



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE □ URBAN DESIGN □ PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Landscape and Visual Assessment  
for  
96 Beach Haven Rd & 13 Cresta Ave,  
Beach Haven

Prepared for:  
Bentley Studios Ltd

Prepared by:  
Sally Peake  
Principal, Peake Design Ltd  
Registered NZILA Landscape Architect

# CONTENTS

Page No.

1. INTRODUCTION .....	2
2. EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND CONTEXT.....	2
3. THE PROPOSAL .....	4
4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY .....	5
4.1 Introduction .....	5
4.2 The Auckland Plan .....	5
4.3 Auckland Unitary Plan (Part Operative) .....	6
5. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS .....	7
5.1 Introduction .....	7
5.2 Landscape effects .....	8
5.3 Visual amenity effects.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6. CONCLUSION.....	15
APPENDIX – Rating table and descriptors	

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Peake Design Ltd was requested by Barker & Associates on behalf of Bentley Studios Ltd to undertake an evaluation of the potential landscape and visual effects of a proposed apartment development at 96 Beach Haven Road and 13 Cresta Avenue, Beach Haven.

In order to undertake the evaluation a site visit was made to the site and surrounding context on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The assessment is based on the Resource Consent drawings prepared by Brewer Davidson dated 28/01/2022. Reference is also made to the Brewer Davidson Urban Design Statement dated 21 February 2022.

The purpose of the landscape and visual assessment is to gain an understanding of the existing landscape and how the proposed development will potentially affect that landscape, its character and also the visual amenity of local communities with respect to landscape values.

Specifically, this landscape and visual assessment report responds to the s92 request for a Landscape and Visual Assessment to address the potential landscape and visual amenity effects that may result from the proposal, in particular the height infringement.

## **2. EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND CONTEXT**

The existing site and immediate context are described in the application/AEE and urban design assessment and summarised below.

In terms of its wider context, the site is within the area known as Beach Haven and Birkdale that originated from the purchase of the area by the Birkdale Land Company (1923). By 1959, the residential area was almost completely developed (Figure 1), while according to Wikipedia, there is very strong sense of community which centres on the village shops at the intersection of Beach haven and Rangitira Roads. It is also noted that there are several community centres/halls in the area together with the Opekatai Beach Haven Garden.

As a result, the character of the area is strongly based on the suburban dwellings and development on the peninsula, while the landscape values and character are primarily derived from the coastal perimeter and open space, notably Tui Park and Shepherds Park (which was previously occupied by orchards and market gardens).



**Figure 1 Beach Haven aerial photograph 1959 (sourced from Geomaps)**

The site is clearly visible in Figure 1, including the existing site access to the south, with the bulk of the site clearly separate from the adjacent residential area to the west, with strong vegetated boundaries (partly evident today). The existing physical characteristics are briefly described in the Urban Design Statement and include a small steep gully and overland flow path on the western side of the site (noting that there is consent for earthworks in preparation for residential development). Generally, the site is vacant except for a dwelling and outbuildings (Figure 2).

The majority of trees have been removed and there are none of value, although some trees (along the northwest boundary) are proposed to be retained.

Images of the site and neighbourhood are included in the attachment to this report.



**Figure 2 Site and context**

### **3. THE PROPOSAL**

The proposal is described in the application/AEE and urban design statement.

The proposal is for four three storey apartment buildings with a car parking area and JOAL on the eastern side of the buildings, connecting directly to the pan-handle access way from Cresta Avenue.

In total 81 apartments are proposed, ranging between studio, one bed and two bedroom units. All dwellings face either north, east or west and all have a balcony.

Two bike storage facilities are proposed towards the north-east and south-east corners of the site and adjoining the refuse storage areas to be serviced by a private contractor. The access JOAL includes landscaping and regularly placed footpath strips to signal pedestrian movement.

The roof design incorporates both horizontal and vertical flares and a visually exposed soffit based on maximising the sense of visual variation and shape when viewed from the ground level (in conjunction with periodic balcony recesses). The roof profile has been continued to the ground around the building sides in places so as to create a visually

striking wrapping or folding feature. The roof form accommodates one habitable floor level and the non-occupiable volume above that (it is double-height in places).

The proposal infringes the maximum building height standard as well as the occupiable height component of the standard. The proposal otherwise complies with the zone standards.

The cladding is a combination of whites, creams and dark greys, with timber cladding used to add a warming / earthen element.

A comprehensive landscape treatment is proposed across the site, including specimen trees, shrubs and hedging, riparian planting, a mix of hard paving and a range of fence types.

The access JOAL includes landscaping and regularly placed footpath strips to signal pedestrian movement, while the pedestrian entry incorporates a footpath, trees and low planting.

## **4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The assessment of landscape and visual effects has been undertaken with reference to the methodology contained in *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa Landscape Assessment Guidelines*<sup>1</sup> and in consideration of the Auckland Council Information Requirements for the assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects (September 2017).

The assessment provides ratings based on professional judgement and evaluates the level or magnitude of effects that will result from the proposed development, and, in particular, the building height infringement.

Effects are assessed in respect of determining the way in which a proposal will impact on the character and values of the place, with reference to the site context and relevant planning framework outlined below.

### **4.2 The Auckland Plan**

The Auckland Plan 2050 is an integrated spatial plan that sets the long-term strategic direction for Auckland and shows how Auckland is expected to grow and change during

---

<sup>1</sup> *'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', approved by Tuia Pito Ora / NZILA 5 May 2021'*

the next 30 years. Adopted in June 2018, it has a simple structure and clear links between outcomes, directions and measures.

Relevant directions, outcomes and focus areas are covered in six sections, with Homes and Places and Opportunity and Prosperity being key sections for this project.

#### **4.3 Auckland Unitary Plan (Part Operative)**

Under the Regional Policy Statement, Part B2 covers the issues, objectives and policies for urban growth and form. Section B2.2 envisages a quality compact urban form that enables higher residential intensification in and around centres; along identified corridors; and close to public transport, social facilities (including open space) and employment opportunities. B2.3 and B2.4 set out the objectives and policies for a quality built environment and residential growth and intensification.

Under the zone description for the Residential – Single House Zone (H3), it states that the purpose of the zone is to maintain and enhance the amenity values of established residential neighbourhoods, which in this case is likely to relate to its coastal setting or established neighbourhood character. A suburban built character is envisaged.

Objectives and policies are focussed on the zone purpose and outcomes, including:

H3.2.(2) Development is in keeping with the neighbourhood's existing or planned suburban built character of predominantly one to two storeys buildings.

H3.3.(1) Require an intensity of development that is compatible with either the existing suburban built character where this is to be maintained or the planned suburban built character of predominantly one to two storey dwellings.

(2) Require development to:

(a) be of a height, bulk and form that maintains and is in keeping with the character and amenity values of the established residential neighbourhood; or

(b) be of a height and bulk and have sufficient setbacks and landscaped areas to maintain an existing suburban built character or achieve the planned suburban built character of predominantly one to two storey dwellings within a generally spacious setting.

(4) Require the height, bulk and location of development to maintain a reasonable level of sunlight access and privacy and to minimise visual dominance effects to the adjoining sites.

(8) To provide for integrated residential development on larger sites.

The proposal is a non-complying activity.

## 5. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

### 5.1 Introduction

This assessment is based upon the professional judgement of the author, and uses ratings that evaluates the level of landscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development. The full description of the scale of effects ratings is included as an appendix.

It should be noted that change in a landscape does not necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect. Landscape is dynamic and naturally changes over time in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways. These changes are both natural and human induced. What is important is the management of landscape change so that significant adverse effects are avoided or sufficiently mitigated to ameliorate the effects of the change in land use. Effects are assessed with regard to the way in which a proposal will impact on the character and values of the place.

Landscape and visual impacts result from natural or induced change in the components, character or quality of landscape. Usually these are the result of landform or vegetation modification or the introduction of new structures, activities or facilities into the landscape. The process of change itself, that is the construction process and/or activities associated with the development, also carry with them their own visual impacts as distinct from those generated by a completed development.

The landscape and visual effects generated by any particular proposal can, therefore, be perceived as:

- Positive (beneficial), contributing to the visual character and quality of the environment.
- Negative (adverse), detracting from existing character and quality of environment; or
- Neutral (benign), with essentially no effect on existing character or quality of environment.

The degree to which landscape and visual effects are generated by a development depends on a number of factors, these include:

- The degree to which the proposal contrasts, or is consistent, with the qualities of the surrounding landscape.
- The proportion of the proposal that is visible, determined by the observer's position relative to the objects viewed.
- The distance and foreground context within which the proposal is viewed.
- The area or extent of visual catchment from which the proposal is visible.
- The number of viewers, their location and situation (static, or moving) in relation to the view.
- The backdrop and context within which the proposal is viewed.



- The predictable and likely known future character of the locality.
- The quality of the resultant landscape, its aesthetic values and contribution to the wider landscape character to the area.

Change in a landscape does not of itself, constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect.

## **5.2 Landscape and visual effects**

As noted in the urban design assessment, the site is located on the fringe of the residential area of the peninsula and the Urban Design Statement remarks on the suitability of the site for intensification due to its contextual features. This includes its proximity to the local centre and adjacent apartments.

Being located on a rear site, the proposed development has no direct interface or interaction with public space and as a result will be mostly viewed from behind other sites and buildings. As a result, it is the form of the top portions of the buildings, including their silhouette and roof shape that will have the greatest visual impact and impacts on local landscape and amenity values.

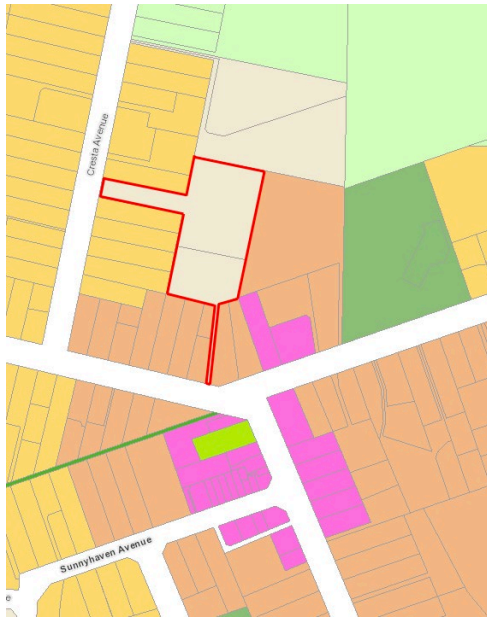
At three storeys high, the buildings will be taller than the prevailing height of the adjacent one and two-storey buildings, but similar to the apartments to the east. Height standards allow for buildings 8-9m high to the north and west, and buildings 11-12m high to the south and east. Permitted building height in the Business Local centre is 16-18m. The proposed maximum height of 11.229m is consistent with the permitted height for the Mixed Housing Urban Zone and is therefore expected to comfortably fit within the future landscape character and environment as development occurs to the south and east (excepting for the Open Space Zone). It will also be significantly below the height standard for the Business Local Centre Zone.

As a result, existing currently available views from the south (Figure 3) will likely be blocked in the future (Sheet 2 of the attachment).

The attachment to this report identifies representative locations from where the proposed development would be visible together with views of the site and neighbourhood.

The site has a limited close visual catchment due to the nature of the surrounding built and vegetative environment, with many potential views interrupted by intervening buildings and established trees.

In addition, due to the site's low elevation, the site also has a limited more distant visual catchment, although the upper portion of the buildings will be visible from some locations as shown in the attachment to the report. Farther views are mainly from the south – along Rangatira Road.



**Figure 3 Land use zones**

The Viewpoint images show that views from public places other than from the south (Viewpoints 5-10) are limited to views above and between buildings, and between trees on Cresta Avenue. In this view (Viewpoint 13), a thin sliver of roof is visible.

The building is not visible from Shepherds Park (Viewpoints 1-3), nor from Beach Haven Road to the east (Viewpoint 4).

In views from Rangatira Road south of the local centre (Viewpoints 5-7) Block D is visible above the foreground dwellings and partially interrupted/contained by trees. In all these views the background vegetation remains the primary landscape feature, with the retail buildings becoming more prominent in closer views (View 7) and Block D obscuring more of the backdrop.

Based on the rating table in Appendix A, landscape and visual effects from Viewpoints 1-7 and 13 are rated between no, very low or low effects.

Viewpoints 8 and 9 are from closer to the site, adjacent to the Opekatai Beach Haven Garden and on Beach Haven Road close to the pedestrian entry. Due to the closer proximity, the buildings take up a large proportion of the view and backdrop vegetation, but will not break the skyline.

In Viewpoint 8, Block D is still the only building visible, and is subservient to the foreground buildings, occupying a small part of the view and at a low relative elevation. In Viewpoint

9, Block D essentially fills the space occupied by the backdrop vegetation and has greater visual impacts as a result. It still sits at a comfortable height relative to the adjacent dwellings, however, and will not be a dominant feature of the view, being set back from the road and behind existing dwellings. Landscape and visual effects are rated low from these viewpoints.

Viewpoint 10 is the view along the pedestrian entry and is therefore not representative of public views for pedestrians and drivers. In this view, Block D sits to the left of the path and is partially screened by foreground dwellings, with Blocks A and B sitting behind at a lower relative elevation. Due to the close proximity of the viewpoint, Block D breaks the skyline, but the other blocks retain views of the backdrop vegetation. While the development will be prominent in this view, as noted above, it is not representative of public views but rather, views for residents. In addition, with reference to dwg. L206, proposed trees along the path are expected to fully screen the buildings.

Sheet 3 of the attachment shows the perimeter condition of the site, and neighbouring dwellings. A detailed analysis of available views from all the neighbouring sites has not been undertaken. However, it is noted that the development generally complies with the height in relation to boundary standards (except for small infringements to Blocks A and D) so that it is considered that any adverse effects in relation to sunlight access, privacy and visual dominance effects for neighbours will be small.

While the scale and height of the development is larger than anticipated in the Single House Zone, the assessment shows that the development is appropriate within its setting and context, and will not be out of keeping with the character and amenity values of the established residential neighbourhood. In addition, proposed landscape treatment will reduce the perceived bulk and scale of the buildings, while buildings are set back from boundaries.

Potential effects in relation to planning controls on adjacent properties are described in the AEE.

Proposed mitigation of landscape and visual effects for neighbouring residents is described in the table below.

Address	Mitigation
88 Beach Haven Road	Living and outdoor living is orientated away from the site; existing vegetation within the property screens the site. Block D is

	separated by (low) landscape. A new 1800mm timber fence is proposed.
90 Beach Haven Road	Living and outdoor living are orientated towards the site but the house is set back from the boundary. Block D is set back from the boundary with intervening tree planting and (low) landscape. A new 1800mm timber fence is proposed.
92 Beach Haven Road	Living and outdoor living are orientated away from the site. Block D is set back from the boundary with intervening tree planting and (low) landscape. A new 1800mm timber fence is proposed.
94/94A Beach Haven Road	Living and outdoor living are orientated towards the site but the house is set back from the boundary. Block D is set back from the boundary with intervening tree planting and (low) landscape. A new 1800mm timber fence is proposed. Tree planting and groundcover are proposed along the fenced walkway.
98 Beach Haven Road	Proposed tree and shrub planting along the boundary separates the dwelling from the vehicular circulation space on the site (with the corner of Block D to the northwest of the site). The existing 1800mm timber fence is to be retained on a low garden wall. Tree planting and groundcover are proposed along the fenced walkway.
100 Beach Haven Road	Proposed tree and shrub planting along the boundary separates the dwelling from the vehicular circulation space on the site (there is no building adjacent to this property). The existing 1800mm timber fence is to be retained on a low garden wall.

<p>116 Beach Haven Road</p>	<p>Dwellings on this property are separated by a commercial site and the apartments to the north. In addition , the access road/ circulation space is located along the eastern boundary, providing additional separation from Block D.</p>
<p>120 Beach Haven Road</p>	<p>Residents will be orientated towards, and have clear views of, the proposed development. However, the bulk and scale will be similar to their own development and buildings will be set back from the boundary and separated by the access road/ carparking. Some trees between carparks are proposed together with trees in front of buildings.</p>
<p>5 Cresta Avenue</p>	<p>Living and outdoor living is orientated away from the site and the house is set back from the boundary. A new 1800mm timber fence and hedge are proposed. Block D is separated by (low) landscape.</p>
<p>7 Cresta Avenue</p>	<p>Living and outdoor living is orientated towards the site with the house set back from the boundary. Existing vegetation that currently screens the site will likely be removed. Block D is separated by (low) landscape, with Block C set farther back with additional garden/landscape set back. A new 1800mm timber fence and hedge are proposed, with some additional tree planting in front of Block C.</p>
<p>9 Cresta Avenue</p>	<p>Living is orientated away from the site but outdoor living is adjacent with the house set back from the boundary. Existing vegetation that currently screens the site will likely be removed. Block C is separated by a landscaped area and communal landscape</p>

	space with tree planting. A new 1800mm timber fence and hedge are also proposed.
11 Cresta Avenue	This property has not been infilled and consequently the house is well away from the site boundary and separated by dense planting. Blocks B and C are set back from the boundary and separated by landscaped areas including tree planting, a hedge and new 1800mm timber fence. The adjacent site (13 Cresta Avenue) is the proposed site entry with parking and a footpath adjacent. Trees are proposed to break up the planting. The boundary will be a planted retaining wall with metal railings.
15 Cresta Avenue	The house is well set back from the site boundary with living rooms partially orientated towards the site boundary separated by a garden and outdoor living area. Existing screen vegetation within the site will be retained along the northwestern boundary and the existing fence. The existing fence along the JOAL will be removed and replaced with a new 1.8m high timber fence along the shared boundary.
17 Cresta Avenue	A block of three units is located adjacent to the site relatively close to the site boundary with paved rear yards. Existing screening vegetation within the site will partially screen views of Block A, with additional screen trees planted in the gap. The existing 1.8m high screen fence will be retained.
29 Cresta Avenue	This is a large property that backs on to Shepherds Park and mainly retained in trees/bush. The house is close to the site boundary but living areas are orientated away from the site and palm trees are planted between the house and site and

	<p>provide screening. The existing 1.8m high fence is proposed to be retained. Block A is set back from the boundary and separated with a landscaped area and hedge, with trees added for additional screening.</p>
--	---

It is considered that the set back of the buildings from the boundary together with their separation from adjacent neighbours with landscaped areas will adequately mitigate any effects of building bulk and scale. It is also noted that there is opportunity for some additional spot tree planting, if desirable, where outdoor living areas abut the site boundary. This should only be carried out in consultation with neighbours, however, and is not considered necessary to mitigate adverse effects.

The design of the building has also been cognisant of potential effects for neighbours. This includes splitting the development into 4 blocks, varying their size and orientation, with each separated by attractive landscape treatment. The buildings' form and elevation have been designed to reduce and break up perceived massing. Although the roof profile of Building D presents as a single monopitch when viewed from the south, the assessment of visual effects shows that it is only in close views where the building and roof will be visually prominent and/or break the skyline, and it is noted that any increase in height to provide greater variation to the roofline, would result in additional height infringements. Analysis of the views describes how the building sits at a comfortable height relative to the adjacent dwellings, and that existing and proposed vegetation will partially screen views. In addition, a variety of building materials and colour has been utilised to create an articulated façade that will focus attention away from the roof.

Although the S92 letter requested an assessment of effects for 12, 14 and 16 Cresta Avenue, effects are likely to mainly relate to the activity and intensification relating to access. Cresta Avenue has a 20m wide road reserve and buildings will be some 80m from the road boundary. Landscape and visual impacts will therefore be limited to the removal of the existing dwelling and its replacement with the road access and parking. Proposed planting at the entry, together with tree planting along its length will partially break up views, so that effects of the change to landscape character will be partly mitigated.

Potential adverse landscape and visual effects for the neighbours either side of the entry road have been considered and addressed in the design. In addition, consultation was carried out with neighbours at 15 Cresta regarding options for fence types and proposed landscape planting. The 1.8m timber fence and adjacent planting reflects the results of that consultation.

Sections for neighbours are shown on dwg. ref RC 17 and show that the house at 11 Cresta Avenue is at a higher elevation than the road (with potential views over it) but set back from the boundary. 1.2m high black railings on top of a retaining wall are proposed along the shared boundary together with climbers and trees between parking areas.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Although the AUP(OP) provides for integrated residential development on larger sites within the zone, the objectives, policies and standards do not support the policy. The site is also differentiated from its neighbours, being one of three sites zoned Residential – Single House, with adjacent sites allowing for greater intensification and additional height to the south and east.

The assessment of landscape effects notes that the proposed development will comfortably fit within the future landscape character and environment of the residential neighbourhood, and considers that effects on local landscape and amenity values will be limited to impacts arising from the form of the top portions of the buildings, including the silhouette and roof shape.

The assessment of visual effects describes how the site has a limited close visual catchment, due to the nature of the surrounding built and vegetative environment, and that closer views are generally interrupted by intervening buildings and established trees.

Longer views available from the south show that the development will be seen against a backdrop of existing vegetation, which will remain the primary landscape feature, with the apartments forming a subservient part of the view, and generally visible between trees and above building rooftops.

The assessment of effects rates landscape and visual effects between no, very low and low.

In addition, the assessment determined that any adverse effects in relation to sunlight access, privacy and visual dominance effects for neighbours would be small. In addition, while the scale and height of the development is larger than anticipated in the zone, the assessment concludes that the development is appropriate within its setting and context, and will not be out of keeping with the character and amenity values of the established residential neighbourhood. Proposed landscape treatment will reduce the perceived bulk and scale of the buildings, with buildings set back from boundaries in addition.



96 BEACH HAVEN ROAD

Sally Peake

*Sally Peake*

Registered FNZILA Landscape Architect



**APPENDIX A - RATING TABLE AND DESCRIPTORS**

Effect rating	Factors
Very high	Total loss of unique elements or elements in pristine condition that contribute to outstanding quality or regional character. This may include nationally important landscape features. Proposal dominates/ modifies views for a sensitive/ large viewing audience with very high adverse effects on landscape values.
High	A major change to elements in very good condition and/or with particularly distinctive or positive contribution to a high quality local or regional character. Proposal is prominent and a focus of views for a sensitive/ large viewing audience with high adverse effects on landscape values.
High - moderate	A moderate change to elements in good or above average condition and/or that make strongly positive contribution to landscape character. May include locally or regionally important landscape features. Proposal will be a major element of view for a large number of people and/or be a focus of view from key locations, with moderate- high adverse effects on landscape values.
Moderate	A moderate change to elements in reasonably good condition and/or that make an average contribution to the local character, which may include locally important landscape features. Proposal will form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene and/or key viewpoints, with moderate adverse effects on landscape values.
Low - moderate	A moderate change to elements in slightly below average condition and/or that are not particularly distinctive local features. Proposal will be a limited component of a wider scene and/or make a small difference to the overall scene, with moderate-low effects on landscape values.
Low	A small change to elements in below average condition and/or that make a low contribution to the local character. Proposal will be a limited component of a wider scene and/or make little difference to the overall scene (e.g. may be missed

	by casual observer) and with low effects on landscape values.
Very low	A very low or no perceived change to elements in poor condition and/or that make a low or no contribution to the local character. Proposal will form a very limited component of the wider scene and/or be viewed from a considerable distance, with very low effects on landscape values.