

Lisle Farm – Private Plan Change

70A and 70B Lisle Farm Drive – Pukekōhe

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects



LA4 Landscape Architects
PO Box 5669, Victoria Street West
Auckland 1010

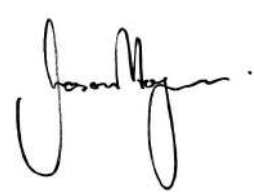
Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects
Quality Assurance Statement

Prepared by:



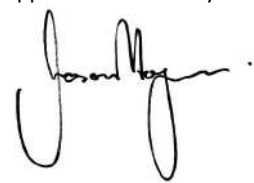
Director

Reviewed by:



Director

Approved for Issue by:



Director

Status: **Final**
Date: 27 June 2023

File Number/Name	23-206 Lisle Farm Private Plan Change
Author	Rob Pryor, Director NZILA Registered Landscape Architect
Client	Stephen Smith

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction 3
2.0	Proposed Plan Change 3
3.0	Assessment Methodology 3
4.0	The Site and Landscape Setting 5
5.0	Statutory Context10
6.0	Evaluation of the Proposal13
7.0	Conclusions21

Annexures

1. Concept Master Plan
2. The Site and Viewpoint Location Map
3. Viewpoint Photographs
4. Visual Effects Matrix

Lisle Farm Private Plan Change – Pukekōhe

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

1. Introduction

- 1.1 LA4 Landscape Architects ('**LA4**') have been engaged by Stephen Smith to undertake an Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects ('**ALVE**') for a proposed Private Plan Change ('**PPC**') for the urbanisation of the land at 70A and 70B Lisle Farm Drive, Pukekōhe ('the **Site**').
- 1.2 The majority of the site is zoned 'Future Urban' ('**FUZ**') within the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) ('**AUP**'). 70 Lisle Farm Drive is located within the Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban ('**MHS**') zone. The site also falls within the area subject to Auckland Council's Pukekōhe – Paerata Structure Plan ('**PPSP**') suitable for rezoning for residential development and identified as Pukekōhe northeast – Area D1.
- 1.3 The land also adjoins land that is subject to Auckland Council Plan Change 78 – Intensification that implements the Medium Density Residential Standards. The adjoining land is zoned Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone.
- 1.4 This assessment investigates the existing character of the site and surrounding environment, identifies the key landscape and visual features of the site and describes the visual and landscape implications of the PPC on the site and surrounding area. Investigations of the site and surrounding environment were undertaken in June 2023.

2. Proposed Plan Change

- 2.1 The site is located within the Auckland Unitary Plan ('**AUP**') Future Urban Zone ('**FUZ**') and covers a total area of 18.647 hectares. The proposal seeks a Private Plan Change to rezone the land as Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('**MHU**') in its entirety such that is aligned with Plan Change 78.
- 2.2 A Concept Plan has been prepared and is included in **Annexure 1**. The plan is illustrative only and has been designed in accordance with established urban design principles. It is a potential option for development and indicatively it would ensure a high level of visual amenity, and protection and enhancement of the bush and wetland areas and riparian plantings along the stream network to enhance its overall landscape amenity and assist in its integration with the surrounding rural and urban area over time. The Concept Plan also takes into account known constraints such as ecological and geotechnical constraints. It also shows the proposed arterial "ring road" which is currently being planned by the Supporting Growth Alliance.

3. Assessment Methodology

- 3.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of the PPC on this landscape is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of this proposal on them. In accordance with the Resource Management Act (1991) ('**RMA**') this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal combined with existing developments.
- 3.2 The methodology used in this assessment is based on the guidelines contained within the Tuia Pito Ora NZILA Aotearoa Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2022 and designed to assess whether or not development enabled by the PPC would have adverse landscape effects on the nature and quality of the surroundings. The following methodology has been used in this assessment.

Background Review

- 3.3 A review of the background information and Concept Plan has been undertaken in relation to the landscape and visual amenity aspects of the proposal. Key landscape and environmental factors which would potentially be affected by development enabled by the PPC were identified and reviewed.

Statutory Context

- 3.4 A review of the relevant statutory provisions was undertaken to identify the key landscape and visual related objectives and policies in order to assess the proposal against them.

Site and Landscape Evaluation – Landscape and Visual Environment

- 3.5 Detailed site investigations and an analysis of the site and surrounding environment were undertaken. The landscape character, natural character, visual and amenity values were identified and outlined, and a photographic record of the site and surrounding environment compiled. Key landscape features and elements were identified and an analysis of the landscape values and the landscape's ability to accommodate change as a result of development enabled by the PPC undertaken.
- 3.6 An analysis of the existing landscape and urban/rural character of the site and surrounding environment was undertaken. The analysis identified how vulnerable the site and surrounding environment would be to change. This included:
- i) aesthetic value (vividness, complexity, cohesion, legibility, and other less tangible values)
 - ii) urban/rural character values
 - iii) natural processes, patterns and elements
 - iv) rarity
 - v) visual absorption capability including land uses, vegetation cover and type and topographic diversity and type
 - vi) exposure and visibility.

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 3.7 The physical area that would be visually affected by development enabled by the PPC was determined. In turn, this indicated the range, type and size of viewing audiences that would be impacted upon.

Viewpoint Selection

- 3.8 The next step was to establish a platform from which detailed analysis could be carried out. The most practical platform for carrying out such analysis is a series of viewpoints, strategically located within the visual catchment in order to assess the impact of the proposal for most of the potential viewing audiences.
- 3.9 Detailed analysis of the implications of the PPC was then carried out using a Visual Effects Matrix, which ensures that each view and changes within each view are evaluated thoroughly and consistently.

Landscape Character and Visual Effects Assessment

- 3.10 A specific analysis and assessment were undertaken and key questions addressed derived from the very nature of anticipated effects on landscape character and visual amenity. This process assessed the effects of the proposal and identified the aspects which were likely to have high or adverse visual, landscape or visual amenity impacts.

Conclusions

- 3.11 An evaluation of the proposal as a whole taking into account all the preceding analysis was then undertaken in relation to potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity values. Conclusions were made in relation to the potential landscape and visual effects, landscape character and amenity effects of the development including recommendations for avoiding, remedying or mitigating these effects.

4. The Site and Landscape Setting

- 4.1 The site comprises 18.647 hectares over two lots at 70A and 70B Lisle Farm Drive and legally described as Lots 1 and 2 DP 143272.

Landform and Catchment

- 4.2 The topography of the site comprises broad south-north and west-east running ridgelines extending into the site from the southwestern corner from a high point of RL 95m. The land falls steeply from the ridgelines with depressions, hummocky features and soil creep into the incised stream gullies in the central, eastern and southern parts of the site. Two smaller gullies are located in the southern part of the site. The land rises up from the eastern gully at RL 50m to the eastern boundary at RL 75m. The landform along the southern boundary falls from RL 95m in the west to RL 65m in the east.

Land use

- 4.3 The site is utilised for pastoral grazing of livestock including cattle and several pigs. A dwelling is located on the spur on the western part of the site accessed off Lisle Farm Drive to the west. Amenity gardens, swimming pool and tennis court are located in the vicinity.
- 4.4 A large farm shed/garage is positioned in the southwestern corner of the site and farm sheds are sited in the northwestern and southeastern parts of the site. Boundaries are demarcated with predominantly timber post and wire fences with a hawthorn hedge extending along the southern fenceline.

Vegetation

- 4.5 The majority of the site comprises grazed exotic grassland dominated by ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*). Woody shrubs are scattered across parts of the pasture including gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), barberry (*Berberis glaucocarpa*), blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), and Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*).
- 4.6 Mown lawns, amenity tree and shrub plantings surround the existing dwelling including ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), fig (*Ficus carica*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), pōhutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*), tītoki (*Alectryon excelsus*), kōhūhū (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*), akeake (*Dodonaea viscosa*), and lacebark (*Hoheria populnea*). Lower growing herbaceous amenity plants are present along the margins.
- 4.7 A small area of kanuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) and kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) is located in a small gully in the northern part of the property together with common crack willow (*Salix fragilis*). Understorey species are largely restricted to harakeke (*Phormium tenax*) and juvenile kahikatea. Groundcover species are also present.
- 4.8 Kānuka forest occurs on the upper slope of the northern gully. Several large pūriri (*Vitex lucens*) are present along the edge of this and other canopy species include red oak (*Quercus rubra*), akeake, pūriri (*Vitex lucens*), and taraire (*Beilschmiedia taraire*). Understorey species

include harakeke, māhoe (*Melicytus ramiflorus*), nīkau (*Rhopalostylis sapida*), karamū (*Coprosma robusta*), koromiko (*Veronica stricta*), and kawakawa (*Piper excelsum*).



Figure 1: Looking across the northeastern part of the site



Figure 2: The northern part of the site



Figure 3: Looking towards the northeastern part of the site



Figure 4: Looking towards the eastern part of the site



Figure 5: The southern slopes of the site



Figure 6: Looking across the southern slopes of the site to the adjoining property

- 4.9 The lower reaches of the eastern permanent stream are bounded by areas of mānuka-kānuka scrub that have been planted. Mature taraire-tōtara-pukatea forest bounds the upper reaches of the stream, characterised by a canopy of taraire, tōtara (*Podocarpus totara*), pukatea (*Laurelia novae-zelandiae*), and pūriri with associated understorey species. A small area of kānuka-mānuka-tōtara scrub is located to the west of this group. Swamp maire (*Syzygium maire*) forest occupies the wet gully floor in the northern part of the property with isolated kahikatea and understorey species.

- 4.10 A shelterbelt of eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus spp.*) and radiata pine (*Pinus radiata*) extends along the northeastern boundary of the site. A hawthorn hedgerow (*Crataegus monogyna*) extends along the southern boundary of the site. Scattered hawthorns are also present in the small gully in the southern portion of the site.

Streams, watercourses and wetlands

- 4.11 A permanent stream is present in the northeastern part of the property. This stream is soft-bottomed and deeply incised with pools and undercut banks. The stream is shaded and buffered by the mature taraire-totara-pukatea forest and mānuka-kānuka scrub.
- 4.12 An intermittent stream originates downstream of the swamp maire forest and features a clear channel free from terrestrial rooted vegetation, with areas of natural pooling. An intermittent stream also flows through wetland vegetation in the southwestern part of the site and features a grazed channel with natural pools and areas of exposed bedrock.

The surrounding landscape context

- 4.13 The site is bordered by residential land to the west with typically 600m² – 800m² properties with standalone dwellings and the land adjoining the site to the south is zoned MHS and is currently being earthworked for intensive residential development. FUZ zoned land adjoins the site to the north with a small area of Residential Single House zoned land to the northwest accessed off William Andrew Road. FUZ zoned land extends to the east of the site.
- 4.14 The Anselmi Ridge residential subdivision is located to the southwest of the site with typically 400m² – 600m² residential sites with standalone dwellings. Land to the west of here is currently being earthworked for intensive residential development. Raven Rock, an elevated open space reserve, is located to the southwest of the site, between Lisle Farm Drive and Stile Place and is part of the Pukekōhe Five Summits Walk and Cycle Trail.
- 4.15 Rural activities extend to the southeast of the site through to Pukekōhe East Road within the Rural – Mixed Rural zone.
- 4.16 The Pukekōhe East tuff ring is located further to the east towards Runciman Road. It is scheduled as an Outstanding Natural Feature (**'ONF'**) ID 169 in the AUP. The tuff ring is the best-preserved tuff ring in the South Auckland volcanic field. The volcano erupted through a fringe of lava from Rutherford's cone, which lies just to the northeast. The tuff ring is approximately 1km in diameter and 80m deep, with erosion resistant lava around two thirds of the crater accounting for its well-preserved morphology¹.
- 4.17 The remains of two other former tuff rings are located in the area between Pukekōhe and the Pukekōhe East tuff ring being Roosevelt Tuff Rings north and south. The highest point on the tuff ring remnants is Roosevelt Park which lies near the junction of the two. The 0.9 km diameter Roosevelt Tuff Ring South is outlined by an unbroken arcuate ridge (80-90m above sea level) that runs between Pukekōhe East Rd in the northeast and Ngahere Rd in the northwest. Golding Rd passes over the crest of this ridge on the south side of the tuff ring. The eroded floor of the crater is dissected by streams and was originally between 15-20m below the crest of the tuff ring².
- 4.18 The landscape character in relation to the underlying landform of the wider area is strongly expressive of its geological origins. The southern volcanic field has created distinctive patterns of volcanic cones and tuffs with craters and intact or dissected rims. These geological features

¹ AUP - Schedule 6 Outstanding Natural Features Overlay Schedule

² Pukekōhe Heritage Survey, Auckland Council

are distinctive and legible encircling the Pukekōhe urban area. Pukekōhe Hill is the most prominent volcanic feature and forms the major landmark for Pukekōhe.

- 4.19 There are a number of streams traversing the wider area entering into the headwaters of the Oira Creek and Whangapouri Creek. The wider surrounding area to the eastern quarters is dominated by horticultural, agricultural, and rural lifestyle land uses. There is a general patterning of smaller scale lifestyle type lots scattered along the roads surrounding the area. Further away from the site, lot sizes tend to increase in size.
- 4.20 This rural landform is generally characterised by expansive areas of undulating to gently rolling lowland pasture, with areas of more localised fragmentation by shelterbelts and stream corridors. The land to the southeast and east is more of a working landscape, intensively farmed with small landholdings along with relatively well-established rural living and lifestyle block development.

5. Statutory Context

- 5.1 A comprehensive outline of the proposal relating to statutory and non-statutory provisions is provided within the AEE documentation prepared by Scott Wilkinson Planning. This section of the assessment outlines, by way of background, the provisions most relevant to landscape character and visual amenity matters.
- 5.2 As outlined previously the PPC seeks to rezone the land as Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('MHU'). This enables residential buildings up to three storeys, not exceeding 11m in height. The PPC proposes to use the existing provisions associated with the MHU zone under the AUP. These have been tested and proved as appropriate as part of the establishment of the AUP. The PPC application is for rezoning only and any further matters can and will be dealt with as part of future resource consent processes for the respective sites.
- 5.3 The following statutory documents are of particular relevance to this assessment:
- Resource Management Act 1991
 - Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)

Resource Management Act 1991

- 5.4 Part 2 of the Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA') sets out the purpose and principles of the Act. Section 5 states that the purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Section 6 of the RMA sets out matters of national importance that must be recognised and provided for. Section 6(a) in relation to natural character is not relevant as the site is not located within the coastal environment. Section 6(b) requires the protection of outstanding natural features ('ONF') and landscapes ('ONL') from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. The Pukekōhe East explosion crater is located to the east of the site.
- 5.5 Section 7 identifies a range of matters that shall be given particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the RMA, including Section 7(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and Section 7(f) the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment. Effects relevant to Sections 7(c) and 7(f) of the RMA are addressed in this assessment.

National Policy Statement: Urban Development (NPS-UD)

- 5.6 The NPS-UD directs councils to remove overly restrictive planning rules and plan for growth, both up and out. Councils also have to respond to changes in demand by allowing

denser housing in areas where people want to live, that are well-connected to jobs, transport and community facilities.

- 5.7 The policies are focused requiring Council plans to enable greater height and density, particularly in areas of high demand and access. The Council has notified Plan Change 78 – Intensification to give effect to the NPS-UD.

Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)

- 5.8 The main relevant sections of the AUP relating to the landscape character and visual amenity are:

B2. Tāhuhu whakaruruhau ā-taone – Urban growth and form

B2.2. Urban growth and form

B2.2.1. Objectives

- (1) *A quality compact urban form that enables all of the following:*
- (a) a higher-quality urban environment;*
 - (b) greater productivity and economic growth;*
 - (c) better use of existing infrastructure and efficient provision of new infrastructure;*
 - (d) improved and more effective public transport;*
 - (e) greater social and cultural vitality;*
 - (f) better maintenance of rural character and rural productivity; and*
 - (g) reduced adverse environmental effects.*
- (2) *Urban growth is primarily accommodated within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A).*
- (3) *Sufficient development capacity and land supply is provided to accommodate residential, commercial, industrial growth and social facilities to support growth.*
- (4) *Urbanisation is contained within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages.*
- (5) *The development of land within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages is integrated with the provision of appropriate infrastructure.*

B2.3. A quality built environment

B2.3.1. Objectives

- (1) *A quality built environment where subdivision, use and development do all of the following:*
- (a) respond to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the site and area, including its setting;*
 - (b) reinforce the hierarchy of centres and corridors;*
 - (c) contribute to a diverse mix of choice and opportunity for people and communities;*
 - (d) maximise resource and infrastructure efficiency;*
 - (e) are capable of adapting to changing needs; and*
 - (f) respond and adapt to the effects of climate change.*

B2.3.2. Policies

- (1) *Manage the form and design of subdivision, use and development so that it does all of the following:*
- a. supports the planned future environment, including its shape, landform, outlook, location, and relationship to its surroundings, including landscape and heritage.*

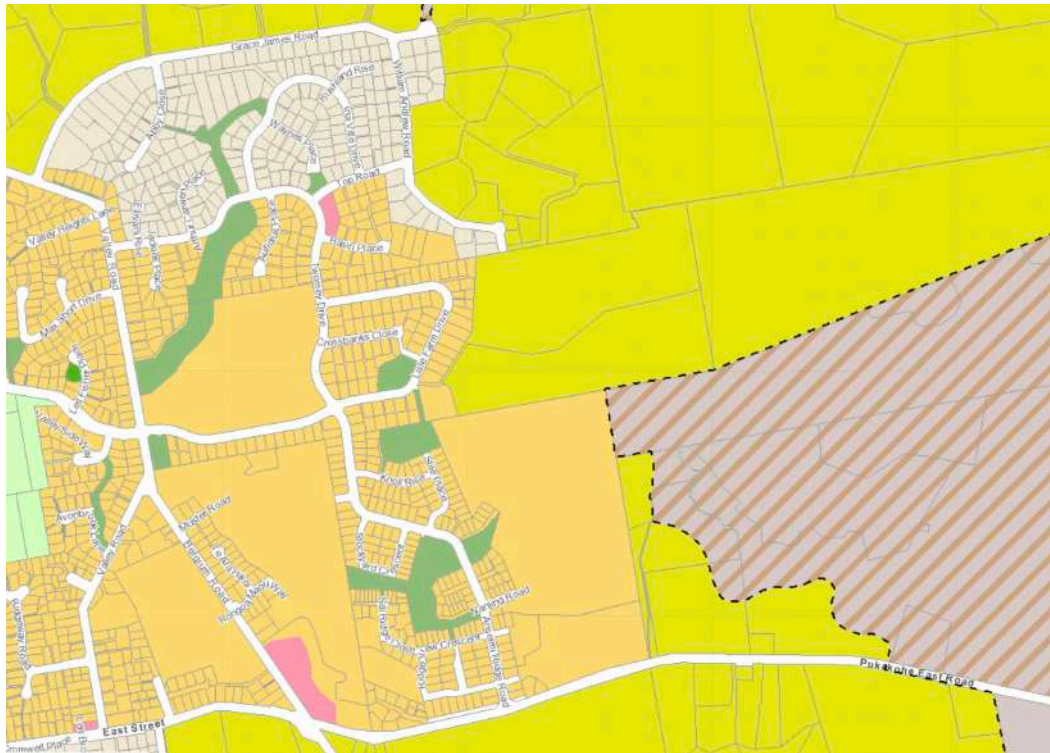


Figure 7: AUP zoning map

5.9 With respect to the matters addressed in these objectives and policies, I note as follows:

- i) Development within the PPC area would achieve a comprehensive residential environment with a centralised green network, primarily focussed on existing riparian areas, which would have high levels of amenity and allow for a range of housing densities and typologies. Potential adverse effects of urban activities on the environment would be avoided, remedied or mitigated in accordance with the operative AUP provisions.
- ii) The concept plan has responded to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the site and setting.
- iii) Development enabled by the PPC would ensure a high-quality environment. The concept plan has responded to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the site through the enhancement of the stream corridors and watercourses for stream protection and ecological linkages, as well as the provision of an extensive open space network throughout the site.
- iv) Development enabled by the PPC would be largely in keeping with the area's planned urban built character and the site has the capacity to visually absorb the proposed development within a well landscape setting. The adjoining landholdings to the north and east are similarly zoned FUZ and therefore an appropriate transition will be achieved.
- v) The visual and physical integrity of the Pukekōhe East tuff ring ONF would not be adversely affected by the proposal and would remain the dominant natural feature within the area.

5.10 I therefore consider that future development enabled by the PPC would be generally consistent with the intent of the landscape, visual, natural character and amenity objectives and policies of the AUP and when considered in totality would be entirely acceptable in landscape and visual amenity terms.

6. Evaluation of the Proposal

- 6.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of the PPC is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of development enabled by the PPC on them. In accordance with the RMA this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal combined with existing urban development within Pukekōhe.
- 6.2 The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the nature and degree of potential landscape effects and the appropriateness of the PPC and development opportunities. The assessment responds to matters related to landscape character and visual amenity. It also considers the anticipated outcomes of the MHU zone proposed (in relation to the AUP provisions) and their suitability in this setting.
- 6.3 The zoning sought under the PPC will enable development opportunities pertaining to the provisions associated with the anticipated AUP zoning. This application is for rezoning and any further matters can and will be dealt with as part of future resource consent processes for the respective sites.
- 6.4 The assessment of landscape effects takes into consideration physical changes to the landscape as a resource which may give rise to changes to its character and quality and perceived landscape values. Visual effects are a consequence of landscape effects as this is how we mainly perceive effects on landscape values. Landscape and visual effects are therefore inextricably linked and are influenced by the sensitivity of the receiving environment combined with the type and magnitude of change associated with the proposal.
- 6.5 Matters to be addressed in this assessment relate to the urban landscape and visual amenity include the following:
- i) Natural character effects
 - ii) Landscape effects
 - iii) Visual amenity effects
 - iv) Construction effects

Natural Character Effects

- 6.6 Natural character relates to the degree of 'naturalness' of a landscape. It is primarily determined by the nature and extent of modification to a landscape and can be expressed in relation to natural processes, patterns and elements in the landscape.
- 6.7 Natural character relates to the degree of 'naturalness' or modification of a landscape. Assessments of natural character therefore broadly assess:
- i) Natural processes – the underlying formative processes that have shaped and given expression to the landscape (geological, volcanic, ecological, fluvial etc.)
 - ii) Natural elements – features within the landscape that are products of natural processes (landform, vegetation, waterbodies etc.)
 - iii) Natural patterns – the natural expression or distribution of un-manufactured elements and features within the landscape; and
 - iv) Development / land use – the presence or absence of development such as structures and buildings and the level of modification as a result of land use and management.

- 6.8 The highest levels of natural character are where there is the least modification. Natural character effects relate to the degree to which a proposal alters the biophysical and / or perceived naturalness of a landscape.

Natural Character Effects Analysis

- 6.9 The site is not high in natural character values and has been extensively modified through previous and current pastoral activities. The area has undergone extensive agricultural activities and is highly modified by vegetation clearance, modified streams, the dwelling, access drives and associated farm structures. The site is a component of the wider modified Pukekōhe urban and peripheral semi-rural environment in an area zoned for future urban intensification within the AUP and PPSP.
- 6.10 The indicative master plan includes a central green open space network based on the enhanced stream corridor and stormwater management areas which would enhance the natural character values of the site. The stand of taraire-tōtara-pukatea forest and swamp maire forest is to be retained and enhanced through the exclusion of stock and to be protected and enhanced using the provisions of the AUP in Chapter E that relate to riparian areas and vegetation. It is understood that the Requestor is open to various methods to protect these trees as part of this PPC.
- 6.11 Overall, the adverse effects of development enabled by the PPC on the natural character values of the site and surrounding area would be low. Protection of the stand of taraire-tōtara-pukatea forest and swamp maire forest and retention of other areas of indigenous vegetation would enhance the natural character values of the site and surrounding area.

Landscape Effects

- 6.12 Landscape effects take into consideration the physical effects on the land resource. Assessments of landscape effects therefore investigate the likely nature and scale of change to landscape elements and characteristics. Landscape effects are primarily dependent on the landscape sensitivity of a site and its surrounds to accommodate change and development. Landscape sensitivity is influenced by landscape quality and vulnerability, or the extent to which landscape character, elements/features and values are at risk to change.
- 6.13 'Landscape characterisation' is the term used to encapsulate the process of identifying and describing landscape character areas. Each character area has a distinguishing combination of biophysical and cultural factors that make it distinctive. Characterisation provides a basis for the understanding of landscape diversity and change.
- 6.14 Landscape character is derived from a combination of landscape components that make up the landscape of the site that distinguishes one area from another including:
- i) The elements that make up the landscape including:
 - physical influences – geology, soils, landform, drainage and waterbodies;
 - land cover, including different types of vegetation and patterns and types of tree cover; and
 - the influence of human activity, including land use and management, the character of settlements and buildings, and pattern and type of enclosure.
 - ii) The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape including its scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity or wilderness; and
 - iii) The overall character of the landscape in the area including any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified, and the particular combinations of

elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that make each distinctive, usually by identification as key characteristics of the landscape.

- 6.15 Landscape character results from a combination of physical elements together with aesthetic and perceptual aspects that combine to make an area distinct. The wider Pukekōhe landscape is undergoing rapid change and development with the urbanisation of the area transforming the previously semi-rural landscape to one of highly modified characteristics through earthworks, ground shaping, roading construction and associated infrastructure for urban residential development.
- 6.16 The existing attributes that contribute to the existing semi-rural character of the area would become progressively less pervasive as the site is developed with the future urbanisation of the area. Development enabled by the PPC would inevitably transform the local semi-rural character to that of more intensive and mixed urban development which would have an influence on the surrounding area. It is important to note however that this type of development is not unanticipated and the AUP identifies the site as an area to accommodate future urban growth requirements in this part of the town.
- 6.17 It is also important to note that although the site and local area currently exhibit semi-rural characteristics, neither display a high degree of 'ruralness' due to a combination of the size of landholdings, the patterns of rural-residential and countryside living settlement, existing infrastructure, and the proximity to the residential, and urbanised area of Pukekōhe. Consequently, distinctly urban influences are highly evident in the area, which further reduce the sensitivity of the site and surrounding environment to change as anticipated by the PPC.

Landscape Effects Analysis

- 6.18 Based on the preceding description and analysis of the site and surrounds it is clear that there are relatively low landscape values and sensitivity associated with the site. The site is a relatively degraded, highly modified environment lacking significant landscape and natural character values, adjacent to an existing residential area to the west and under-construction residential area to the south. Therefore, the only negative outcomes in landscape terms would be the loss of the remaining rural character, which is anticipated by the relevant AUP planning strategies and current Future Urban Zoning that applies to the site.
- 6.19 The key methods of mitigating for this loss are to retain and enhance the existing landscape features within the site and create a quality urban development. Although the proposal would result in the loss of semi-rural characteristics there are number of positive landscape outcomes associated with the PPC.
- 6.20 The concept master plan has been designed in accordance with established urban design principles and would ensure a high level of visual amenity, with an extensive green open space network with retention, enhancement and protection of the stand of taraire-tōtara-pukatea forest and swamp maire forest and retention of other areas of indigenous vegetation to enhance its overall amenity and assist in its integration with the surrounding urban and semi-rural area over time.
- 6.21 Development enabled by the PPC would result in a change in landscape character, but would ensure a suitable level of amenity, albeit an urban, rather than a semi-rural character is achieved. Although some land modification would be required to make the land geotechnically suitable for development, it is understood that these works can be undertaken without substantial modification to the landform and riparian gullies/streams on the site.

Visual Effects

- 6.22 The assessment of visual effects analyses the perceptual (visual) response that any of the identified changes to the landscape may evoke, including effects relating to views and visual amenity. Visual sensitivity is influenced by a number of factors including the visibility of a proposal, the nature and extent of the viewing audience, the visual qualities of the proposal, and the ability to integrate any changes within the landscape setting, where applicable.
- 6.23 The nature and extent of visual effects are determined by a systematic analysis of the visual intrusion and qualitative change that a proposal may bring, specifically in relation to aesthetic considerations and visual character and amenity.
- 6.24 The methodology used in this assessment is designed to assess whether or not future development enabled by the PPC would have adverse visual effects on the nature and quality of the surrounding environment.

The process of analysing such effects involves:

- i) Identification of the physical area or catchment from which development enabled by the PPC would be visible
- ii) Identification of the different viewing audiences that would be affected by future development enabled by the PPC; and
- iii) Evaluation of the visual amenity effects taking into account the preceding analysis.

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 6.25 The visual catchment is the area from which noticeable visual effects of future development enabled by the PPC within the site are likely to be evident to any significant degree. The relative openness of the site, albeit compartmentalised in a number of locations by the existing landform means that it has a relatively high level of exposure, although the existing landform and vegetation patterns within the surrounding area combine to limit the extent of visibility beyond the immediate area.
- 6.26 The western ridgeline largely screens views from the established Pukekōhe urban area to the west. Views from Pukekōhe East Road are screened by roadside vegetation and the transient nature of the viewer. Existing vegetation in the east of the site and neighbouring properties either screens or filters views of large parts of the site from a number of easterly directions.
- 6.27 The largest visual catchment is the area adjoining the site to the south, currently under construction for residential development. From here open views towards the southern part of the site would be gained although large parts of the site would be screened by the southern ridge. These views would also be gained from a residential landscape setting similar to that proposed by the PPC. Partial views would be gained from parts of the Anselmi Ridge residential area to the southwest.
- 6.28 The adjoining residential properties to the north accessed off William Andrew Road would be exposed to close views. More distant views from the north and northeast would be filtered by landform and vegetation patterns.
- 6.29 Views would not be gained from residential properties within Lisle Farm Drive, other than those immediately adjoining the site, due to the western containing ridge. Distant views towards the uppermost parts of the site would be gained from the Early Settlers Walkway (Cape Hill) and a small portion of Cape Hill Road in the vicinity, across the foreground of the existing residential area, albeit in excess of 1km distance. Views would be gained from the open space zoned land to the southwest extending between Stile Place and Lisle Farm Drive.

- 6.30 Distant, albeit elevated views towards the upper parts of the site would be gained from some of the rural properties to the southeast accessed off Pukekōhe East Road albeit interrupted by landform and vegetation within the line of site. Views towards a small part of the site would be gained from Roosevelt Park to the southwest, albeit in excess of 1km distance.
- 6.31 The viewing audience would therefore encompass the following groups:
- i) Future residents within the adjoining under-construction residential subdivision to the south accessed off Nanjing Road
 - ii) Residents and visitors within parts of the Anselmi Ridge residential area
 - iii) Immediately adjoining residents along the western boundary of the site in Lisle Farm Drive and northern boundary in William Andrew Road
 - iv) Residents and workers within some of the rural properties to the southeast accessed off Pukekōhe East Road
 - v) Motorists along a small portion of Pukekōhe East Road travelling in a westerly direction
 - vi) Recreational users of the Early Settlers Walkway (Cape Hill)
 - vii) Recreational users of Raven Rock
 - viii) Recreational users of Roosevelt Park; and
 - ix) Distant viewers within the wider surrounding area.

Visual Amenity Effects Analysis

- 6.32 The proposed future development of the site enabled by the PPC raises a number of visual issues, including the potential effects on visual amenity to the following key areas:
- i) Adjoining properties
 - ii) Surrounding road network
 - iii) Wider surrounding area
- 6.33 The visual effects of development enabled by the PPC have been assessed from representative viewpoints within the visual catchment area that have potential for visual effects. Three viewpoints have been identified in order to assess the potential visual effects. The viewpoints were selected as locations that capture and fairly represent the range of public and private views towards the site.
- 6.34 The assessment has been undertaken by reference to the following:

Adjoining Properties

Wider Surrounding Area

Surrounding Road Network

*Refer to: **Annexure 2** – The Site and Viewpoint Location Map
Annexure 3 – Viewpoint Photographs 1-3*

- 6.35 Photographs have been taken with a 35mm SLR camera with a fixed 50mm lens from the viewpoints and a detailed assessment and analysis of potential effects have been carried out using a Visual Effects Matrix, which ensures that each view and changes within each view are evaluated thoroughly and consistently.
- 6.36 The key factors contained in that matrix are given in detail in **Annexure 4**. It covers aspects such as the sensitivity of the view to change, the size of the viewing audience that would be affected, the legibility of the proposed development, how well the proposal integrates with its surroundings and whether or not the proposal intrudes into any existing views.

- 6.37 The total score given in the descriptions denote the overall visual effects rating. The following seven-point scale has been used to rate effects, based on the guidelines contained within the NZILA Te Tangi a te Manu 'Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2022':

Very Low | Low | Low-Moderate | Moderate | Moderate-High | High | Very High

Very Low Effect

No appreciable change to the visual character of the landscape, its landscape values and/or amenity values.

Low Effect

Limited change to the visual character of the landscape, with a low level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values.

Low-Moderate Effect

Evident visual change to the visual character of the landscape with a low to moderate level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values.

Moderate Effect

Appreciable change to the visual character of the landscape with a moderate level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values.

Moderate-High Effect

Marked change to the visual character of the landscape with a moderate to high level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values.

High Effect

Significant change to the visual character of the landscape with a high level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values.

Very High Effect

Fundamental change to the visual character of the landscape with a very high level of effect in relation to landscape values and/or amenity values. The proposal causes significant adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

- 6.38 In assessing the significance of effects, the assessment also considers the nature of effects in terms of whether this would be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in the context within which it occurs. Neutral effects can also result where the visual change is considered to be benign in the context of where it occurs.

- 6.39 The assessment has been undertaken in terms of the following criteria:

- i) **Quality of the view** – the relative quality and sensitivity of views into the site, including landscape character and visual amenity values.
- ii) **Viewpoint | perceptual factors** – the type and size of population exposed to views into the site, the viewing distance to the site, and other factors which indicate its sensitivity in terms of both viewing audience and the inherent exposure of the view towards the site due to its physical character.
- iii) **Urban | rural amenity** – the impact of future development on the wider surrounding rural and urban amenity.
- iv) **Urban | rural form** – the degree to which future development would fit into the existing rural and urban context of the surrounding environs.

- v) **Visual intrusion | contrast** – the intrusion into or obstruction of views to landscape features in the locality and beyond and the impact upon key landscape elements and patterns.
- vi) **Mitigation potential** – the extent to which any potential adverse effects of the development could be mitigated through integration into its surrounds by specific measures.

Adjoining Properties

- 6.40 The adjacent properties to the site would be most affected by future urban development enabled by the PPC. This would include the immediately adjoining residential properties to the west in Lisle Farm Drive, north accessed off William Andrew Road, the under-construction subdivision to the south and the adjoining rural properties to the east and southeast.
- 6.41 Views towards parts of the site however would be moderated, filtered or partially screened by the ridgelines within the site, existing vegetation patterns within the site and surrounding properties, orientation, intervening landform and proposed landscape initiatives.
- 6.42 For the immediately adjoining properties, the existing outlook would change noticeably from a relatively open semi-rural pastoral scene characterised by grazing activities, into a comprehensive urban view. Although this would constitute a distinctive change to the existing rural character and a loss of the existing spaciousness, it is not the type of change which is totally unexpected within the planning context of the AUP, and the quality nature of the future urban development would ensure that a suitable level of amenity is achieved.
- 6.43 Once the site is developed, the existing views would be replaced with a mixed housing urban development with planted streetscapes, open spaces and the green open space network extending along the stream corridors and wetland areas within the site.
- 6.44 Development enabled by the proposal would not be entirely out of context due to the surrounding residential settlement pattern to the west, under-construction subdivision to the south and FUZ zoning of the site and surrounding area to the north and east. The green network along the streams, in conjunction with the open space areas would maintain a sense of spaciousness and assist in visually integrating the future development into the surrounding landscape. The future form will be read as part of the surrounding wider Pukekōhe urban context.
- 6.45 From these close viewing locations, the full effects of change brought about by the PPC would be gradual as the land is retired from pastoral use, modified and staged built development extends across the landform. It is anticipated that the full progression from semi-rural to urban would logically take a number of years, in line with similar urban development of greenfield sites within the surrounding area. This would reduce the impact of the change to some degree, due to the incremental nature of the changes and a general conditioning of the audience over time as urban development progresses. Development would also be viewed as a natural extension to the Pukekōhe urbanisation occurring locally.
- 6.46 The green network extending along the stream corridors would assist in breaking up the expanse of the urban development and filter views so that although the view would have changed from a semi-rural to an urban one, the full extent of the development would not be apparent. Development enabled by the PPC, however, would entirely change the landscape character and visual amenity currently experienced for the surrounding properties. Overall, the visual effects for the adjoining residential and rural properties would be moderate to high, albeit anticipated through the zoning of the site for urban development.

Wider Surrounding Area

- 6.47 Distant views towards parts of the site would be gained from the wider surrounding area and from elevated locations. This would include the rural properties to the east, southeast and northeast, some of the elevated residential area to the northwest, Early Settlers Walkway and Roosevill Park to the southwest.
- 6.48 **Viewpoint 1** is taken from the Early Settlers Walkway looking in an easterly direction towards the site from a distance of 1km away. The view extends across the foreground of the residential area and the extensive Possum Bourne Retirement Village in the middle ground. The southwestern end of the site is demarcated by the brown farm shed in the middle of the view extending left towards the grassed northwestern corner of the site above the residential properties in Lisle Farm Drive. From here the upper western parts of development enabled by the PPC would be visible, viewed as an extension to the existing residential fabric. Development would be viewed sitting below the backdrop hills and not appear incongruous within the surrounding urban landscape context.
- 6.49 **Viewpoint 2** is taken from Roosevill Park looking in a northeasterly direction, again from a similar distance. The view encompasses the residential area and beyond to the rural Pukekōhe environs to the east and north. From this direction only the southern slopes of the site are visible, above the earthworked subdivision to the south of the site. The containing ridgeline and knoll to the southwest of the site screens the majority of views. Again, from here, development enabled by the PPC would be viewed sitting below the distant backdrop hills and sit comfortably into the residential settlement pattern.
- 6.50 **Viewpoint 3** is taken from Pukekōhe East Road in the vicinity of number 197 and is representative of potential views from the rural properties to the southeast of the site. This landscape has typically rural characteristics with the undulating pastoral slopes, vegetation within the gullies, remnant pine and macrocarpa stands, poplars and willows, post and wire fences and dwellings associated with the settlement pattern. The view is characteristic of the surrounding rural environment extending beyond to Pukekōhe's urban settlement. The southwestern end of the site is demarcated by the brown farm shed just above the earthworked site to the extending right across to the shelterbelt along the eastern boundary. Large parts of the site are screened from here by the intervening landform and vegetation. From here, development enabled by the PPC would be viewed sitting on the slopes backdropped and side dropped by the residential infrastructure.
- 6.51 From elevated locations within the wider surrounding area, views of development enabled by the PPC would be highly variable due to distance, orientation of the view, diversity of elements within the view and screening elements (buildings, landform, shelterbelts, prevailing vegetation patterns). While a prominent level of built form would be introduced into the landscape it would be viewed in the context of the surrounding residential settlement pattern within Pukekōhe, and therefore not appear incongruous.
- 6.52 While development enabled by the PPC would be highly visible from parts of the wider surrounding area, I consider that the adverse visual effects would be low to very low and entirely acceptable within the context of the existing and planned future urban environment.

Surrounding Road /

- 6.53 The site is not highly visible from the surrounding road network due to landform and vegetation. Views towards the site would be visible from roads including parts of Pukekōhe East Road, Runciman Road, Ngahere Road and Cape Hill Road. The site would be more visible from the proposed future arterial road that will traverse the southeastern part of the site. For road users, in particular those who live locally, the development of the site is likely to result

in visual effects of some significance. For general road users, the effects are likely to be of much less significance as development enabled by the PPC would be seen as part of the pattern of land use change occurring locally within the surrounding Pukekōhe environs.

- 6.54 Although a large audience, the general road users are unlikely to be particularly sensitive to future development, as they would have fleeting views of only portions of the site whilst moving through a landscape, which already exhibits diverse characteristics adjoining Pukekōhe's residential environs. The sensitivity and the effects of development enabled by the PPC would also be reduced further by the fact that development would be gradual and staged over a number of years.
- 6.55 Viewed from these areas, the green network along the stream corridors, street tree plantings, the indigenous bush stand and planting associated with the future residential properties would assist in integrating the built development into the landscape and provide a vegetated framework of appropriate form and scale.
- 6.56 Overall, the visual effects from the surrounding road network would be very low.

Construction Effects

- 6.57 Due to the nature and scale of the development, and the level of disturbance it would bring to the existing landscape, the visual effects would generally be high during and immediately following construction. The most noticeable changes and resultant effects on visual amenity would arise from earthworks associated with roading and associated infrastructure. These visual effects would however be viewed in the context of existing residential development occurring locally.
- 6.58 These visual effects would reduce on completion with the establishment of the green network, open space and street tree plantings assisting in integrating the urban development into the surrounding landscape.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposed urbanisation of the site resulting from development enabled by the PPC would significantly change its current open and semi-rural landscape character. The development would however be consistent with the site being zoned Future Urban with urban expansion envisaged in the AUP.
- 7.2 Although the subject site is largely in grazed pasture, its semi-rural character is lessened to a degree by the existing land uses including grazing, the dwelling and ancillary farm buildings and structures, accessways and drives, adjacent to Pukekōhe's residential area to the west and south. While the site includes productive grazing land, it is a highly modified site with relatively low landscape values other than the areas of indigenous bush. In light of these considerations the site is well suited to the type of urban development proposed.
- 7.3 The proposed urbanisation of the land would inevitably result in the transformation of the site from a fringe semi-rural area to one with urban residential characteristics. This would have implications on the surrounding rural land to the east and southeast, with the urban development impacting on the rural quality of this area. Nevertheless, this is a landscape in transition and is an area designated for urban expansion in the AUP.
- 7.4 Because of the size and nature of development enabled by the PPC and the anticipated eventual urbanisation of the site and surrounding area, rather than trying to screen the development or create significant buffers to the adjacent rural area, the approach has been to accept the change and attempt to develop the site in accordance with accepted urban

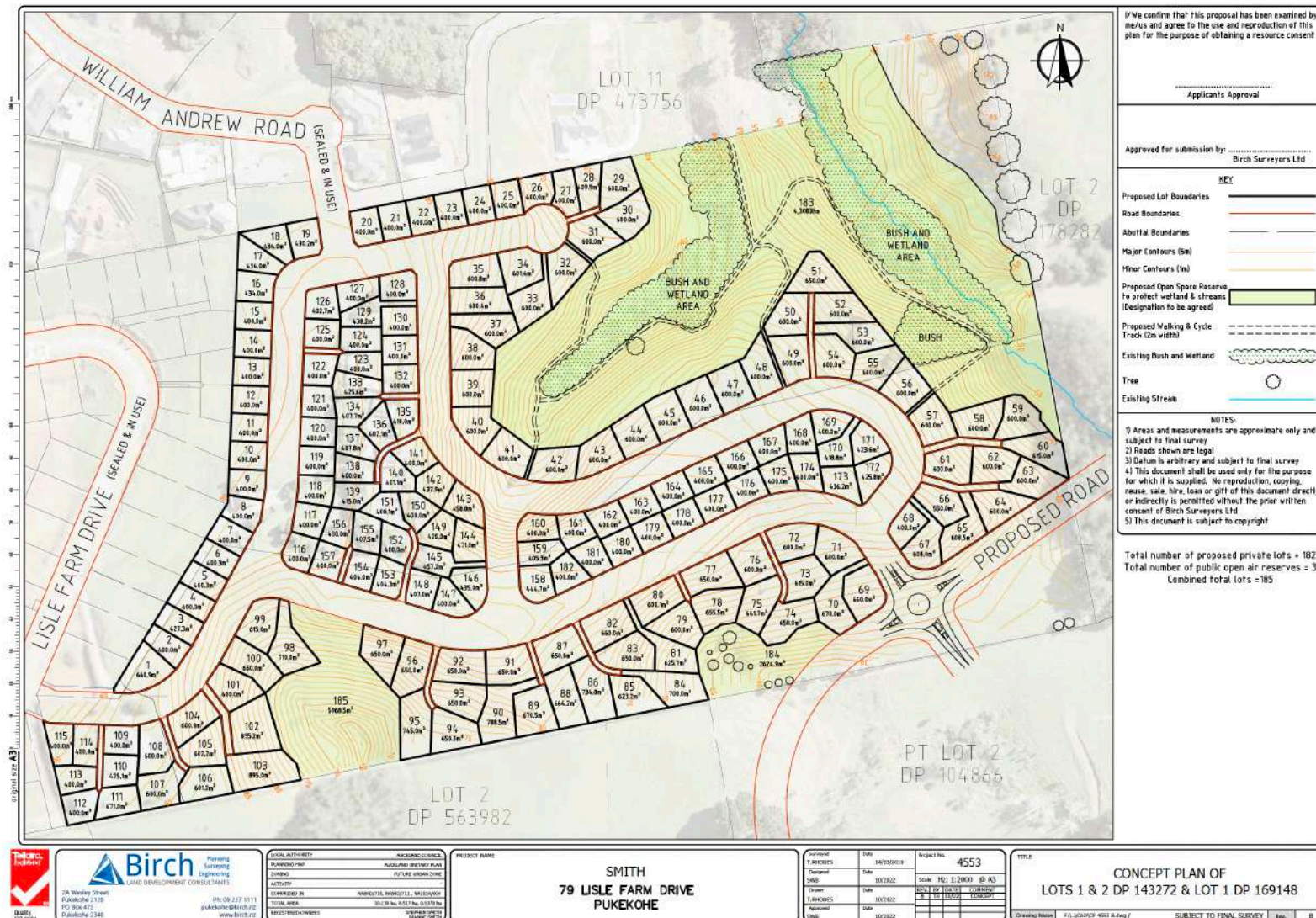
design principles to create a quality residential development with a high level of amenity, albeit an urban amenity.

- 7.5 The change from the existing semi-rural character of this landscape to one dominated by the built form of a residential area would also introduce a range of beneficial effects, including:
- Enhancement of the stream corridors including stream protection, riparian planting and ecological connections.
 - Protection of the stand of taraire-tōtara-pukatea forest and swamp maire forest and retention of other areas of indigenous vegetation throughout the site to enhance the natural character and ecological values of the site and surrounding area.
 - Extensive framework of planting including riparian stream planting and specimen trees in streets, and open areas which would improve the character and amenity as well as enhance habitat values and break up the contiguous urban expanse increasingly with time and contribute to the wider surrounding area.
- 7.6 While development enabled by the PPC would result in a significant visual change from the site's current open semi-rural state to one with urban characteristics, particularly for some of the immediate neighbours, such visual change is anticipated and is in accordance with the key planning initiatives for the area both within the AUP and PPSP.
- 7.7 Development enabled by the PPC would initially generate landscape and visual effects of some significance. These however are inevitable with urban development in a predominantly semi-rural area at the start of a process of urbanisation. In addition, the visual effects of the development of the site apparent from the early stages would decrease over time as the proposed landscape initiatives become established.
- 7.8 The visual and physical integrity of the Pukekōhe East tuff ring ONF would not be adversely affected by the proposal and would remain the dominant natural feature within the area.
- 7.9 In conclusion, development enabled by the PPC would fulfil the need for residential and urban intensification and provide an opportunity for an innovative and environmentally sustainable urban development. The PPC would be largely consistent with the regional growth strategies for the area and would result in a high-quality urban development with a range of positive landscape and environmental outcomes.

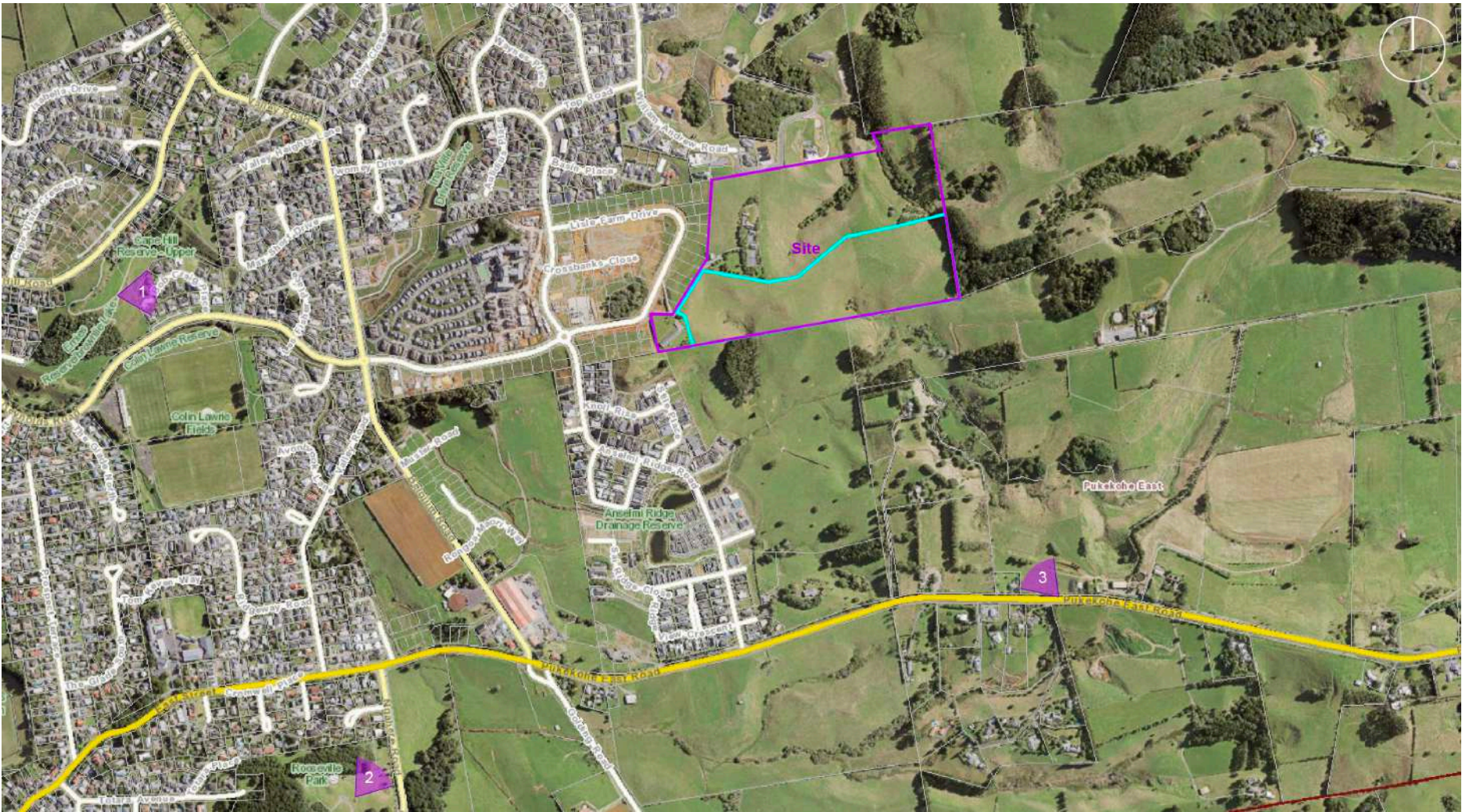
Rob Pryor
Director | Registered NZILA Landscape Architect
LA4 Landscape Architects
July 2023



Annexure 1: Proposed Concept Plan



Annexure 2: The Site and Viewpoint Location Map



Annexure 3: Viewpoint Photographs



Viewpoint 1: Early Settlers Walkway



Viewpoint 2: Roseville Park



Viewpoint 3: Pukekōhe East Road

Annexure 4: Visual Effects Matrix Methodology

Use of a matrix offers one way in which the various facets of visual change – qualitative change, visual contrast etc. – can be pulled together and evaluated in a way which gives due weight to each. This matrix was designed to measure the scale of no or low visual effects through to high visual effects.

The assessment matrix is broken into two stages. The first involves looking at the existing situation and assessing the visual quality and sensitivity of the present view to change. This is followed by an evaluation of the changes associated with the proposed development. Key issues or variables are addressed within each stage and ratings for these are eventually combined to provide a composite visual effects rating. Set out below is the basic structure, showing what these key variables are and how they are arranged:

PART A - SENSITIVITY OF THE VIEW AND SITE TO CHANGE

- A1. Analysis of the view's **Visual Quality** is carried out on the basis that higher quality views are more sensitive to potential disruption and degradation than poorer quality views.
- A2. Analysis of the view's **Visual Absorption Capability** is an evaluation of the degree to which a view is predisposed, or otherwise, to change by virtue of its land uses and/or screening elements and will either accommodate change or make it stand out from its setting.
- A3. Analysis of **Perceptual Factors**. In this section the type and size of population represented by the viewpoint, the viewing distance to the development site and other factors which indicate its sensitivity in terms of both viewing audience and the inherent exposure of the viewpoint to the site because of its physical character is assessed.

PART B - INTRUSION AND QUALITATIVE CHANGE

- B1. Analysis of **Intrusion | Contrast**: the degree to which a proposal's location and specific structural content and appearance make it either blend into its surroundings or be made to stand out from them in terms of form, linearity, mass, colour and physical factors. Whether or not the proposal would intrude into existing views.
- B2. Analysis of the proposal's **Aesthetic Characteristics**: exploring the degree to which it would relate aesthetically and in terms of general character to its surroundings.

Ratings are combined for each viewpoint via a system of averaging and multiplying of ratings to progressively indicate each viewpoint's **sensitivity**, followed by levels of **intrusion and qualitative change**, and culminate in an **overall visual effects rating**.