

LA4

Ambridge Rose Retirement Village
Proposed Apartment Development – Pakuranga

Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment



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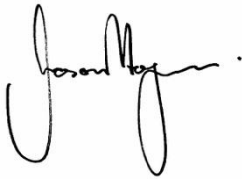
Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment Quality Assurance Statement

Prepared by:



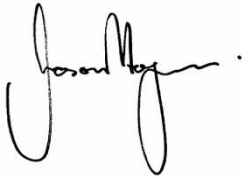
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Ambridge Rose Retirement Village
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Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment

1 Introduction

- 1.1 LA4 Landscape Architects have been engaged by Ambridge Rose (**applicant**) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (**LVA**) for the proposed apartment development (the **proposal**) at 147-153 Edgewater Drive, Pakuranga, Auckland (the **site**).
- 1.2 This assessment investigates the existing landscape values and the key landscape and visual features of the site and surroundings, and outlines the effects of the proposal on the landscape character and visual amenity values of the site and surrounding area. In preparing this assessment, site investigations, an analysis of the site and surrounding Pakuranga environment, and an assessment of landscape character and visual amenity effects of the proposal were undertaken in March 2025. The assessment is structured as follows:
- i) Description of the proposal (Section 2);
 - ii) Description of the assessment methodology (Section 3);
 - iii) Description of the site, landscape context and existing visual environment (Section 4);
 - iv) Consideration of the relevant statutory context (Section 5);
 - v) Evaluation of the landscape character and visual amenity effects (Section 6); and
 - vi) Conclusions (Section 7).

2 The Proposal

- 2.1 The proposed apartment development is fully illustrated in the Peddlethorpe Architects plans and architectural design statement. The proposal is for two six-level standalone apartment buildings within the sites at 147-153 Edgewater Drive, Pakuranga.
- 2.2 Key visual elements include:
- Block A:**
- Basement with car parking for 19 vehicles;
 - Ground floor – village amenities and car parking for 7 vehicles;
 - Levels 1-4 – five apartments and circulation; and
 - Level 5 – four apartments and circulation.
- Block B:**
- Ground floor – village amenities and car parking for 13 vehicles;
 - Levels 1-3 – five apartments and circulation;
 - Level 4 – four apartments and circulation; and
 - Level 5 – three apartments and circulation.
- 2.3 The building materials palette is restrained and distinctly urban in look to relate to and complement the residential activities in the area. A conservative but modern approach to material use has been utilised. The prominent facade material is to be a textured masonry material of medium to light tone. The upper floor and other façade cladding is to be a powder coated aluminium with a vertical groove in a soft grey tone. Window joinery and other features will be of a darker powder coated tone. The design and

materiality have been selected to give the building an upmarket residential character, complementing the varied urban nature of the surrounding area.

- 2.4 A landscape development plan has been prepared for the proposal to assist in integrating the proposed apartment buildings into the surrounding landscape (refer to the Second Nature landscape plans). Large evergreen and deciduous specimen tree plantings have been utilised throughout the site to break down the form and scale of the building and provide a vegetated framework to the development.

3 Assessment Methodology

- 3.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of the proposal 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 in accordance with the Te Tangi a te Manu (**TTatM**) Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 2022, and designed to assess whether the proposal would have adverse effects on the landscape values and visual amenity of the site and surrounding environment. The following methodology has been used in this assessment.

Background Review

- 3.3 A review of the background information, site layout, architectural and landscape plans was undertaken in relation to the landscape character and visual amenity aspects of the proposal. Key landscape and environmental factors which could potentially be affected by the proposal were identified and reviewed.

Statutory Context

- 3.4 A review of the relevant RMA and Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) (**AUP**) statutory provisions was undertaken to identify the key landscape character and visual amenity related objectives and policies. The purpose of reviewing the statutory provisions was to help frame the landscape assessment.

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 and visual amenity values were identified and outlined and a photographic record of the site and surrounding environment compiled. Key landscape elements and features were identified and an analysis of the existing landscape values and the landscape's ability to accommodate change as a result of the proposal undertaken.
- 3.6 An analysis of the existing landscape character of the site and surrounding environment was undertaken. The analysis identified the vulnerability of the site and surrounding environment to change resultant from the proposal.

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 3.7 The physical area that would be visually affected by the proposal was defined. In turn, this indicated the range, type and size of viewing audiences that would be impacted upon and their sensitivity to change as enabled by the proposal.

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 conducting 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.

Landscape Character and Visual Effects Assessment

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

Conclusions

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

4 The Site and Surrounding Landscape Context

The Site

- 4.1 The application site comprises 2987m² of land on the eastern side of the road, comprising the four properties at 147, 149, 151 and 153 Edgewater Drive. The site is predominantly flat at approximately RL 5m, before falling away in an easterly direction towards the estuarine edge of the Pakuranga Creek inlet.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the site and adjoining properties (Auckland Council GIS 2017)

- 4.2 The property at 147 comprises a single level contemporary weatherboard dwelling with steel roof, and double garaging towards the front of the site. The front yard is largely paved with grass and outdoor living to the rear. A single level older brick and tile dwelling is located on the site at 149, with double garage to the front, driveway and lawn area. Lawn extends around to the rear. The property at 151 comprises a single level older brick and tile dwelling and garaging to the rear. Two mature phoenix palms are towards the front of the site. An older style weatherboard and corrugated iron roof dwelling with conservatory to the front and garaging to the rear is located at 153 Edgewater Drive.



Figure 2: Looking in a southerly direction towards the site



Figure 3: Looking in a northeasterly direction towards the site

- 4.3 The existing Ambridge Rose Manor, private hospital and rest home care facility, is located immediately to the north at 157 Edgewater Drive. The Manor wraps around the large 2832m² site and comprises a two-level facility with ground level parking and paved surfacing. An inlet of the Pakuranga Creek adjoins the eastern boundary of the site, characterised by its shallow intertidal margins and dense mangrove forest. Residential activities adjoin the site to the south and west.



Figure 4: Looking in a westerly direction towards the site from Freemantle Esplanade Reserve

The Wider Landscape Context

- 4.4 The Edgewater Drive urban environment is characterised by the ‘peninsula’ landform, surrounded to the south, east and west by the estuarine Pakuranga Creek and to the north by Ti Rakau Drive. The residential urban grain is varied, comprising single and two-level standalone dwellings, cross-leased units, terraced houses, and duplexes.
- 4.5 Edgewater College occupies a large site at 32 Edgewater Drive, with classroom blocks, recreational facilities, playing fields and car parking. Te Tahawai Marae is set within the grounds of Edgewater College. Edgewater Retirement Village is located immediately to the north of the college with modern three level apartment buildings, care centre, villas and facilities. HV transmission towers and lines traverse the area. Several areas of open space include the Riverina Place esplanade reserve, Snell Place recreation reserve and Raewyn Place esplanade reserve.
- 4.6 The coastal environment features a mix of native and exotic vegetation species and is influenced by the neighbouring land uses. Mangroves also heavily feature within the Coastal Marine Area (CMA) and are part of the Marine SEA occupying the Tāmaki River.
- 4.7 The Edgewater Shopping Centre is located on the corner of Edgewater Drive and Ti Rakau Drive, providing for local convenience needs including superette, bakery, hair salon, liquor store, takeaway and mortgage broker. The Ti Rakau Drive road corridor is undergoing extensive construction works as part of the Eastern Busway Pakuranga to Botany project. Key construction activities which are well advanced, include the widening of Ti Rakau Drive to allow for a dedicated busway and cycleway. The road widening has involved the removal of a number of dwellings along the southern side of Ti Rakau Drive.

5. Statutory Context

5.1 The statutory context is covered fully in the AEE prepared by Tattico in support of the application. The application site is zoned Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban (**MHS**), in the Auckland Unitary Plan. The relevant key landscape character, natural character and visual amenity provisions from the RMA and AUP have been reviewed for this assessment. The purpose of reviewing the provisions is to help frame the landscape assessment, it is not to undertake a planning assessment of the proposal against the provisions.

5.2 The relevant statutory documents in relation to this assessment are as follows:

- Resource Management Act (1991)
- New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (2010)
- Auckland Regional Plan: Coastal
- Auckland Unitary Plan

Resource Management Act (1991)

5.3 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.

5.4 Section 6 sets out the matters of importance that must be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the CMA), and its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is identified in section 6(a) as a matter of national importance. This is relevant to this assessment as the site abuts the coastal environment. Additionally, the protection of outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is identified as a matter of national importance in section 6(b). There are no outstanding natural features or landscapes identified on or adjacent to the site or within the wider landscape context.

5.5 Section 7 identifies a range of matters that shall be given particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the RMA. Section 7(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values is particularly relevant to this proposal. Section 8 states that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi must be considered in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (2010)

5.6 The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (**NZCPS**) includes objectives, policies, and priorities with respect to the coastal environment, preservation of natural character, including natural features and landscapes, and the maintenance and enhancement of open space and recreation, minimising adverse effects and facilitating the provision of the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and health of people and communities.

5.7 There are a number of objectives and policies of relevance to landscape and natural character matters. The relevant objectives are Objectives 2 and 4. The key policies relevant to this assessment are Policies 13 and 15. Policy 13 – Preservation of natural character, and Policy 15 – Natural features and natural landscapes have been taken into consideration in this assessment. The need to address cumulative effects is addressed in Policy 4 as an integrated management matter requiring, particular consideration of situations where significant adverse cumulative effects are occurring or can be anticipated.

Comment:

- 5.8 Natural character is part of landscape character and varies within each area. It is the result of the combined levels of indigenous nature (i.e. biophysical values) and perceived nature (i.e. sensory values), which are typically defined by the extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur and are legible, and the nature and extent of existing human modifications. As such the highest degrees of natural character occur where there is the least modification within an area and its context.
- 5.9 I consider that the proposal is an appropriate development and use of this part of the coastal environment. While the coastal edge contains high natural elements, natural patterns and natural processes, the wider area has a highly modified character. The key natural elements, i.e. the landform, mangrove forest and shallow intertidal margins of the Pakuranga Creek would not be adversely affected by the proposal. Similarly, the existing natural patterns and natural processes currently evident in the area would be unaffected.

Auckland Council Regional Plan: Coastal

- 5.10 The regional coastal plan section of the AUP gives effect to provisions relating to the coastal environment by way of objectives, policies, rules and other methods. The plan is applicable to the CMA, as well as other parts of the coastal environment, which are strongly related to the CMA.
- 5.11 The main relevant sections relating to the landscape and visual effects are Chapter 3 – Natural Character and Chapter 4 – Landscape. The intent of these sections is consistent with RMA Section 6a. This requires as a matter of national importance, the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Comment:

- 5.12 In my opinion the qualities and features of natural character in the area would not be adversely affected by the proposal. Any adverse landscape effects (including effects on natural character and landscape values) of the proposal would be localised and would have minor implications on the quality, character and aesthetic values and landscape of the wider coastal setting. The scale, location and design of the proposal would integrate with the type and intensity of development in the adjacent areas of the coastal marine area and with the pattern of subdivision, use and development in the surrounding area.

Auckland Unitary Plan

- 5.13 The application site is zoned Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban (**MHS**) in the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) (**AUP**). To the east of the site is a strip of Open Space – Informal Recreation (**OS-IR**), and Coastal – Coastal Transition (**C-CT**) zone along the coastal edge. A Significant Ecological Area – Marine (**SEA**) extends around and into the coastal foreshore. The MHS zone enables intensification, while retaining a suburban built character. The resource consent requirements enable the design and layout of the development to be assessed; recognising that the need to achieve a quality design is increasingly important as the scale of development increases.
- 5.14 The relevant sections of the AUP that have been taken into consideration are as follows:
- E18. Natural character of the coastal environment
 - H4. Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban Zone

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

- i) The proposal has been architecturally designed to provide a high level of visual quality and amenity. The proposed development responds well to the streetscape and surrounding environment. The amenity values of the surrounding area would be retained and positively enhanced by the development.
- ii) The proposal is of an appropriate form and scale for its location adjacent to the open expanse of the Pakuranga Creek environs and the Edgewater Drive road corridor and has been designed in consideration of its site context. A high standard of visual quality would be achieved from the surrounding area and streets through the quality architectural design, detailing and materiality of the buildings and proposed landscape development. The proposal would result in a high level of passive surveillance over, and good activation with the street.
- iii) The proposed development would positively contribute towards the planned future form and quality of the surrounding area, albeit of greater height and scale. The proposal is of a form that manages adverse visual amenity effects on the environment through the architectural design and detailing of the apartment buildings. The development is of a quality and design that positively contributes to the visual quality and interest of the surrounding streets and public open spaces. The quality of design is commensurate with the prominence and visual effects of the development.
- iv) The amenity values of the surrounding area would be retained and enhanced by the development of superior architectural design than currently existing within the site and surrounding area. The proposal would complement and be read as part of the existing Ambridge Rose Manor.
- v) The natural characteristics and qualities that contribute to the natural character of the coastal environment would not be adversely affected by the proposal. There are no areas of high natural character (**HNC**) within the vicinity. The location, scale and design of the proposal is appropriate in this highly modified coastal environment. The physical and visual integrity of the coastal area would be retained, and the natural processes of the location would not be adversely affected. The physical and visual integrity of the area and natural processes of the location would not be adversely affected by the proposal.
- vi) The proposal would not visually compromise or adversely affect any significant landscapes and features. The application site, while containing a degree of coastal character along the foreshore edge is not high in landscape quality at a district level. The site and surrounding area are a distinctly modified environment through past and present land use. The proposal will not adversely affect the marine SEA extending along the coastal edge.
- vii) The proposal would enable a variety of housing types including integrated residential development such as retirement villages. The development would enable the more efficient use of the larger site by providing for an integrated residential development.
- viii) While the scale and intensity of development is greater than the neighbourhood's planned suburban built character, the design and appearance of the proposal reduces potential adverse effects of height, dominance and scale.

- ix) The height, bulk and location of the development has been designed to maintain a reasonable standard of sunlight access and privacy and to minimise visual dominance effects to adjoining sites. The mass and height results in an architectural statement entirely appropriate to the prominent location and complementary to the surrounding built development.

Statutory conclusions:

- 5.16 Through the above analysis I therefore consider that the proposal would be generally consistent with the intent of the landscape and visual objectives and policies of the AUP and when considered in totality would be entirely acceptable in landscape character and visual amenity terms.

6 Evaluation of the Proposal

- 6.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of the proposal on this landscape is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of the proposal on them. In accordance with the RMA this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal combined with existing developments. The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the nature and degree of potential landscape effects and the appropriateness of the proposal. The assessment responds to matters related to landscape character and visual amenity.
- 6.2 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. Landscape character results from a combination of physical elements together with aesthetic and perceptual aspects that combine to make an area distinct. Landscape character is influenced by natural and built elements as well as types, patterns and intensity of land use, historic, cultural and other intangible qualities.
- 6.3 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.
- 6.4 Sensitivity to change considers not only the receiving environment but also the nature and characteristics of the proposal. The ability of a landscape to accommodate change is dependent on a variety of considerations such as the:
 - i) existing land use and resultant landscape patterns;
 - ii) physical characteristics of the landscape;
 - iii) scale of the landscape, the quality and values placed on a landscape; and
 - iv) the ability to mitigate any effects.
- 6.5 The objective of Landscape and Visual Effects assessments is not to assess change or visibility but the nature and magnitude of effect of change on the existing landscape values. With all assessments the objective is not to determine the proposal's extent of visibility, it is to determine how the proposal will impact on existing landscape values, including landscape character and visual amenity. Visibility of itself is not an adverse effect¹.

¹ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [p. 146]

6.6 Matters to be addressed in this landscape assessment in relation to the landscape character and visual amenity include the following:

- i) Landscape character effects
- ii) Visual amenity effects
- iii) Cumulative effects

Landscape Effects

6.7 A landscape effect is a consequence of change in a landscape's physical attributes on that landscape's values. Change is not an effect – landscapes change constantly. It is the implications of change for a landscape's values that is the effect². Landscape effects take into consideration physical effects to 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. 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.

6.8 Landscape assessments are based on the links between landscape character and values. Character is an expression of the landscape's collective attributes. Values are the reasons a landscape is valued but are embodied in attributes. Effects are consequences for a landscape's values of changes to the attributes on which the values depend. Landscape character results from a combination of physical elements together with aesthetic and perceptual aspects that combine to make an area distinct. Landscape values relate to people's aesthetic perception of the biophysical environment, including considerations such as naturalness, vividness, coherence, memorability and rarity.

6.9 Effects on landscape values are assessed against the existing environment, and the outcomes sought in the relevant statutory provisions. Whether effects on landscape values are appropriate would therefore depend both on the nature and magnitude of effect on the existing landscape values and what is anticipated by the provisions.

6.10 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.

6.11 '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.

6.12 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

² Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [p. 135]

- 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 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.

Landscape Effects Analysis

- 6.13 The landscape values associated with the site itself are low due to the highly modified characteristics of the site, lack of significant vegetation, and the established urban form including the surrounding residential settlement pattern. As such the landscape sensitivity of the site to change as enabled by the proposal is low.
- 6.14 The proposed development would have low adverse effects on the landscape values of the site and surrounding area, particularly in relation to the character and quality of the site and the surrounds, given that:
- i) The site is a component of a very highly modified urban landscape. The site and surrounding area are not high in landscape character (other than the coastal edge) and have been modified by patterns of residential settlement, educational facilities, retirement complexes, community facilities, peripheral commercial activities, and the roading network with associated infrastructure including HV pylons. It is a highly urbanised environment and as such the landscape sensitivity of the site to change as enabled by the proposal is low.
 - ii) The proposal has been architecturally designed to a high standard, is of a design quality that is commensurate with the prominence of the development and would positively contribute to the existing landscape character of the area. The proposed development would not introduce new elements or features that would adversely influence the landscape values and character of the surrounding area.
 - iii) Any potential landscape effects would be localised due to the type and scale of change and existing landscape character of the area. The proposal would not adversely impact on any key landscape elements or features, nor alter the distinctive natural patterns found within the surrounding landscape.
 - iv) The scale and appearance of the proposed development would ensure it has low adverse effects on the character or quality of the adjoining residential environment. The scale and expanse of Edgewater Drive fronting the site and expanse and open space characteristics of the Pakuranga Creek would mitigate the potential adverse landscape effects of the proposal.
 - v) The development is of a scale and form that manages adverse effects on the landscape values of the environment through the architectural design and detailing of the building. The proposal is of a quality and design that positively contributes to the landscape character, landscape values and interest of the surrounding streets, public open spaces, residential, community and educational facilities.

- vi) The proposal would result in a change in landscape character but would ensure a suitable level of amenity is achieved.

Visual Effects

- 6.15 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 subsequent changes within the landscape setting, where applicable. As with landscape effects, visual effects relate to landscape values. Visibility and change are not effects in and of themselves³.
- 6.16 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. The methodology used in this assessment is designed to assess whether or not the proposal would have adverse visual effects on the nature and quality of the surrounding environment. The proposal raises a number of visual issues, including the potential effects on visual amenity to the following key areas:
 - i) Adjoining properties
 - ii) Surrounding streetscape
 - iii) Wider urban area
- 6.17 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. The key consideration in this assessment is the potential adverse effects of the proposal on the surrounding viewing audience with particular regard to:
 - i) Urban character and amenity
 - ii) Compatibility of building bulk and scale
 - iii) Maintenance and enhancement of amenity values

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 6.18 The visual catchment is the physical area that will be exposed to the visual changes associated with the proposal. The increased height of development enabled by the proposal than currently existing on the site would result in a higher level of visual exposure from the surrounding and wider area. Close views will be gained from the adjoining residential properties to the south, in Susanne Place and those to the west of the site in Edgewater Drive. Views will be gained from parts of the residential area accessed off Pūrākau Lane and Raewyn Place. The residential area to the east across the Pakuranga Creek inlet accessed off Freemantle Place will be exposed to views to varying degrees, along with recreational users of the esplanade reserve around the coastal edge.
- 6.19 Motorists travelling in both directions along Edgewater Drive will be exposed to views towards the proposal. Staff and students at Edgewater College will gain views from the school grounds as well as residents within some of the villas at Edgewater Village across the foreground of the playing fields. Visitors to the Te Tahawai Marae within the school grounds would gain views towards the site. Residents within a number of properties within the wider Edgewater Drive catchment would gain views to varying degrees, albeit

³ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [p. 245]

interrupted or obstructed by dwellings and vegetation within the line of sight. Workers within northern parts of the Highbrook Business Park may gain views towards the proposal across the foreground of the Pakuranga Creek and vegetation along the coastal edge. Distant views may be gained from parts of Ti Rakau Drive and elevated parts of the residential area extending to the north off Riverhills Avenue.

6.20 The primary viewing audiences that would be exposed to the proposal would therefore comprise:

- i) Residents within the adjoining properties in Susanne Place, Edgewater Drive, Raewyn Place and Pūrākau Lane.
- ii) Motorists and pedestrians travelling in both directions along Edgewater Drive;
- iii) Staff, students and visitors to Edgewater College;
- iv) Visitors to Te Tahawai Marae;
- v) Residents within the properties accessed off Freemantle Place;
- vi) Residents within parts of Edgewater Village;
- vii) Motorists travelling along parts of Ti Rakau Drive; and
- viii) Distant viewers within parts of the wider surrounding area.

Visual Amenity Effects Analysis

6.21 The visual effects of the proposal have been assessed from representative viewpoints within the visual catchment area that have potential for visual effects. Four 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. View-verified visual impact simulations have been prepared by Cadabra Applied Computer Graphics from the viewpoint locations to illustrate the proposed development within the surrounding landscape context.

6.22 The assessment has been undertaken by reference to the following viewpoints:

Viewpoint 1: Edgewater Drive – north

Viewpoint 2: 141 Edgewater Drive

Viewpoint 3: Raewyn Place Esplanade Reserve

Viewpoint 4: Freemantle Place Esplanade Reserve

*Refer to **Annexure 1: Visual Impact Photo Simulations***

6.23 A detailed assessment and analysis of potential visual effects has been undertaken to ensure that each view and changes within each view are evaluated thoroughly and consistently. The total rating 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 Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 2022. The 7-point scale is a rating of magnitude, whereas an assessment of whether effects are minor (or less than or more than) is a reasoned consideration of the magnitude and importance (significance) of such effects in context⁴.

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.

⁴ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [6.40]

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.

					SIGNIFICANT	
LESS THAN MINOR		MINOR	MORE THAN MINOR			
VERY LOW	LOW	LOW-MOD	MODERATE	MOD-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH

Figure 5: TTatM rating scale

- 6.24 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.
- 6.25 The assessment has been undertaken in terms of the following criteria:
- Sensitivity and quality of the view** – the relative quality and sensitivity of views into the site, including landscape character and visual amenity values.
 - 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.
 - Urban amenity** – the impact of the proposal on the wider surrounding urban amenity.
 - Urban form** – the degree to which the proposal would fit into the existing 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 proposal could be mitigated through integration into its surrounds by specific measures.

Viewpoint 1 – Edgewater Drive

- 6.26 Viewpoint 1 is taken from Edgewater Drive immediately north of the Pakuranga Creek inlet culvert looking in a southerly direction towards the site. The existing Ambridge Rose Manor is dominant in the focus of the view. The urban characteristics of the area are apparent from here with the residential dwellings extending in the distance beyond. The open space character of the Pakuranga Creek environs is a dominant natural landscape element with views extending across the inlet. Vegetation within the inlet provides a level of visual relief, albeit largely weed infested.
- 6.27 As illustrated in the visual simulation the proposal would be highly noticeable from here due to the close proximity of the viewer to the site, and the increased height, bulk, and scale of development on the site than currently exists. The site and surrounding environs however have the capacity to absorb such change as proposed due to the scale and expanse of the vegetated and open space characteristics of the Pakuranga Creek inlet and site location abutting the road frontage.
- 6.28 From here the proposal would be seen as an integral component of the adjoining Ambridge Rose Manor and surrounding residential area and would be of an appropriate form and scale for its location, albeit of greater height than its current neighbours. The development would introduce a new built form of development of superior character and scale than currently existing within the area and would positively address the surrounding environs. The proposal would be viewed in the context of the surrounding mixed residential, aged care, and educational environment and would not appear incongruous in this setting, adjacent to the road and viewed within the context of the Pakuranga Creek environs.
- 6.29 The additional height of the apartment buildings would provide variety on the skyline and while taller than the permitted 9m height limit for the MHS zone would not significantly detract from the existing visual amenity values. The expanse of the surrounding road and creek environs provides an appropriate setting for a development of the height, form and scale as proposed.
- 6.30 The development would not adversely impact on the surrounding area and would sit comfortably into the existing urban fabric. The proposal would be seen as an integral component of the urban setting and would be of an appropriate form and scale for its location. As illustrated, the open expanse of the Pakuranga Creek inlet provides a good level of scale within which the proposal is viewed.
- 6.31 The development would not adversely impact on the landscape values, surrounding urban amenity and pattern of development and would sit comfortably into the existing urban fabric characterised by a mix of activities in the vicinity. Overall, the adverse visual effects of the development from here would be low-moderate.

Viewpoint 2 – 141 Edgewater Drive

- 6.32 Viewpoint 2 is taken from adjacent to 141 Edgewater Drive looking in a northerly direction towards the site. The view is representative of motorists and pedestrians

travelling north along the road. Similar views would be gained from some of the residential properties in the vicinity.

- 6.33 As illustrated, the proposed apartment buildings would be highly visible from here in front of the existing facility. The development is of a scale and form that manages adverse visual amenity effects on the area through the architectural design and detailing of the buildings, including the modulation and articulation of the façades and setback of the upper levels of both blocks reducing their form and scale.
- 6.34 As illustrated, the environment has the capacity to absorb the additional height of the proposal. The contrasting cladding material to the upper level assists in reducing the scale of a building and the corner wintergardens reduce the visual mass. The offsetting of the windows draws the viewer's eye away from the vertical. The upper levels are set back from the street, and adjacent boundary for Block B reducing the perception of dominance. The proposal is of a quality and design that positively contributes to the visual quality and interest of the surrounding streets and adjoining residential area. The quality of design is commensurate with the prominence and visual effects of the development.
- 6.35 Change in visual character is not necessarily an adverse effect and taller buildings, if well designed, can have positive visual outcomes. In urban terms, redevelopment of the site would lift the amenity of the site and surrounding area and the proposal is considered to be of a demonstrable level of quality so as to warrant the additional built form proposed in the context of this viewpoint. The form and scale of the proposal is entirely appropriate within the surrounding mixed character environment which includes the residential fabric, existing aged care facility, a large secondary school, marae and another retirement village.
- 6.36 Overall, I consider that the adverse visual effects from here would be low-moderate and entirely appropriate in light of the site's location, and the quality architectural design and detailing of the building.

Viewpoint 3 – Raewyn Place Esplanade Reserve

- 6.37 Viewpoint 3 is taken from the Raewyn Place Esplanade Reserve looking in a northeasterly direction. The viewing audience from here would be the recreational users of the reserve and playground. The view extends across the park to the residential area accessed off Raewyn Place and Susanne Place, with the site being located approximately 200m away. The open space and vegetated characteristics of the park and surrounding area are dominant from here with the expanse of the grass and mature tree plantings in the reserve and residential properties.
- 6.38 As illustrated in the visual simulation the proposal will be largely screened from view by the intervening dwellings and tree plantings. The southern part of Block B addresses the adjoining residential area well through the setback of the upper levels and the reduced length of the façade. The bulk and scale of the building has been reduced through the articulation of the building façade and effective use of materials with the recessive upper level. The utilisation of different materials and colours further reduces potential dominance effects and provides visual variation while achieving a level of continuity between the built form. The variety in façade treatment, materiality and colour would ensure a level of interest within the building's form, thereby reducing its scale and visual impact.
- 6.39 Overall, the adverse visual effects of the proposal would be low from here.

Viewpoint 4 – Freemantle Place Esplanade Reserve

- 6.40 Viewpoint 4 is taken from the Freemantle Place Esplanade Reserve, in the vicinity of 38 Freemantle Place, looking in a westerly direction. The viewing audience from here would be the recreational users of the esplanade reserve, albeit not highly used due to the lack of access, paths and facilities. Similar views would be gained from some of the residential properties accessed off Freemantle Place, towards the western end. The view extends across the mangrove forest of the Pakuranga Creek inlet towards the site with existing aged care facility visible towards the right of the view.
- 6.41 The vegetated characteristics of the reserve and open expanse of the estuarine environs are the dominant characteristic from here with views extending down the creek towards the left. From here, the proposal would introduce a new built form of development of superior character and scale than currently existing within the site and would positively address the surrounding area. As illustrated the height infringement of the apartment buildings could be readily assimilated into the surrounding area through the scale and expanse of the Pakuranga Creek inlet environs with the additional height providing a level of interest on the skyline.
- 6.42 The development would not adversely impact on the surrounding area and would sit comfortably into the existing urban fabric dominated by the urban activities. The proposal would be seen as an integral component of the urban setting and would be of an appropriate form and scale for its location. Overall, the adverse visual effects of the proposal would be low from here within the context of the established suburban fabric.

Wider Surrounding Area

- 6.43 From other locations within the wider surrounding area, views towards the proposal would be highly variable due to distance, orientation of the view, diversity of elements within the view and screening elements including buildings, landform, and prevailing vegetation patterns. Where visible from these more distant areas, the proposal would integrate sensitively into the landscape due to the scale of the proposal relative to the site context and surrounding environs. While the proposal may be visible from parts of the wider surrounding area, I consider that the adverse visual effects would be low and entirely acceptable within the context of the settlement pattern and existing and planned future urban environment.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The application site is part of an established and varied residential, educational and aged care environment adjoining the existing care facility that has been an integral component of the Pakuranga environs for a number of years. The site and surrounding landscape have the capacity to visually absorb the landscape and visual effects of the development through the physical characteristics and prevailing attributes within the surrounding environment.
- 7.2 The development would be highly visible from various locations in the surrounding urban environment due to its height, form, and scale. The proposal would, however, enhance the streetscape and interface with Edgewater Drive through the interactive street frontage and passive surveillance afforded by the apartments outlook over the street. The proposed development would provide an attractive and interesting frontage to the street and potential adverse effects on the amenity of the streetscape have been appropriately avoided.

- 7.3 The buildings would have minimal adverse effects on the landscape values and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area and could be readily accommodated in the prominent location adjacent to Edgewater Drive and the Pakuranga Creek inlet. The architectural design of the building has reduced the bulk and scale of the building and addressed the prominent site in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- 7.4 Overall, I consider within the context of the established urban environment the proposal could be effectively integrated and assimilated into the site and surrounding landscape without adversely affecting the landscape character, visual amenity and landscape values of the surrounding Pakuranga environment.



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Annexure 1: Visual Impact Photo Simulations