

STAGE 3 - SECTION 32

CHAPTER 9

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

APPENDIX 3.6 - CENTRAL CITY TECHNICAL LANDSCAPE
OVERVIEW REPORT

CONTENTS

Executive Summary3

Introduction.....4

1 Overview of approach to landscape assessment within the Central City for the District Plan Review5

1.1 Ensuring a consistent approach to landscape assessment, evaluation and identification across the District.....5

1.2 Brief Overview of Landscapes and Features5

1.3 Outstanding and Significant Landscapes and Features6

1.3.1 Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features – explanation and assessment methodology.....6

1.3.2 Significant Landscapes or Features – explanation and assessment methodology
7

1.4 Overview of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015.....8

2 Summary of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 findings in relation to Christchurch Central City9

3 Maps and Schedules9

4 Landscape overlay approach.....9

5 Cultural Landscapes9

6 Non Regulatory Methods.....10

7 Landscape sensitivities in relation to potential land uses10

8 Appendix One: Excerpt from section 4.5.2 of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study - Ōtākaro / Avon River Significant Feature (SF) Evaluation.....11

8.1 Landscape Evaluation.....13

8.2 Identification of Significant Landscape Features.....14

9 Appendix Two: Excerpt from Stage 3 of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study relevant to the Ōtākaro / Avon River – Landscape Sensitivities and Recommended Management Mechanisms15

9.1 Potential Future Land Uses and Management Mechanisms.....15

Hannah Lewthwaite

This landscape report was prepared at the stage of preparation of the proposed Replacement District Plan when it was intended that there would be a stand-alone section for Natural and Cultural Heritage within the Central city chapter, Chapter 13.

Although there are now references within the report to Chapter 13, this landscape report now forms part of Chapter 9.

Executive Summary

This report sets out an overview of the approach to the review of the District’s Outstanding and Significant Natural Landscapes and Features for Chapter 13 - Central City of the proposed Christchurch Replacement District Plan. While the focus is solely on Chapter 13, where the Ōtākaro / Avon River has been identified as a Significant Landscape Feature, commentary on the wider Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 has been included to explain the context to the landscape assessment of the Ōtākaro / Avon River (which was undertaken as part of a City wide landscape assessment). It is also included to explain the difference between the ‘Outstanding’ and ‘Significant’ landscape feature classifications in terms of the assessment methodology used. It is also important to refer to the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 together with this report as the detailed context and methodologies are explained in that document.

The methodology which has been used for assessing and evaluating Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features (ONL/Fs) for the District Plan Review is one which has been developed from case law in New Zealand over the last fifteen to twenty years and recently endorsed by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects as best practice. It has also recently been incorporated into the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement.¹

The Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 was undertaken by a team of local and national experts and independent peer reviewers, and focussed on achieving a consistent approach to landscape identification and evaluation across the District. Given the extensive landscape assessment previously carried out for Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū/Banks Peninsula, the focus in that area was on reviewing the existing Banks Peninsula Landscape Study 2007 (contained in new addendum reports), whereas for Ōtautahi/Christchurch City a new landscape study was required.

The Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 was undertaken over a period of 12 -15 months during 2014-2015 and involved extensive research, landscape assessment and evaluation including site visits and peer review. Ongoing discussions with the District Plan Review Project’s Collaborative Advisory Group (CAG) and the Rūnanga Focus Working Group (RFWG) were also undertaken. The Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 should be read in conjunction with this Technical Report (Landscape Technical Report for the Central City 2015). The findings of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 in relation to the Ōtākaro / Avon River are contained in Appendix One of this report. The diagram in Figure 1 below sets out how the various reports fit together with those relating to the Central City on the lower left:

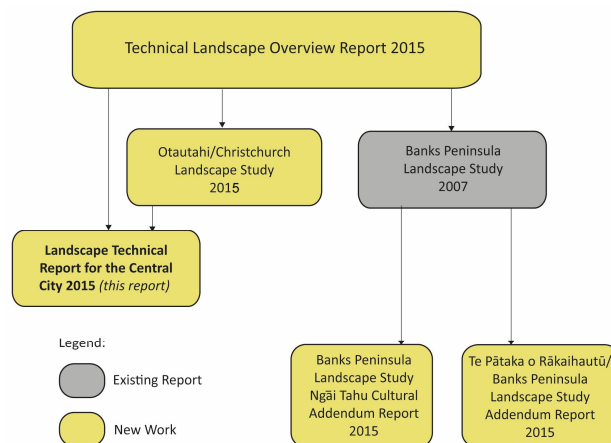


Figure 1: Diagram showing an overview of landscape assessment undertaken for the District Plan Review and the documents that support this report.

¹ NZILA Best Practice Note Landscape Assessment And Sustainable Management 10.1

Introduction

As previously discussed, this report sets out an overview of the approach to the review of the District's Outstanding and Significant Natural Landscapes and Features for Chapter 13 - Central City of the proposed Christchurch Replacement District Plan. Table 1 (below) summarises the legislative requirements in relation to landscapes within the District and compares the currently operative plan provisions with the proposed Christchurch Replacement District Plan approach. Note: a detailed list of the relevant legislative requirements should also be referred and is attached in Appendix One of the Technical Landscape Overview Report 2015.

The left hand column (1) shows the higher order legislative documents which the Council is required to give effect to in relation to landscapes. Because some of this legislation has been updated over time, previous versions have been shown as well to explain the context in which the currently operative plans have been operating (2), and the changed context (as these higher order legislative documents have been updated over time) in which the Review is now being undertaken (3). Finally, column (4) shows the scope of the landscapes work undertaken for the District Plan Review as relevant to Chapter 13.

<p>1</p> <p>Drivers/ policy context (chronological order):</p> <p>RMA '91 CRPS '98 NZCPS '06</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>RMA '91 CCRP '12 CRPS '13</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Existing situation - Christchurch Central Recovery Plan Te Mahere 'Maraka Ōtautahi'</p> <p>- Avon River Precinct, Objective 12.4, Policies and Rules</p>	
	<p>3</p> <p>Summary of legislative requirements for territorial authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify/review ONL/Fs and other important landscapes or features - Develop objectives & policies - Undertake mapping 	<p>4</p> <p>District Plan Review - Chapter 13 Central City Chapter scope in relation to landscapes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review, identification and mapping of Significant Features (S/Fs) for Ōtautahi/Christchurch Central - Review of objectives, policies, and rules

Table 1: showing the legislative requirements in relation to landscapes within the District comparing the currently operative plan provisions with the proposed Christchurch Replacement District Plan approach.

1 Overview of approach to landscape assessment within the Central City for the District Plan Review

1.1 Ensuring a consistent approach to landscape assessment, evaluation and identification across the District

The wider context of landscape assessment undertaken for the District is explained in detail in the Technical Landscape Overview Report for Chapter 9 - Natural and Cultural Heritage so is not repeated here. However Figure 1 provides an overview of landscape assessment undertaken for the Central City and shows that which is relevant to Chapter 13.

Landscape assessment work for the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan Te Mahere ‘Maraka Ōtautahi’ has drawn specific attention to the Ōtākaro / Avon River within the Central City as part of the Te Papa Ōtākaro / Avon River Precinct. In particular the Ōtākaro / Avon River was identified as a place of significance to Ngāi Tahu for many reasons including its importance as a source of mahinga kai; a place of settlement, burial or urupā, trade and way finding (source: Christchurch Central Recovery Plan pg. 13).

Other important values which were recognised include the historical contrast between the curving river and linear grid of the streets, high amenity values, and open space and recreation values. These values have also been recognised in the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 where the Ōtākaro / Avon River is considered to be a Significant Feature (to be explained in more detail later in this Report and in the accompanying Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015).

1.2 Brief Overview of Landscapes and Features

A brief overview of landscapes and features is provided below to explain the terminology and context in which landscape assessment for the District Plan Review is undertaken.

The Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 explains that,

“ ‘Landscapes’ have been interpreted as the geographic products of interaction between human societies and culture with the natural environment.”

It also explains that, *“while natural processes established the land on which we live, human processes have modified the land with various characteristic activities and patterns. Because the human and natural processes are subject to change and evolution, landscapes are dynamic systems which will be subject to further change in the future.”*

This understanding is consistent with the purpose, principles, definitions and interpretations of the Resource Management Act (RMA), which provides the context for the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 and is a useful reference for understanding landscapes across the District.

Scale is an important consideration for landscape assessment and the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 explains that,

“Landscapes are larger areas that are perceived as a whole, which can include a number of features within them. Landscapes can be either experienced from within (eg walking tracks/ Summit Road within Port Hills landscape) or seen as the whole of the outlook (eg the Port Hills perceived as a whole from Ōtautahi/Christchurch City). Landscape boundaries can coincide with visual catchments. Landscape features are discrete elements within a landscape, which are generally experienced from outside the features’ boundaries. Both landscape and feature are scale dependent, eg Pātaka o Rākaihautū/Banks

Peninsula could be identified as a feature when seen as a whole from a satellite aerial view (Regional Scale), while it has landscapes, such as the Akaroa Harbour, and features, such as volcanic outcrops, occurring within it when perceived from within (District and Local Scale)."

1.3 Outstanding and Significant Landscapes and Features

While the focus of this report is on the Significant feature of the Ōtākaro / Avon River, an explanation of Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features and the assessment methodology for these is included below to provide relevant context to the identification and evaluation of the Ōtākaro / Avon River as a significant feature.

1.3.1 Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features – explanation and assessment methodology

Section 6(b) of the Resource Management Act, Policy 15 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement, and particularly Objective 12.2.1 of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement require the Council to identify Outstanding Natural Landscapes within the District.

While Section 6(b) of the RMA refers to both landscapes and features without differentiating between the two, for District landscape assessment purposes a differentiation has been made between the identification of Outstanding Natural Landscapes (ONL) and Features (ONF) as described in 1.2 above. This is according to the requirements of Objective 12.2.1 of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement which states that,

"Outstanding natural features and landscapes within the Canterbury region are identified and their values are specifically recognised and protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development."

Objective 12.2.1 continues on to explain that,

"Landscape is an integral element of the environment and potential land-use effects on landscape values require an integrated management response. Changes in landscape can also affect the relationship of Ngāi Tahu with ancestral land, sites and wahi tapu. Landscape is multi-dimensional and includes natural science, legibility, aesthetic, shared and recognised, transient, heritage and tāngata whenua values."

The specific methodology for assessing Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features (ONL/Fs) is described in full in the Landscape Studies accompanying this report. However to summarise the approach, ONL/Fs identified for the Christchurch District were evaluated according to methodology which has been developed in New Zealand over the last fifteen to twenty years and tested through the Environment Court. The range of criteria that the Environment Court has reinforced for landscape practitioners to consider when valuing landscapes is referred to as the 'Amended Pigeon Bay criteria' or factors². The criteria or factors include (but are not limited to):

1. the natural science factors - the geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components of the landscape;
2. its aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness;
3. its expressiveness (legibility): how obviously the landscape demonstrates the formative processes leading to it;
4. transient values: occasional presence of wildlife; or its values at certain times of the day or of the year;
5. whether the values are shared and recognised;

² *Pigeon Bay Aquaculture Ltd v Christchurch Regional Council* [1999] NZRMA 209; *Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown Lakes District Council* [2000] NZRMA 59 at paragraph 72.

6. its value to tāngata whenua; and
7. its historical associations.

As the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 explains, there is now a level of acceptance in the use of these criteria as an assessment framework. However, it is also increasingly recognised by practitioners that while the above criteria is useful, it also has certain limitations. While they were not intended to form a definitive or 'complete' list of landscape values, this is how they have often been used by assessors. Many of the criteria actually overlap and some could be more usefully seen as subsets of one another rather than as separate value categories. This can be confusing and lead to some values being given more weight than others, or 'double-counting'.

A recent review by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) has reordered the Pigeon Bay criteria into three categories, focusing on the landscapes' broad Biophysical, Sensory and Associative values. Condensing the Pigeon Bay criteria or factors into these three broad categories reduces the risk of emphasising some criteria at the cost of others and enables assessors to interpret the landscape values with validity and reliability - which was why the recent NZILA approach was used.

This is also the approach that is required by the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement in Policy 12.3.4 'Consistency of identification and management of outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes' which seeks to achieve consistency in the identification of outstanding natural features and landscape areas and values by:

"(1) Considering the following assessment matters which address biophysical, sensory and associative values (author's emphasis) when assessing landscapes in the Canterbury region... (lists the Amended Pigeon Bay Factors from above)."

In brief, as the full methodology for evaluating outstanding natural landscapes and features is already described in the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015, landscapes and features were scored and ranked using a five point rating system from 'very high' to 'very low'. ONF/Ls were defined as those landscapes and features that would reach an overall rating of greater than 'High' with no one of the attributes rated lower than 'Moderate'.

1.3.2 Significant Landscapes or Features – explanation and assessment methodology

Natural features and landscapes that do not meet the criteria for being ranked as 'outstanding' can nonetheless be required to be "maintained and enhanced" either as "amenity values" or part of the wider "environment" under RMA S.7(c) or S.7(f). Objective 12.2.2 – 'Identification and management of other landscapes' of the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement also addresses the identification and management of other important landscapes that are not outstanding natural landscapes. It states that other important landscapes may include:

- (1) natural character
- (2) amenity
- (3) historic and cultural heritage landscapes.

For the Christchurch City area, features containing particular scenic values, but a noticeably lower rating of other landscape values, have been identified as Significant Features and Landscapes (SF/Ls). As the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 explains, the values of these SF/Ls are often more alike to Visual Amenity Landscapes (VAL), which have been identified in other Districts to assist in considering section 7(c) of the RMA. Through case law VALs are often associated with rural landscapes

that have an ‘arcadian’ character, such as the rural valleys of the western Port Hills with a mix of mature exotic vegetation³.

Since this approach to VAL's does not generally apply to the urban context of Ōtautahi/Christchurch City, the term ‘Significant’ has been used in the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 to identify natural features and landscapes that do not meet the quality threshold for ‘Outstanding’ in terms of their values. While the identification of SF/Ls was not part of the initial brief for the study, these areas were identified due to their relatively high landscape value, which in the view of the study team lies just below or around the threshold for ONF/L identification. The Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015, section 2.5.2 ‘Thresholds for Identification of Outstanding/Significant Natural Landscapes’ should be referred to for further detail.

1.4 Overview of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015

An overview of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 is provided in Figure 2 below, while a more detailed description should also be referred in the Study itself. As explained previously, while the focus of this report is on the Significant Feature of the Ōtākaro / Avon River, an overview of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 is shown below to explain the context in which the Ōtākaro / Avon River was assessed.

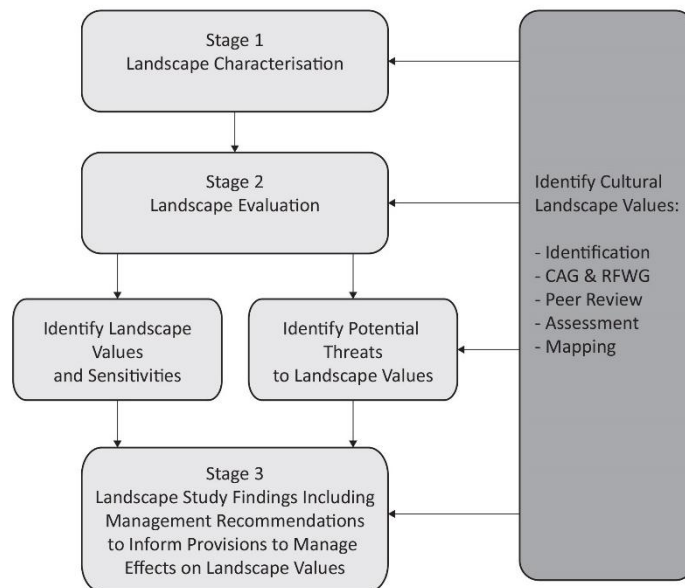


Figure 2: Overview of the Christchurch Landscape Study

Note:

CAG = The District Plan Review Project’s Collaborative Advisory Group

RFWG = Rūnanga Focus Working Group. *Note: workshops were undertaken with the RFWG throughout the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015.*

³ Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc. v Queenstown Lakes District Council [2000] NZRMA 59 at paragraphs 113 – 115.

2 Summary of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 findings in relation to Christchurch Central City

The Ōtākaro / Avon River has been identified as a significant feature within the Central City (i.e. between Fitzgerald and Harper Avenue's).

The findings of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015 in relation to the Ōtākaro / Avon River are set out in detail in the Landscape Study which should be referred to in conjunction with this report, but are also attached to this report in Appendix One for easy reference. A summary of the findings is provided below to highlight key points in relation to Christchurch Central City:

"The Ōtākaro / Avon River is one of the key features of Christchurch that forms part of the city's identity. As it provides high amenity values for the city along its entire course it has been identified as a Significant Feature.

The central section of the river flows through the heart of the city, including Hagley Park, where the historic (heritage buildings, bridges, trees) and tāngata whenua associations (including Puari pā and kāinga of Ōtautahi) with the river are particularly strong.

The ecological value of the river has been reduced through the urban context, but the river continues to provide freshwater habitat for fish and birds. The lower river is under tidal influence through its connection to the estuary. The river and its tributaries has very high associative values, which may make an identification as a feature of cultural significance appropriate." (Source: Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015, page 18)

3 Maps and Schedules

Detailed mapping of Significant Natural Landscapes and Features was carried out in GIS (Geographic Information System) software in conjunction with the landscape identification and evaluation process to map the findings on planning maps as detailed overlays (see also section 4 below for an explanation of the overlay approach).

The Significant Feature of the Ōtākaro / Avon River is listed in the schedule of Significant Features for the Central City with a unique identifying code, planning map reference, name and description and location information.

4 Landscape overlay approach

Landscape overlays are being used on Planning Maps in order to clearly identify the extent of Significant Features. These overlays will 'sit above' underlying zones and will include objectives and policies but will otherwise usually rely on the underlying zone rules.

Landscapes and features identified within the Central City and the wider District often have other means of management for example under the Reserves Act. This has been considered when analysing potential sensitivities in relation to land use, subdivision and development, and in providing landscape management recommendations.

5 Cultural Landscapes

As previously discussed Significant Landscapes and Features have been identified where these fall below the threshold of Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features (ONL/Fs) for Christchurch. Cultural Landscapes (different to cultural values as part of the assessment of ONL/Fs) have not been addressed although it is noted that some of the features and landscapes within the City (including the Ōtākaro / Avon River within the Central City) have rated at least "high" in terms of Ngāi Tahu and European

associative values and these can be used to inform future work with a specific emphasis on cultural landscapes under Chapter 13 of the Regional Policy Statement if this is considered appropriate. Cultural landscapes are addressed in more depth in the Heritage Technical Report.

6 Non Regulatory Methods

There are a variety of other methods which are available to support land owners and applicants when applying for a resource consent or plan change.

These include advice from landscape specialists and planners (available as pre-application advice, including free advice, prior to when consents are formally lodged with the Council); and development guidelines which are available to provide assistance with the preparation of assessments of environmental effects in relation to landscape and / or natural character matters.

The Council's Biodiversity and Public Open Space Strategies also provide strategic policy advice and guidance for the protection and enhancement of the District's 'high quality' landscapes. These Council adopted Strategies provide high level policy direction on the outcomes which are sought for landscapes across the district. They also seek the protection and enhancement of landscapes through land purchase – either by Council or other parties, and there have been land purchases in recent years aligning with the aims of these Strategies. In addition the Council's proposed Landscape Strategy will address opportunities to provide further support to landowners whose land is included within an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, or a coastal natural character area.

7 Landscape sensitivities in relation to potential land uses

Sensitivities in relation to potential land uses have been identified for the Ōtākaro / Avon River within the Central City and are included together with recommended management mechanisms in Appendix Two to this report.

It is acknowledged that some areas within the Significant Natural Landscapes and Features vary internally in landcover and landscape quality. There is a difference in how these internal variations present themselves within Outstanding and Significant landscapes.

For an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) or Feature, where individual buildings/ structures or other modifications occur, the immediately surrounding land may not necessarily provide the same outstanding natural values that may be displayed in the wider ONL. Generally modifications occur in confined areas within the Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features, and as such do not reduce the value below the "outstanding" ranking.

Where man-made structures and land cover modifications occur within Significant Natural Features/Landscapes, they tend to be more wide-spread and hence reduce the landscape values. (Source: Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study 2015).

8 Appendix One: Excerpt from section 4.5.2 of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study - Ōtākaro / Avon River Significant Feature (SF) Evaluation

The evaluation of the entire Ōtākaro / Avon River Significant Feature within Ōtautahi/Christchurch City is included below to provide relevant context to the portion listed within the Central City. This is because landscape features such as rivers and their associated landscape values are rarely confined to planning boundaries which is the case with the Significant Feature of the Ōtākaro / Avon River. For example the cultural values associated with it, in terms of tāngata whenua and European heritage, reference early settlement patterns where travel was undertaken along the entire length of the River.

The Ōtākaro / Avon River is a particularly important river for Christchurch, as it contributes to the city's identity and cultural and natural history. The waterway meanders its way from its spring-fed tributaries in the western and northern suburbs, through the city and out to sea via the estuary it shares with the Ōpāwaho/Heathcote River. Its central stem known today as the Waimairi, winds around 26 km from its source in Avonhead through Ilam, Upper Riccarton and Fendalton before meeting with its northern and southern tributaries, the Wairārapa and Ōrakipaoa respectively at Mona Vale. From here, the combined river known as the Ōtākaro continues through Hagley Park, the Botanic Gardens and the Central City before heading east through Avonside, Dallington and Aranui. Here it receives a number of tributaries from these north-eastern suburbs before emptying into the estuary near South Brighton. The entire Ōtākaro / Avon catchment covers about 84 square kilometres, nearly all of it urban in nature. Christchurch's history is closely linked to the Ōtākaro / Avon, as both Māori and European settlement was founded along its course and the city itself was built on the first extensive area of dry land up the river. The lower reaches of the river and estuary are under tidal influence and are described as a separate landscape character area (see Avon Heathcote Estuary / Te Ihutai Character Area). Bed and groundwater levels in the catchment were significantly affected by the 2010 – 2012 earthquake sequence.

Major tributaries of the Ōtākaro / Avon include the Wairārapa Stream (northern most branch), Waimaero or Waimairi Stream (middle branch), and Ōrakipaoa/ Upper Avon (the southern branch) all of which are predominantly spring-fed, albeit highly urbanised, streams. Active springs are found on the Wairārapa Stream at Jellie Park. Some tributaries themselves have significant tributaries, such as the spring fed Wai-iti Stream which flows into the Wairārapa Stream in Bryndwr. However, many upper reaches are ephemeral dry channels except in rainfall events. Water quality in the upper reaches of the Ōtākaro / Avon and in particular in the Wairārapa and Waimairi Streams, is higher than elsewhere in the catchment. As the river flows through the city, water quality is more and more affected by the urban environment and stormwater inputs. As an urban river, the Ōtākaro / Avon has been significantly modified as Christchurch City has developed on its banks and hinterland. The majority of the river's banks are lined by roads, parks and private gardens that contain little native vegetation, which creates a pleasant setting with high visual amenity but comparatively low natural character. The park-like character of the river banks along the north-western Ōtākaro / Avon tributaries, in particular along Wairārapa and Waimairi Streams, is one of the key contributors to the landscape character of this part of Christchurch and gives the river banks and surroundings the "Garden City" appearance it is famous for. The Christchurch Beautifying Association played a major role in establishing these plantings on the river banks. The historic buildings of Mona Vale, set in four hectares of gardens, are one of the areas where this character is particularly well expressed and accessible to the public.

In recent times some native vegetation along the river banks has been either restored or allowed to grow along the margins, rather than be cut back. Little Hagley Park is an example of a woodland landscape character with river banks that have a more natural appearance. Additionally, the overhanging vegetation cover also provides habitat for stream invertebrates and fish, and important spawning habitat for species such as inanga. The river, and its tributaries, are home to a number of fish species including four different species of koukoupāra/bully (upland, common, giant and bluegill), tuna/longfin and shortfin eels, inanga, aua/yellow eyed mullet, kanakana/lamprey and exotic brown trout. Studies have shown that increasing amounts of fine sediment entering the Ōtākaro / Avon via

stormwater inputs and settling on the river bed have reduced the quantity and quality of habitat for freshwater invertebrates and fish.

Most of the banks and landscape context of the river have been modified, which makes the few reserves along its banks even more valuable. Cockayne Reserve (3 ha) is a narrow strip of wetland bordered by the lower reaches of the Ōtākaro / Avon River approximately 2.5 kilometres upstream from the estuary. The reserve was established in the late 1800s and is one of the few native lowland wetlands remaining in Christchurch. This Reserve has been significantly affected by the earthquakes, which meant that the brackish/fresh water section has been inundated by salt water, resulting in a change in habitat and species.

Ngāi Tahu had an extensive network of both permanent settlements and more temporarily occupied mahinga kai sites along the length of the Ōtākaro. Many of these were associated with landscape features including former wetlands and river channels that have either been significantly altered or have disappeared as a result of the development of Christchurch City. Those sites and features in the upper tributaries include: Hereora (at the head of the Ōtākaro / Avon, near the airport), Wairārapa (along the northern tributary), Ōhikahuruhuru (near a previous swamp in upper Fendalton), Te Warokurī (within an old gully in Papanui), Motu-iti (near Bryndwr) and Ō-Rakipāoa (along the southern tributary). The remnant channels of the upper Waimaero/Waimairi stream, such as those within Crosbie Park and around Avonhead, are still visible today and provide an example of the extent of water that used to flow in these areas. In particular, a significant remnant channel still exists beyond Russley Road, near the site of Hereora, and survives as the furthest visible inland extent, and original source/head of the Ōtākaro / Avon – hence the name Avonhead. Two patches of important forest within the upper catchment included Pūtarikamotu/Riccarton Bush and its surrounding swamps as well as Tāpapanui/Papanui Bush, which no longer exists. Sites in the central city include the Waitaha pā of Puāri which was centred on the former drylands where the court buildings currently stand, and Ōtautahi, the kāinga of Tautahi, situated on the banks of the Ōtākaro near ‘the Bricks’ on Kilmore Street, where the former Free’s Creek used to join the main stream and from which the modern Māori name of Christchurch takes its name. Further downstream is Waikākāriki/Horseshoe Lake, which included a kāinga and associated urupā, the kāinga of Ōruapaeroa near Travis Wetland and the pā of Te Kai a Te Karoro at the mouth of the river in the estuary (the latter two both previously described). A number of these sites, including Puāri, Ōtautahi and Waikākāriki were unsuccessfully claimed by Ngāi Tahu in the Native Land Court in 1868 which had the effect of Ngāi Tahu having little involvement in the protection and management of these areas, until more recent times.

The river banks of the Central City have been used for a variety of uses by Europeans. This included a flour mill with a dam, mill race and waterwheel in the late 1850s. Along Cambridge Terrace the Christchurch City Council's first swimming baths were opened in 1877. The nearby Montreal Street boat sheds were also built around that period. The park-like character of the river banks, including the plantings of rhododendrons, stems from this early European influence as well. The Christchurch Beautifying Association undertook early plantings along the river, which means that today's character of the river and its banks owes a lot to their influence. Many of the trees found along the river banks today are recorded as protected or notable trees due to their impressive age and size. Along the Central City section of the river numerous heritage buildings and structures line its banks. Buildings of particular importance include the Antigua Boat Shed, the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings and the Town Hall with its distinctive fountains, all of which were severely damaged in the earthquakes but will be rebuilt. The bridges that cross the Ōtākaro / Avon in this section are also of historic importance, including the Bridge of Remembrance with its adjacent park. Victoria Square on the banks of the Ōtākaro / Avon, which used to be Christchurch's Market Square, is another area that is of particular importance to both European and Maori history (associated with the Waitaha settlement Puāri).

Nowadays, the Ōtākaro / Avon River forms an integral part of the city along its various reaches. The character of the river and its urban context changes as it winds its way through the city. In the Central City the river has always been a focal point and a centre of activity, including the rowing facilities at Kerrs Reach. With the recent plans to design a park along the Ōtākaro / Avon River, it can be expected

that the river will continue to draw attention as a feature and place to provide for recreational opportunities. The lower reaches of the Ōtākaro / Avon have experienced significant changes through the impacts of the earthquake, which has led to a red zoning of the adjacent land due to land damage. It is uncertain how this land will be developed in the future and if it will be suitable for future residential development. If the red zone is designed as a green space, the river banks may experience a significant improvement in terms of their naturalness and recreation and amenity value over time. These lower reaches of the Ōtākaro / Avon River are also important for the recreational users of the area and the river contributes to the amenity of the residential environment.

8.1

Landscape Evaluation

Biophysical attributes:

- The vast majority of the Ōtākaro / Avon catchment is urban in nature, which has modified its natural and biophysical values significantly, although in a range of sites, particularly in the upper catchment around Avonhead, the remnant river channels remain and are important features that tell a story of the amount of water that used to flow in the river.
- Some of the wetlands adjacent to the river course, such as Bexley Wetland and Cockayne Reserve, are ecologically important.
- The river banks predominantly contain exotic trees, planted since European settlement. A high number of protected and notable trees can be found along the banks of the Ōtākaro / Avon, in particular the Central City section.
- More recently native plants have been increasingly used for plantings along the river banks, which provides habitat for fish, birds and invertebrates.
- The lower Ōtākaro / Avon River is important spawning habitat for fish species such as inanga.
- The lower river and estuary are under tidal influence (see Avon Heathcote Estuary / Te Ihutai).
- Springs are a primary value of the groundwater regime.

Sensory attributes:

- The river is one of the key landscape features of the city that connects a number of suburbs along its meandering course.
- Numerous walkways extend along the river, which makes it a very important recreation resource for numerous activities, including various forms of boating.
- The river and its banks form an important part of Mona Vale, Hagley Park, the Botanic Gardens and the Central City.
- The watercourse, despite its modified context and predominantly exotic vegetation along the banks still has a largely natural appearance and holds very high amenity values.
- The banks of the river, which are generally lined with trees, shrubs and grasses provide a natural foil for the densely developed residential areas in its context.
- Upper catchment remnant channels, such as those in Crosbie Park and beyond Russley Road provide a unique experience of the past size and naturalness of the river.

Associative attributes:

- The Ōtākaro / Avon River is a particularly important river for Christchurch, as it contributes to the city's identity and cultural, as well as natural history.
- The river is a landmark with iconic status within Christchurch City as it defines the landscape of the city that has developed along its banks.
- A number of historic buildings and bridges, which are of high importance to Christchurch's character, are located along the Ōtākaro / Avon in the Central City section.
- A network of key cultural sites dots the catchment from Hereora (near Avonhead), to Ōhikahuruhuru in Fendalton and Pūtarikamotu/Riccarton Bush, to Puāri pā and the kāinga of Ōtautahi in the central city, and Waikākāriki/Horsehose Lake and Ōruapaeroa/Travis Wetland in the lower reaches.
- The cabbage tree at Burnside High School is believed to have been a pre-European boundary marker delineating Maori usage areas of the Wairārapa Stream.

- The river banks of the Central City have been used for a variety of uses by Europeans, including a flour mill with a dam, mill race and waterwheel in the late 1850s.
- The park-like character of the river banks, including the plantings of rhododendrons and deciduous shade trees, the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park, stem from European influence.

8.2 Identification of Significant Landscape Features

Note: the full evaluation of the Ōtākaro / Avon River is provided below for context and completeness however only the Central City section (between Harper Avenue to the west and Fitzgerald Avenue to the east) is listed within Chapter 13.

The Ōtākaro / Avon, including its three major tributaries, has been identified as a SF due to its moderate biophysical values, moderate to high perceptual values and very high associative values.

The river is considered to be a very important feature of Christchurch City, which serves as a landmark along its entire course. The river corridor, in particular the Central City section, has very high cultural values associated with it, in terms of tāngata whenua and European heritage. The natural and dual cultural values have led to identification of the Ōtākaro / Avon River, including its three major tributaries (Ōtākaro / Avon River with Waimairi and Wairārapa Streams in Mona Vale) as a SF. Since the urban context of the river has led to a high degree of human modification, which has reduced the biophysical values and naturalness of the river, the SF boundary is confined to the river banks.

The three major tributaries of the Ōtākaro / Avon, the Wairārapa Stream (northern most branch), Waimaero or Waimairi Stream (middle branch), and Ōrakipaoa / Avon (the southern branch), have been identified as SFs due to their high amenity values and importance to tāngata whenua. Since the biophysical values and naturalness of the Ōtākaro / Avon are only moderate, a SF identification is considered appropriate. It should, however, be acknowledged that the river and all of its tributaries are of very high importance to tāngata whenua, which may justify special recognition as a significant cultural feature.

9 Appendix Two: Excerpt from Stage 3 of the Ōtautahi/Christchurch Landscape Study relevant to the Ōtākaro / Avon River – Landscape Sensitivities and Recommended Management Mechanisms

Landscape Sensitivities:

- The urban context of rivers, springs and wetlands of Christchurch provides distinctive boundaries to the majority of features.
- The ecological values in many of the areas are improving due to active restoration and revegetation of the features and their margins, but there is little to no extensive buffer to the surrounding intensive development.
- Many heritage and historic sites are located along the Ōtākaro / Avon River, as places for early settlement for both Māori and European people.
- Community interest in restoration of various reserves is high and access for public recreation is highly valued.
- The rivers, springs and wetlands (both former and existing) are of high importance to tāngata whenua and efforts to protect, restore and/or enhance these are critical to uphold cultural values, particularly for mahinga kai. This includes the former channels, depressions and other land forms associated with the rivers and their wetlands.
- The Ōtākaro / Avon River is lined by a network of key cultural sites throughout the catchment, both Māori and European. Key sites of significance to tāngata whenua include Puāri pā and the kāinga of Ōtautahi in the central city.

Potential landscape change issues in relation to land use:

- The rivers, springs and wetlands of Christchurch are mostly located within a highly developed urban context, which means that they are exposed to stormwater runoff. This can lead to altered flow regimes and high sediment and contaminant inputs, which in turn affects water quality and recreation and cultural values.
- Most of the key features are reserves in public ownership, which often means that the risk of land use change is relatively low and public access is secured.
- Flooding is a major threat in some low-lying areas of Christchurch. Future changes to the river environment could include protection works along the major waterways, or alternatively urban retreat to provide additional floodplain and flood retention areas, such as the creation and/or re-establishment of wetlands.
- The earthquakes have led to changes in some of the features and their urban context, e.g. through red-zoning of land, which may provide opportunities for increasing buffer areas or the regeneration of vegetation and ecological habitat in the future.
- The amenity of landscape features, including former river channels, can be compromised through encroaching development, such as residential and industrial subdivision, earthworks, roading, and other buildings and structures that may have adverse visual effects on the features' landscape character.

9.1 Potential Future Land Uses and Management Mechanisms

Within this section landscape vulnerability to a variety of human activities is addressed as part of the potential landscape management mechanisms.

Earthworks and Quarrying:

Earthworks can leave exposed and cut surfaces which often contrast with surrounding vegetation and natural contours. Earthworks and quarrying can also destroy natural contours, depressions and historic landscape features and landforms, some of which may be significant to tāngata whenua.

In particular, if earthworks are carried out on slopes, the scarring can be visually prominent with an adverse effect on the surrounding landscape. The location, shape, volume and size of earthworks generally determine their visual impact, but other factors, such as extent and treatment of cut, batter and spill on slopes are also important aspects that can influence the landscape outcomes of larger-scale earthworks. On slopes, large-scale earthworks can also lead to erosion which can cause adverse visual effects over extensive areas, including increased sedimentation in nearby waterways.

Removal of native vegetation:

For Significant Features (SFs), the presence of both remnant and restored indigenous vegetation is an important contributing factor that adds to the natural science, ecological and cultural values of the areas. The quality and quantity of native vegetation cover varies considerably between. The extent and species composition of vegetation cover/ remnants needs to be considered when effects of vegetation removal are to be assessed. There is a strong overlap with parts of the district plan that are aimed at protecting the biodiversity of the district.

From a landscape perspective consideration should be given to the extent to which the loss of indigenous vegetation will adversely affect:

- The natural science and legibility values of an SF
- The overall natural character of an area, including its natural elements, patterns and processes;
- Indigenous ecosystem integrity and function;
- Cultural values;
- Natural character associated with a water body or wetland

Furthermore, where restoration of native vegetation can contribute positively to the existing values, consideration for not only protection, but enhancement should be given.

Subdivision, Buildings and Structures:

Buildings and structures have the potential to modify the landscape depending on their location in relation to the topography, size, scale, height form, colour, materials and finish as well as surrounding existing, former and proposed vegetation.

For Christchurch the proximity of the identified SFs to the urban context of the city puts increased pressure for residential development on them compared to many rural areas in other districts. It may be appropriate to identify areas that are suitable to absorb residential and industrial development outside the SFs to ensure future development is planned in a strategic rather than reactive manner. This strategic planning has recently occurred through various planning mechanisms following the Canterbury earthquakes, which have led to identification of greenfield sites within Christchurch for future residential subdivision.

Structures can also include telecommunication towers, electricity pylons, bridges and other non-residential buildings, such as sheds or commercial/ industrial buildings. Likewise remnant river channels and wetland basins/depressions are sensitive to the development of residential and industrial land as they are low-lying and often overlooked. The expressiveness of particularly legible landforms may be modified by subdivision, buildings and structures, if they physically and visually dominate their surroundings.

Consideration of the following factors should be taken into account when assessing landscape and visual effects of subdivision, buildings and structures in Significant Features such as the Ōtākaro / Avon River.

- Type of subdivision/building/structure and the effects on the natural / cultural landscape character;

- Location in relation to the landform and topography and specific landscape features that are particularly legible within the SF/L;
- Scale, form, and finish of any structure, including colour and materials;
- Impact on coherence of landscape character or pattern of natural features such as indigenous vegetation, river channels, springs and wetland basins etc;
- The nature and extent of existing development within the vicinity or locality;
- The extent to which the number of dwellings or the building location and coverage on a site would degrade, visually dominate or contrast with existing character, landforms and amenity values;
- The need for any increased height of a building/structure in order to undertake the proposed activity and how this may detract from views and outlook from adjoining properties or from public roads and places;
- Cumulative effects and potential to visually dominate the landscape;

As part of an assessment of landscape effects, opportunities for benefits should also be taken into account. These benefits could include opportunities to remedy or mitigate an existing adverse effect and opportunities to protect open space from further development through e.g. the use of restrictive covenants. The extent to which a proposal avoids fragmentation of the landscape and allows for the physical and visual connections between natural features and elements should also be taken into consideration.

Flood Protection and Retention, Land Drainage and Stormwater:

Flood protection and retention works, land drainage and stormwater can also affect the values of SFs, particularly where these are associated with waterways or wetlands and associated ecological and cultural values. Consideration of a range of matters to protect and/or enhance waterways from such works is important.