

Pukekohe East – Private Plan Change 2

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects



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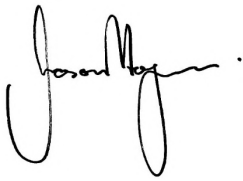
**Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects
Quality Assurance Statement**

Prepared by:



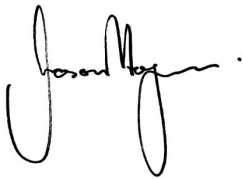
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Pukekohe East Private Plan Change 2 – Pukekohe

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

1. Introduction

- 1.1 LA4 Landscape Architects ('**LA4**') have been engaged by OMAC Limited and Next Generation Properties Limited to undertake an Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects ('**ALVE**') for a proposed Private Plan Change ('**PC2**') for the urbanisation of 27 hectares of land at 47 Golding Road and 50 Pukekohe East ('the **Site**').
- 1.2 The site is zoned 'Future Urban' ('**FUZ**') within the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) ('**AUP**'). The site also falls within the area subject to Auckland Council's Pukekohe – Paerata Structure Plan ('**PPSP**') with a Residential – Mixed Housing Urban zone across the FUZ.
- 1.3 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 PC2 on the site and surrounding area. Investigations of the site and surrounding environment were undertaken in December 2021.

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 27ha. The proposal seeks a Private Plan Change to rezone the land as Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('**MHU**') in its entirety, though through precinct provisions the ultimate use of land will be broken down as:
 - Residential – 12.7ha
 - Natural stream/riparian – 5.40ha
 - Public open space reserve – 0.6ha
 - Drainage reserve – 2.5ha
 - Roads – 5.8ha

The proposed Precinct Plan is included in **Annexure 1**.

- 2.2 A Concept Master Plan has been prepared and included in **Annexure 2**. The plan is illustrative only and has been designed in accordance with established urban design principles. It is a potential option for development and testing of the Precinct Plan. Indicatively it would ensure a high level of visual amenity, comprehensively planted with street trees and riparian plantings along the stream network to enhance its overall amenity and assist in its integration with the surrounding semi-rural and urban area over time.
- 2.3 Generally north-south oriented blocks are proposed where practicable to provide opportunities for lots that can accommodate active road frontages, private and sunny outdoor living space, and means of vehicular access that are not in conflict with one another. East-west links through the site are proposed through the public open space reserve and stream corridor. A drainage reserve is proposed based on an enhanced stream network and stormwater management area which would enhance the visual amenity, landscape and natural character values of the site.

3. Assessment Methodology

3.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of PC2 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) 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 based on the guidelines contained within the Tuia Pito Ora NZILA Aotearoa Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2021 and designed to assess whether or not development enabled by PC2 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 site plans 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 PC2 were identified and reviewed.

Statutory Context

3.4 A review of the relevant AUP 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, 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 PC2 undertaken.

3.6 An analysis of the existing landscape and 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) 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 PC2. 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 PC2 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 was 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 27ha over two lots at 47 Golding Road and 50 Pukekohe East Road and is bordered by Pukekohe East Road to the north, Golding Road to the west and rural landholdings to the south and east.
- 4.2 The topography of the site comprises a number of broad spurs dissected by incised stream gullies. A broad east – west aligned spur enters the site from Pukekohe East Road from a high point along the northeastern boundary at RL85m, flattening out towards the west at RL60m. A north-south aligned spur originates along the Pukekohe East Road boundary at RL79m extending into the site to a low point at RL60m.
- 4.3 A broader east-west aligned spur enters the site at 47 Golding Road from the eastern boundary at RL80m in a convoluted manner opening into a wide gully at RL55m. The broad gully opens out towards Golding Road to a low point at RL54m along the western boundary.
- 4.4 The site is presently utilised for pastoral grazing of livestock including cattle. A dwelling is located within the southwestern part of 47 Golding Road. A farm shed is positioned in the northwestern part of the 50 Pukekohe East Road. Boundaries are demarcated with predominantly timber post and wire fences.
- 4.5 Two permanent streams originate along the eastern and southern boundary of the site. Several ephemeral overland flow paths traverse the site in an east-west orientation. The majority of the site is in grazed pastoral land comprising conventional pasture. Individual large exotic and indigenous trees, tree groupings and shelterbelts are spread throughout the site. The stream corridors are vegetated in parts with mainly exotic species including willow and poplar with some tree ferns established. Amenity tree and shrub species are associated with the private dwelling.

The surrounding landscape context

- 4.6 Three smaller residential properties are located beyond the northwestern part of the site at 12-18 Pukekohe East Road with lots between 1012m² and 1280m². A larger block comprising 7828m² is located at 8 Pukekohe East Road.

- 4.7 Rural residential lifestyle properties are located to the northeast of the site accessed off Valley Royal Way. Grazed rural land holdings are located to the east and south of the site with similar characteristics to the application site albeit smaller in area. A rural landholding is located to the west of the site, also currently subject to a Private Plan Change application. Rural lifestyle and rural residential properties adjoin this site to the south characterised by smaller landholdings with lifestyle activities.
- 4.8 The Anselmi Ridge residential subdivision is located immediately to the north 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.



Photograph 1: Looking across the western part of the site



Photograph 2: Looking across the central part of the site



Photograph 3: Looking across the northern part of the site

- 4.9 Roosevelt Park is situated further to the west of the site beyond Ngahere Road with open grassed areas and extensive areas of regenerating indigenous bush. Pukekohe Showgrounds are located on the southern side of Birch Road opposite the site with show ground, motorhome camping ground and associated facilities. A small commercial area is located to the northeast of the site off Belgium Road with a Business – Neighbourhood Centre zoning.

The wider landscape context

- 4.10 The wider landscape context to the west and north is characterised by the urban settlement pattern and to the east and south by the mixed rural activities.
- 4.11 The remains of two former tuff rings are located in the area between Pukekohe and the Pukekohe East explosion crater 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 Pukekohe 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 ring¹.
- 4.12 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 are distinctive and legible encircling the Pukekohe urban area. Pukekohe Hill is the most prominent volcanic feature and forms the major landmark for Pukekohe.
- 4.13 The wider surrounding area to the south and east 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.

¹ Pukekohe Heritage Survey, Auckland Council

- 4.14 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 south 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 Civix. This section of the assessment outlines, by way of background, the provisions most relevant to landscape character and visual amenity matters.
- 5.2 The site is identified within the Pukekohe – Paerata Structure Plan ('PPSP') with a Residential – Mixed Housing Urban zone across the FUZ. This enables residential buildings up to three storeys, not exceeding 11m in height. As outlined previously PC2 seeks to rezone the land as Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('MHU') with a mixture of outcomes including:
- Residential yield – 12.7ha
 - Natural stream/riparian – 5.40ha
 - Public open space reserve – 0.6ha
 - Drainage reserve – 2.5ha
 - Roads – 5.8ha
- 5.3 PC2 proposes to use the existing provisions associated with the Mixed Housing Urban zone under the AUP. These have been tested and proved as appropriate as part of the establishment of the AUP. The PC2 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.
- 5.4 The following statutory documents are of particular relevance to this assessment:
- Resource Management Act 1991
 - Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)
 - Pukekohe – Paerata Structure Plan 2019

Resource Management Act 1991

- 5.5 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. There are no ONF's or ONL's within or nearby to the site.
- 5.6 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.

Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)

- 5.7 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*

Comment:

- 5.8 Development within the PC2 area will achieve a comprehensive residential environment with a centralised green network which would have high levels of amenity and allow for a range of housing densities and typologies. Potential adverse effects of urban and business activities on the environment would be avoided, remedied or mitigated in accordance with the operative AUP provisions.

- 5.9 Development enabled by PC2 would ensure a high quality environment. The concept master 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.
- 5.10 Development enabled by PC2 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 south and east are similarly zoned FUZ and therefore an appropriate transition will be achieved.

Pukekohe-Paerata Structure Plan

- 5.11 In 2017, Auckland Council engaged Opus Consultants to undertake a landscape and visual assessment of the Pukekohe-Paerata Structure Plan area which had been identified as being suitable for urbanisation in the Auckland Unitary Plan². This report was prepared to identify and provide an evaluation of existing landscape attributes and the likely effects of urbanisation on landscape character and visual amenity. It also identified ways in which the landscape can positively contribute to the area's future urbanisation. The main purpose was to recommend landscapes to be protected, opportunities to enhance landscape character and visual amenity and opportunities for new landscape interventions to help shape a quality urban environment.
- 5.12 I therefore consider that future development enabled by PC2 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 PC2 is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of development enabled by PC2 on them. In accordance with the RMA this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal combined with existing urban development within Pukekohe.
- 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 PC2 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 PC2 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.

² *Pukekohe-Paerata Structure Plan, Landscape and Visual Assessment, Opus International Consultants, August 2019*

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, artificial farm channels, modified streams, buildings and associated structures. The site is a component of the wider modified Pukekohe urban and peripheral semi-rural environment in an area zoned for future urban intensification within the AUP and PPSP.

6.10 The concept master plan includes a central green open space network based on the enhanced stream corridors and stormwater management areas which would enhance the natural character values of the site. Overall, the adverse effects of development enabled by PC2 on the natural character values of the site and surrounding area would be low.

Landscape Effects

6.11 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.

6.12 '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.

- 6.13 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.
- 6.14 Landscape character results from a combination of physical elements together with aesthetic and perceptual aspects that combine to make an area distinct. The wider Pukekohe 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.
- 6.15 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 PC2 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.
- 6.16 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, commercial, light industry urbanised area of Pukekohe. 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 PC2.
- 6.17 While the Roosevile South Tuff Ring is included within the Pukekohe-Paerata Structure Plan it is not identified in the AUP as an Outstanding Natural Feature ('ONF') or Outstanding Natural Landscape ('ONL'). Furthermore, the entire site and surrounding land to the west, south and east is zoned for future urban development.

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 working environment lacking any significant landscape and natural character values, adjacent to an existing residential area to the north. 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 for the site.
- 6.19 The key methods of mitigating for this loss are to retain and enhance where possible existing landscape features 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 PC2.

- 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, comprehensively planted with street trees and riparian plantings along the substantial stream corridors and green network 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 PC2 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.

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 PC2 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 PC2 would be visible;
- ii) Identification of the different viewing audiences that would be affected by future development enabled by PC2; 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 PC2 within the site are likely to be evident to any significant degree. Golding Road and Pukekohe East Road surrounding the periphery of the site result in a number of open views into the site, however existing vegetation patterns and landform variations currently provide a level of screening from parts of the wider surrounding areas.
- 6.26 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.
- 6.27 Consequently, Golding Road, Pukekohe East Road and properties accessed off these roads define the main visual catchment. Properties within Anselmi Ridge on the northern side of Pukekohe East Road are generally at a lower elevation, oriented north and buffered by vegetation within the road reserve. The adjoining properties to the south and east would be exposed to open views across the site. These properties are similarly zoned FUZ.

- 6.28 Distant, albeit elevated views would be gained from parts of the Ngahere Road residential area and the open grassed areas of Roosevelt Park to the west albeit a number of views being screened by the stand of indigenous bush within the property to the west. Very distant views would be gained from Pukekohe Hill and some of the residential properties on the hill, however these would be from in excess of 3.6km away, encompassing the entire Pukekohe township and surrounds.
- 6.29 The viewing audience would therefore encompass the following groups:
- i) Road users on the surrounding roads including Golding Road, Pukekohe East Road and Ngahere Road;
 - ii) Residents and visitors within the adjoining residential properties at 8-18 Pukekohe East Road;
 - iii) Residents and workers in the adjoining rural property to the west accessed off Golding Road; and
 - iv) Residents and visitors to the adjoining rural and rural lifestyle properties to the south and east; and
 - v) Distant viewers within the wider surrounding area.
- 6.30 Overall, the anticipated level of audience exposure would be large due to the location of the site adjacent to the surrounding roads and in particular Pukekohe East Road, being the main thoroughfare into Pukekohe from eastern locations.

Visual Amenity Effects Analysis

- 6.31 The proposed future development of the site enabled by PC2 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
- 6.32 The visual effects of development enabled by PC2 have been assessed from representative viewpoints within the visual catchment area that have potential for visual effects. Six 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.
- 6.33 The assessment has been undertaken by reference the following viewpoints:
- Viewpoint 1:** Pukekohe East Road – East
Viewpoint 2: Pukekohe East Road – West
Viewpoint 3: Pukekohe East Road – Belgium Road
Viewpoint 4: Pukekohe East Road – Golding Road
Viewpoint 5: Golding Road
Viewpoint 6: Ngahere Road
- Refer to: **Annexure 3** – The Site and Viewpoint Location Map
Annexure 4 – Viewpoint Photographs 1-5
- 6.34 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.
- 6.35 The key factors contained in that matrix are given in detail in **Annexure 5**. 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.

- 6.36 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 2021':

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.

- 6.37 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.

- 6.38 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

- 6.39 The adjacent properties to the site would be most affected by future urban development enabled by PC2. This would include the residential properties to the northwest at 8-18 Pukekohe East Road and the rural properties to the west, south and east accessed off Golding Road. The rural lifestyle properties to the east accessed off Pukekohe East Road and Valley Royal Way would also be impacted on views to varying degrees.
- 6.40 Views towards parts of the site however would be moderated, filtered or partially screened by the existing vegetation patterns within the surrounding properties, orientation, intervening landform and proposed landscape initiatives. Viewpoints 2, 4 and 5 are indicative of the potential views from the adjoining properties.
- 6.41 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 area, and the quality nature of the future urban development would ensure that a suitable level of amenity is achieved.
- 6.42 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 through the central area of the site.
- 6.43 Development enabled by the proposal would not be entirely out of context and gradual in nature due to the residential zoning of the land to the north and future urban zoning of the site and surrounding area to the west, east, and south. The green network along the streams, in conjunction with the open space areas and street tree plantings 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 urban context.
- 6.44 From these close locations, the full effects of the change brought about by PC2 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. 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 Pukekohe urbanisation occurring locally.
- 6.45 The green network extending along the stream corridors would assist in breaking up the expansiveness 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 PC2, however, would entirely change the landscape character and visual amenity currently experienced for the surrounding properties. Overall, the visual effects for the adjoining rural, residential and rural-residential properties would be moderate to high, albeit anticipated through the zoning of the site for urban development.

Surrounding Road Network

- 6.46 For road users on the surrounding road network, in particular those who live locally, the development of the site is likely to result in visual effects of some significance, particularly for Golding Road and Pukekohe East Road users accessing their properties. For general road users, the effects are likely to be of much less significance as the proposal would be seen as part of the pattern of land use change occurring locally within the surrounding Pukekohe environs. Viewpoints 1-6 are indicative of the potential views from the surrounding roads.
- 6.47 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 Pukekohe's residential environs. The sensitivity and the effects of development enabled by PC2 would also be reduced further by the fact that development would be gradual and staged over a number of years. Travelling in westerly directions along Pukekohe East Road, the proposal would be viewed against the backdrop of the Pukekohe East residential area surrounding Roosevelt Park.
- 6.48 Viewed from Golding Road and Ngahere Road, the green network along the stream corridors, street tree plantings 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.
- 6.49 Overall, the visual effects from the surrounding road network would be low.

Wider Surrounding Area

- 6.50 Distant views would be gained from the residential properties accessed off Ngahere Road and some of the more distant rural lifestyle properties on the western elevated slopes extending up to Pukekohe Hill and from distant locations within the wider surrounding area. Viewpoint 6 is taken from Ngahere Road in the vicinity of Roosevelt Park looking towards the site.
- 6.51 From elevated locations within the wider area, views of development enabled by PC2 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.
- 6.52 While development enabled by PC2 would be highly visible from parts of the wider surrounding area, I consider that the visual effects would be low to very low and entirely acceptable within the context of the existing and planned future urban environment.

Construction Effects

- 6.53 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.
- 6.54 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

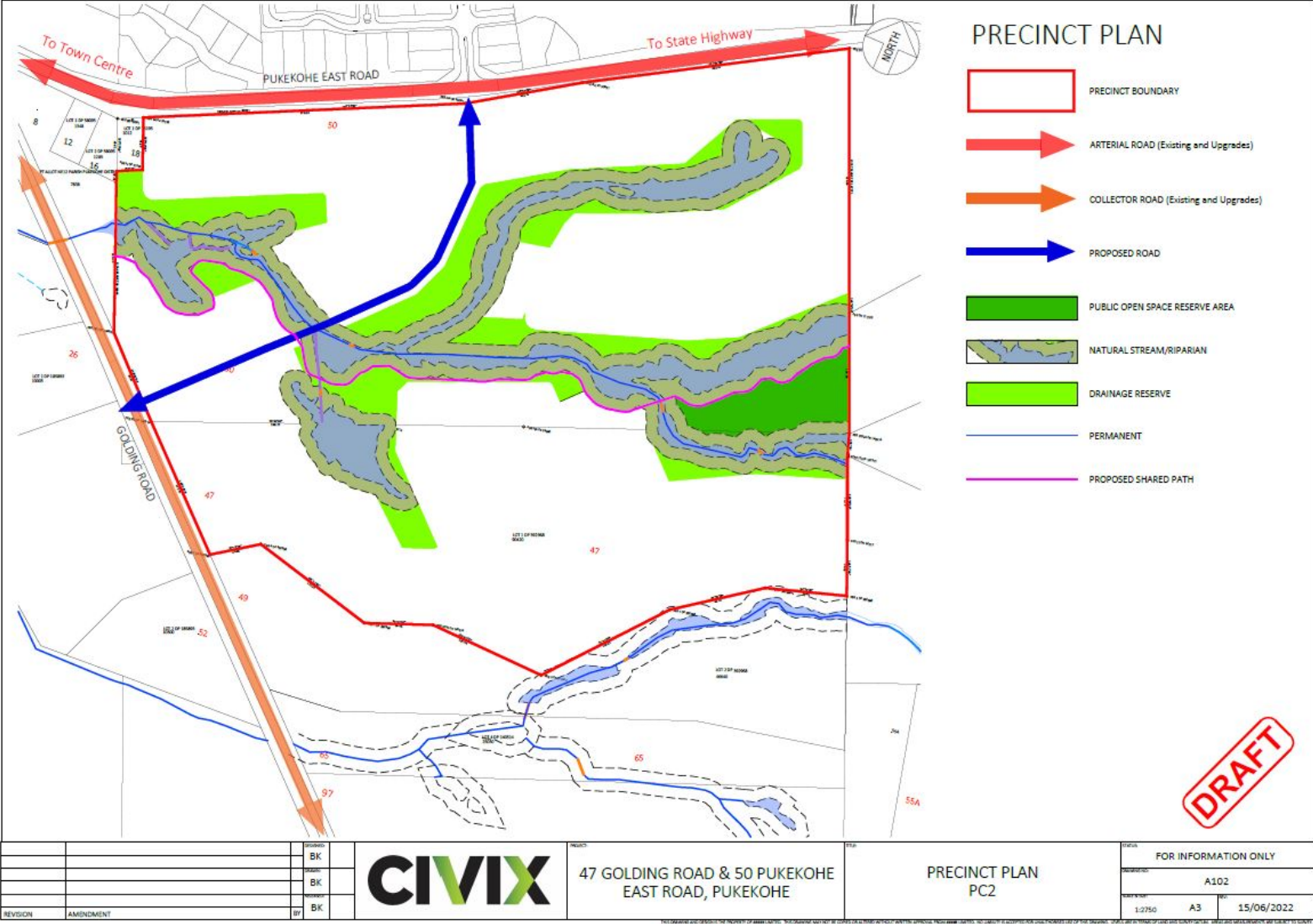
- 7.1 The proposed urbanisation of the site resulting from development enabled by PC2 would significantly change its current open and semi-rural landscape character. The development would however be consistent with the site being zoned Future Urban with urban expansion envisaged in the AUP.
- 7.2 Although the subject site is largely in grazed pasture, its semi-rural character is lessened to a degree by the existing land uses including grazing, dwellings and ancillary structures, accessways and drives, and bordering onto Pukekohe's residential area to the north. While the site includes productive grazing land, it is a highly modified site with relatively low landscape values. 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 semi-rural land to the west, east and south, with the urban development impacting on the semi-rural quality of this area. Nevertheless, this is a landscape in transition and is an area designated for urban expansion in the foreseeable future.
- 7.4 Because of the size and nature of the development 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 semi-rural areas, 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; and
 - 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 the proposed development 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 Despite the relatively low landscape values, the development 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 proposed landscape initiatives become established.
- 7.8 In conclusion, development enabled by PC2 would fulfil the need for residential and urban intensification and provide an opportunity for an innovative and environmentally sustainable urban development. PC2 would be largely consistent with regional growth strategies for the area and would result in a high-quality urban development with a range of positive landscape and environmental outcomes.

7.9 I consider that the proposed Private Plan Change is appropriate in this urban and semi-rural setting from a landscape character and visual amenity perspective.

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



Annexure 1: Proposed Precinct Plan



REVISION	AMENDMENT	BY	BK
			BK
			BK

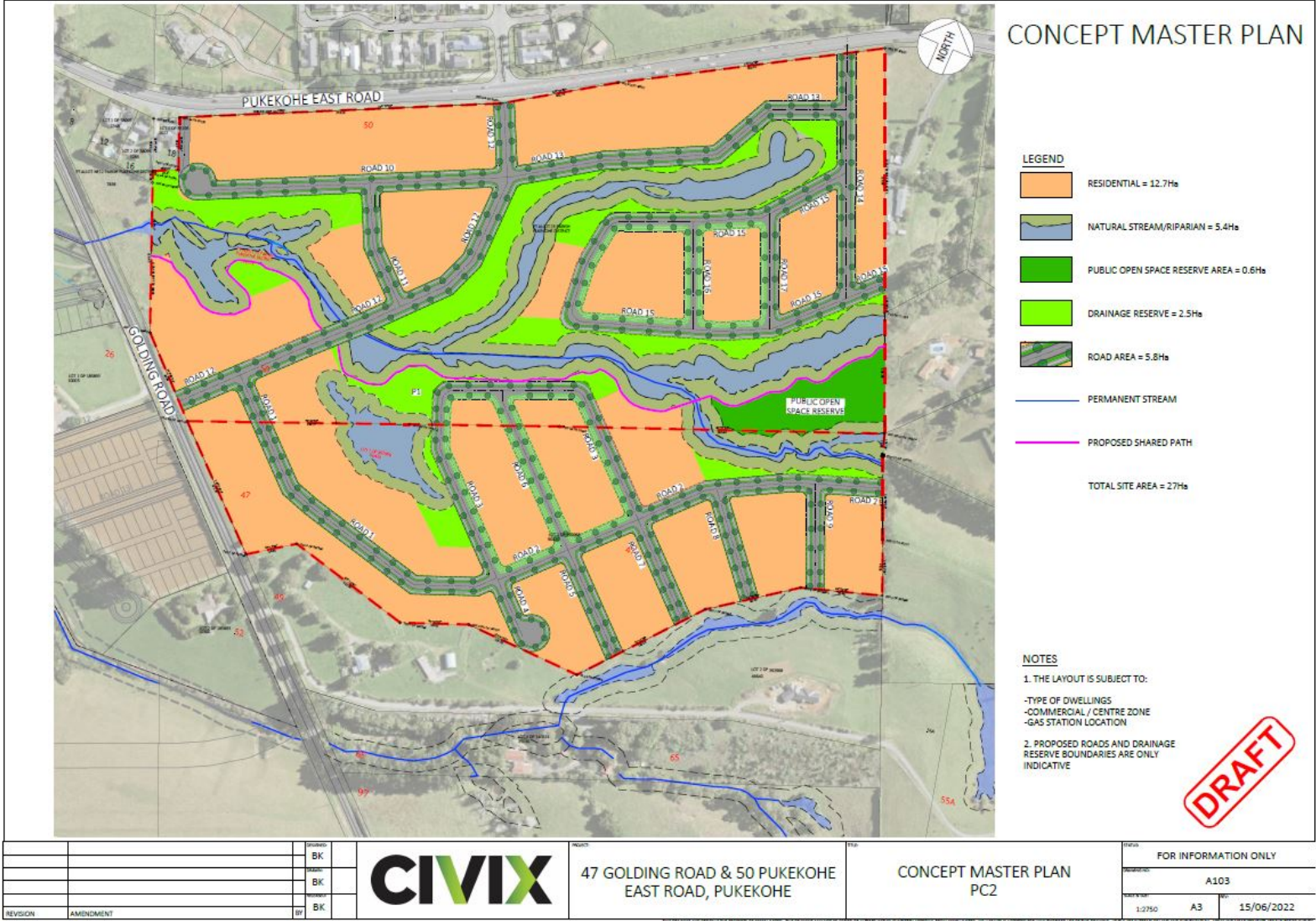


47 GOLDING ROAD & 50 PUKEKOHE EAST ROAD, PUKEKOHE

PRECINCT PLAN PC2

FOR INFORMATION ONLY		
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Annexure 2: Concept Master Plan



Annexure 3: The Site and Viewpoint Location Map



Annexure 4: Viewpoint Photographs



Viewpoint 1: Pukekohe East Road – East



Viewpoint 2: Pukekohe East Road – West



Viewpoint 3: Pukekohe East Road – Belgium Road



Viewpoint 4: Pukekohe East Road – Golding Road



Viewpoint 5: Golding Road



Viewpoint 6: Ngahere Road

Annexure 5: 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**.