

22 & 22A Summit Drive, Ōwairaka (Mount Albert)

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

July 2025

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Prepared for Baseplan Limited by

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landscape architecture

Contents

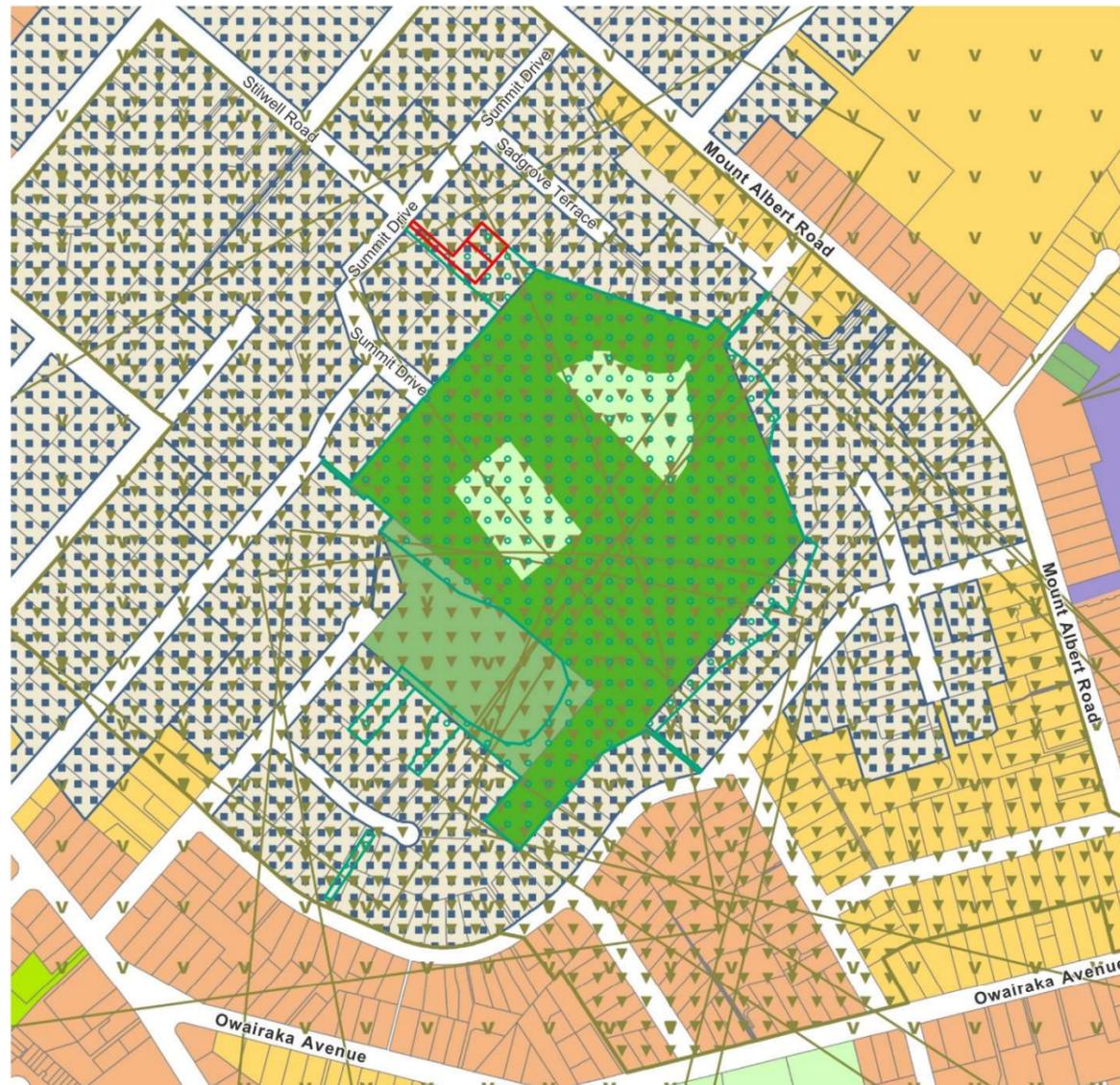
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Proposed Development	3
3.0	The Site and its Context	3
4.0	Visual Effects	8
5.0	Landscape Effects	17
6.0	Commentary against relevant Statutory Context	17
7.0	Conclusion	18
	Appendix A: Pre Application Meeting Minutes	19
	Appendix B: Landscape Plans	20
	Appendix C: Landscape Management Plan	21
	Appendix D: Photomontages	22

Figures

Figure 1:	AUP:OP Landscape related overlays	2
Figure 2:	Contours	6
Figure 3:	Notable Trees Overlay	14

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The following Landscape Assessment has been prepared by Bridget Gilbert Landscape Architecture Limited (**BGLA**) for Baseplan Limited, in support of a land use consent application to construct two dwellings, with one on each property at 22 and 22A Summit Drive, Mt Albert (collectively, **the site**).
- 1.2 Under the Auckland Unitary Plan: Operative in Part (**AUP:OP**), the following zoning and overlays are of relevance to an assessment of landscape effects:
- Residential Single House Zone (SHZ).
 - The Outstanding Natural Feature overlay (**ONF**) – Mount Albert – Ōwairaka that applies to the two properties.
 - The Regionally Significant Volcanic Viewshafts and the Height Sensitive Areas overlays that apply to the two properties.
 - The Special Character Area Residential – Mount Albert, Residential Isthmus C2 overlay.
- 1.3 These various overlays are depicted in **Figure 1**.
- 1.4 The proposed construction of two new dwellings at 22 and 22A Summit Drive, including earthworks, retaining and landscape proposals will require consent overall as a non-complying activity as detailed in the AEE prepared by Baseplan Limited (supporting the proposal). The key reasons for consent relevant to a landscape assessment of the proposal, are as follows:
- The volcanic viewshafts sit below the existing ground level of the subject site, and the applicable height control in Chapter D14, being D14.6.3(a) (i) utilises the average height of adjacent buildings. The proposed buildings will infringe the applicable maximum building height as demonstrated in the architectural plans prepared by 10x10 and therefore require consent as a non-complying activity.
 - The proposed retaining walls and fences at the site are within the volcanic viewshaft and will require consent as a restricted discretionary activity.
 - The proposed earthworks and building within the ONF will require consent as a restricted discretionary activity.
 - New building and minor modification to development standards in the Special Character Overlay and SHZ will require consent as a restricted discretionary activity.
- 1.5 In reference to the proposed building height infringements, it should be noted that the inclusion of the site within the volcanic viewshafts and ONF at this particular site is unusual in that in most circumstances within the Isthmus, the ONF captures the relevant maunga landform and the unbuilt curtilage of private properties abutting the maunga's reserve land. In this instance, the site is separated from the reserve at Ōwairaka by another property, being 24 Summit Drive, which is vacant. So, while the sinking height method is applicable under D14.6.3(a)(i), the only abutting properties which qualify to establish the applicable building height maximum for the site under D14.6.3(a)(i), sit much lower than the site, and therefore 'over represent' the restriction, relevant to the intended purpose of this height control method.
- 1.6 The titles for 22 and 22A Summit Drive were created in 2024 after physical works including earthworks and construction of drainage, retaining and a shared driveway were completed in accordance with approved consent R/SUB/2016/743.
- 1.7 While practicable building platforms were demonstrated in the abovementioned consent, no building platforms were formed or constructed. Further, no specific development controls formed part of the subdivision consent by way of a consent notice or covenant.
- 1.8 In 2022, a subdivision consent was approved for a vacant two lot subdivision at 24 Summit Drive (Council reference BUN60361098), immediately east and abutting both 22 and 22A Summit Drive. The landscape related overlays of relevance to site also apply in the same way to these properties and the subdivision consent was the subject of a Council level hearing with extensive landscape evidence informing that process.



LEGEND

ZONING		Open space		Overlays	
Residential		Open Space - Conservation Zone	Natural Heritage		
Residential - Single House Zone		Open Space - Informal Recreation Zone	Outstanding Natural Features Overlay [rcp/dp]	Viewshafts	Regionally Significant Volcanic Viewshafts & Height Sensitive Areas Overlay [rcp/dp]
Residential - Mixed Housing Suburban Zone		Open Space - Sport and Active Recreation Zone	Viewshafts	Height Sensitive Areas	
Residential - Mixed Housing Urban Zone		Open Space - Community Zone	Historic Heritage & Special Character		
Business			Special Character Areas Overlay Residential and Business		
Business - Business Park Zone					
		SITE			
		Site boundary			

Figure 1: AUP:OP Landscape related overlays

- 1.9 This 'background' along with careful review of the relevant policy context has provided a starting point in guiding the applicant's team on the important landscape related issues at play on the site, which can be summarised as follows:
- a) Appropriately minimising earthworks disturbance, in particular the depth of excavation to maintain the integrity of the maunga landform.
 - b) Appropriately minimising building height and careful consideration of building forms and exterior colours / materials to maintain the visual integrity of the maunga.
 - c) Establishing a built form character that sits comfortably within the wider maunga and built form context (including the Special Character Area), tested via the analysis of a range of representative viewpoints.
 - d) Creating a native planting setting for development that links with the native planting character envisaged for the maunga, serves to break up the built form and provides a sympathetic interface to neighbouring properties and the streetscape.
- 1.10 As a result of this 'context', the applicant's team have undertaken a comprehensive and iterative design process to develop a proposal that is appropriate from a landscape perspective. Amongst other techniques, this has included repeated testing of the design to minimise the earthworks and building height, using 'mock up' model views from key viewpoints.
- 1.11 This has also included a thorough and constructive discussion with the Auckland Council team, culminating in the Pre Application Meeting Minutes, dated 2 April 2025 (**Pre App Minutes**) (refer **Appendix A**). The Pre App Minutes provide helpful guidance from the Auckland Council team on the landscape related matters that need to be addressed in the application. This Landscape Report has been deliberately structured to respond to those matters.
- 1.12 The design process has also included discussions with the Tupuna Maunga Authority (the **TMA**) who strategically guide the ongoing protection and management of Auckland's Maunga.
- 1.13 For completeness, it is confirmed that the landscape assessment that informs the Landscape Report has been undertaken in accordance with *Te Tangi a te Manu* (Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines) (**TTatM**). This includes reliance on the seven-point adverse effects rating scale set out in TTatM.
- 1.14 The Landscape Report should be read in conjunction with the following application documents:
- a) The Landscape Plans prepared by Earl Design and dated July 2025 (refer **Appendix B**).
 - b) The Landscape Management Plan prepared by BGLA, dated July 2025 (refer **Appendix C**).
 - c) The Visual Simulations (including Methodology Statement) prepared by Rose Fox Architect and dated July 2025 (refer **Appendix D**).
 - d) The Architectural Design Statement (**ADS**) prepared by 10x10, dated July 2025.
 - e) The Architectural Plans prepared by 10x10, dated July 2025.
 - f) The Geological Assessment prepared by Initia Geotechnical Specialists, dated March 2025 (**Initia Report**).

2.0 Proposed Development

House Design

- 2.1 A two-storey dwelling is proposed on each lot, as described in the Architectural Statement and Plans. Care has been taken to design high quality dwellings that complement the character residential context. As explained in the Architectural Statement:

Cedar and brick anchor the homes in the landscape, their warm tones reflecting the spirit of the maunga. Cedar acts as a connective element, tying the building together from back to front and from top to bottom, creating a continuous thread throughout the structure. In contrast, brick grounds the building on the higher side of the site, rising vertically to anchor it firmly within the terrain. The living spaces are elevated on the first floor, opening up to the sweeping views that define the site. Here, the bold horizontality of mid-century expression is tempered by vertical accents, offering contrast without overpowering the form of the land. The scale of the houses is carefully modulated, resonating with the rhythm of the neighboring homes, and reflecting their intimate, human scale.

- 2.2 Importantly, the dwellings have been positioned and oriented to run along the contours, and 'off set' from each other to optimise the outlook while managing internal privacy.

Landscape Treatment

- 2.3 The landscape proposals that form part of the development are shown in **Appendix B** attached. In summary, a locally appropriate palette of predominantly evergreen native tree, shrub, climber and groundcover species are proposed to settle the built development into its specific setting. This includes evergreen native climber planting on the existing retaining wall adjacent the driveway to 22 and 22A Summit Drive and the use of visually recessive, hard landscape materials.

Landscape Maintenance

- 2.4 All of the proposed plantings will be subject to the Landscape Management Plan attached in **Appendix C**.

3.0 The Site and its Context

Site Context

- 3.1 As explained earlier, the site corresponds to two properties, being 22 and 22A Summit Drive, within the established residential suburb of Ōwairaka / Mount Albert. The property at 22A Summit Drive is 616m² in area, and the property at 22 Summit Drive is 932m² in area, (noting that this includes the shared driveway (pan handle)). 22 and 22A Summit Drive are accessed via a 3 m wide driveway from Summit Drive. The site (inclusive of both properties) is therefore a rear lot, with the only street frontage being the narrow driveway.
- 3.2 Relying on the Geological Assessment prepared by Initia, the maunga has been known by many names over different generations of settlement in the area. Records show that when early Māori occupation occurred the maunga was known as 'Te Puke o Ruarangi' and has also been referred to as 'Te Ahi Ka roa a Rakataura' and 'Te Wai inu roa o Raka'.
- 3.3 Ōwairaka (place of Wairaka) was the name in place when European settlers arrived in the mid-19th century. Settlers named the mountain and the surrounding suburb Mount Albert shortly after 1840 (after Queen Victoria's consort).
- 3.4 With respect to the volcanic history of the maunga, Ōwairaka / Mt Albert erupted approximately 30,000 years ago forming a large scoria cone. The early stages of eruption were wet and explosive in style and would have formed a large tuff ring that has mostly been buried by subsequent volcanic activity, where fire fountaining formed the large and complex scoria cone.
- 3.5 The scoria cone had a large, breached crater opening to the northwest, and a smaller cone to the south. Lava flows formed out from the lower flanks of the cone, with some flowing south. Lava also flowed north from the breached crater in the vicinity of present-day Summit Drive and into the Meola Valley near Chamberlain Park Golf Course.
- 3.6 The scoria cone of Ōwairaka / Mt Albert was modified by Māori occupation through the development of extensive terraces, pits, ditches and banks as part of a defensive pa formation.
- 3.7 The upper 15m to 20m of scoria and volcanic material was quarried from the top of the maunga, with 1.5 million cubic metres removed between 1860 and 1959. The two upper cones of the maunga were further modified by installation of water reservoirs and sports fields with the quarried crests / cones. The quarrying, reservoir installation, roading and residential construction on the lower slopes have destroyed or damaged almost all pre-European, and Māori occupation features.
- 3.8 As explained earlier, parts of the maunga are identified as an ONF in the AUP:OP. The Plan explains that the feature is valued as a consequence of the following factors:
- (a) *the extent to which the landform, feature or geological site contributes to the understanding of the geology or evolution of the biota in the region, New Zealand or the earth, including type localities of rock formations, minerals and fossils;*
 - (b) *the extent to which the feature is an outstanding representative example of the diversity of Auckland's natural landforms and geological features;*

- (d) *the extent to which the landform, geological feature or site is part of a recognisable group of features;*
- (e) *the extent to which the landform, geological feature or site contributes to the value of the wider landscape;*
- (f) *the extent of community association with, or public appreciation of, the values of the feature or site;*
- (g) *the potential value of the feature or site for public education;*
- (h) *the potential value of the feature or site to provide additional understanding of the geological or biotic history;*
- (i) *the state of preservation of the feature or site;*

3.9 The context of the site is similar to that described in the Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited (dated February 2018) for the 24 Summit Drive Subdivision application which is reproduced below:

“Summit Drive originates from Mount Albert Road to the north and is orientated in a northeast / southwest direction. Summit Drive diverges from the loose grid structure observed within the suburb due to the climbing topography of the volcanic cone of Ōwairaka-Mount Albert.

Two streets intersect with Summit Drive, these are Sadgrove Terrace and Stilwell Road. Sadgrove Terrace is a cul-de-sac, which provides access to a number residential properties which back onto the site, as well as Ōwairaka-Mount Albert, located to the south. Stilwell Road is located directly opposite the site and is orientated perpendicular to Summit Drive. Stilwell Road decreases in elevation from Summit Drive, and terminates at Allendale Road to the north west of the site.

Mount Albert town centre, located approximately 500m northwest of the site, is the social centre of the suburb and is the nearest commercial centre to the site. The town centre’s compact form is focused around the intersection of New North Road and Mount Albert Road, signifying the importance of Mount Albert Road as an arterial route...

At approximately 135m in height, Ōwairaka-Mount Albert forms a prominent volcanic landmark and open space focal point to the suburb, as well as being an identifiable high point on the isthmus skyline from a range of more distant locations in all directions.

Since human settlement Ōwairaka-Mount Albert has undergone modification to its natural form. Earthworks including terracing remain visible from its time as a Māori Pa, and in the late 19th century and early 20th century, substantial quarrying of the volcanic cone for scoria took place. Earthworks facilitating a small road have also been undertaken which links Summit Drive to the summit of the volcanic feature.

Today, the volcanic craters have been levelled to incorporate a playing field, archery and water reservoir. Much of the maunga remains grassed with trees occupying its flanks as well as a belt of vegetation bisecting the centre of the cone...

A number of neighbouring properties are located within the vicinity of the site accessed from Summit Road and Sadgrove Terrace...

[With respect to the immediate built form context of 24 Summit Drive], notwithstanding the age of the dwellings [in the immediate area], these buildings are consistent with the objective of the Special Character Overlay in their scale, form and materiality...

Lot sizes in the vicinity of the site vary, with long established properties fairing the largest, and more recent properties, resultant of subdivision being the smallest. These sizes range from approximately 639m² (7 Sadgrove Terrace), to 1690m² (26 Summit Drive). An amalgamation of mature trees and established gardens occupy these surrounding lots, although the treed interface with Ōwairaka-Mount Albert provides the defining vegetative feature.

An established vegetative framework exists along the rear of the lot [i.e 24 Summit Drive] at the interface to the Domain. This backdrop includes species such as Magnolia spp., Syzygium spp. Puka (Meryta sinclairii), Titoki (Alectryon excelsus), Kauri (Agathis australis), Tulip Tree (Liriodendron spp). Diospyros spp., and Taiwan Cherry (Prunus spp.), in addition to remnant ornamental planting such as Impatiens spp. The trees along this backdrop are considered to be an important landscape asset in terms of minimising further modification of the skyline (when viewed in the immediate vicinity), through anticipated development within the site [i.e.24 Summit Drive]. These trees also contribute to the unique characteristics of the green belt of mature trees which surround the Domain as it meets the residential land uses.”

Site

- 3.10 The site itself enjoys a broadly northern aspect with panoramic city and maunga views. The land slopes to the northeast, from a highpoint of approximately 89m asl at the southern corner (adjoining 24 Summit Drive), to approximately 80m asl at the northern corner (adjoining 16 Summit Drive and 1 Sadgrove Terrace - refer **Figure 2** below.
- 3.11 The northeastern boundary of the site adjoins the existing property at 24 Summit Drive (including Lot 1 and Lot 2, consented under Council reference BUN60361098), which is a vacant rear site. This property serves to separate the site from Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park (sometimes referred to as Mount Albert Domain).
- 3.12 To the northwest, are three developed residential lots, that front Summit Drive (i.e. 16, 18/18A and 20 Summit Drive). These properties contribute to the unique street frontage in the vicinity of the site, albeit with each contributing a different architectural character in so far as: 16 Summit Drive is well setback from the road and is finished in dark painted interlocking weatherboards; 18 Summit Drive comprises a more traditional weatherboard and tile character; and 20 Summit Drive forms a more modern version of the same.
- 3.13 Two period homes exist along the site's southwestern boundary, being: no. 28, fronting Summit Drive; and no. 26, a rear lot. These homes are typical of the character residential area, one of which is subject to additional demolition, removal and relocation rules under the Isthmus C2, Special Character Overlay. The accessways to these properties, 24 Summit Drive and the site, run parallel with each other and are set side-by-side. This means that the 'opening' to the site from Summit Drive is wider than is usual for a rear lot.
- 3.14 Also characteristic of the character properties in the area, is the generously proportioned garden associated with 26 and 28 Summit Drive which includes a extensive grassed areas, basalt retaining walls and ornamental plantings.
- 3.15 More generally, the site presents as a remnant undeveloped piece of land, within the established residential suburb.
- 3.16 With respect to vegetation features, rank grass dominates the site. Other vegetation features are limited to rough scrub vegetation (dominated by weed species) throughout the northern portion of the land and there are no noteworthy tree or shrub specimens evident on the site.
- 3.17 The Initia Report explains that the site was likely to have been formed into a fenced residential section around 1940 and treated as a garden lot. Their review identified a mound of basalt boulders on the site (covered in grass). It is also their view that the site is on a flank of scoria and ash that drapes the wider basalt lava flows and that if lava flows are present they are likely to be at a depth beyond 1.4m.
- 3.18 The Initia Report goes on to advise that in terms of the factors associated with the ONF in the AUP:OP:
- a) *The landform of the site does not display significant geological features, we assess that there is no contribution to understanding of geology, New Zealand or the earth, including no presence of rock formations, minerals or fossils. The biota appears modified as garden and grass.*
 - c) *We consider that the site does not display any features as an outstanding representative of Auckland's natural landforms and geology.*
 - d) *The landform is a typical flank slope of one of Auckland's Volcanoes. It is very generic in the ash/gravel soil with no rock exposures, and is unremarkable in comparison to hundreds/thousands (including distal flank slopes) of similar residential sections in Auckland*
 - e) *The landform offers no geological contribution to the value of the wider landscape. It shows no distinctive geological difference from surrounding and neighbouring residential lots.*
 - f) *There is currently no public access to the site, and it is bordered by residential subdivided lots. We therefore assume low to no public appreciation or value.*
 - g) *We assess there is no potential value of the site for public education (there are no distinctive geological features).h) We assess there is no potential value of the site for understanding of geological history beyond what is interpreted and presented in this memo letter (there are no distinctive geological features, we assume the biota is highly modified).*
 - i) *The site appears highly modified and there are no features to preserve.*
- 3.19 The Initia Report concludes that from a geological and geomorphological perspective, the site does not display any geologically outstanding features of value.



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22 and 22A Summit Drive, Mount Albert
Figure 2: Contours



Scale @ A3
= 1:1,000

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Key landscape values associated with the site and local area

- 3.20 Drawing from this description, the key landscape values associated with the local area and informing the landscape setting of the site can be summarised as follows:
- a) The **high to very high biophysical values** associated with the maunga landform, as an example of a scoria cone with lava flows spreading in three directions from the volcano to cover some 3.3km³.
 - b) The **high perceptual values** of the area deriving from: the role of the maunga as a highly legible natural landmark within the cityscape; and the special character of the urban fabric in the vicinity of the site which includes a mix of heritage and more modern, typically high-quality homes, set within a reasonably cohesive leafy setting.
 - c) The **high to very high associative values** connected to the maunga as a place of special importance to mana whenua and iwi.

4.0 Visual Effects

Representative Viewpoints

- 4.1 In terms of 'representative' public views, the key locations to enable an understanding of potential adverse visual amenity effects are:
- a) Viewpoint 1: Corner of Summit Drive and Stilwell Road.
 - b) Viewpoint 2: Corner of Summit Drive and Mount Albert Road.
 - c) Viewpoint 3: Corner of Saint Lukes Road and New North Road.
- 4.2 In addition to these representative views, the Landscape Report also provides comment with respect to visual amenity effects in relation to:
- i. residential properties adjacent the site;
 - ii. views from track network within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park
 - iii. views from Maungawhau, across to Ōwairaka; and
 - iv. views from Nikau Street near the new Maungawhau Rail Station.

Visual Simulations

- 4.3 Visual simulations have been prepared for the three representative public views described in paragraph 4 above – see **Appendix D**. Appendix D also includes a Viewpoint Location Plan and Methodology Statement. While the methodology used to prepare the simulations is not strictly in accordance with the NZILA Guidelines, it is considered to be fit for purpose for the application, noting that visual simulations are a tool to assist an understanding of visual effects, but should not replace field survey (see TTatM 6.51-6.53).

Viewpoint 1: Corner of Summit Drive and Stilwell Road



Photograph 1: Existing View



Photograph 2: Proposed View

- 4.4 Refer **Appendix D** for larger scale imagery and viewpoint location plan.
- 4.5 This vantage point corresponds to the close-range view available from the street frontage of the site. As explained earlier, the site forms a rear lot accessed via a panhandle driveway from Summit Drive. This means that only the southern margin of the site is visible from the street.
- 4.6 The driveway and retaining wall along the southern edge of the site, along with the rank grass throughout the southern part of the site are seen, backdropped by the mature vegetation within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park (or Mount Albert Domain), that is adjacent 24 Summit Drive.
- 4.7 The substantial character homes and gardens of 28 Summit Drive, and, to a lesser degree, 26 Summit Drive are seen uphill and to the right of view. Downhill, and to the left of view are the more recent and modestly proportioned dwellings of 20 and 18 Summit Drive. The arrangement of the driveways to 20, 22, 22A, 24, 26 and 28 Summit Drive is such that they are set side by side in this outlook, forming an obvious 'gap' in the patterning of houses fronting the street, and enabling views through from the street to the mature vegetation within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park (or Mount Albert Domain), that is adjacent 24 Summit Drive. This serves to reinforce the proximity of the viewer (and the street more generally) to the maunga.

- 4.8 From this location, the southern end of the western elevation of the dwelling proposed at 22 Summit Drive will be seen, backdropped by the mature vegetation within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park.
- 4.9 The visually recessive and earthy tones of the exterior building finishes combined with the varied and interesting articulation of the elevational treatments will ensure that the dwelling does not form a dominant element.
- 4.10 The careful use of high-quality materials such as cedar and brick respond positively to the materiality of houses in the local area and the scale and height of the dwellings will fit well with the local residential fabric as viewed from the street. The rear lot character of the site combined with the appealing and visually recessive architectural design means that the development will maintain the continuity and coherence of the special character values of the area and the streetscape qualities and cohesiveness. The proposed layout and site conditions (i.e. rear lot) will also avoid an impression of carparking or garaging dominating the streetscape.

- 4.11 The proposed hedge and climber planting on either side of the driveway, together with the proposed tree and shrub planting around the dwelling at 22 Summit Drive will settle the building into its leafy residential setting. a reasonably cohesive leafy setting.
- 4.12 Overall, the development will read as a high quality and sympathetic addition to the local residential neighbourhood that maintains a strong visual connection from the street to the mature vegetated backdrop associated with the maunga. This outcome is considered to be of importance in maintaining the setting of the special character area and the relationship of built form to open space and landscape context associated with the area.
- 4.13 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **low** (less than minor) reducing to **very low** (less than minor) as the proposed plantings establish and mature (approximately 5 years).

Viewpoint 2: Corner of Summit Drive and Mount Albert Road



Photograph 3: Existing View



Photograph 4: Proposed View

- 4.14 Refer **Appendix D** for larger scale imagery and viewpoint location plan.
- 4.15 From this viewpoint location (approximately 225m from the site), a very limited sliver of the site is visible. This corresponds to the southeastern and highest part of the site. The visible area reads as part of a small pocket (or 'wedge') of grassland, backdropped by the character properties of 26 and 40 Summit Drive and the mature tree plantings throughout the northwestern flanks of the maunga. The majority of the grassed area seen in this view corresponds to the undeveloped land at 24 Summit Drive (i.e the neighbouring site to the east). The mid and foreground of view is dominated by the established suburban residential patterning of Mt Albert, characterised by a mix of single and two storey dwellings, set within a leafy garden suburb type landscape context.
- 4.16 A relatively limited proportion of the upper parts of the proposed dwellings at 22 and 22A will be seen in this view, backdropped by the character properties at 26 and 28 Summit Drive. The established suburban residential patterning in the mid and foreground of view serves to screen views to the mid and lower portion of proposed dwellings.
- 4.17 The proposed tree and shrub plantings along the eastern side of 22 Summit Drive will also be glimpsed, serving to 'contain' the eastern side of the dwelling.
- 4.18 The limited extent of the proposed buildings that will be visible, coupled with the visually recessive appearance of the exterior materials, their careful articulation of the elevations and the visually complex setting means that the proposal will not form a prominent or dominant visual element.
- 4.19 The character homes that sit above the proposed development reinforce the positioning of the site below (or within) the perceived edge between the undeveloped maunga and established residential neighbourhood.
- 4.20 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor) reducing further, as the proposed plantings establish and mature (approximately 5 years).

Viewpoint 3: Corner of Saint Lukes Road and New North Road



Photograph 5: Existing View



Photograph 6: Proposed View

- 4.21 This vantage point corresponds to a large traffic intersection where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle users are likely to stop, allowing views to the maunga.
- 4.22 From this vantage point, some 1.4km from the site, 22 and 22A Summit Drive are barely discernible due to the screening influence of intervening buildings and mature vegetation and the diminishing influence of distance. While it is not usual to rely on off-site vegetation in managing visual effects, it is evident that at least some of the intervening mature trees are likely to be protected under the AUP:OP as illustrated by the mapping of the Notable Trees Overlay in **Figure 3** below.
- 4.23 From this orientation, the open grassed character of 24 Summit Drive together with the visible portion of the site reads as part of the established 'apron' of more generously proportioned character properties extending around the elevated flanks of the maunga (i.e. 26 and 40 Summit Drive).
- 4.24 A very limited proportion of the upper parts of the proposed dwellings at 22 and 22A will be seen in this view, backdropped by the character properties at 26 and 40 Summit Drive. The established suburban residential patterning in the mid and foreground of view (including mature trees), serves to screen views to the mid and lower portion of proposed dwellings.
- 4.25 As for viewpoint 2, the proposed tree and shrub plantings along the eastern side of 22 Summit Drive will also be glimpsed, serving to 'contain' the eastern side of the dwelling.
- 4.26 The diminishing influence of distance along with the limited extent of the proposed buildings that will be visible, the visually recessive appearance of the exterior materials, their careful articulation of the elevations and the visually complex setting means that the proposal will not form a prominent or dominant visual element in this outlook.
- 4.27 The character homes that sit above the proposed development reinforce the positioning of the site below (or within) the perceived edge between the undeveloped maunga and established residential neighbourhood.
- 4.28 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor) reducing further as the proposed plantings establish and mature (approximately 5 years).



Figure 3: Notable Trees Overlay

Views from residential properties adjacent the site

- 4.29 In considering visual effects for private residential properties, it is important to note that private views are not protected per se under the RMA. However, it is fair to consider the effects on visual amenity enjoyed from a neighbouring property. This typically involves consideration of whether a development will appear as a dominant element for the neighbour or result in overlooking or compromise the impression of privacy.
- 4.30 Further, the subdivision of the site into two residential lots, sets a reasonable expectation for two new residential buildings to be constructed on the land, subject to 'alignment' with the various AUP:OP provisions relevant to the site.
- 4.31 It should be noted that the assessor has not visited the neighbouring residential properties. The following comments are based on field survey from the site and street network, along with review of AC Geomaps aerial mapping with contours.

1 and 3A Sadgrove Terrace

- 4.32 With respect to views from the neighbouring properties to the north of the site (1 and 3A Sadgrove Terrace), it would appear that at least some of the indoor (and to a lesser degree, outdoor) living is likely to be oriented to the north away from the site, to optimise northern sun and the expansive cityscape views.
- 4.33 That said, both of these properties have outdoor living areas (including pools) to the rear of their land in proximity to the northern site boundary.
- 4.34 The compliance of the proposal with the 3m yard setback standard and very minor infringement with respect to the 2.5m plus 45° HIRB control along this boundary, result in a sympathetic interface between the existing dwellings and the proposed development.

4.35 Further, referencing AC Geomaps contours, the outdoor living areas on the neighbouring properties would appear to be set at least two metres below the proposed dwelling at 22A Summit Drive. This elevational difference means that the first floor living of the proposed dwelling at 22A, will look out and over the neighbouring properties, rather than directly into them. Further, the arrangement of the first-floor outdoor living towards the northwestern end of the proposed building means that it is not directly adjacent the pool at 3A Sadgrove Terrace which is reasonably close to the common boundary.

4.36 The proposed landscape treatment which includes evergreen tree and shrub species, will serve to filter or screen views from 1 and 3A Sadgrove Terrace to the ground floor of 22A Summit Drive and filter views to the first floor of 22A Summit Drive. Where visible, the proposed dwelling will read as a high-quality residential dwelling.

4.37 Collectively, these various characteristics will ensure that adverse visual amenity effects (including potential privacy and overlooking effects) for these audiences rate as **very low** (less than minor), reducing further as the proposed planting establish and mature.

16, 18 / 18A and 20 Summit Drive

4.38 All of these properties would appear to be primarily oriented broadly northwards to optimise the northern aspect and (potential) cityscape views. However, it is expected that each of these neighbouring properties have at least some degree of indoor and / or outdoor living oriented towards the site, suggesting the potential for the proposed development to influence their visual amenity.

4.39 The compliance of the proposal with the applicable 3m yard setback standard and 2.5m plus 45° HIRB standard along the western side of the site result in a sympathetic interface between the existing dwellings and the proposed development.

4.40 The proposed landscape treatment which includes tree, hedge and shrub plantings, will serve to filter views from 16, 18 / 18A and 20 Summit Drive to the proposed dwellings at 22 and 22A Summit Drive. As for 1 and 3A Sadgrove Terrace, where visible, the proposed dwellings will read as high-quality residential dwellings.

4.41 Collectively, these various characteristics will ensure that adverse visual amenity effects (including potential privacy and overlooking effects) for these audiences rate as **very low** (less than minor), reducing further as the proposed planting establish and mature.

26 Summit Drive

4.42 Although not directly adjacent the site, the two-storey dwelling at 26 Summit Drive has broadly northern unobstructed panoramic cityscape views out over the site.

4.43 Referencing AC Geomaps contour data and the architectural plans prepared by 10 x 10, the existing dwelling at 26 Summit Drive is set well above the site with habitable floor levels having clear and unobstructed views over the proposed roof forms at both 22 and 22A Summit Drive. Importantly, neither the proposed buildings (or landscape treatment for that matter) will disrupt the panoramic cityscape views enjoyed by 26 Summit Drive.

4.44 The visually recessive appearance of the proposed roof materials (flaxpod / charcoal coloursteel), positioning of the development within the established urban pattern and lower elevation of the site relative

to the viewer means that the proposed development will not form a prominent or dominant element that detracts from the visual amenity enjoyed from 26 Summit Drive.

4.45 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects (including potential privacy and overlooking effects) for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor).

Views from track network within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park

4.46 The screening influence of mature vegetation within Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park is such that the site is not visible from the existing track network. It is possible that over time, this vegetation may die or be removed as part of the ongoing restoration and management of the maunga. In turn, it is possible that this may open glimpses or views out over the proposed development in the future.

4.47 Were this to occur, the visually recessive appearance of the proposed roof materials (flaxpod / charcoal coloursteel), positioning of the development within the established urban pattern (noting the vacant property of 24 Summit Drive with two consented lots sits between the site and park edge and serves to enclose the site on its eastern side), and lower elevation of the site relative to a viewer in Ōwairaka – Teahi – Ka – A – Rakataura - Mount Albert Park means that the development will not form a prominent or dominant element that detracts from the visual amenity enjoyed in the park.

4.48 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor).

Views from Maungawhau (Mount Eden)

4.49 Relying on a desktop review of the Auckland Volcanic Field along with knowledge of this part of the Isthmus, the potential visibility of the site from other maunga is limited to Maungawhau (Mount Eden). At a distance of around 4km from Maungawhau, the site is positioned within the complex and highly legible patterning of urban development wrapping around the lower and mid flanks on the northern and eastern sides of Ōwairaka (Mount Albert).

4.50 At this distance, and in light of the proposed scale of the buildings and their visually recessive appearance, the proposed development would be indiscernible from locations on Maungawhau (Mount Eden).

4.51 That said (and tested via the analysis of zoomed in photographs), from this orientation and elevation, the proposed dwellings sit below the existing residential dwellings to the south of the site and will not protrude above the established urban edge fringing the maunga. Importantly, the impression of the upper parts of the maunga as an undeveloped area with a mix of mature indigenous and exotic trees will remain intact and continue to read as a highly legible and expressive natural landscape landmark within the cityscape.

4.52 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor).

Views from Nikau Street near Maungawhau Rail Station

- 4.53 This vantage point is at a similar distance to the Maungawhau viewing audience (discussed above), albeit at a lower elevation, suggesting the potential for development to potentially 'breach' the established urban edge flanking Ōwairaka (Mount Albert).
- 4.54 As discussed for the view from Maungawhau, at this distance and in light of the proposed scale of the buildings and their visually recessive appearance, the proposed development would be indiscernible.
- 4.55 Again, it is also interesting to note that the proposed dwellings sit below the existing residential dwellings to the south of the site and will not protrude above the established urban edge fringing the maunga. Importantly, the impression of the upper parts of the maunga as an undeveloped area with a mix of mature indigenous and exotic trees will remain intact and continue to read as a highly legible and expressive natural landscape landmark within the cityscape.
- 4.56 On balancing these considerations, adverse visual amenity effects for this audience are rated as **very low** (less than minor).

5.0 Landscape Effects

- 5.1 With respect to effects on physical landscape values, the limited extent of excavation proposed as part of the application serves to minimise effects on the landform attributes and values of the maunga. This is borne out in the Geological Assessment by Initia Geotechnical Specialists, which advises that the site is underlain by fairly generic ash and scoria deposits with the ash deposits showing no structure or unique layering. The approximate RL and thickness of ava flows in the area are inferred (from nearby borehole investigations) to be at depth and unlikely to be encountered or disturbed by the proposed development.
- 5.2 The absence of noteworthy vegetation (or hydrological) features on the site is such that effects in relation to these aspects of physical values are unremarkable.
- 5.3 The above discussion of adverse visual amenity effects assists with an understanding of the effects of the development on perceptual landscape values. Importantly, the proposal will not detract from, or disturb, the legibility and identity of the maunga as a natural landmark within the cityscape. Importantly, the visual effects analysis reveals that the proposal will not form a dominant visual element nor 'breach' the perceived urban edge around the mid flanks of the maunga. The high-quality architectural design and landscape treatment will ensure that the development sits comfortably into the special character neighbourhood.
- 5.4 The discussion of adverse visual amenity effects also reveals that the development will not detract from visual connections between the maunga, or the visual amenity enjoyed on the maunga. The use of locally appropriate eco-sourced native species and locally sourced rocks (from the site) in the landscape proposals, complements and builds on the endemic attributes and values associated with the maunga.
- 5.5 It is noted that the origin points of all of the Maunga Viewshafts that are potentially relevant to the site are located at a considerable distance from the maunga (i.e. St Jude Street intersection origin point: 1.7km; Morningside Drive origin point: 1.6km; North Western Motorway origin point: 6.6km). The visual effects analysis demonstrates that at these sorts of distances, the proposed development (if visible), will be barely discernible at worst. For these reasons it is concluded that the proposal will not undermine the visual integrity of the maunga in the viewshaft.
- 5.6 With respect to effects in relation to associative values, the assessor is advised that discussions have commenced with mana whenua and are expected to be progressed as the application makes its way through the planning process.
- 5.7 Collectively (and relying on the information available to date), the very careful approach of minimising earthworks and building height and adopting sympathetic architectural and landscape design strategies will ensure that adverse landscape effects rate as **very low** (less than minor)

6.0 Commentary against relevant Statutory Context

- 6.1 With respect to the **ONF** that applies to the site, the Initia Geological Assessment establishes that the development will not undermine the factors that underpin the ONF that applies to the site and parts of the local area (maunga). This analysis in combination with the very limited extent of earthworks proposed as part of the development gives confidence that the proposed development will protect the physical integrity of the ONF (AUP:OP B4.2.1(3) and D10.3 (1)(a) & (c)).
- 6.2 The preceding discussion of visual amenity effects demonstrates that the development will protect the visual integrity of the ONF (AUP:OP B4.2.1(3) and D10.3 (1) (b)).
- 6.3 The approach of using locally appropriate eco-sourced native species and locally sourced rocks (from the site) in the proposed landscape treatment, aligns with the intentions of enhancing the values of the ONF (AUP:OP B4.2.1(8) and D10.3(7)).
- 6.4 Overall, the analysis of landscape effects (including visual amenity effects) establishes that the proposal will ensure that the ONF is protected from inappropriate development.
- 6.5 In terms of the Maunga Viewshaft that applies to the site, the preceding visual and landscape effects analysis demonstrates that the proposal will: maintain the contribution that the maunga makes to the landscape of Auckland and protect the visual connection between the maunga (D14.3.(2)); will have no adverse effect on the visual integrity of the maunga as viewed from the origin point (D14.3.(4)(a)) or, more generally (D14.8.2(1)(a)).
- 6.6 With respect to the **Special Character Overlay** in the vicinity of the site, the discussion of visual amenity effects (particularly in relation to Viewpoints 1 and 3), demonstrates that the development will: maintain the continuity and coherence of the identified special character values of the areas (AUP:OP D18.3(2)(a)); maintain the streetscape qualities and cohesiveness AUP:OP D18.3(2)(b)); respond positively to the design, scale, height, setback and massing of existing development (AUP:OP D18.3(2)(c)); maintain the relationship of built form to open space and landscape context (AUP:OP D18.3(2)(d)); maintain the setting of the special character area such as mature trees and landform (AUP:OP D18.3(2)(e)); use materials that are compatible with the area (AUP:OP D18.3(2)(h)); manage the design and location of car parking etc to maintain and enhance streetscape character (AUP:OP D18.3(6)).

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 In conclusion, this landscape assessment has considered the proposed development at 22 and 22A Summit Drive, Ōwairaka (Mount Albert), in relation to its physical, perceptual and associative landscape effects. The assessment confirms that the proposal has been carefully designed to respond to the unique characteristics of the site, including its location on the lower urban fringe of the maunga, its inclusion within an Outstanding Natural Feature overlay, its position within a Maunga Viewshaft and its location within a Special Character Area.
- 7.2 The proposed dwellings have been positioned and designed to minimise earthworks, respect the volcanic landform, and integrate sensitively with the surrounding built environment. The use of locally appropriate native planting and visually recessive materials further supports the integration of the development into its landscape setting.
- 7.3 The visual simulations and viewpoint analysis demonstrate that the proposal will not result in significant adverse visual effects, and the development will maintain the visual integrity of the maunga and surrounding neighbourhood. The proposal aligns with relevant statutory provisions, including those relating to Outstanding Natural Features, Maunga Viewshafts and Special Character Areas.
- 7.4 Overall, the proposed development represents a high-quality and contextually appropriate response to the site and is considered to be appropriate from a landscape perspective with adverse effects rating as, at worst, **low** (less than minor), reducing to **very low** (less than minor) in the medium term once plantings have established.

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Appendix A: Pre Application Meeting Minutes

Appendix B: Landscape Plans

Appendix C: Landscape Management Plan

Appendix D: Photomontages