowaiti Inlet – High Natural Character affects designation but not tracks</p>	<p data-bbox="847 633 1390 943">No change</p>
 <p data-bbox="204 1592 831 1619">Granity – High Natural Character</p>	 <p data-bbox="863 1503 1374 1619">Overlay no longer affects rail corridor – pulled back away up the hill</p>

**[4] Omissions from Appendix 1 Recommended Amendments to the Plan**

- On reviewing Appendix 1 I have identified that some recommended amendments from the S42A report in relation to the Overview for the RURZ – Rural Zones chapter were not included in the Appendix. These are shown below:

That the Overview for the RURZ – Rural Zones chapter is amended as follows:

Rural areas represent the majority of private land within the West Coast/Te Tai o Poutini. They are working environments – with farming, mining, tourism, horticulture, and forestry being undertaken alongside a number of smaller industries. They contain native bush, rivers, wetlands, habitats of indigenous flora and fauna, renewable electricity

generation sites and national grid infrastructure. Rural areas are also residential environments – characterised by a lower levels of built development and greater separation distance from neighbours. The rural area is characterised by its open vistas and natural landscapes and features that are of importance to the wider community. Components of the rural area include the coastline, waterbodies, vegetation and the absence of built-up areas.

### **Recommended Amendments to the Plan**

1. That the following amendments are made to the Overview Section of the Ecosystems and Biodiversity Chapter:

#### Overview

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2. That the following amendments are made to the Overview Section of the RURZ - Rural Zones Chapter:

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