

LA4

Golding Road Private Plan Change – Pukekohe
Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects



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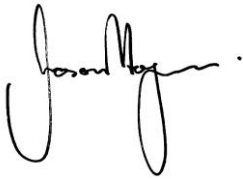
Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects Quality Assurance Statement

Prepared by:



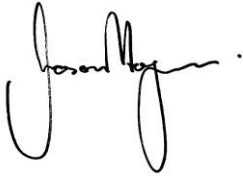
Director

Reviewed by:



Director

Approved for Issue by:



Director

Status: **Final**

Date: 2 November 2021

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Golding Road Private Plan Change – Pukekohe

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

1. Introduction

- 1.1 LA4 Landscape Architects have been requested by Golding Meadow Developments Limited ('**GMD**') and Auckland Trotting Club ('**ATC**') to undertake an Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects ('**ALVE**') of the Private Plan Change ('**PPC**') for the proposed urbanisation of 82.66 hectares of land bounded by Golding Road, Yates Road, Station Road and Royal Doulton Drive, Pukekohe ('the **Site**').
- 1.2 This assessment investigates the existing character of the Site and surrounding environment, identifies the key landscape and visual features of the Site and describes the visual and landscape implications of the PPC on the Site and surrounding area.
- 1.3 Investigations of the Site and surrounding environment were undertaken in July 2020.

2. Project Overview

- 2.1 The Site is located within the Auckland Unitary Plan ('**AUP**') Future Urban Zone ('**FUZ**') with the exception of the Franklin Trotting Club which is zoned Special Purpose (Major Recreation Facility) ('**SPMRF**').
- 2.2 The Site is also identified within the Paerata – Pukekohe Structure Plan ('**PPSP**') as Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban zone (excluding the Franklin Trotting Club).
- 2.3 The proposal seeks a Private Plan Change to rezone the land as a mixture of:
 - Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('**MHU**') – 62.356ha
 - Business – Light Industry Zone ('**LI**') - 19.7792ha
 - Business – Neighbourhood Centre Zone ('**NC**') - 0.3365ha

The proposed Zoning Plan is included in **Appendix 1**.

- 2.4 The PPC proposes to use the existing provisions associated with the MHU, LI and NC zones under the AUP. These have been tested and proved as appropriate as part of the establishment of the AUP. This PPC application is for rezoning only and any further matters can and will be dealt with as part of future resource consent processes for the respective sites.
- 2.5 A Precinct Plan has been developed to provide certainty and a way forward for future development enabled by the PPC. The Precinct Plan is illustrated in **Appendix 2**. An indicative Concept Plan has also been prepared and is a potential option for development and testing of the Precinct Plan. It is illustrative only and has been designed in accordance with established urban design principles. Indicatively it would ensure a high level of visual amenity, comprehensively planted with street trees and riparian plantings along the stream networks to enhance its overall amenity and assist in its integration with the surrounding semi-rural and urban area over time. The proposal is illustrated in the Birch Surveyors Concept Plan included in **Appendix 3**.
- 2.6 Generally north-south oriented blocks are proposed where practicable to provide opportunities for lots that can accommodate active road frontages, private and sunny outdoor living space, and means of vehicular access that are not in conflict with one another. East-west links through the Site are proposed through park edge roads and the green network.

- 2.7 Several reserves are proposed and connected through a green-network based on the enhanced stream network and stormwater management areas which would enhance the visual amenity, landscape and natural character values of the Site. An additional green link runs along the watercourse along the southeastern edge of the Site which would create a buffer from the properties to the southeast and would mitigate any negative impacts of the PPC while creating a softer transition between the built form and more open countryside to the east (albeit zoned FUZ).

3. The Subject Site and Surrounding Environment

- 3.1 The Site comprises 82.66ha of land bounded by Station Road to the west, part of Yates Road to the south, a watercourse to the southeast, Golding Road to the east and Royal Doulton Drive to the north.

- 3.2 Refer to:

- *The Site and Viewpoint Location Map*
- *The Site and Landscape Context*

Landform and Catchment

- 3.3 The topography of the Site is predominantly flat, ranging from approximately RL 57m along the southeastern watercourse rising to approximately RL 60m along the northern boundary. The northeastern corner of the Site rises up towards Royal Doulton Drive to a high point of RL 65m at the intersection of Golding Road.

Land use

- 3.4 The Site has multiple access points due to the number of landholdings. The primary vehicle access is off Golding Road accessing the properties at 152-162 via a sealed driveway. The majority of the land is used for activities associated with the Franklin Park Training Centre, being the hub for Northern Harness Racing ('NHR'). Activities associated with the 39ha NHR complex include horse grazing, equestrian training, stabling and horse barns. Facilities include race training tracks, arenas, races, paddocks and a horse and hound retail supplier. Laneways run from the racetrack to the privately owned properties which house a number of the trainers.
- 3.5 There are several lifestyle properties in the southern and eastern parts of the Site with grazed paddocks accessed off Golding Road and Yates Road. An olive grove, 'Olivale Grove', is located off Royal Doulton Drive with approximately 2ha of established olives growing on the sloping land.
- 3.6 Boundaries are demarcated with predominantly timber post and rail and post and wire fences. Stable structures define the boundary along the Station Road frontage to the Training Centre.

Streams, watercourses and wetlands

- 3.7 The Tutaenui Stream corridor enters into the Site adjacent to the main access drive from Golding Road, running parallel to it before extending in a southwesterly direction and exiting under Yates Road. A small watercourse/drain extends part way through the Site from the olive grove.
- 3.8 A watercourse originates from Golding Road in the northeast and extends along the southeastern boundary of the property before exiting beneath Yates Road and largely drying out. The horse paddocks drain towards the stream and recharge it. An artificial farm pond is located in the southwestern part of the Site.



Photograph 1: Looking south across Royal Doulton Drive towards the Site



Photograph 2: Looking towards the southeastern part of the Site



Photograph 3: The western part of the Site



Photograph 4: The central part of the Site

Vegetation

- 3.9 The majority of the Site is grazed pastoral land comprising conventional pasture. Individual large trees, tree groupings and shelterbelts are spread throughout the Site. Tree species include evergreen magnolia, totara (*Podocarpus totara*), olive (*Olea spp.*), oak (*Quercus spp.*), Pride of India (*Melia azadarach*), eucalyptus (*Eucayptus spp.*) and other exotic species. Amenity tree and shrub species are associated with the private dwellings and facility buildings.
- 3.10 A remnant kahikatea stand (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) is located beside the stream along the southern boundary adjacent to Yates Road with cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*), karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigatus*), titoki (*Alectryon excelsus*) with tree fern (*Cyathea medullaris*) and indigenous seedlings in the sub-canopy. Several other remnant stands are located on the southern side of Yates Road, adjacent to the Site.
- 3.11 Shelterbelts and lower hedgerows are scattered throughout the Site defining some of the properties. Typical species include poplar (*Populus spp.*), willow (*Salix spp.*), Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) and pine.

The surrounding landscape context

- 3.12 The immediately surrounding properties to the north, east and south are characterised by rural lifestyle activities. The property to the southeast is similarly used for equestrian activities with a formed racetrack, stables and grazed horse paddocks. Landholdings on the eastern side of Golding Road are largely rural lifestyle and rural production with cropping activities. Pukekohe Christian School is located on the southern side of Yates Road.
- 3.13 The North Island Main Trunk ('NIMT') Railway runs parallel to Station Road to the west of the Site. Pukekohe Park Raceway is located on the western side of Station Road, across from the Site. This facility hosts horse training, driver training, motor sport events, cycling and various events and functions. Immediately to the northwest of the raceway is the Pukekohe Mega Centre characterised by a number of large format retailers including Mitre 10 Mega, Harvey Norman, Briscoes, Noel Leeming and a number of other retailers.

The wider landscape context

- 3.14 The wider landscape context comprises highly variable and diverse landscapes. Land to the east and southeast is typically flat to gently rolling landforms mostly in rural lifestyle land use, uses associated with horse racing, horticultural and cropping with rectilinear land management patterns emphasised through amenity and shelterbelt plantings. Dwellings are generally set back from the road and clustered with ancillary structures, sheds, barns and garages.
- 3.15 Land to the north rises up towards the Roosevile Tuff Rings and northeast towards the Pukekohe East Explosion Crater. Characterised by predominantly rural agricultural land but with localised development of rural residential and larger allotment rural lifestyle activities. Rural lifestyle activities extend up towards Pukekohe East Road beyond which is the urban area of Anselmi Ridge.
- 3.16 The Buckland township characterises the surrounding area to the south. Cropping activities prevail to the southwest of Pukekohe Park Raceway extending up towards Pukekohe Hill. Land to the northwest encompasses the Pukekohe industrial area and beyond to the urban area of Pukekohe.
- 3.17 The landscape character in relation to the underlying landform of the wider area is strongly expressive of its geological origins. The southern volcanic field has created distinctive patterns of volcanic cones and tuffs with craters and intact or dissected rims.

These geological features are distinctive and legible encircling the Pukekohe urban area. Pukekohe Hill is the most prominent volcanic feature and forms the major landmark for Pukekohe.

Paerata – Pukekohe Structure Plan assessment

- 3.18 In 2017, Auckland Council engaged Opus Consultants to undertake a landscape and visual assessment of the Paerata-Pukekohe Structure Plan area which had been identified as being suitable for urbanisation in the Auckland Unitary Plan¹. This report was prepared to identify and provide an evaluation of existing landscape attributes and the likely effects of urbanisation on landscape character and visual amenity. It also identified ways in which the landscape can positively contribute to the area's future urbanisation. The main purpose was to recommend landscapes to be protected, opportunities to enhance landscape character and visual amenity and opportunities for new landscape interventions to help shape a quality urban environment.
- 3.19 The Site is located within Landscape Character Area 14 – Pukekohe Southeast, characterised by flat to gently rolling rural lifestyle. The character area was evaluated as having a low sensitivity to modification.

4. Evaluation of the Proposal

- 4.1 The key to assessing the landscape and visual effects of the PPC is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of development enabled by the PPC on them. In accordance with the Resource Management Act (1991) this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the proposal combined with existing urban development within Pukekohe.
- 4.2 The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the nature and degree of potential landscape effects and the appropriateness of the PPC and development opportunities. The assessment responds to matters related to landscape and visual amenity. It also considers the anticipated outcomes of the MHU and LI zones proposed (in relation to the AUP provisions) and their suitability in this setting.
- 4.3 The zoning sought under the PPC will enable development opportunities pertaining to the provisions associated with the anticipated AUP zoning. This PPC application is for rezoning and any further matters can and will be dealt with as part of future resource consent processes for the respective sites.

Natural Character Effects

- 4.4 Natural character relates to the degree of 'naturalness' of a landscape. It is primarily determined by the nature and extent of modification to a landscape and can be expressed in relation to natural processes, patterns and elements in the landscape.
- 4.5 Natural character relates to the degree of 'naturalness' or modification of a landscape. Assessments of natural character therefore broadly assess:
- i) Natural processes – the underlying formative processes that have shaped and given expression to the landscape (geological, volcanic, ecological, fluvial etc.);
 - ii) Natural elements – features within the landscape that are products of natural processes (landform, vegetation, waterbodies etc.);
 - iii) Natural patterns – the natural expression or distribution of un-manufactured elements and features within the landscape; and

¹ *Paerata – Pukekohe Structure Plan, Landscape and Visual Assessment, Opus International Consultants, August 2017*

iv) Development / land use – the presence or absence of development such as structures and buildings and the level of modification as a result of land use and management.

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

Natural Character Effects Analysis

4.7 The Site is not high in natural character values and has been extensively modified through past pastoral and equestrian activities. The area has undergone extensive agricultural activities and is highly modified by vegetation clearance, artificial farm drains, ponds, stables, horse training tracks, ancillary buildings, sheds and dwellings. The Site is a component of the wider modified Pukekohe urban and peripheral semi-rural environment with the Site located within an area zoned for future urban intensification within the AUP and PPSP.

4.8 A central green open space network is proposed based on the enhanced Tutaenui Stream corridor and stormwater management areas which would enhance the natural character values of the Site. Overall, the adverse effects of development enabled by the PPC on the natural character values of the Site and surrounding area would be low.

Landscape Effects

4.9 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.

4.10 '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.

4.11 Landscape character is derived from a combination of landscape components that make up the landscape of the site that distinguishes one area from another including²:

- i) The elements that make up the landscape including:
 - physical influences – geology, soils, landform, drainage and waterbodies;
 - land cover, including different types of vegetation and patterns and types of tree cover; and
 - the influence of human activity, including land use and management, the character of settlements and buildings, and pattern and type of enclosure.
- ii) The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape including its scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity or wilderness; and
- iii) The overall character of the landscape in the area including any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified, and the particular combinations of elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that make each distinctive, usually by identification as key characteristics of the landscape.

² Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, LI and IEMA, 2013

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

Landscape Effects Analysis

- 4.15 Based on the preceding description and analysis of the Site and surrounds it is clear that there are relatively low landscape values and sensitivity associated with the Site. The Site is a relatively degraded, highly modified working environment lacking any significant landscape features, has low natural character values (other than the Tutaenui Stream), and generally relatively low visual amenity due to the presence of the extensive equestrian activities within the Site. Therefore, the only negative outcomes in landscape terms would be the loss of the remaining rural character, which is anticipated by the relevant AUP planning strategies for the Site.
- 4.16 The key methods of mitigating for this loss are to retain and enhance where possible existing landscape features and create a quality urban development. Although the proposal would result in the loss of semi-rural characteristics there are number of positive landscape outcomes associated with the PPC.
- 4.17 There are a number of provisions within the I4XX. Pukekohe Golding Precinct to ensure a suitable level of landscape amenity would be achieved. While there would be a loss in landscape character, the key methods of mitigating for this loss are to retain and enhance where possible existing landscape features and create a quality urban development which is anticipated by the relevant AUP planning strategies for the site. Although development enabled by the PPC would result in the loss of semi-rural characteristics there are number of positive landscape outcomes associated with the PPC.
- 4.18 The Precinct includes a Significant Ecological Area ('**SEA**') of approximately 0.44ha associated with a group of kahikatea trees adjoining Yates Road which is to be protected and enhanced.
- 4.19 The objectives and policies require the ecological values of streams, wetlands, and the significant ecological area to be protected and enhanced. I4XX.3. Policy 8 requires subdivision and development to plant the riparian margins of streams and wetlands and to provide at source hydrological mitigation, attenuation and quality treatment to

prevent stream bank erosion and to enhance in-stream morphology, and stream and wetland water quality.

- 4.20 Standard I4XX.6.2 Riparian and Buffer Planting outlines the requirements including planting the riparian margins of any permanent or intermittent stream to a minimum width of 10m from the top of the stream bank. There is also a requirement to plant the riparian margins of any natural wetland to a depth of 10m from the wetlands fullest extent. The margin of the SEA must also be planted to a minimum depth of 5m measured from the edge of the canopy. All planting is to be eco-sourced native vegetation densely planted at 1m spacings.
- 4.21 The riparian plantings along the stream corridor and wetlands would enhance the overall amenity and assist in the PPC areas integration with the surrounding semi-rural and urban area over time.
- 4.22 Development enabled by the PPC would result in a change in landscape character, but would ensure a suitable level of amenity, albeit an urban, rather than a semi-rural character is achieved .

Visual Effects

- 4.23 The assessment of visual effects analyses the perceptual (visual) response that any of the identified changes to the landscape may evoke, including effects relating to views and visual amenity. Visual sensitivity is influenced by a number of factors including the visibility of a proposal, the nature and extent of the viewing audience, the visual qualities of the proposal, and the ability to integrate any changes within the landscape setting, where applicable.
- 4.24 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.
- 4.25 The methodology used in this assessment is designed to assess whether or not future development enabled by the PPC proposal would have more than minor adverse visual effects on the nature and quality of the surrounding environment.

The process of analysing such effects involves:

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

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 4.26 The visual catchment is the area from which noticeable visual effects of future development enabled by the proposal within the Site are likely to be evident to any significant degree. Station Road, Yates Road, Golding Road and Royal Doulton Drive surrounding peripheral areas of the Site, result in a number of open views into the Site, however existing vegetation patterns and landform variations currently provide a level of screening from many of the wider surrounding areas.
- 4.27 The relative openness of the Site, albeit compartmentalised in a number of locations by existing shelterbelts, boundary planting and individual specimen trees, means that it has a relatively high level of exposure, although the existing vegetation patterns

within the Site and surrounding area combine to limit the extent of visibility beyond the immediate area.

- 4.28 Consequently, Station Road, Yates Road, Golding Road and Royal Doulton Drive and properties accessed off these roads, define the main visual catchment. The adjoining properties to the north and southeast would also be exposed to open views across the Site. These properties are similarly zoned FUZ.
- 4.29 Views would be gained from some of the rural lifestyle properties accessed off Logan Road to the southeast (within the Waikato District). Elevated and more distant views would be gained from some of the residential properties on the slopes to the west extending up to Pukekohe Hill.
- 4.30 The viewing audience would therefore encompass the following groups:
- i) Road users on the surrounding roads including Station Road, Yates Road, Golding Road and Royal Doulton Drive
 - ii) Residents and visitors to the rural residential properties on the eastern side of Golding Road, opposite the Site, extending up to Logan Road
 - iii) Residents and visitors to the adjoining rural residential properties to the north, southeast and south accessed off Golding Road, Logan Road, Yates Road and Station Road
 - iv) Workers and visitors to Pukekohe Park Raceway
 - v) Passengers travelling in trains along the NIMT railway
 - vi) Distant viewers within the residential and rural lifestyle properties on the western elevated slopes extending up to Pukekohe Hill
 - vii) Distant viewers within the wider surrounding area.
- 4.31 Overall, the anticipated level of audience exposure would be large due to the location of the Site adjacent to the surrounding roads.

Visual Amenity Effects Analysis

- 4.32 The proposed future development of the Site enabled by the PPC raises a number of visual issues, including the potential effects on visual amenity to the following key areas:
- i) Adjoining properties
 - ii) Surrounding road network
 - iii) Wider surrounding area
 - iv) LIZ – MHU interface
- 4.33 The visual effects of development enabled by the PPC have been assessed from representative viewpoints within the visual catchment area that have potential for visual effects. Seven 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.
- 4.34 The assessment has been undertaken by reference the following viewpoints:

Viewpoint 1: Golding Road

Viewpoint 2: Golding Road | Logan Road

Viewpoint 3: Logan Road

Viewpoint 4: Yates Road

Viewpoint 5: Station Road
Viewpoint 6: Upper Queen Street
Viewpoint 7: Pukekohe Hill

*Refer to: The Site and Viewpoint Location Map
Viewpoint Photographs 1-7*

- 4.35 Photographs have been taken with a 35mm SLR camera with a fixed 50mm lens from the viewpoints and a detailed assessment and analysis of potential effects have been carried out using a Visual Effects Matrix, which ensures that each view and changes within each view are evaluated thoroughly and consistently.
- 4.36 The key factors contained in that matrix are given in detail in **Appendix 4**. It covers aspects such as the sensitivity of the view to change, the size of the viewing audience that would be affected, the legibility of the proposed development, how well the proposal integrates with its surroundings and whether or not the proposal intrudes into any existing views.
- 4.37 The total score given in the descriptions denote the overall visual effects rating. The following seven-point scale has been used to rate effects, based on the guidelines contained within the Tuia Pito Ora NZILA 'Aotearoa Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2021':

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

Very Low Effect

The proposal is barely discernible or there are very low changes to the existing character, key attributes, features or visual amenity of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen.

Low Effect

A low level of effect on the existing character, key attributes, features or visual amenity of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen.

Moderate-Low Effect

Minor change or loss of the existing character or distinctive features of a landscape and a small reduction in the perceived visual amenity of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen.

Moderate Effect

Partial change or loss of the existing character or distinctive features of a landscape and a small reduction in the perceived visual amenity of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen.

Moderate-High Effect

Noticeable change to the existing character or distinctive features of the landscape or reduction in the perceived amenity or the addition of new but uncharacteristic features and elements.

High Effect

Major modification or change to the existing character, distinctive features or quality of the landscape or a significant reduction in the perceived amenity of the outlook. The proposal causes high adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Very High Effect

Total loss of the existing character, distinctive features or quality of the landscape resulting in a complete change to the landscape or outlook. The proposal significantly affects and entirely changes the character of the surrounding area. The proposal causes very high adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

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

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

- i) **Quality of the view** – the relative quality and sensitivity of views into the Site, including landscape character and visual amenity values.
- ii) **Viewpoint | perceptual factors** – the type and size of population exposed to views into the Site, the viewing distance to the site, and other factors which indicate its sensitivity in terms of both viewing audience and the inherent exposure of the view towards the Site due to its physical character.
- iii) **Rural | urban amenity** – the impact of future development on the wider surrounding rural and urban amenity.
- iv) **Rural | urban form** – the degree to which future development would fit into the existing rural and urban context of the surrounding environs.
- v) **Visual intrusion | contrast** – the intrusion into or obstruction of views to landscape features in the locality and beyond and the impact upon key landscape elements and patterns.
- vi) **Mitigation potential** – the extent to which any potential adverse effects of the development could be mitigated through integration into its surrounds by specific measures.

Adjoining Properties

4.40 The adjoining properties to the Site would be most affected by future urban development enabled by the proposal. This would include the rural lifestyle properties to the north, southeast and south accessed off Golding Road, Logan Road, Yates Road and Station Road as well as the rural residential properties on the eastern side of Golding Road, opposite the Site, extending up towards Logan Road.

4.41 Views towards parts of the Site however would be moderated, filtered or partially screened by the existing vegetation patterns within the surrounding properties, orientation, intervening landform and proposed landscape initiatives. **Viewpoints 1, 3 and 4** are indicative of the potential views from the adjoining properties.

4.42 For the immediately adjoining properties, the existing outlook would change noticeably from a relatively open semi-rural pastoral scene characterised by equestrian activities, into a comprehensive urban view. Although this would constitute a distinctive change to the existing rural character and a loss of the existing spaciousness, it is not the type of change which is totally unexpected within the planning context of the area, and the quality nature of the future urban development would ensure that a suitable level of amenity is achieved.

4.43 Once the Site is developed, the existing views would be replaced with a mixture of urban development including, single house, medium density housing and light industrial activities with planted streetscapes, open spaces and the green network extending along the Tutaenui Stream corridor through the Site.

- 4.44 Development enabled by the proposal would not be entirely out of context and gradual in nature due to the future urban zoning of the site and surrounding area to the north, south and southeast. The green network along the Tutaenui Stream and southeastern watercourse, retention of the remnant kahikatea stand, in conjunction with the open space areas, neighbourhood park and street tree plantings would maintain a sense of spaciousness and assist in visually integrating the future development into the surrounding landscape.
- 4.45 From these close locations, the full effects of the change brought about by the proposed PPC would be gradual as the land is retired from equestrian use, modified and staged built development extends across the landform. It is anticipated that the full progression from semi-rural to urban would logically take a number of years, in line with similar urban development of greenfield sites . This would reduce the impact of the change to some degree, due to the incremental nature of the changes and a general conditioning of the audience over time as urban development progresses. Development would also be viewed as a natural extension to the Pukekohe and Paerata urbanisation occurring locally.
- 4.46 The green network extending along the stream corridors would assist in breaking up the expansiveness the urban development and filter views so that although the view would have changed from a semi-rural to an urban one, the full extent of the development would not be apparent. Development enabled by the PPC, however, would entirely change the landscape character and visual amenity currently experienced for the surrounding properties. Overall, the visual effects for the adjoining rural-residential properties would be moderate to high, albeit anticipated through the zoning of the Site for urban development.

Surrounding Road Network

- 4.47 For road users on the surrounding road network, in particular those who live locally, the development of the Site is likely to result in visual effects of some significance, particularly for Golding Road users accessing their properties. For general road users, the effects are likely to be of much less significance as the proposal would be seen as part of the pattern of land use change occurring locally within the surrounding Pukekohe and Paerata environs. **Viewpoints 2 - 5** are indicative of the potential views from the surrounding roads.
- 4.48 Although a large audience, the general road users are unlikely to be particularly sensitive to future development, as they would have fleeting views of only portions of the Site whilst moving through a landscape, which already exhibits diverse characteristics in close proximity to Pukekohe's urban and light industrial centre. The sensitivity and the effects of the proposal would also be reduced further by the fact that the development would be gradual and staged over a number of years. Travelling along Station Road, the proposed light industrial area would be viewed within the context of Pukekohe Park Raceway, the NIMT railway and the light industrial area to the north with the large format retail and light industrial activities.
- 4.49 Viewed from Golding Road, Logan Road and Yates Road, the green network along the stream corridors, street tree plantings and planting associated with the future residential properties would assist in integrating the built development into the landscape and provide a vegetated framework of appropriate form and scale.
- 4.50 Overall, the visual effects from the surrounding road network would be low-moderate.

Wider Surrounding Area

- 4.51 Distant views would be gained from the residential and rural lifestyle properties on the western elevated slopes extending up to Pukekohe Hill and from distant locations

within the wider surrounding area. **Viewpoints 6 and 7** are indicative of the potential views from the slopes extending up to Pukekohe Hill to the southwest.

- 4.52 As illustrated in the viewpoint photographs, from elevated locations within the wider area, views of development enabled by the PPC would be highly variable due to distance, orientation of the view, diversity of elements within the view and screening elements (buildings, landform, shelterbelts, prevailing vegetation patterns). While a prominent level of built form would be introduced into the landscape, it would be viewed in the context of the surrounding diverse activities within Pukekohe, and in particular Pukekohe Park Raceway in the foreground and the established light industrial zone to the north.
- 4.53 While development enabled by the proposal would be highly visible from parts of the wider surrounding area, I consider that the visual effects would be low and entirely acceptable within the context of the existing and planned future urban environment.

LIZ – MHU Interface

- 4.54 In regard to the interface between the proposed Business: Light Industry zone and the Residential: Mixed Housing Urban, I consider that potential adverse landscape and visual effects have been addressed in the AUP. The AUP contains many residential areas adjacent to a Light Industrial zone without creating the additional need for new methods to manage effects at the interface. The LI zone provisions in Chapter H17 already include provision to manage this interface and these were deemed to be sufficient by the AUP Independent Hearing Panel.
- 4.55 Of relevance are that adverse effects on amenity values and the natural environment, both within the zone and on adjacent areas, are managed (Objective H17.2(3) and that development avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on the amenity of adjacent public open spaces and residential zones (Objective H17.2(4). In addition, Policy H17.3 (4) requires development adjacent to open space zones, residential zones and special purpose zones to manage adverse amenity effects on those zones.

Construction Effects

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

Acoustic Wall Effects

- 4.58 The Precinct requires the construction of a 7m high acoustic barrier to attenuate noise from the Special Purpose – Major Recreation Facility Zone (Pukekohe Park) prior to or concurrently with the residential subdivision of land between the Business – Light Industry Zone and the 55dB LAeq noise contour illustrated on the Precinct Plan.
- 4.59 The acoustic barrier is to be located mid-block and runs approximately north-south as illustrated below.
- 4.60 The wall would be located within the Light Industrial zoned land where large format warehouse type buildings are anticipated. Within this context the wall will not appear

incongruous. Regardless of the duration of the wall, its visual amenity would not be dissimilar to a Light Industry zone permitted activity outcome.

- 4.61 The wall is to be set back from the road and the combination of the setback, the wide expanse of the road reserve and openness of the Pukekohe Park Raceway would mitigate any potential adverse visual or dominance effects.



Figure 1: The mid-block' wall

5. Statutory Context

- 5.1 The Site is identified within the Pukekohe – Paerata Structure Plan ('**PPSP**') with a Mixed Housing Suburban zone across the FUZ with the ATC land retained as Special Purpose – Major Recreation Facility.

- 5.2 As outlined previously the PPC seeks to rezone the land as a mixture of:

- Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone ('**MHU**') – 62.356ha
- Business – Light Industry Zone ('**LI**') - 19.7792ha
- Business – Neighbourhood Centre Zone ('**NC**') - 0.3365ha

as illustrated in Appendix 1.

- 5.3 The following statutory documents are of particular relevance to this assessment:

- Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)
- Pukekohe – Paerata Structure Plan

Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part)

- 5.4 The main relevant sections of the AUP relating to the landscape and visual effects are:

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

B2.2. Urban growth and form

B2.2.1. Objectives

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

B2.3. A quality built environment

B2.3.1. Objectives

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

B2.3.2. Policies

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

Comment:

- 5.5 Development within the PPC area will achieve a comprehensive residential, light industry and neighbourhood centre environment with a centralised green network which would have high levels of amenity and allow for a range of housing densities

and typologies and a neighbourhood centre. Potential adverse effects of urban and business activities on the environment would be avoided, remedied or mitigated in accordance with the operative AUP provisions.

- 5.6 Development enabled by the PPC would ensure a high quality environment. The Precinct Plan responds to the intrinsic qualities and physical characteristics of the Site through the enhancement of the Tutaenui Stream corridor and the watercourse along the southeastern boundary for stream protection and ecological linkages.
- 5.7 Development enabled by the PPC would be largely in keeping with the area's planned urban built character and the Site has the capacity to visually absorb the proposed development in a variety of residential and light industrial activities within a well landscape setting. The enhanced watercourse along the southeastern boundary would provide an appropriate buffer to the adjoining landholdings (albeit that land being similarly zoned FUZ).
- 5.8 The location of the LI zone adjacent to Station Road, the NIMT railway and proximity to the Pukekohe Park Raceway and LI zoned land to the northwest is appropriate. It would also be consistent with the PPSP LI zoning immediately to the northwest and southeast and have good access to the existing road network, especially freight routes and routes that will limit the need for traffic to travel through the Pukekohe town centre.
- 5.9 The large size of the Site means greater co-ordination can be achieved both internally and to the wider surrounds through a comprehensively designed masterplan.
- 5.10 I therefore consider that future development enabled by the PPC proposal would be generally consistent with the intent of the landscape, visual, natural character and amenity objectives and policies of the relevant statutory documents and when considered in totality would be entirely acceptable in landscape and visual terms.

6. Conclusions

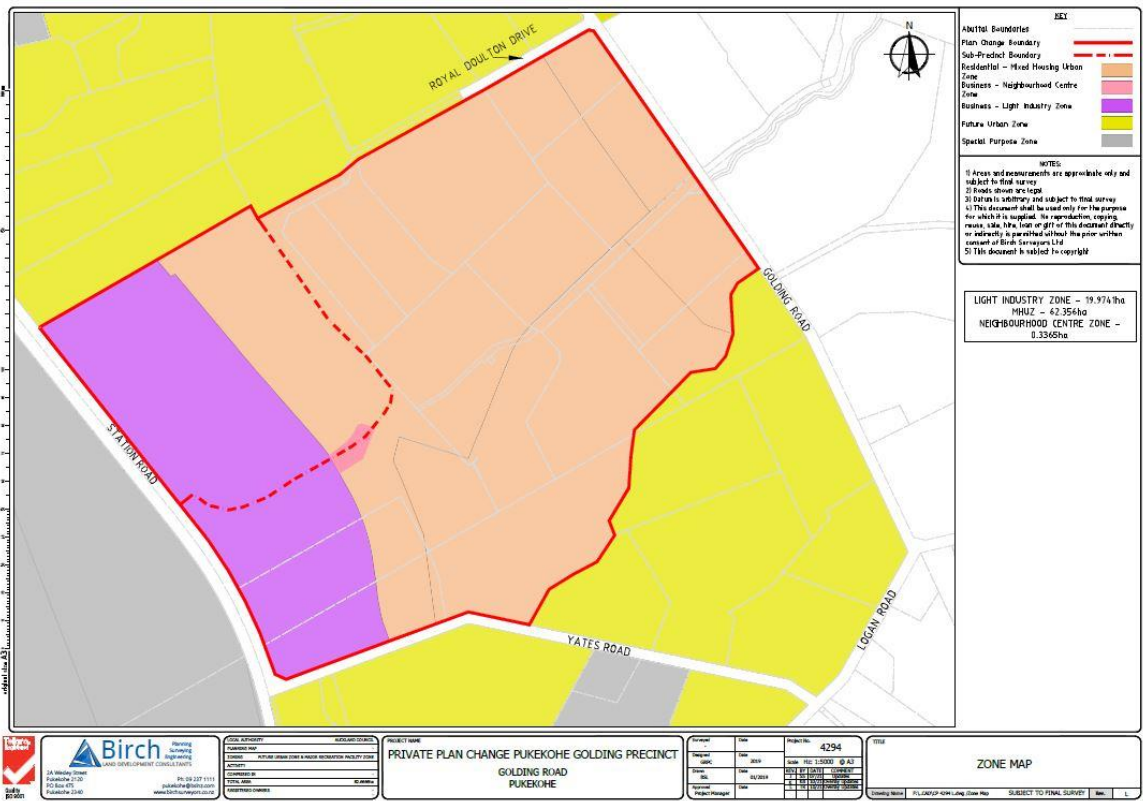
- 6.1 The proposed urbanisation of the Site resulting from development enabled by the PPC would significantly change its current open and semi-rural landscape character. The development would however be consistent with the Site being zoned Future Urban with urban expansion envisaged in the AUP.
- 6.2 Although the subject Site is largely in grazed pasture with equestrian activities, its semi-rural character is lessened to a degree by the existing land uses including the extensive horse training tracks and associate equestrian facilities, fragmented horse grazing paddocks, accessways and drives, and bordering onto Pukekohe's urban area characterised by Pukekohe Park Raceway, Pukekohe Mega Centre and light industrial activities to the northwest. While the Site includes productive grazing land, it is a highly modified site with relatively low landscape values, other than the Tutaenui Stream. In light of these considerations the Site is well suited to the type of urban development proposed.
- 6.3 The proposed urbanisation of the land would inevitably result in the transformation of the Site from a fringe semi-rural area to a mixed density urban residential and light industrial area. This would have implications on the surrounding semi-rural land to the east, with the urban development impacting on the semi-rural quality of this area. Nevertheless, this is a landscape in transition and is an area designated for urban expansion in the foreseeable future.

- 6.4 Because of the size and nature of the development and the anticipated eventual urbanisation of the Site and surrounding area, rather than trying to screen the development or create significant buffers to the adjacent semi-rural areas, the approach has been to accept the change and attempt to develop the Site in accordance with accepted urban design principles to create a quality residential and light industrial development with a high level of amenity, albeit an urban amenity.
- 6.5 The change from the existing semi-rural character of this landscape to one dominated by the built form of a residential area would also introduce a range of beneficial effects, including:
- Enhancement of the Tutaenui Stream and southeastern stream corridors including stream protection, riparian planting and ecological connections;
 - Extensive framework of planting including riparian stream planting and specimen trees in streets, and open space areas which would improve the character and amenity as well as enhance habitat values and break up the contiguous urban expanse increasingly with time and contribute to the wider surrounding area.
- 6.6 While the proposed development would result in a significant visual change from the Site's current open semi-rural state to one with urban characteristics, particularly for some of the immediate neighbours, such visual change is anticipated and is in accordance with the key planning initiatives for the area both within the AUP and PPSP.
- 6.7 Despite the relatively low landscape values, the development would initially generate landscape and visual effects of some significance. These however are inevitable with urban development in a predominantly semi-rural area at the start of a process of urbanisation. In addition, the visual effects of the development of the site apparent from the early stages would decrease over time as proposed landscape initiatives become established.
- 6.8 In conclusion, the proposed Golding Road PPC would fulfil the need for residential and urban intensification and provide an opportunity for an innovative and environmentally sustainable urban development. The proposal would be largely consistent with regional growth strategies for the area and would result in a high-quality urban development with a range of positive landscape and environmental outcomes.

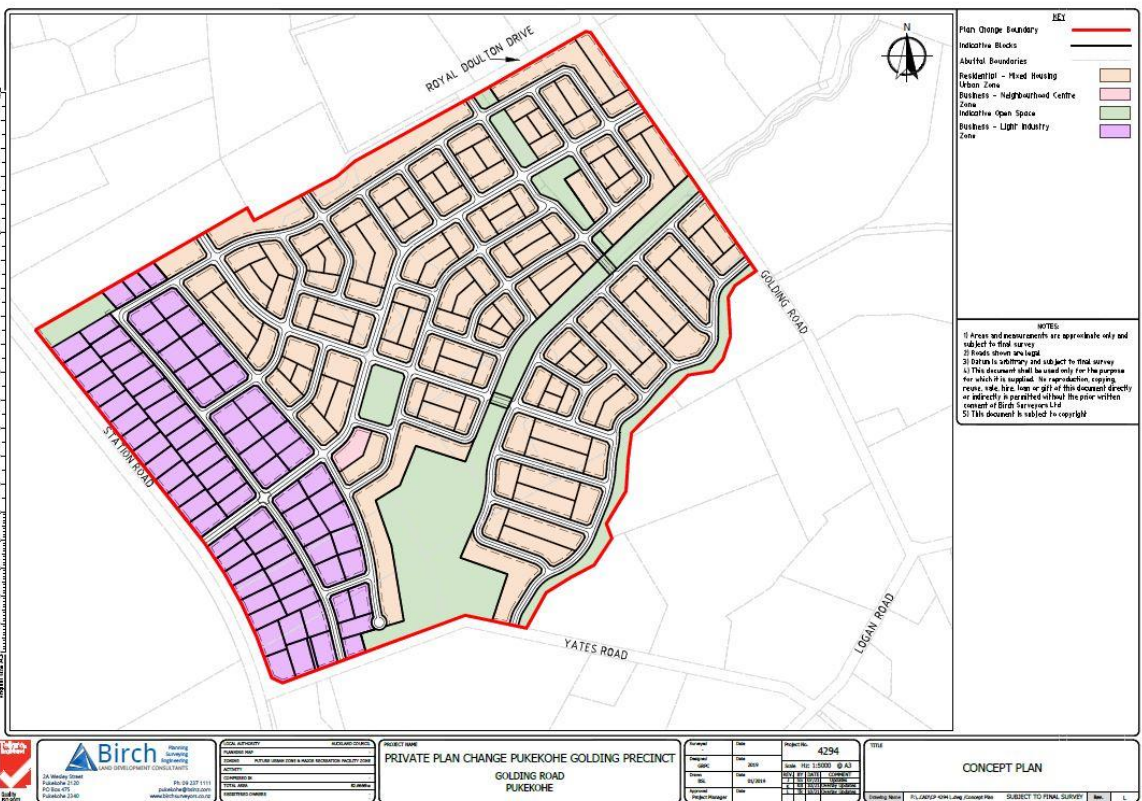
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LA4 Landscape Architects
November 2021



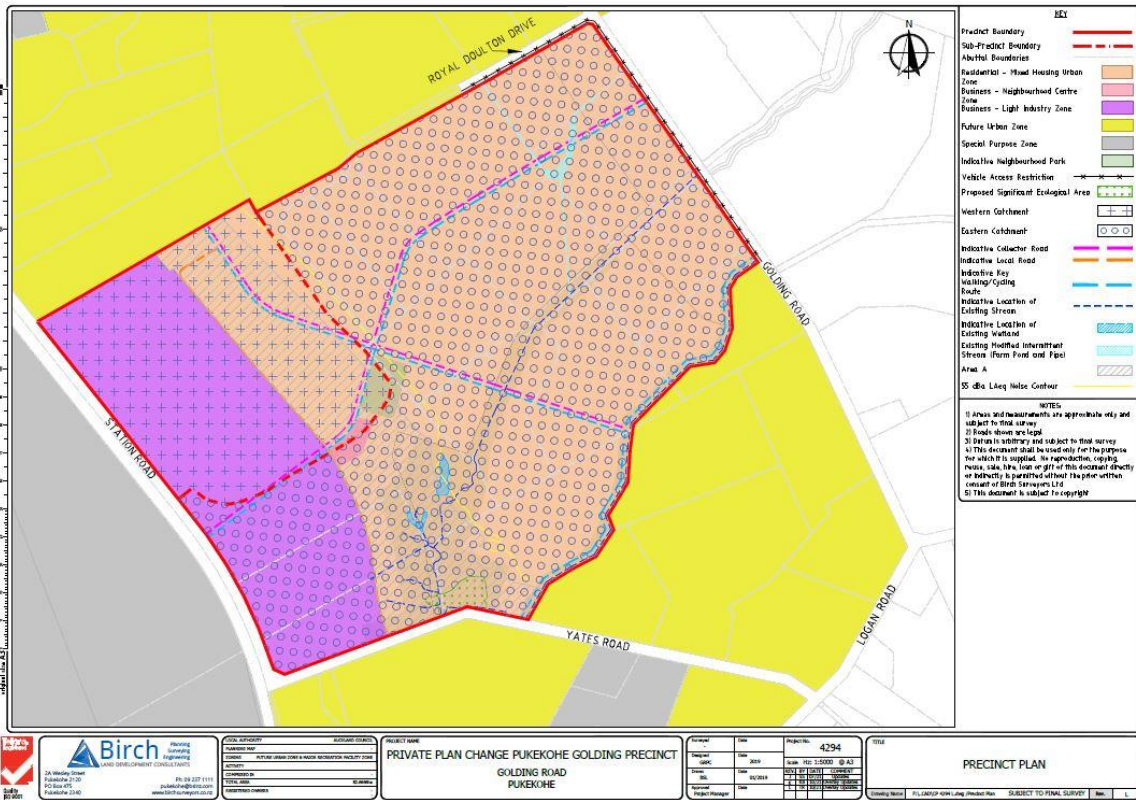
Appendix 1: Proposed Zoning Plan



Appendix 2: Concept Plan



Appendix 3: Precinct Plan



Appendix 4: Visual Effects Matrix Methodology

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

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

PART A - SENSITIVITY OF THE VIEW AND SITE TO CHANGE

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

PART B - INTRUSION AND QUALITATIVE CHANGE

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

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