

TIMARU DISTRICT SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS SURVEY

PROPERTY REPORT

PROPERTY DETAILS:

Owners: Jim and Eleanor Jolly
Valuation Reference: 24660/222.17 and 24660/222.02
Address: Kalaugher Road, Geraldine
Location: In a small gully on the crest of the Geraldine Downs.
Ecological District: Geraldine Ecological District
TDC Land Type: Soft Rock Hills and Downs
Land Environment: N3 (downlands of South Canterbury and coastal Otago)

ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT:

The property lies at the eastern edge of the Geraldine Ecological District, on the rolling hills of the Geraldine Downs. The original vegetation of this area would have been predominantly podocarp-hardwood forest, dominated by totara, matai and kahikatea emergent over a hardwood canopy. Important canopy hardwood species would probably have been narrow-leaved lacebark, pokaka, kowhai, lemonwood, five-finger, broadleaf and mahoe. The indigenous fauna would have been significantly more numerous and diverse, with a greater range of forest birds, lizards and invertebrates than is presently found in the area.

One area of restoration planting and wetland habitat is present on the property. It is a good example of a well-established and now largely self-sustaining area of indigenous vegetation and habitat. The associated ponds provide important open-water and riparian habitat in an otherwise dry area. This area is part of a more extensive collection of scattered patches of forest and treeland on the Geraldine Downs that provide important habitat for birds and possibly for long-tailed bat (a 'nationally endangered' species). Bats have been recorded in Talbot Forest in recent years.

SIGNIFICANT AREAS ON THE PROPERTY:

The property was surveyed briefly as part of the District-wide survey of Significant Natural Areas during August 2007. The area of restoration planting and the associated ponds are regarded as a Significant Natural Area (SNA) when assessed against the District Plan criteria.

Area No.	Area Name	Central grid reference	Aprox. size (ha)	Vegetation/habitat type
725d	Jolly restoration forest and ponds	J38: 681-795	0.68	Restoration plantings and ponds/ wetland habitat

This SNA is illustrated on the attached aerial photograph and described in greater detail in this document. Note that the boundaries of the SNA are indicative, rather than precise. This SNA meets the ecological criteria in the Timaru District Plan (criteria i-vi, pages B18-B19) and is considered to be sustainable in the long term (criterion vii, page B19). SNAs are subject to confirmation by Council after regarding the matters listed under Final Considerations (pages B19-B20).

The implication of an area being listed as an SNA is that consent is required from Council for clearance of indigenous vegetation by any means (including burning and spraying with herbicides) or over-planting. This does not normally include clearance to prevent shading of buildings, the maintenance of tracks and fences, or grazing. To assist with the protection and management of any SNA, landowners can apply to Council for financial assistance. SNAs will eventually be listed in the District Plan. Any questions regarding the protection, management and use of SNAs should be directed to the District Planner.

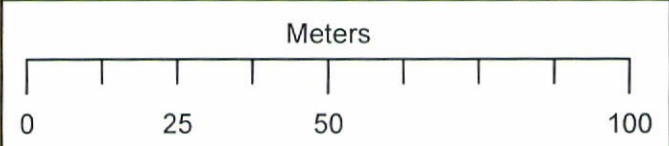
OTHER AREAS INSPECTED ON THE PROPERTY:

A small area comprising several trees of totara, narrow-leaved lacebark and pokaka, isolated within plantation forest, was also inspected. This area of indigenous treeland is not regarded as significant when assessed against the criteria on pages B18-B20 of the Timaru District Plan. Failure of this area to meet the significance criteria does not mean that it is not important for nature conservation or the protection of indigenous biodiversity; it simply means that the area (as assessed at this time) does not meet the criteria in the Timaru District Plan. These trees may provide useful habitat for birds.

Jolly Property



725d



1:1,250

TIMARU DISTRICT SNA SURVEY

AREA 725d

Area Name: Jolly Restoration Forest and Ponds
Location (central map reference): J38: 681-795
Ecological District: Geraldine
Surveyors: Mike Harding and Jim Jolly

Property: Jim and Eleanor Jolly
Nearest Locality: Geraldine
Area Size (ha): 0.68 **Altitude (m):** 190
Survey Time: 1 hour **Survey Date:** 14-08-07

General Description:

This Significant Natural Area (SNA) comprises an area of planted indigenous vegetation and constructed ponds in a small gully on the crest of the Geraldine Downs.

Plant Communities:

Two main plant communities are present, low-forest on the gully sides and wetland vegetation on the gully floor and on the pond margins. These plant communities arise mostly from deliberate plantings over the past 20 years.

The low-stature forest on the slopes has a canopy 6-8 m tall. Important species present are cabbage tree, matipo, lemonwood, kowhai, broadleaf, totara, five-finger, kanuka, *Coprosma propinqua* and *C. rotundifolia*. The forest understorey is relatively open. Additional species present on the gully floor are toetoe, flax, sedge (*Carex* sp.) and rush (*Juncus* sp.). Planted mountain beech trees are growing adjacent to the SNA, between the ponds and Kalaugher Road. Exotic species present include blackberry, cotoneaster and a planted silver birch tree.

Birds/Fauna Observed:

Insufficient time was spent at the site to survey bird populations. Birds utilising the ponds and adjacent habitat include grey teal, little shag, pukeko, paradise shelduck, mallard, kingfisher, welcome swallow (nesting under the culvert) and occasionally Australasian shoveler (Jim Jolly, *pers. comm.*). Birds likely to utilise the low-forest and adjacent habitats are bellbird, kereru, grey warbler, shining cuckoo, fantail and silvereye. A single tui has visited the site in recent weeks (Jim Jolly, *pers. comm.*).

Notable Flora, Fauna and Habitats:

The most notable features of this SNA are the presence of open water habitat with good riparian cover in an otherwise dry environment, and the stature and density of the well-established restoration plantings.

Notable Plant and Animal Pests:

The SNA was not thoroughly investigated for pests. Cotoneaster plants were observed.

Boundaries (buffering, fencing, adjoining plant communities and habitats):

The SNA is securely fenced and not grazed. It is protected and buffered by fences and by its location in a small gully. It adjoins areas of plantation forest, amenity plantings and grassland. It lies close to areas of indigenous forest and treeland on adjacent properties and is effectively part of a network of fauna habitat on the Geraldine Downs. It is less than one kilometre from the ecologically important Talbot Forest Scenic Reserve.

Condition and Management Issues:

The SNA is in good condition. The planted trees are well established. Removal of cotoneaster would be desirable, as its bird-dispersed fruits pose a threat to this and other SNAs in the area.

Property Owner Comment:

The property owners have spent considerable time and effort creating and managing this area of indigenous vegetation and wetland habitat. It is considered an important part of the mix of land uses on the property. Mountain beech trees planted for timber are present in the restoration plantings between the ponds and Kalaugher Road. The property owners wish to be able to harvest these trees, so this small part of the restoration plantings is excluded from the SNA. The ponds were established to provide a supply of water for activities on the property. The owners wish to continue to take water from these ponds.

ASSESSMENT AGAINST DISTRICT PLAN CRITERIA:

Primary Criteria	Rank	Notes
Representativeness	M	A good example of a restoration planting using locally-sourced species.
Rarity	L/M	The ponds provide suitable habitat for locally-uncommon birds. The restoration plantings provide some habitat for kereru (threat status: gradual decline).
Diversity and pattern	L/M	Two main habitats are present, though species diversity is less than that originally present at such sites.
Distinctiveness/special features	M	The presence of open-water habitat with riparian cover is a special feature.
Other Criteria		
Size/shape	M	A small area, but has a good shape and is well buffered.
Connectivity	M	A useful part of a network of fauna habitat on the Geraldine Downs.
Long-term Sustainability	M	The ecological values of the area are likely to persist in the long term with minimal conservation management.

Final Consideration (of other matters: Section D, page B-19 of Timaru District Plan):

This SNA has been created and protected by the landowners. They have willingly foregone opportunities for other development of this part of their property. The SNA complements other land uses on the property and provides a source of water for irrigation during dry periods. The restoration plantings are sufficiently well established to be largely self-sustaining.

Discussion:

This area meets the District Plan criteria for a Significant Natural Area. It is a good example of a well-established restoration planting and created wetland habitat. Special features are the presence of open water habitat with good riparian cover in an otherwise dry environment and the stature and density of the well-established restoration plantings.

Scientific names of species cited by common name

Common Name	Scientific name
(* = naturalised species)	
blackberry*	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
broadleaf	<i>Griselinia littoralis</i>
cabbage tree/ti rakau	<i>Cordyline australis</i>
cotoneaster*	<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.
five-finger	<i>Pseudopanax arboreus</i>
flax	<i>Phormium tenax</i>
kahikatea/white pine	<i>Dacrycarpus dacrydioides</i>
kanuka	<i>Kunzea ericoides</i>
kowhai	<i>Sophora microphylla</i>
lemonwood	<i>Pittosporum eugenioides</i>
mahoe/whiteywood	<i>Melicytus ramiflorus</i>
matai/black pine	<i>Prumnopitys taxifolia</i>
matipo/kohuhu	<i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i>
mountain beech	<i>Nothofagus solandri</i> var. <i>cliffortioides</i>
narrow-leaved lacebark	<i>Hoheria angustifolia</i>
pokaka	<i>Elaeocarpus hookerianus</i>
silver birch*	<i>Betula pendula</i>
toetoe	<i>Cortaderia richardii</i>
totara	<i>Podocarpus totara</i>