

**TIMARU DISTRICT**  
**SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS**  
**SURVEY**

**WOODS PROPERTY**



**Report prepared for the Timaru District Council by Mike Harding**  
**September 2007**

# TIMARU DISTRICT SIGNIFICANT NATURAL AREAS SURVEY

## PROPERTY REPORT

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### PROPERTY DETAILS:

**Owner:** ..... SJ and CE Woods Family Trust  
**Valuation Reference:** ..... 24660/268.00  
**Address:** ..... 374 Pleasant Valley Road, Geraldine  
**Location:** ..... On a steep scarp and in small eastern gullies on the southwest side of the Geraldine Downs, adjacent to Pleasant Valley Road.  
**Ecological District:** ..... Geraldine Ecological District  
**TDC Land Type:** ..... Soft Rock Hills and Downs  
**Land Environment:** ..... N3 (downlands of South Canterbury and coastal Otago)

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### ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT:

The property lies at the eastern edge of the Geraldine Ecological District, on the low rolling hills and western scarp 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 birds, lizards and invertebrates than is presently found in the area.

Two large areas of podocarp-hardwood forest and three smaller areas of podocarp-hardwood forest are present on the property. These forest remnants contain remnant and regenerating indigenous vegetation, including large old podocarps (kahikatea, totara and matai) and tall emergent narrow-leaved lacebark and pokaka trees. The remnants are especially diverse and support three threatened species (kereru, rifleman and *Brachyglottis sciadophila*) and several locally uncommon species. The larger areas of forest are fenced from grazing and the two largest areas protected by QEII Open Space covenants. These larger remnants are the most important indigenous forest remnants on the Geraldine Downs outside of Talbot Forest Scenic Reserve. These areas of forest are part of a more extensive collection of scattered patches of forest and treeland on the Geraldine Downs.

Areas of forest and treeland on the Geraldine Downs may provide roost sites (though maybe only occasionally used) for long-tailed bat (a 'nationally endangered' species). Long-tailed bat have been recorded nearby in Talbot Forest and in the Te Moana valley.

The presence, health and protected status of these forest remnants are a credit to the effort and vision of the landowners.

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**SIGNIFICANT AREAS ON THE PROPERTY:**

The property was surveyed as part of the District-wide survey of Significant Natural Areas during July 2007. All parts of the property were visited. Six areas of forest on the property are regarded as Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) when assessed against the District Plan criteria.

Area No.	Area Name	Central grid reference	Aprox. size (ha)	Vegetation/habitat type
5a	Woods podocarp covenant	J38: 666-792	6.10	Podocarp-hardwood forest
5b		J38: 665-791	0.57	Podocarp-hardwood forest
34a	Woods scarp forest covenant	J38: 658-796	4.44	Podocarp-hardwood forest
34c	Woods scarp forest covenant	J38: 663-790	15.97	Podocarp-hardwood forest
212	Woods forest-treeland remnant	J38: 665-795	1.83	Podocarp-hardwood forest
213	Woods old kahikatea remnant	J38: 667-789	0.36	Podocarp-hardwood forest

These SNAs are illustrated on the attached aerial photograph and described in greater detail on the Area Inspection Forms in this report. Note that the boundaries of the SNAs are indicative, rather than precise. These SNAs meet the ecological criteria in the Timaru District Plan (criteria i-vi, pages B18-B19) and are (mostly) considered to be sustainable in the long term (criterion vii, page B19). The 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 prevent 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.

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**OTHER AREAS INSPECTED ON THE PROPERTY:**

One other small area of indigenous vegetation on the property was inspected but is not regarded as significant when assessed against the criteria on pages B18-B20 of the Timaru District Plan. This area is the small patch of kanuka at the base of the small spur at the eastern edge of the property (just east of Area 5a). This kanuka patch may provide some useful habitat for birds and may become significant if natural regeneration was encouraged.

Failure of an area to meet the significance criteria does not necessarily 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. Such areas may have considerable potential value and, if left alone, may eventually become significant.



Woods Property  
24660/268.00

34a

212

5a

5b

34c

213

N

Meters

0 50 100 200

1:7,500