

597 Horahora Road Subdivision

Assessment of Landscape Effects
Prepared for Kevin and Lynn Tylee

26 June 2026





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Appendix 1: Natural Character and Landscape Effects Assessment
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scope of the report

Boffa Miskell Limited (BML) has been engaged by Kevin and Lynn Tylee to undertake a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LVEA) for a proposed 73 lot rural-residential subdivision at 597 Horahora Road, Arapuni (otherwise referred to as The Site in this report). The Site is zoned Rural Lifestyle in the South Waikato District Plan (SWDP) and is within the Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL).

The following Landscape and Visual Assessment assesses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed subdivision on the immediate and surrounding landscape and natural character.

BML have prepared a landscape concept masterplan for the proposed subdivision, this has been developed to provide appropriate landscape and visual mitigation for the subdivision which located adjacent to the Waikato River / Lake Karapiro.

Following engagement with neighbouring properties a review of the masterplan and response to landscape values was undertaken in April 2026 with an update to the proposal completed in June 2026. This review maintained the scope of the application and integrated:

- Substantial reduction in the scale of earthworks, in particular Stage 3;
- a reduction in density to primarily Stage 3 layout, and;
- inclusion of a 10m esplanade strip along the lake frontage for provision of public access.

1.2 Purpose and Scope of this Report

This report provides an assessment of landscape, natural character and visual effects of the proposed subdivision. It is based upon the proposal as depicted in the Landscape Masterplan and the drawings attached to the AEE, the latter of which has been prepared by Cogswell Surveys.

In summary this report sets out:

- a. The methodology used for this assessment.
- b. A summary of legislative and policy framework relevant to the assessment of landscape, natural character and visual amenity effects.
- c. A description of the locality's current and future character, and an appraisal of the site in terms of these.
- d. A description of the key public and likely private viewing audiences of the site and the proposed subdivision.
- e. A summary of the proposal, including the measures taken to ensure any significant adverse landscape or visual effects have been avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- f. A description of the potential landscape, natural character and visual amenity effects of the proposal and an assessment of their suitability relative to the site's context.

1.3 Other Relevant Technical Reports

As part of the preparation of this assessment, a number of key reports and other data sources have been used to better understand the existing baseline environment as well as the proposal.

These sources were:

- Cogswell Surveys Survey Data/Plans
- An Ecological Report by Blue Wattle Ecology (Gerry Kessels) who has confirmed that there are two very small wetlands onsite, and there are trees which could be considered bat habitat.
- A Stormwater Report and Design prepared by Te Miro Water
- An Archaeological Report by Warren Gumbley who has confirmed that it is unlikely there is any archaeological remains onsite.
- A Contamination Report by HD Geo which has confirmed there is no contamination onsite via a Preliminary Site Investigation.
- An Integrated Traffic Assessment by CKL has confirmed that there are appropriate entrances available to all sites, provided some minor mitigation (roadside tree clearance) is undertaken.
- A Preliminary Geotech assessment by Mark T Mitchell has determined the minimum setback from the slopes onsite.
- Topographical Maps.
- Relevant sections of:
 - o Resource Management Act
 - o Waikato Regional Plan
 - o South Waikato District Plan.

1.4 Assessment Process

This assessment follows the concepts and principles outlined in *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines*¹. A full method is outlined in **Appendix 1** of this report. In summary, the effects ratings are based on a seven-point scale which ranges from very low to very high.

A site visit was undertaken on 13 November 2023 and 7th February 2024 to appraise the site's characteristics and establish the viewing catchment and viewing audience. During the site visit photographs were taken on the site and from the surrounding area. A selection of images is contained within the Graphic Supplement that complements this report.

The site visit did not include access to private properties located on the opposite side of the Waikato River. The weather was fine and slightly overcast during the site visit, which enabled a good understanding of the site and consideration of potential effects.

A further site visit was undertaken via a boat trip to view the site and surrounds from the Waikato River was undertaken on Friday 30th of May 2025, the weather conditions were overcast. Dave Mansergh, of Mansergh Graham Ltd attended this visit as part of peer review process for South Waikato District Council (SWDC). Photos from the visit have been included in Section 2.0 of this report.

¹ 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

Since the original preparation of this report and lodgement of the application, the original author, Jo Soanes, has since left Boffa Miskell Ltd. Landscape Architect, Rebecca Ryder, has undertaken a site visit with the project team (15 May 2026) and reviewed all background information and participated in engagement with hapu and neighbouring property's representatives.

The LVEA has been prepared using reference documents provided by the Applicant and from information gained during site visits.

This assessment has been updated to respond to SWDC Requests for Further Information from the aforementioned consultant peer reviewer, Dave Mansergh.

A Graphic Supplement has been prepared by Boffa Miskell, which contains the following illustrations:

- Figure 1: Site Context Plan
- Figure 2: Planning Context
- Figure 3: Site Layout Plan
- Figure 4: Viewpoint Plan
- Figure 5: Private Properties Plan
- Figure 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Combined)
- Figure 7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 1)
- Figure 8: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 2)
- Figure 9: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 3)

A Landscape Masterplan document (**Appendix 2**) includes the following:

- Landscape Design Intent
- Context Broad / Site Specific
- Landscape Masterplan – Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3
- Look and Feel
- Connectivity
- Open Space
- Landscape Planting Strategy / Zones
- Lot Design – Built Form, Colour/Material and Site Design

1.5 Iwi Engagement

Work regarding to Iwi consultation with mana whenua has been led by Cogswell.

A site visit was undertaken alongside mana whenua representatives from Raukawa and Ngāti Koroki Kahukura on Wednesday the 7th of February 2024. Site visit involved understanding the site character and context through the process of establishing strong relationships between client, stakeholders, consultants and mana whenua groups.

At the time of preparing this assessment no formal feedback or preparation of Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) or Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) has been prepared as part of the resource consent application. With no formal feedback from mana whenua or no CVA & CIA prepared for this application, it is important to acknowledge the Whenua, the Awa and the history of this area are important to Māori as it is an integral part of their cultural identity. A full list of the interactions with mana whenua are included in the subdivision consent application submitted to Council.

The Waikato River has its own mana being identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF) and is considered a living entity. Considering the journey along the awa, passing remnant gullies, terraces and embankments provides proof of Māori settlement, history, and cultural narratives through the lense of the landscapes surrounding the Waikato River are essential to Māori principles and values e.g. concepts of kaitiakitanga. These environmental qualities have informed how Māori view the world reflecting their strong connection to the land.

The Raukawa website and documents² describes the iwi's cultural landscape as an interconnected network of mountains, rivers, wetlands, and other significant features within Te Takiwā o Raukawa, valued as taonga for their ancestral, spiritual, and ecological importance. Through the Raukawa Environmental Management Plan and related projects, the iwi integrates mātauranga Māori with modern tools such as GIS mapping, LiDAR, and 3D modelling to identify, document, and protect wāhi tūpuna and other culturally significant sites (note this work has not been presented for the Site). This work is supported by co-governance of waterways, partnerships with local authorities, and cultural revitalisation initiatives, ensuring that the landscape's cultural values are recognised, safeguarded, and actively maintained for future generations. This highlights the need to consider not only physical attributes but also the cultural, historical, and spiritual dimensions of the landscape as understood and expressed by Raukawa.

It is anticipated that the engagement and collaborative design process with mana whenua will progress with the more detailed design of the open space and streetscape components of the project to enable collaborative design and integration of cultural interpretation, and landscape design aspects of the proposal. Continual follow-up with mana whenua is occurring with an intention for mana whenua to collaborate for the duration of this project.

The secondary author to this LEA report, Rebecca Ryder, has participated in engagement with Ngaati Koroki Kahukura & Taumatawiiwi Trusts³.

² <https://www.raukawa.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Raukawa-Environmental-Management-Plan-2015.pdf>

³ Online Meeting held 19th June 2026

2.0 Existing Environment

This section describes the existing landscape context and available viewing audiences, which provides the baseline for the assessment of effects.

2.1 Landscape Context

The Site sits within Waikato Lowlands in the Waikato Region and South Waikato District. They are flat and low lying in contrast with the surrounding hill country. They comprise pasture, hedges, groups of both exotic and indigenous trees, and have a well maintained and developed landscape character. The Waikato River is the central feature in this landscape, with Hamilton the main city⁴.

The first dam on the Waikato River was built in 1913 at Horahora (about 4km south of the Piarere turnoff) to supply power for the Waikato Battery and Waihi gold mines. At the time the transmission line was the longest in the world. The station was flooded with the creation of Lake Karapiro but traces can be seen on the banks. The second dam was Arapuni in 1929. 5 further dams were constructed following World War Two. The dams have created lakes that have become landscape features in their own right, and which are used for boating and picnicking. The power stations also add to the identity of South Waikato as a productive and pioneering landscape. However the dams have also modified the natural form of the Waikato River⁵.

The rural landscape is dominated by dairy farming as the main agricultural activity in the South Waikato and wider Waikato areas.

The Waikato River terraces are the focus for rural and lifestyle development, with new development apparent in areas on the eastern side of the river along Horahora Road approximately 1.5km to the north of the Site. Further north around Lake Karapiro and Karapiro settlement areas of rural residential development have also established.

The Waikato River Trail is a 104km walking and cycling trail following the Waikato River. It is divided into five sections, with the 11.5km Karapiro section starting at the Pokaiwhenua Bridge carpark approximately 700m to the north of the Site and ending at Arapuni Village around 6km to the south. The trail follows alongside Horahora Road in the section between Pokaiwhenua Bridge Carpark and Little Waipa Reserve, past the Site.



Figure 1: Photograph Waikato River Trail along Horahora Road, adjacent to proposed Stage 2.

⁴ Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment, February 2010. Technical Report # 1636162, page 26

⁵ South Waikato Landscape Assessment - Final Report August 2012, page 13

There are several recreational facilities along this stretch of the River. Horahora Domain, approximately 3.7 km to the north of the site on the western side of the River, hosts key recreational facilities, including a caravan park and water ski club. On the western side of the river opposite the Site (proposed Stage 1) is the Finlay Park Adventure Camp and Epworth Retreat and Recreation Centre which feature recreation facilities on the river, including a slide and jetties.

2.2 Site Description

The site is located at 579 Horahora Road, is 45.61ha in size and is between the Waikato River and Horahora Road, within the South Waikato District. It is zoned rural lifestyle and currently vacant of any buildings. The site is easily accessed via various farm paddocks directly off Horahora Road, there are various entrances. Additionally, the River Trails Cycleway runs along the road frontage adding recreational activation to the Site.

The land is predominantly used for sheep and beef grazing on agricultural pasture. The Site includes two gully features, connecting with the river and include exotic and native planting. The gullies divide stages 2 and 3 of the proposed subdivision.

Vegetation along the river edge (outside the site), consists of a mix of mature exotic trees such as poplar and willow, native revegetation and weeds species. The Waikato Regional Council is responsible for maintaining the riverbank and associated riparian vegetation.

The site is characterised by remnant river terraces. The site has varying contours, with some steeper river's slopes at the northern end and through the property. Where the site is lower to the river the contours are slightly gentler as well as at the northern end. The pastoral agricultural land use of the site has significantly altered the indigenous character of the site and its relationship with the Waikato River. The predominantly grassland landscape vegetation cover and predominantly exotic tree species are opposed to the indigenous riparian planting at the along the river edge, outside of the site boundary.

Significant Natural Areas (SNA) are located outside the site along the river edge and adjacent gullies and streams, with SNA buffers extending onto the Site. These overlays provide a level of protection to the indigenous vegetation cover in these areas, which forms part of the existing environment considered in the following assessment of natural character and landscape effects.

Due to the nature of the proposed earthworks, the following existing landform description has been prepared for each proposed subdivision stage, along with photographs to illustrate the existing landform.

2.2.1 Stage 1

Stage 1 existing natural terrain consists of undulating ground and terracing ranging from 2m to 5m, separated by lower flat areas that provide for stormwater flow through the site from Horahora Road to the Waikato River.



Figure 2: Photograph taken within Stage 1, looking south, with Horahora road to the east and the Waikato River to the west. The photograph illustrates the undulating nature of the stage 1 landform and the terracing to the south and east.



Figure 3: Photo taken from a boat (May 2025) illustrating view southeast from the River towards Stage 1 Development from the Waikato River. Photograph illustrates river embankment and existing plant to be retained.

2.2.2 Stage 2

Stage 2 existing landform consists of undulating ground with some smaller terraces up to 2m in height. There are lower depressions throughout the middle of the site.



Figure 4: Photograph taken within Stage 2, looking south, with Horahora road to the east and the Waikato River to the west. The photograph illustrates the flat to undulating nature of the stage 2 landform.



Figure 5: Photograph taken from a boat (May 2025) view east from the River towards the northern end of the Stage 2 Development. Photograph illustrates the elevated river embankment and existing vegetation to be retained.



Figure 6: Photograph taken from a boat (May 2025) illustrating the view east from the river towards the southern end of Stage 2 Development. Photograph illustrates river embankment and existing dense vegetation to be retained.

2.2.3 Stage 3

Stage 3, there are four existing distinct terraces. The northern terrace is generally flat and similar level to Horahora Road, the terrace is approximately 23m above the Waikato River water levels. The next terrace drops approximately 9m and runs parallel along Horahora Road. From east to west the land drops by approximately 10m and then raises again by approximately 7.5m. The fourth terrace is about 100m east of the Waikato River and varies in height of around 5m.



Figure 7: Photograph taken within Stage 3, looking east. The photograph illustrates the terraced characteristics of the landform.



Figure 8: Photograph taken within Stage 3, looking west towards the Waikato Riad. The photograph illustrates the terraced characteristics of the landform.



Figure 9: Photograph taken from a boat (May 2025) illustrating view east towards Stage 3 of the development from the River.



Figure 10: Photograph taken from a boat (May 2025) illustrating view east toward the proposed reserve (Lot 37) in Stage 3 of the development from the River.

The site includes Outstanding Landscape (ONL) overlay. Significant Natural Areas (SNA) are located outside the site along the river edge and adjacent gullies and streams, with SNA buffers extending onto the Site. There are no recorded Archaeological or contaminated sites within the property boundaries.

To the north, the site is located opposite Finaly Park Adventure Park, Epworth Retreat and Recreation Camp and further back Takapoto Estate. These developments provide existing built form adjacent to the Waikato River, contributing to the overall landscape and built environment in the area.

2.3 Visual Catchment

To assist in determining the visual catchment and potential viewing audiences of future development within the site areas. Site visits included walking within the site, the surrounding footpaths and driving the surrounding roads, and a boat trip along the Waikato River. Due to the linear nature of the proposal, variations in topography and existing mature vegetation the relative visibility of the site varies considerably and is dependent on the position of viewers and the section of the site they are viewing.

Properties on the western side of the river including Finlay Park Adventure Camp, Epworth Camp are adjacent to stage 1 development. Rural dwellings, off Oreipunga Road in the Waipā District are located throughout landscape albeit at a varied density, with a couple of identified properties located opposite the site adjacent to stage 1 and stage 3.

In summary, the following key public and likely private viewing audiences have been identified from the desktop analysis and site survey. These have been considered when selecting/preparing and assessing the potential impact of the proposed development and when undertaking the assessment and landscape concept design.

Potential Key Private Viewing Audiences

- Residents and rural worker located at the properties along Horahora Road, Oreipunga Road and Finlay Road including:

- 735 Horahora Road
- 599 Oreipunga Road
- 367 Oreipunga Road
- 80 Finlay Road
- 104 Finlay Road
- 289 Oreipunga Road
- Users⁶ of surrounding locals roads such as Horahora Road, Oreipunga Road and Finaly. Road.
- Users of recreation facilities such as Waikato River Ride, Finaly Park and Epworth Camp.
- Users of the Waikato River.
- Viewing Audiences in the wider context.

A range of viewpoints representing the key viewing audiences have been selected and are referred to in the visual effect's assessment.

Following the initial assessment, a series of detailed ZTV maps were produced to simulate the potential visibility of the proposal, using non ground LiDAR information, meaning existing vegetation surrounding the site is included. The maps have been created which simulate the potential visibility of future buildings (1 observer point for each future lot at a height of 6m) and the proposed earthworks using surface-level (topography, existing buildings and vegetation) mapping.

It is noted that the proposed ZTV modelling does not include any anticipated screening of the future structures as a result of proposed mitigation planting. The purpose of the ZTV is to identify the potential visual catchment and associated viewing audiences for the field assessment. A ZTV analysis does not determine degrees of visual effect and is a tool to inform the assessment process. As such it is understood that the ZTVs represent the existing landscape context without additional mitigation applied. These maps are provided in Maps 6, Map 7, Map 8 and Map 9 in Appendix 3 Graphic Supplement.

2.4 Natural Character Condition

Natural character can be measured on a continuum. Some places are less modified than others and can be said to have greater natural character or naturalness.

While the site is largely a part of a highly modified landscape, influenced by land use patterns associated with rural development and Horahora development such as rural residential development and recreation facilities, natural processes and patterns contributing to natural character are evident within the wider landscape, including the Waikato River.

Due to the impressive length and connection through a wide range of landscapes, determining the natural character of the entire Waikato River is outside of the scope of this assessment.

The Waikato River has been identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF). With a length of 425 km and catchment area of 14,456 km² the Waikato River is New Zealand's longest river.

The natural character of the river and its margins is a product of the combination of natural elements, natural processes and patterns. The natural elements that are associated with the river environment and contribute to the overall natural character include, the water, riverbanks (in parts), and pockets of native vegetation along the river margins and banks. Where the river

⁶ Including people walking, cycling and travelling in vehicles.

runs through native forest banks or rocky gorges, that natural character is considered to be higher than when in the urban modified landscape.

The Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment⁷ identifies the following ratings for the Waikato River and Reservoirs landscape attributes:

Aesthetic Values

- *Memorability = Medium*
- *Vividness = Medium*
- *Expressiveness = High*
- *Cohesion = Medium*
- *Eminence = Low*

Physical Attributes

- *Geology = Medium*
- *Topography = Medium*
- *Ecology = High*
- *Dynamic Change = High*

Associations

- *Historical Associations = High*
- *Value to Tangata Whenua = High*
- *Recreational Values = Medium*
- *Shared and Recognised Values = High*

Natural Character = Medium

Applying the Waikato Regional Council's method and approach to Natural Character Assessment applied to its Coastal Environment the approach of considering the Abiotic, Biotic and Experiential attributes of the Waikato River and its margins (inclusive of the Site) inform the degree of existing natural character. Human modification is a key indicator to the degree of natural character, where human modification is at its greatest, natural character is at its lowest. Modification includes productive land use, structures, human presence and frequency of human presence.

The site itself and surrounding environment have a high degree of modification including its river margin of the Waikato River. The surrounding environment along the river and its margins, includes utilitarian structures, introduced exotic vegetation, commercial buildings and residential dwellings. The Bluewattle Ecology Assessment Report provides an analysis of the ecological condition for flora and fauna. Table 4 of the *Assessment of Ecological Effects for a Subdivision at 597 Horahora Road* concludes the ecological context and value of areas within and surrounding the site. The report provides descriptive analysis of the vegetative state of the Site and the associated fauna observed. Notably all areas were noted as having low to negligible ecological value, with the exception being the Stream Gully Link area which was noted as having moderate ecological value.

Abiotic Attributes

Abiotic attributes are the non-living part of an ecosystem that shapes its environment and include soil/terrain and the river waters. The key abiotic attributes of the Site are the landform (including river edge) and the river waters. Areas of the Waikato River which include native forest banks and rocky gorges are where the natural character is considered to be higher when it is within urban, more modified landscape.

⁷ Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment, February 2010. Technical Report # 1636162

The existing riverbed shape within the immediate vicinity is considered to follow a natural meandering pathway, widening and narrowing at certain areas along this stretch of the river. The riverbed does not include dams, and/or man-made diversions, within the immediate area, however human modification is present within the active bed, including duck maimai's.

Modifications and manmade structures are common along the Waikato River Margins, within the context of this site, this includes timber retaining, water slide and boat ramp and river access as part of the Finlay Park Adventure Camp and Epworth Camp.

Biotic Attributes

Biotic attributes can be described as any living component that affects another organism or shapes the eco system and includes trees, plants and grasslands. The embankment found along the western boundary of the site appears typical of that found along this section of the Waikato River corridor comprising a mixture of native and exotic introduced vegetation and grasslands. There are examples north of the site along the river embankment where native restoration planting has been undertaken as part of private development.

Experiential Attributes

Human modification of the Waikato River and its margins are inherent in the hydro scheme modifications that extend along the Waikato River, Floodgates and stop banks associated with the Karapiro hydroelectric power station, are located approximately 16km north along the Awa of the site, the Horahora Bridge approximately 4km north of site, and Arapuni Substation approximately 6.3km south. Little Waipa Reserve is located directly south of the site adjacent to the Awa and includes boat ramp access to the Awa.

Structures such as bridges, pylons and overhead wires, floodgates, stop banks, discharge structures, located along the Waikato River, have introduced manmade materials such as concrete and steel into the river margins.

Although not the most accessible area of the Waikato for human recreational activity when compared to Horahora Domain, ski boats and kayakers are expected within this stretch of the Waikato River, especially during the summer months. Adjacently there are a number of duck maimais located within the Awa adjacent to the site, as well as the slide and associated jettys/boat ramps associated with Finlay Park Adventure Camp and Epworth Camp.



Figure 11: Photograph of the Waikato River and its river margins, looking north-west from the northern boundary of the site (Stage 1).

Although the site borders the Waikato River, which has been identified as an ONF, the site is classified as an ONL. However, this classification adopts different assessment criteria and are separate in their policy referencing in the Regional Policy Statement and RMA 1991.

The site itself fronts the River by approximately 3.5km. As part of the proposal there are no works within the river margins or outside of the site boundary. The proposal will be seen in the context of the existing built elements and modified rural land use. It is considered the proposal will result in a neutral effect to the experiential attributes.

In summary, it is considered that a proposal of this nature is broadly in keeping with the context of the receiving environment and that overall, the potential adverse effect upon the natural character is low moderate.

3.0 Proposal Description

The proposed subdivision has been design lead to ensure the development responds to the unique characteristics of the site and the wider environmental overlays in order to ensure effects on the subdivision layout, future building design and mitigation planting are appropriate, any environmental effects mitigated appropriately. The proposal seeks to subdivide and develop this Rural Lifestyle Zoned land into 84 73 rural lifestyle lots. The subdivision is proposed in three stages, from the far northern stage to the far southern stage, then the centre stage. The proposed Lot sizes range from 3,248 m² 3,153m² (smallest) to 2.5567ha (largest). with a calculated average of 5,668m². The development will commence with Stage 1 (lots 1-15) and then progress to the far south developing Stage 2 (Lots 63-83). Stage 3 may be developed in stages and comprises 16-58. In summary the lot composition across stages is:

Stage 1 – 15 lots

Stage 2 – 21 lot

Stage 3 – 37 lots plus one reserve lot

3.1 Subdivision Layout

The site is relatively restrictive with regard to shape, ecological areas (wetland and native areas), as well as visibility from the road with regard to entrance location. With all these factors taken into consideration, the layout was created. The staging enables some of the simpler areas to develop to occur first (Stage 1), prior to the larger area (Stage 3). The road to vest is positioned to reduce (as far as possible) the number of rear lots. The reserve has been placed with access to the River providing connectivity to the river, enabling local residents and those using the cycle trail to stop and rest, or picnic. The reserve is also located low in the topography which could enable boat ramp access to the River in the long future.

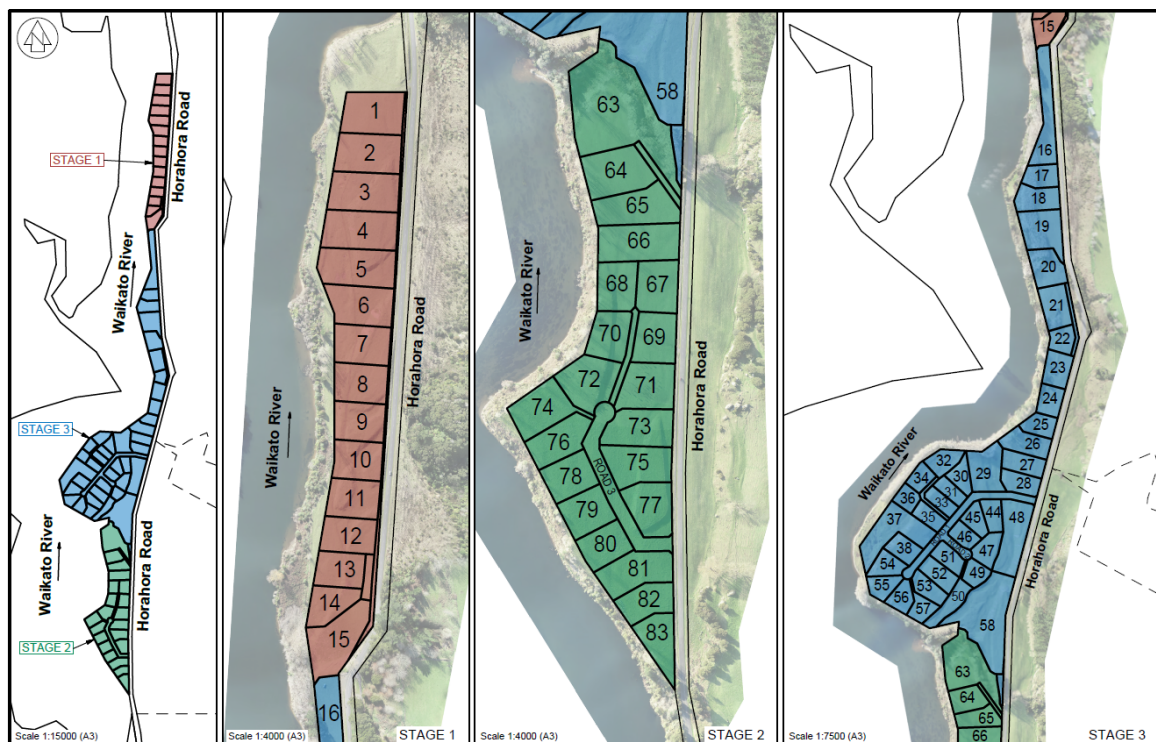


Figure 12: Subdivision Proposal – Updated – Dated 25/05/2026

Stage 1 comprises 15 rural lifestyle lots, which will all obtain access directly from Horahora Road. Lots are setback from the riverbank edge for geotechnical and landscape reasons.

Stage 2 consists of 21 lots located south of the gully. This stage will include a road to vest, two rights of way, therefore avoiding direct access from Horahora Road. The gully will be protected and revegetated and included in Lot 63.

Stage 3 consists of 45 lots in the centre of the development between stages 1 and 2. This stage will include significant earthworks to enable subdivision development and associated infrastructure. There is a proposed road to vest and rights of way and a reserve area to be vested with Council (Lot 37) with River access and a wetland.

3.2 Earthworks

The proposal involves earthworks of approximately ~~270,000m³~~ 72,000m³ cut to fill across all 3 stages in order to construct roading, building platforms and swales required for stormwater management throughout the site will be constructed at the same time. Earthworks will be completed over most of the development to level out river terracing in the site and create level building platforms.

The earthworks have been carefully designed to occur only within the site. There are no cuts along the River boundary, and therefore the site will not be lowered or increased in height as viewed from the River edge. The intent is to level out the undulations within the site to create lots which are usable and appropriate for future development. The cut and fill plans have been supplied to Council in the s92 response.

Stage 1 earthworks include bulk earthwork volumes approximately 40,000m³ cut to fill. All earthworks are contained within the site containing natural terrace levels and embankments to the River. Within the site, earthworks involve trimming of the landform in cuts of up to 3m and fill depths of 3.5m. Bulk earthworks volumes are in the order of 40,000m³ cut to fill.

Stage 2 earthworks consist of trimming and filling the site to preserve existing site levels along the River boundary. Cut depths of up to 2.5m and fill of 1.5m. Approximately 20,000m³ cut to fill

Stage 3 earthworks are to complete the road formation and the stormwater system, with some minor surface levelling. Bulk earthworks are in the order of 12,000m³ cut to fill.

The earthworks will take place in stages as the development progresses. Waikato Regional Council consent will be required for the earthworks that are within the high-risk erosion areas as defined in the Regional Plan. The design recommendations will avoid steep cuts or retaining walls to ensure earthworks are integrated with the adjacent river environment. No earthworks will occur outside the site. There is no intention to have steep cuts or retaining walls as this is a rural residential development which is capable of battering slopes and planting or re-grassing.

3.3 Wastewater

Wastewater will be managed via individual septic tank and effluent field within each lot, which will be established at the time of construction of each of the homes. Minimum setback of at least 30m from the edge of the river for all wastewater systems.

3.4 Stormwater

All lots to detain the 10-year event on lot. Swales alongside the roads and in between some of the lots which will take all water over the 10-year event from the lots, as well as the roads. Swales are to be grassed and mown. The existing receiving environments remain unchanged for overland flow to the Waikato River & unnamed tributary of the Waikato River. The identified natural wetland will be preserved with existing hydrological regime. The overall solution aligns with Te Ture Whaimana through returning rainfall to ground and via filtration swales.

3.5 Ecology

Bluewater Ecology has prepared an ecological effects assessment as part of the proposed subdivision (dated 17/07/2025).

The report describes land cover vegetation is predominantly grasses and herbs with clusters of mature exotic trees and shrubs along the river edge. An unnamed tributary stream flows through the site. The site provides commuting and foraging habitat for the nationally critical long tailed bat and threatened indigenous bird species including black shag. In addition, threatened fish species, such as the longfin eel, are present in the Waikato Awa and are likely to be present in the unnamed tributary stream.

Fauna ecological values range from very high for 'Threatened – Nationally Critical' long-tailed bats, to low for common indigenous fish and bird species. In conclusion the EIA considers all potential adverse effects to be adequately addressed. In the long term, restoration of the stream link gully and wetland areas, along with ongoing pest plant and animal control, will contribute to a net ecological gain for the rural residential development.

With regard to the management of vegetation and river embankment planting, this is under the control of Waikato Regional Council. It is understood that the management of the River edge may include the removal of exotic trees and replanting with indigenous species in conjunction with the Waikato Regional Council. As this is located outside of the boundary of the property and within the operating easement, Mercury is required to agree with this planting plan. No formal plans exist for vegetation removal outside of the property.

3.6 Landscape Mitigation and Amenity Planting

The landscape design of the proposed subdivision has been developed through a collaborative process involving Cogswell and the Applicant. A key objective of the landscape design has been to reflect the Waikato River and the rural surroundings of Horahora, while creating a lot layout for dwellings and associated infrastructure within the Rural Lifestyle Zone.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed subdivision responds appropriately to surrounding river and landscape context and existing development. Careful consideration has been given to the external interface to ensure it enhances the area's native vegetation and open space character. This approach not only complements the river and rural character but preserves some of the features of the site, despite significant modification to the terraced landform required for development.

The 25m minimum building setback, along the river boundary, along with native site wide planting reinforces the areas river and rural character. The landform and vegetation along the riverbank is retained along with clustering of native specimen tree planting will, once established provide an attractive and sensitive river interface with increased native planting.

Key landscape design features for the Landscape Masterplan include:

- Development in three stages;
- Limiting each lot to an 800m² building platform area;
- A maximum building height of 6 metres (above finished ground level);
- Use of specific colours in accordance with approved colour chart (*as outlined in recommendations Section 6*);
- Defined cladding materials;
- Water tanks buried 2/3 underground;
- Fences limited to be 1.2 metre in height, using post and rail or post and wire designs; and
- Implement of mitigation planting in accordance with the landscape concept masterplan, including site wide landscape mitigation and on-lot planting and plant species.
- Inclusion of a 10m esplanade strip for continuous informal public pedestrian access along the lake boundary, integrated with mitigation planting.



Figure 13: Overall Landscape Masterplan (Refer Appendix 2) – Updated – Dated 25/05/2026

STAGE 1



Figure 14: Stage 1 - Landscape Masterplan (Refer Appendix 2) – Updated – Dated 25/05/2026

STAGE 2



Figure 15: Stage 2 - Landscape Masterplan (Refer Appendix 2) – Updated – Dated 25/05/2026



Figure 16: Stage 3 - Landscape Masterplan (Refer Appendix 2) – Updated – Dated 25/05/2026

3.7 Lot and Building Design

The Landscape Masterplan Plan (LMP) provides recommendations for lot and building design guidelines, the methods for implementation and maintenance for the mitigation planting. To make sure that this design outcome is achieved, a level of supervision and control is required to protect the landscape values within the site and surrounding environment, as well as the interests of all future residents in relation to the nature and type of construction and planting that is permitted within the development. This required level of control will be achieved in the form of design guidelines and private covenants. The owners of each new title will need to comply with those requirements when building within the development.

Well-designed architectural housing will play an important role in minimising landscape and visual effects for the subdivision. The LMP has considered the change in landform and appropriate building scale, orientation, and massing enables new dwellings to integrate more successfully within the existing landscape context. The use of recessive colours, natural materials, and non-reflective finishes helps reduce visual prominence, while layered native planting along the river margins and within the subdivision softens built edges and strengthens the connection to the riparian environment.

4.0 Relevant Statutory Provisions

The proposed subdivision is located on a site zoned Rural Lifestyle in the South Waikato District Plan. The site is subject to an Outstanding Natural Landscape Overlay (ONL10).

The proposal is located on the Waikato River / Lake Karapiro edge and requires a land use consent as a Controlled Activity. As outlined within the AEE it is intended that this subdivision consent also grants land use consent for one dwelling and one accessory building on each lot. Any additional buildings will require a separate land use consent.

The sections below provide an overview of the key planning provisions that are relevance to this project.

4.1 Resource Management Act 1991

Part 2 of the Resource Management Act (RMA) sets out its purpose and principles. Part 2, Section 5 states that the purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Section 6 sets out the matters of importance that must be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the RMA. Section 7 contains other matters that must be given particular regard to, and section 8 states that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi must be taken into account in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

The site is identified as an Outstanding Natural Landscape. The site is located adjacent to the Waikato River and its margins. Therefore, the following Section 6 matters are relevant:

- 6(a) the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;
- 6(b) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;
- 6(d) the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers.

The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values is a relevant 'other matter' requiring consideration under Section 7.

4.2 Waikato Regional Policy Statement (WRPS)

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement plans for the future to identify and resolve resource management issues across the districts included within the Waikato Region.

- The qualities and characteristics of areas and features, valued for their contribution to amenity, are maintained or enhanced.
- The natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins are protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

4.3 Waikato Regional Policy Statement

The Waikato Regional Policy Statement plans for the future to identify and resolve resource management issues across the districts included within the Waikato Region. The policy also lists the characteristics/values that underpin High Value Amenity Natural Features and Landscapes (HVANFL) and Landscapes identified across the region.

The landscape and natural character values for Waikato River identified within the Waikato Regional Plan comprise:

The river has been dammed in eight places forming lakes, along approximately half its length, that serve hydroelectric stations. These lakes, particularly Lake Karapiro are very popular for recreational pursuits including canoeing, kayaking, water skiing, and motor boating. Fishing is also a regular activity. The lake is an international rowing venue.

The Waikato River was an important trade and access route for Māori and early Pakeha settlers; it has very strong historical and tangata whenua values, which are shared and recognised.

It has high natural character values in places. The main factors contributing to its identification as a high value amenity landscape are its length, its width, its importance to the Waikato region, and in places its drama as it passes through rocky gorges, and the expansive man-made lakes along its length.

Activities that could threaten those values could include additional hydroelectric schemes and transmission lines, visual access being cut off by buildings or forestry, and the reduction in water flow.

4.4 South Waikato District Landscape Assessment

The South Waikato Landscape Assessment, prepared by Isthmus Group Ltd in 2009, identifies outstanding natural landscapes (ONL), outstanding natural features (ONF), and significant amenity landscapes (SAL) in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The report describes the physical, perceptual, and associative dimensions of landscapes, dividing the district into seven landscape character units for assessment. Parts 1–3 describe the district's physical attributes, landscape values, and assessment criteria, identifying nine ONLs, nine ONFs, and eight SALs based on their significance. Parts 4–6 detail scoring methodologies, boundaries, and representative descriptions, supported by maps and photographs. Subsequent consultation processes, including stakeholder input and reviews of cultural and additional landscape values, informed the integration of findings into the draft District Plan, with further public consultation planned to refine and finalize the plan.

The site is located in the Tirau Hills Character Unit 1. The character area is described as being located in the northwestern corner of the South Waikato District, forming a distinct landscape character unit defined by natural boundaries such as the Waikato River, the Pokaiwhenua and Little Waipa Streams, and the Oraka Stream. The rolling terrain, underpinned by ignimbrite sheets and ash layers, is marked by rounded rock outcrops and significant topography. Indigenous vegetation is limited to gullies and stream banks, complemented by naturalized exotic species and trees associated with historic farm homesteads. The landscape is predominantly pastoral, with hilltop pā sites reflecting early Māori and Pakeha influences, while lifestyle blocks near Horahora Road introduce diverse land use patterns. Recreational activities like cycling, fishing, and boating are supported by waterways and wetland areas. The unit offers varied visual experiences, from confined views along Horahora Road to expansive vistas of Maungatautari, the Kaimai Ranges, and the Mamaku Plateau from elevated roads and State Highway 1.

The property has been identified in the previous District Plan as land suitable for rural lifestyle and was then zoned as Rural Lifestyle Zone. This gives clear direction that subdivisions such as that proposed are anticipated and an expected part of this environment. When the District Plan was first reviewed the property was not included in the ONL (as per the recommendation from Isthmus), however as a result of a submission from Raukawa, the Council commissioned Isthmus to undertake a further appraisal of the landscape values of the Horahora Road section of the Waikato River (August 2012). It was determined that the landscape values in this area are associated with the riverbed formations and terraces, and associated escarpment of geomorphic interest, marginal areas of riverine wetlands, minor areas of indigenous riparian and wetland vegetation. There were also some other ecological values listed for bird species. As

well as this, there are some landscape values held for the river as whole, relative to drinking water, irrigation and hydroelectric power – which is general rather than specific to this property.

The Isthmus report goes on to assess the Horahora Road area as *“on balance, and after having considered the characteristics of the area that contribute to these values, as described above, and its surrounding context, this assessment identifies the Horahora Rd area of the river as having significant amenity landscape values rather than outstanding natural values.”*

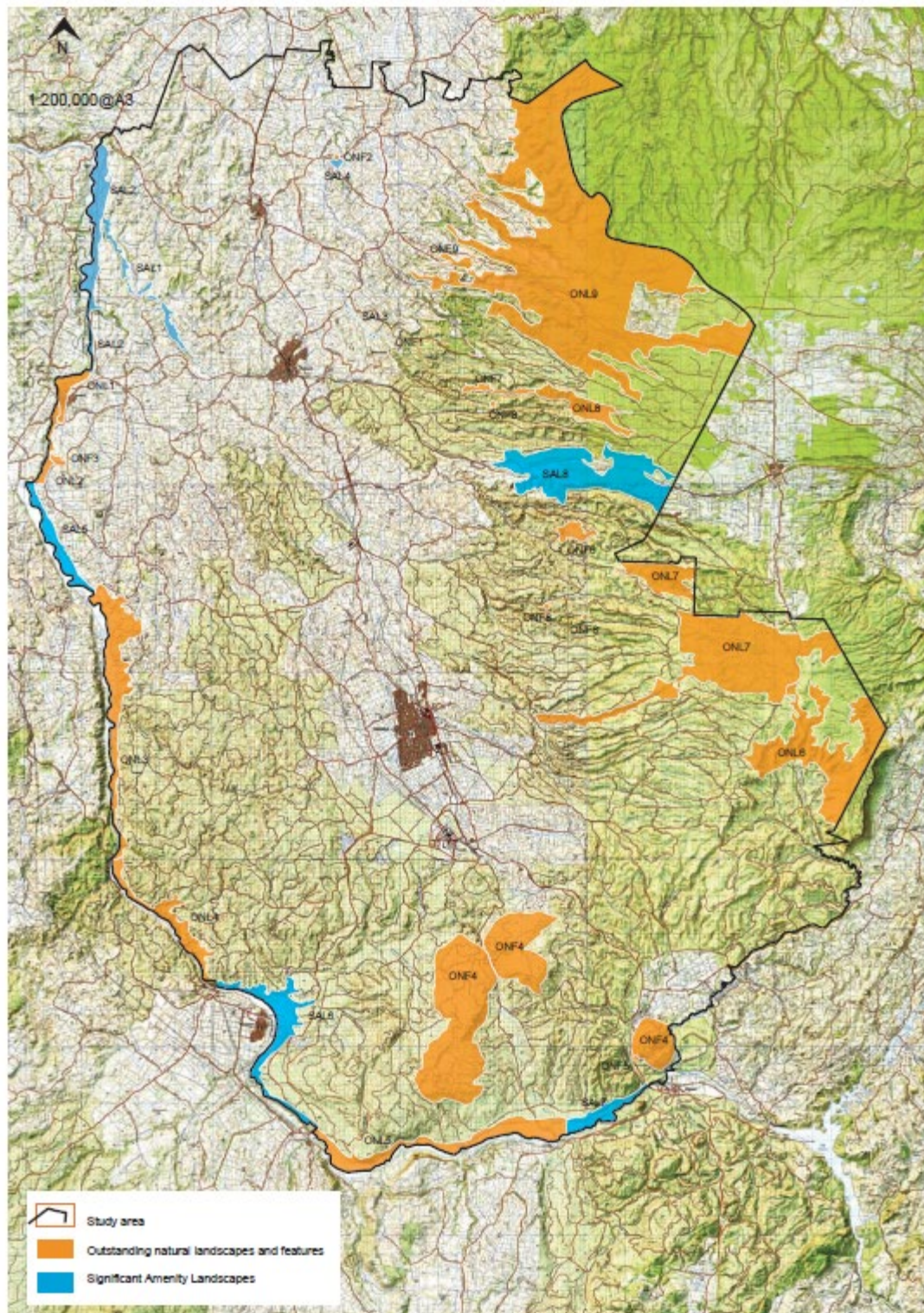
The report goes on to state that the *“immediate riverine environment (also the area identified as Significant Natural Area), natural character values are considered to meet the ‘naturalness test’”* which is outlined within the Isthmus report (see Appendix 3 of that report), which enables it to be considered an ONL or ONF. However, it then states that *“when considering all of the physical, perceptual and associative aspects identified, and where values to tangata whenua are considered as one part of the assessment process, along with natural science factors, aesthetic values etc, this area is not considered to be outstanding.”*

It also later notes in the same report that the Waikato Regional Policy Statement has identified the whole of the Waikato River as an ONL, however the WRPS did not investigate the landscape features to as ‘finer grain’ as the Isthmus report has and *“therefore can be expected to distinguish greater variations in landscape significance”*.

The Isthmus report recommended to Council that the Horahora Road area be included as a Significant Amenity Landscape (SAL2) rather than an ONL.

Through the submissions process for the District Plan review the property was included within the ONL in the Proposed District Plan in 2012. This resulted in the margins of the Waikato River to include an ONL classification on the river terraces adjoining the Waikato River, differing to those areas identified within the Isthmus report.

The link between the District Plan and the Isthmus report is in Section 10.3 Natural Features and Landscapes of the District Plan. This references the features values back to the 2012 Isthmus report, which do not identify the property as having ONL values, and identify the Site as a Significant Amenity Landscape. There is no localised area or site-specific values identified in the baseline study for the ONL across the Site.



Appendix 6 Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features and Significant Amenity Landscapes of the South Waikato District [amended]
Refer also to Addendum 2 (pg77 onwards) for amended description of the Lake Karapiro SAL

pg 84 South Waikato Landscape Assessment - Final Report August 2012

isthmus

Figure 17: Addendum 2: Horahora Rd River Review, South Waikato Landscape Assessment, Final Report 2012, Page 64.

4.5 South Waikato District Plan

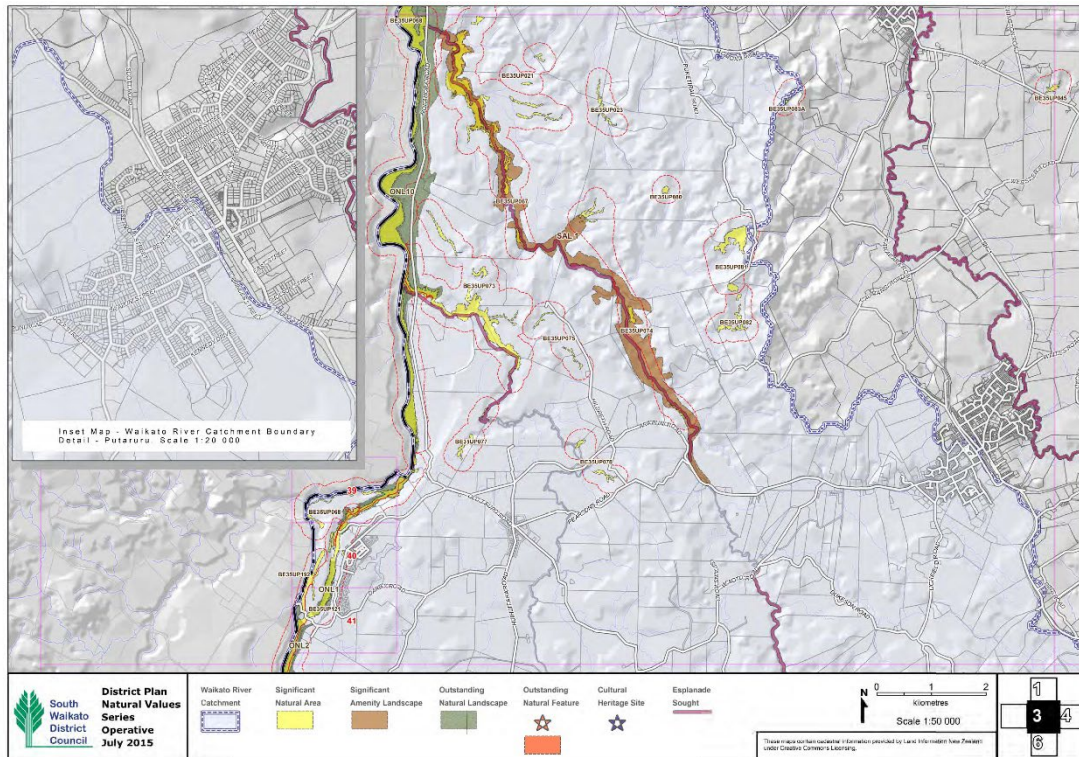


Figure 18: The site is subject to an Outstanding Natural Landscape Overlay (ONL10 – Lake Karapiro section of Waikato River).

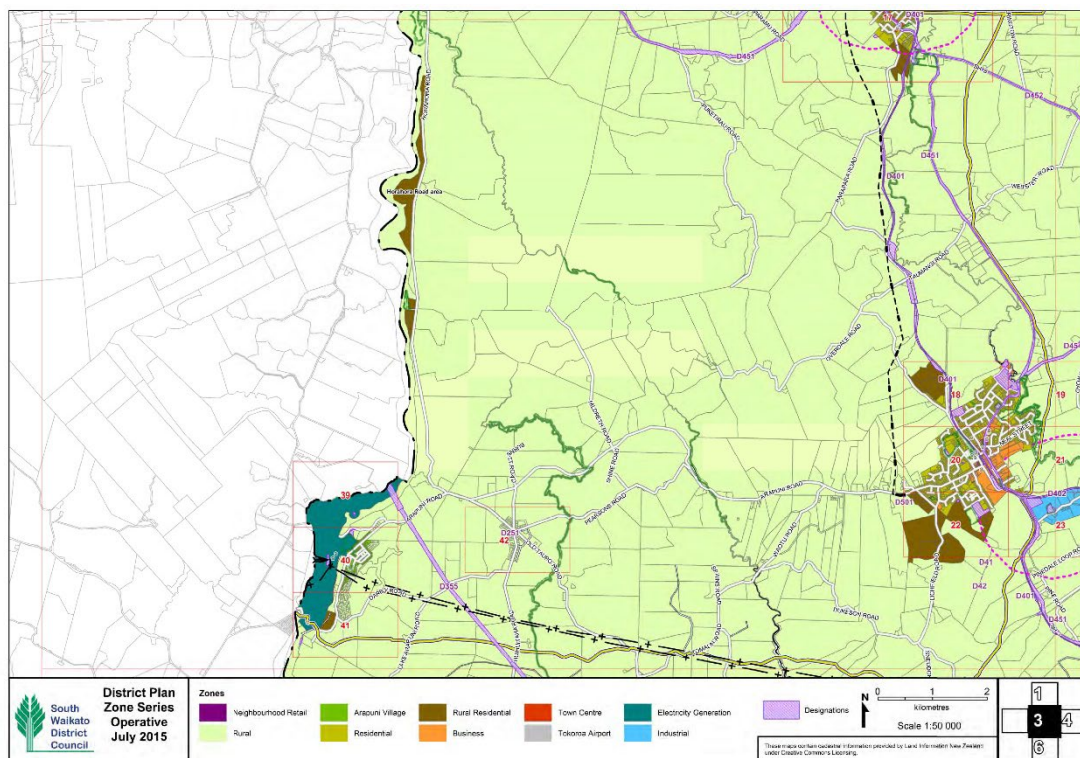


Figure 19: Rural Residential Zone South Waikato District Plan.

The following objectives and policies are potentially relevant:

Rural Lifestyle Zone

RLZ-O2

To avoid the establishment of non-rural based activities that do not have a legitimate need for a rural location, or which are potentially incompatible with activities that require such a location, including for reasons of reverse sensitivity.

RLZ-O3

To identify and address possible effects from activities in rural areas in catchments in the district, and on the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and its catchment during decision making.

RLZ-P3

Provide for the subdivision, use, and development of land for rural lifestyle activities in specifically zoned places.

RLZ-P4

To minimise the potential for adverse effects of rural lifestyle subdivision, use, and development at the interface of the RLZ with other zones.

RLZ-P5

Promote rural residential development only in zoned locations which:

- a) Achieve cluster development, and avoids the layout of lots in a lineal pattern along roads*
- b) Separates access and through-traffic functions in an effective manner*
- c) Requires adequate separation distance from the Waikato River and hydroelectric power operating easements*
- d) Requires adequate separation distance between the national electricity transmission lines and new rural residential development*
- e) Safeguards the landscape character, visual amenity and biodiversity values of the Waikato River valley by encouraging development to be sited and designed to be sympathetic with the landform and landscape, and existing vegetation, and the building materials and cladding of structures do not dominate the outlook visually or physically from or to the locality.*
- f) Avoids, remedies or mitigates reverse sensitivity effects, including by imposing appropriate standards and conditions on development.*

ECO-O1

To provide for the maintenance of the ecological values in the rural area and to conserve the cultural and heritage values of sites, while enabling primary production and other activities in a rural location.

ECO-O2

To safeguard the significant ecological, indigenous biodiversity, and natural values of the Waikato River and its margins while enabling existing rural land-uses and electricity generating infrastructure and electricity transmission and distribution lines.

ECO-O3

To identify and maintain or enhance the values of the district's indigenous biodiversity including by protecting areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.

ECO-O5

To recognise and promote the intrinsic values of indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems.

NATC-O2

To preserve the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers (and their margins) in the district, and protect them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

NATC-O3

To identify and address possible effects from activities in rural areas in catchments in the district, and on the health and well-being of the Waikato River and its catchment during decision-making.

NATC-P1

Manage the adverse effects of land-use change or intensification, upon wetlands, and waterways.

NATC-P2

Promote land management practices that are consistent with:

- *The productive capabilities of the soil/land resource, and*
- *The natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins,*

NATC-P3

Subdivision use and development should be of a density, scale, intensity and in a location that preserves the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins, in the district. In particular, consideration should be given to existing indigenous vegetation and habitat values, the restoration potential of an area, the ecological linkages with other significant natural areas and their potential for enhancement.

NATC-P5

Esplanade reserves and esplanade strips shall be created in identified high priority locations, to provide ecological linkages, improve water quality and enhance public access to lakes and rivers and their margins within the district.

NATC-P

To implement the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision and land-use within areas with natural values and located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, including by:

- (a) requiring building setbacks from waterways*
- (b) creating esplanade reserves or strips*
- (c) managing activities within natural areas*

Natural Features and Landscape

NFL-O1

To provide for the protection of outstanding landscape values, and to conserve the cultural and heritage values of sites, while enabling primary production and other activities in a rural location.

NFL-O2

To recognise the outstanding natural features and landscapes in the district and protect the landscape values within these areas from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

NFL-O3

To maintain and enhance amenity values within outstanding natural landscapes and features, and significant amenity landscapes.

NFL-O4

To recognise and provide for the relationship Raukawa and the Te Arawa River Iwi as Tangata Whenua have with the landscapes of the district.

NFL-O5

To safeguard the significant landscape and natural values of the Waikato River and its margins while enabling existing rural land-uses and electricity generating infrastructure and electricity transmission and distribution lines.

NFL-P1

Promote land management practices that are consistent with the productive capabilities of the soil/resource, and the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes.

NFL-P3

Identification of outstanding natural features and landscapes, and active management to ensure that the landscape values are recognised and protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

NFL-P4

Subdivision, use, and development should avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the values that contribute to an area being an outstanding natural feature or landscape, in particular by avoiding, remedying or mitigating the adverse effects of activities such as indigenous vegetation clearance, wetland drainage, large-scale landform modification, and construction of large or otherwise visually prominent structures, buildings and earthworks that will adversely affect those values identified.

NFL-P5

The effects on the cultural and spiritual relationships of Raukawa and the Te Arawa River Iwi as Tangata Whenua with the outstanding natural features and landscapes identified, in the district, shall be recognised and provided for in considering resource consent applications for subdivision, use, and development.

NFL-P6

To implement the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision and land-use within areas with natural values and located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, by identifying the Waikato River as an Outstanding Natural Landscape

Natural Environment Values – Public Access

PA-O1

To maintain and enhance public access to lakes and rivers in the district, particularly those locations identified as being of high priority due to their ecological or recreational values, where public access is compatible with protecting ecological values.

PA-O2

To improve public access to the Waikato River, Te Waihou and other waterways within the District to better enable recreational and cultural opportunities.

PA-O3

To safeguard the natural and recreational values of the Waikato River and its margins while enabling existing rural land-uses and electricity generating infrastructure and electricity transmission and distribution lines.

PA-O4

To recognise and provide for the relationship Raukawa and the Te Arawa River Iwi as Tangata Whenua have with the Waikato River within the district.

Policies

PA-P1

Esplanade reserves and esplanade strips shall be created in identified high priority locations, to provide ecological linkages, improve water quality and enhance public access to lakes and rivers and their margins within the district.

PA-P2

To implement the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision and land-use within areas with natural values and located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, by creating esplanade reserves or strips.

PA-P3

Improve public access to and along the Waikato River, Te Waihou and other waterways by requiring esplanade reserves or esplanade strips at sites identified on the planning maps at the time of subdivision and by keeping options open for future public use of the river edge through enforcing building setbacks.

PA-P4

Establish and manage a network of well-maintained public reserves that serve neighbourhood, town and district-wide needs for active and passive recreation and biodiversity corridors, including linked parks and walkways along the urban streams.

Subdivision

SUB-O3

To ensure safe and efficient subdivision, well-integrated with the functions of different roads, and which is designed to provide for appropriate alternative transport modes (particularly walking and cycling).

SUB-O4

To recognise the outstanding natural features and landscapes in the district and protect the landscape values within these areas from inappropriate subdivision.

SUB-O5

To preserve the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers (and their margins) in the district, and protect them from inappropriate subdivision.

SUB-P6

Avoid subdivision in the rural area that does not have an operational or other legitimate requirement for a rural location.

SUB-P7

Provide for the subdivision of land for rural lifestyle activities in specifically zoned locations.

UB-P13

To achieve the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision within rural areas and towns located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, including by:

- (a) Limiting rural residential development to specific zoned areas*
- (b) requiring setbacks from waterways*
- (c) including standards for vegetation disturbance, earthworks, silt and stormwater control*
- (d) managing the effects of large-scale land-use change*
- (e) maintaining significant indigenous biodiversity associated with the River*
- (f) creation of new esplanade reserves or esplanade strips.*

4.6 Non- statutory material

4.6.1 Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment

The Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment was prepared to provide information and policy guidance to inform the WRPS⁸.

The site is located adjacent to the Waikato River, which is described in the Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment. Key features noted include:

⁸ Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment, February 2010. Technical Report # TR 2010/12

- The Waikato River was one of the important early transport routes through the area; it is a resource for a range of activities including mining, tourism, fishing, energy generation and sport and recreation.
- Between 1929 and 1971 eight dams and nine powerhouses were built between Taupo and Lake Karapiro to generate electricity by means of hydro generation. There are power stations at Aratiatia, Ohakuri, Atiamuri, Whakamuru, Maraetai, Waipapa, Arapuni and Karapiro.
- Prior to work beginning on the hydroelectric schemes the river would have been a deeply incised gorge with rocky river terraces, occasional rapids and a swiftly flowing river below, similar to the Waikato River north of the Karapiro dam.
- The Waikato River is a focus for a wide range of recreation activities including trout fishing, white water rafting and boating near Lake Taupo, kayaking, rowing and other forms of paddling around Hamilton and on Lake Karapiro.
- The Waikato River terraces are the focus for rural residential development, with new development apparent in areas around Karapiro for example.
- The natural values of the lower Waikato River have been compromised in a number of ways. Drainage and flood protection schemes have reduced the area of swampland adjoining the river. This, along with cattle grazing, has destroyed native vegetation and reduced the habitat available to water birds and fish.

4.7 Summary of Legislation, Policy and Guidance

The above relevant Objectives, Policies and documents have influenced the development of the of the Subdivision Masterplan and has been used a guide to structure and address the assessment of the proposal in terms of landscape, natural character and visual amenity effects as set out in Section 5.0 of this report.

The key focus of these provisions includes the following:

- Protection of Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes;
- Avoid non-rural activities and support rural lifestyle development only in designated zones;
- Mitigate adverse effects;
- The maintenance and enhancement of rural and natural character;
- Preserve the natural character of wetlands, rivers, and lakes by managing density, scale, and location of development;
- Maintain ecological and cultural values while enabling appropriate development;
- Recognize and respect the cultural and spiritual relationships of Raukawa and Te Awa River Iwi with the district's landscapes;
- Provide for recreation and amenity and access to Waikato River;
- Visual integration of buildings and development design including earthworks and vegetation management; and
- Require adequate setbacks from waterways, significant landscapes, and infrastructure (e.g., electricity transmission lines) to maintain visual and ecological integrity.

5.0 Assessment of Effects

Landscape and visual impacts result from natural or induced change in the components, character or quality of the landscape. Usually these are the result of landform or vegetation modification or the introduction of new structures, facilities or activities. All these impacts are assessed to determine their effects on character and quality, amenity as well as on public and private views.

In this study, the assessment of potential effects is based on a combination of the landscape's sensitivity and visibility together with the nature and scale of the development proposal.

Particular effects considered relate to the following:

- *Natural Character effects*
- *Landscape / rural character effects*
- *Visual amenity effects from public and private locations;*
- *Effects in relation to statutory provisions.*

Landscape and visual effects result from natural or induced change in the components of quality of landscape. When subdivisions are proposed the inevitable consequence is a transition of the landscape to a new form of land use with its consequent changed character and amenity. The Site has been signalled for changed as zoned for rural lifestyle development.

When assessing the potential effects arising from the proposed subdivision the assessment should consider the nature of the maximised potential future development enabled by the provisions of the rural lifestyle zoning.

In the consideration of the potential effects in this assessment it is anticipated that the proposed landscape masterplan will be successfully implemented and established.

5.1 Natural Character Effects

In terms of natural character, the highest degree of naturalness occurs where there is the least amount of human introduced modification. Development can adversely change and alter the natural character of an area. The significance of this effects is dictated by the size, location and sensitivity of the receiving environment.

This section of the Waikato River, as discussed as being moderately modified. The key attributes of the Site are the terraced landform and proximity to the Lake edge. Areas of the Waikato River which include native forest banks and rocky gorges are whether the natural character is considered to be higher than when it is within the urban, more modified landscape.

Experiential attributes comprise the interpretation of human experience of the river environment. As outlined earlier in this report, Lake Karapiro consists of a variety of built features (such as jetties, pylons, duck hunting maimai's, cycleway, dam, Horahora bridge and rural residential developments overlooking the lake, and modified areas (such as pasture for farming and exotic trees). The river itself has been modified to form Lake Karapiro as part of the Karapiro Dam construction.

The modification of the river to form Lake Karapiro and the existing development along both sides of the river particularly the western side in relation to Finlay Park and Epworth Camp directly adjacent to the site.

The proposal will be seen in the context of the existing built elements and modified rural land use. It is considered the proposal will result a **Low-Moderate** effect to the experiential attributes.

5.2 Landscape Effects

5.2.1 Landscape Character Effects

Landscape character is derived from the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landforms, soil, vegetation, land use and features of human settlement. It creates the unique sense of place defining different areas of the landscape.

The existing landscape character has been modified through farming practices, built development and river medication through dam constriction, well development recreational facilities such as Finlay Park and Epworth Camp, kayaking, boating and cycling, rural-residential development, open farmland and areas of native vegetation. The landscape is identified as being sensitive and obtaining amenity value for the District and the site is located within ONL.

Currently, the site forms a part of a rural edge along the eastern side of the Waikato Te Awa and comprises maintained farmland, devoid of buildings and structures. This character is consistent with the broader rural landscape, which features dispersed settlement pockets along the river, including Karapiro and Arapuni within 20 km, as well as smaller developments to the north along Horahora Road. Community facilities such as Finlay Park, Epworth Camp, and Takapoto Estate on the western side of the river also contribute to the area's character. The site is an attractive rural landscape but within rural lifestyle zoning development of the proposed subdivision is anticipated.

The conversion of the 45.61 ha site from rural lifestyle development will inevitably result in changes in the character of the landscape. This change is however signalled for the site in the SWDP as rural lifestyle zoning and therefore the change in land use to rural residential development is anticipated.

There would be a major loss of some of the key elements and characteristics which make up the character of the landscape of the Site. Little of the pre-development landscape characteristics of open rural river terraces would remain and there would be a moderate change in views from within the Site area. Although there will be substantial change to the character of the landscape this is in the context of a historically altered river margin modified to integrate productive land use. The effects on the physical landscape as a result of earthworks and integration of infrastructure would be **Low -Moderate** (adverse), and the changes would be permanent and irreversible. Proposed earthworks have focused toward retaining much of the underlying natural landform patterns of the river terrace whilst shaping the site to manage stormwater and lot access. Some small terrace knolls have been removed and integrated into a flattened terrace site. Overall however this integrates to the broader river terrace characteristics of the site.

Regarding to effects on the wider landscape character, the proposed change would introduce a new area of rural lifestyle subdivision adjacent to the Waikato Te Awa, increasing the overall development along the River. However, the site has a relatively compact linear form that influences the stretch of River adjacent to the Waikato River and Horahora Road environs. Overall, it is considered that this change in the character would not notably alter the overall character the localised rural landscape which surrounding Horahora and its environs. Impacts would largely be contained within the Site area and while the inclusion of development would change the immediate character, the perception of the surrounding area being a productive rural agricultural landscape is unlikely to change.

As described earlier in the assessment there is some inconsistency with the conditions, values and status of the ONL. That withstanding, it is anticipated that (in line with the Isthmus report) when viewed at a scale appropriate for this site the attributes, qualities and features of the landscape do not meet the standards for the site to be considered as “outstanding”. It is however recognised that the site does have “significant amenity value”, thus making it more able to accommodate a proposal of this type, compared to other sites adjacent to the Waikato

River. This is further supported by the Rural Lifestyle Zone applied to the Site which enables the land to be subdivided for residential development.

The proposed 73 lot subdivision is confined to the site boundaries, ensuring the surrounding landforms remain untouched. Natural features within the site such as the gullies and vegetation, will be retained and enhanced through native planting to improve the area's ecology and biodiversity.

Landscape mitigation measures include native planting that integrated the proposed subdivision the river and gully environments which visually soften the development and breaking up its overall mass. In conjunction with the existing riparian planting outside site boundary will providing a vegetated buffer edge to the site and improve the site relationship. Additionally, building setbacks from the river provide both visual relief and a buffer zone, providing mitigating design of the adjacent river character.

Well-designed architectural housing can play an important role in minimising landscape and effects for a subdivision adjacent to the Waikato River. Development that responds to the natural landform through appropriate building scale, orientation, and massing enables new dwellings to integrate more successfully within the existing landscape context. The use of recessive colours, natural materials, and non-reflective finishes helps reduce visual prominence, while layered native planting along the river margins and within the subdivision softens built edges and strengthens the connection to the riparian environment. Protecting key viewshafts and incorporating culturally responsive design elements acknowledges the Waikato River's cultural and spiritual significance to Waikato-Tainui, ensuring that the subdivision complements the surrounding landscape values. Collectively, these design responses help the built form settle into its setting and provide for an acceptable design response for the landscape.

The effect on the overall character of the broader area of the landscape which surrounds the Site would be **Low Moderate** (adverse). While the loss of a rural landscape along the Waikato River is acknowledged, this change is anticipated due to the current zoning. This change would impact upon the Site and its immediate setting and is considered unlikely to affect defining characteristics of the broader rural landscape, which would remain largely intact within minimal perceptual change.

5.2.2 Direct Landscape Effects

There will be direct landscape effects as part of the proposed subdivision. Physical landscape effects from earthworks across the site, to establish lots, road networks, stormwater treatments and land suitable for rural residential development will alter the topography within the Site area. Earthworks have been designed to provide a cut to fill approach within each of the stages of development. The approach to earthworks has focused on retaining the natural features of river terraces, whilst merging some of the isolated terrace islands into the wider river terrace. Gully systems are retained and integrated into enhancement native vegetation corridors connecting with the Waikato River.

The existing gullies which forms a key landform within the Site will not be altered by the earthworks associated within the Site will not be altered by earthworks associated with the proposed development. Earthworks would form a permanent and irreversible change to the Site.

The extensive nature of the proposed subdivision changes to the land use within the Site will result in very little landcover 'productive pasture' being retained. The existing pasture related vegetation within the site, is not providing sufficient productive value to warrant retention of large areas of productive pasture and integrate well with the intended future rural lifestyle use. However the development will retain a strong balance of open space with lawns and small paddocks of pasture as part of rural lifestyle development.

Existing trees within the gullies and river embankment (outside of the site), will be retained due to their ongoing use as ecological habitat and bank stability. This retention will also have landscape benefits by retaining established trees which provide for amenity and responding to

the landscape character as well as landscape visual mitigation. Additionally, the development of the site enabled by the zoning will ultimately provide an enhanced level of soft landscape, including native planting between lots, along river and road frontage, within the reserve, stormwater swales and connecting to the larger gully ecological restoration. Trees and shrubs introduced through the design development of the lots would further contribute to the and enhance the vegetation structure within the site, offsetting that which would be lost as a result of the land use change.

Whilst substantial landscape change will occur across the Site, the proposed subdivision and landscape concept masterplan identifies a number of opportunities for integrated open space, recreation opportunities and increasing biodiversity across the Site. There are opportunities available to ensure that the proposed development is settled within the landscape, creating an appropriate interface with the river through building offsets, design guidelines and native planting design, as well as appropriate interface with rural and road interface. Additionally, the enhancement of the gullies, improving the overall biodiversity of the site.

The Site would be developed over a staged timeframe and therefore impacts and effects would not occur over the full site at once. This staged approach would avoid a large – scale change to the character of the site and would areas of new development to ‘bed in’ before future stages are developed.

During construction, it is considered that there would be a major modification to the key characteristics of the Site’s landscape in the area of development. There would be little of the predevelopment landscape remaining. The effect would be **Moderate (adverse)** following construction earthworks and infrastructure. Following establishment of mitigation planting (5 – 7 years), the effect be **Low-Moderate (adverse)**.

The proposed development is substantially changing the land use within the site, as well as permanently altering its physical landscape characteristics through earthworks, landuse, landcover, creation of residential houses and associated infrastructure such as roads and stormwater swales. Sensitive design solutions, such as those recommended in Section 7 and the concept masterplan, seek to soften the change and to integrate the development into its context however are unlikely to reduce the overall effect of the physical change to the landscape.

5.2.3 Summary of Landscape Effects

In summary, a substantial change will be introduced over time which will substantially alter the site’s characteristics and physical landscape features, resulting a **Moderate (adverse)** effect both during and following construction. These effects would be largely contained within the Sites and its immediate surrounding environs. Although the change in the land use in the site will be readily apparent the change in landscape features and qualities will be primarily contained to the site which will have limited influence on the wider and will not undermine or compromise ONL/ONF across the wider area, effects on the rural character which surrounds Horahora Road, and the Waikato River would not be a notably impact and effects of the landscape would be **Low Moderate (adverse)**.

The site will retain a response to the natural landscape and environmental features through restoration of the existing gullies and site wide native planting. The proposed pathway and open spaces fronting the river would connect future residents and users to the natural environment. The proposed landscape integration through landscape design enabled by the site rural lifestyle zoning will provide appropriate quality of native planting throughout the subdivision.

5.3 Visual Effects

Visual amenity effects are influenced by a number of factors including the nature of the proposal, the landscape absorption capability and the character of the site and the surrounding area. Visual amenity effects are also dependent on distance between the viewer and the proposal, the complexity of the intervening landscape and the nature of the view.

The level of change is considered in relation to the nature of the audience of the viewing audience, when evaluating the level of any effects. The sensitivity may be influenced by a number of factors, which include but are not limited to the reason for a viewing audience being at the viewpoint of looking at the view (e.g. if they are residents or motorists); the existing (and likely future) character of the view, the viewing distance and duration.

Judgements made in relation to the potential effects are based on the information contained within subdivision plan and landscape concept masterplan, the nature of the proposed development and the design considerations section above as well as taking into account the proposed recommendations and mitigation outlined in Section 6 of this report and the Landscape Masterplan.

The proposed subdivision will result in a change from rural to more built development when viewed from the surrounding landscape. The potential adverse effects for the surrounding area are dependent on design of the future development including; density, building setbacks and landscape boundary treatment with the river, rural and road interfaces to ensure wider rural, landscape features such as the Waikato River and Maungataurtari Mountain views are appropriately considered. The proposed subdivision has allowed for varied boundary treatments, including native mitigation planting, fencing, boundary setbacks, architectural requirements, reserve, river access, shared pathway and open spaces.

The proposed boundary treatments and mitigation planting has been provided to ensure that the lots are integrated into the site and provide visual softening and integration with the retained planting along the edge of the River.

Changes in views need to be considered against the expectations of the SWDP. The SWDP provides high level guidance on the zoning of the site, which envisages rural lifestyle development. Viewing audiences in the immediate and wider vicinity of the Site and therefore broadly anticipated to view such development and interfaces with their outlooks, notwithstanding that this change in land use from rural to rural residential will ultimately result in some level of visual change.

5.3.1 Effects from public vantage points

As described in Section 2.3, those public vantage points where views of the proposed subdivision would be available are:

- Users of surrounding local roads such as Horahora Road.
- Users of recreational facilities such as the Waikato River Trail, along Horahora Road; and .
- Users of the Waikato River.

5.3.1.1 Effects on Road Users

For users of Horahora Road, the proposed subdivision will introduce rural residential development along the western edge of the road, north of Little Waipa Reserve and south of Pokaiwhenua Stream. The development would also introduce new entrances for the proposed lots to the site.

Views within the existing road corridor adjacent to Stage 1 and Stage 3 of the proposal are contained to the short distance by the steep terraced landform and tall mature vegetation to the east. Stage 1 is being single lot width and separated by a change in elevation from the other two stages, and additionally sharp bend in the road. The proposed earthworks will change the

contour of the Site, however this will not raise lots significantly above Horahora Road. Stage 2 has little change in the proposed landform and intentionally have designed the level at the river edge without changing. Stage 3 includes terracing creating a progression of landform height towards the River.

Adjacent to Stage 3 views within the road corridor less constrained to the east as the terraced landform is set back from the road edge, however views are still limited to the short to medium distance. The existing pastoral land of the site to east of the road is more open along the western edge of the road corridor. However, views of the Waikato River to the east are predominantly prohibited by intervening the linear band of vegetation along river edge. Medium to long distance views are available of the opposing undulating landform to the west of Waikato River.

The change in land use would be notable as the road passes directly past the proposed subdivision, with the fragmentation of the open paddocks into individual lots. Whilst a change the approach to the development is to integrate pocketed clusters framed by mitigation planting. Stage 3 for instance integrates large lots bounded by a vegetated gully feature creating clustered areas. Views will be lost toward the river margin in a similar manner to that which could be established through other rural or environmental land uses on the Site.

While there is existing development along Horahora Road, this is at a much lesser density, and the proposed development creates larger lots along the road corridor and strongly vegetated clusters. This approach focuses on reducing the collective perception of the built development and changes the visual experience of the whole site, into pocketed views across the Site.

It is considered that overall, the proposed change in land use would result in small modification of the overall journey (i.e. 3.43 km of a 13.14 km route along Horahora road from SH1). Views to the Waikato River and Maungatautari Mountain will be retained albeit within context of rural lifestyle development in the foreground adjacent to Horahora Road. The proposed maximum height limit and the nature of the proposed earthworks will ensure that this view is preserved over the long term and post the new lots being developed. Despite the notable change in views the character of the views will change to rural lifestyle as anticipated by the District Plan. The effect would be locally **Low Moderate** (adverse) as the road approaches and passes the Site, reducing to **Low** (adverse) overall.

5.3.1.2 Effects on Waikato River Trail Users

These viewing audiences include people cycling the Waikato River Trail (WRT) along the the eastern side of site adjacent to Horahora Road. The WRT commences just north of the Site, the entire trail is 104 km and predominantly follows the river and or roads near the river, crossing the river multiple times, with the end point Whakamaru. The section adjacent to the site is 11.5km and predominately follows Horahora Road. The existing views of the site experience by this audience along Horahora Road are the same as the road users described above.

Similarly, the change in views for River Trail users will also be similar to road users, however it is understood users of the river trail will experience views along the road at a lower speed. It is anticipated that visual effects on this audience would be **-Low** (adverse) in the areas where views are available of the subdivision from the WRT. Outside these limited locations, effects on views from the WRT would be **Very Low** (neutral).

5.3.1.3 Effects on River Users (Photograph Figures 3,5 and 6).

The viewing audience would comprise of recreation watercraft users including rowers, waka ama, kayakers, motorboat users (to a lesser extent water skiers) and jet skiers. Existing views towards the proposal vary considerably relative to which Stage of the proposal audiences are adjacent to. Audiences adjacent to Stage 1 experience views towards the site limited primarily by the rising embankment and to a lesser extent the existing indigenous vegetation. Views from audiences towards Stage 2 of the proposal are prohibited by the tall steep embankments along the edge of the River, in particular from rowers, kayakers, waka ama users which sit low in the river at a more oblique angle to the elevated landform. Audience views towards Stage 3 of the

proposal are well screened by dense tall mature exotic vegetation, more open views are available towards the lower lying area in the location of the proposed reserve (Lot 37).

Viewing audiences from these locations would view the proposal from the south and north and as they move past the Proposal on the surface of the river. These transient views would comprise of the vegetated river embankments, full and partial views of the subdivision, in particular roofs of the dwellings and Stage 3 development. When adjacent to Stage 1 it is anticipated that partial views will be available of the roofs of dwellings in the lots, although these will be softened and partially filtered by the proposed mitigation planting along the boundaries of the proposed lots. Within the wider viewing context Stage 1 will be viewed in association with Finaly Park and Epworth Camp on the western side of the river and other rural development. A maximum dwelling height will assist the mitigation of the structure when viewed from the River.

Views of Stage 2 of the proposal will be primarily screened by the elevated embankments and the vegetated riparian edge. It is however anticipated that partial and glimpsed views of the proposal will be available from over the intervening existing site characteristics and the proposed mitigation planting.

Views of the Stage 3 of the proposal will vary significantly between the heavily vegetated area of the embankment and the low lying river plateau. It is anticipated that where the existing vegetation is most dense it is anticipated that there will no views of the proposal or heavily filtered views of proposed dwellings. However, where the river landform plateaus where the reserve is proposed, allows access and views to the Site, from here the site will be most visible from the river and associated users for a limited portion of the river. The embankment levels have not been altered as a result of the earthworks and the location of the earthworks are within the property boundary.

With the above in consideration, it is determined that the visual effect resultant from the proposal would be vary from **Very Low** or **neutral** where views are heavily screened to **Low – Moderate** adverse where more open views are available.

5.3.1.4 Effects on Users of Recreational Facilities

Finaly Park Adventure Camp and Epworth Camp

Stage 1 of the proposal is located to the west of Finaly Park Adventure Camp, with Epworth Park situated on the opposite side of the Waikato River. The camps, established in the 1940s, are positioned along the river's edge and feature accommodation facilities, recreational activities (e.g., a slide into the river, kayak and boat access), mature trees, amenity plantings, and open spaces.

Existing views towards the site from within the camps are primarily contained by the existing mature vegetation along the edges of the Waikato River and the eastern edge of the camps, as illustrated in the Stage 1 ZTV. More open views towards the site are available from the banks on the River beyond the screening vegetation. These views will be broadly similar to views of Stage 1 from the Waikato River, as described above.

From the camps, the proposed Stage 1 will be viewed in the context of the Waikato River and the eastern land where the development is planned. The proposed subdivision will introduce a new land use and residential dwellings into views from certain areas of the camps and their associated recreational activities. However, it should be noted that Stages 2 and 3 are unlikely to be visible from the camps due to the terraced landform and river embankments situated between Stage 1 and the future stages. Where Stage 1 is visible, the proposed land use change will modify the view above the river embankments. Building setbacks, height restrictions, design guidelines and site-wide planting will further filter and screen views of the development site.

Taking into account the Rural Lifestyle Zoning of the site, the visual effects are expected to be **Low to Moderate** (adverse) following the establishment of site-wide planting along the river embankment in areas where views are available. Outside of these limited locations, the visual effects on views from the camps are anticipated to be **Low** (neutral).

5.3.2 Private Effects from private vantage points

A desktop assessment of visual effects of the proposal from a number of houses that are within close proximity to the Site was undertaken using Google Earth, mapping and photos taken during site visits. Individual dwellings were not visited as part of the Site visit.

The level of effect has been assessed during the construction (temporary effects without mitigation) and following establishment of mitigation planting. As the Site is currently zoned rural lifestyle a change from rural-to-rural lifestyle character is therefore anticipated. This has been considered during the assessment of effects on private views.

The assessment considered overall effects on the proposed subdivision on views from dwellings in the area surrounding the Site, these properties have been identified as;

- 735 Horahora Road
- 599 Oreipunga Road
- 367 Oreipunga Road
- 80 Finlay Road
- 104 Finlay Road
- 289 Oreipunga Road
- Properties in the Wider Area (within 1km of the Site Boundary)

The level of effect has been assessed during the construction phase (temporary effects without mitigation) and following the establishment of mitigation planting. As the Site is zone for Rural Lifestyle, a change from rural-to-rural residential character is therefore anticipated. This has been considered during the assessment of effects on private views.

5.3.2.1 735 Horahora Road

The current views looking west towards the site from 735 Horahora Road are rural in nature and includes elevated views of the Waikato River and Maungataurtari Mountain. There are a number of dwellings within the site. There appear to be 3 dwellings and associated farm infrastructure within the property, the dwellings are elevated from the site, and include mature vegetation disbursed around the property and dwellings.

The proposed development will change the rural outlook to the west. The dwellings are located between stages 2 and 3, with the existing gully visually intercepting the two stages. It is likely that views from this property would be most affected by future stages of the development including earthworks, resulting in a visual effect of **Low-Moderate** (adverse). Following the establishment of Following the establishment of site wide mitigation, gully and on lot planting and design recommendations outlined in Section 6 the visual effects will reduce over time to **Low** (adverse).



Figure 20: Photograph of the Waikato River and its river margins, looking north-west from the northern boundary of the site (Stage 1).

5.3.2.2 104 and 1/104 Finlay Road

These residential audiences are located approximately 170m to the west of Stage 1 of the proposed. From the residential audiences at 104 and 1/104 Finlay Road it is anticipated that medium distance open views towards the Waikato River and Stage 1 development are available. The backdrop of these views are characterised by the rising landform of the opposing river terrace and dense vegetation. It is likely that views from this property would be most affected by the first stage of development, including earthworks and machinery movements appearing in the short to medium distance of the views. The anticipated construction activity required to the proposal in will be more intensive and extensive than would otherwise be anticipated in rural view. This construction activity is anticipated to result in a visual effect ranging between **Moderate** for stage 1 and **Low-Moderate** (adverse) for future stages. Following the establishment of site wide mitigation, gully and on lot planting and design it is anticipated that views from this audience will primarily be of Stage 1 of the proposal and experience views of residential dwellings within a single depth of lots. The proposed mitigation planting and recommendations outlined in Section 6 the visual effects will provide visual integration will soften the views of the proposed residential dwellings and reduce visual effects over time to **Low** (adverse).



Figure 21 Photograph from proposed stage 1 towards 1/104 Finlay Road.



Figure 22: Photograph from proposed stage 1 towards 104 Finlay Road.

5.3.2.3 288, 367 and 599 Oreipunga Road

For a small number of properties to the west Site of the road corridor, on western side of the river along Oreipunga Road. It is likely that these properties would obtain some views of the subdivision. Phased development would occupy an increasing area of the view to the north and south along the eastern side of the river, changing from an area of open farmland to a rural lifestyle area with associated roads, open space and plantings. While notable, it would impact

upon a small proportion of the overall view from these properties and would result in a minor modification to the key characteristics of the view. The effect would be **Low** (adverse) once plantings have been established.

5.3.2.4 Properties in the Wider Area (within 1km of the Site Boundary)

For other properties in the wider area (within 1km of the Site boundary), the potential adverse effects of the proposed subdivision maybe be visible at a distance amongst a new landscaping structure which, if undertaken sensitively, will ensure that the new development is well settled into the wider context. The change would be discernible but is unlikely to be prominent or uncharacteristic in the view. The effect would be **Low** (adverse).

Views located beyond 1km from the site (refer to ZTV mapping Map 6 – 9 and ZTV methodology outlined within Section 2.3 Visual Catchment of this report), the proposed subdivision maybe seen at a distance within a broad rural landscape context characterised by open pasture, scattered vegetation, and the presence of river corridor.

For distance views the proposed development would appear as an extension of existing rural-residential patterns already located along the wider river environment., with built form visually softened by intervening vegetation and topography. Proposed planting mitigation and design guidelines such as building colours, materials and setbacks will help to integrate the subdivision into the rural setting and reduce contrast with surrounding open space and break up the views when viewing the Site from a distance. The more elevated or open locations, the change would be seen as an addition to a landscape already containing elements of rural lifestyle development and infrastructure. The proximity to the river corridor and is associated vegetation would continue to provide a strong landscape framework that anchors the visual character of the wider area.

5.3.3 Summary of Visual Effects

The principal viewing audience which would be affected by the proposed subdivision are residents in the area immediately surrounding the Site, users of Horahora Road which passes directly past the Site, users of the Waikato River and users recreation facilities west of the Site including Finaly Park Adventure Camp and Epworth Camp.

For road users, the greatest effects would be experienced where people pass directly towards or past the Site are where the change in land use would be a notable modification to the view. Effects for these road users would be Low-Moderate (adverse). Horahora Road which extends for over 20km through the rural landscape, the effect would be highly localised to the extent of road which approaches and passes the Site. Views towards the River and Maungataurtari Mountain would be maintained albeit with development within the foreground adjacent to the Road.

Greater effects have been assessed for views from residential properties which lie immediately adjacent to or in close proximity to the Site boundary, such as properties at Horahora Road and Oreipunga Road. Due to the rural nature of the surrounding Site, they are limited.

The following table summarises the degrees of effects identified for those surrounding dwellings:

ID	Address	Distance ⁹ & Nature of View	Time of construction	Year 5 (after mitigation established)
1	462 Horahora Road	430 m approx north	Low	Very Low
2	871, 873, 875, 877 Horahora Road	500 m approx. South – east towards development. Elevated longer views, intermittent vegetation screening. Distant views towards stage 3.	Low	Very Low
3	937 Horahora Road	800 m approx. South-east toward Stage 1. Oblique partial views largely filtered by riparian and roadside vegetation	Very Low	Very Low
4	950 Horahora Road	1 km approx.. South-east across Little Waipa Stream to Stage 2. Elevated oblique views partly filtered by riparian vegetation.	Very Low	Very Low
5	910 Horahora Road	800m approx.. South across Little Waipa Stream to Stage 2.	Very Low	Very Low
6	739, 737, 735 Horahora Road	200m approx. East across road to stage 2 and 3.	Low-Moderate	Low
7	539 Oreipunga Road	1 km approx West across the Waikato River to stages 2.	Low	Very Low
8	537 Oreipunga Road	1 km approx. West across river to Stage 2	Low	Very Low
9	599 Oreipunga Road	1 km approx. South west of stage 2.	Low	Low
10	289 Oreipunga Road	970m approx. West of stage 1.	Very Low	Very Low
11	367 & 417 Oreipunga Road	1.1km approx. West of stage 3.	Low	Low
12	389 Oreipunga Road	1.1 km approx. West of stage 1.	Very low	Very low
13	80 Finlay Road	800 m approx. West across river, with direct elevated views towards stage 1.	Low	Low

⁹ Measured from the edge of the dwelling to the closest boundary of Site.

ID	Address	Distance ⁹ & Nature of View	Time of construction	Year 5 (after mitigation established)
14	43 Finlay Road (Property Address 37 Plantation Road)	890m approx. 63 ha residential / commercial property. West across river, with very limited views to the southeast of dwelling.	Low	Low
15	117 Finlay Road	West of stage 1.	Low to moderate	Low
16	110 Finlay Road	West of stage 1	Very low	Very low
17	116 Finlay Road	West of stage 1	Low to moderate	Low
18	104 Finlay Road	150m approx. West of stage 1.	Low to moderate	Low
19	1/104 Finlay Road	200m approx. West of stage 1 and 3.	Low to moderate	Low

Overall, the proposed subdivision would be discernible but not prominent in the broader rural and Waikato River would not detract from the underlying landscape character.

5.4 Summary of Effects

	Description of Effect	After Construction Prior to Mitigation	After Mitigation Establishment (5-7 years)
		Level of Effect (adverse)	Level of Effect (adverse)
Natural Character Effects	- The site is located on a section of the Waikato River that is already modified, with terraced landforms, farming activity, and existing rural-residential and recreational development - Converting open pastoral land to a rural lifestyle subdivision will reduce the perceived naturalness of the site, though this change occurs in an already altered landscape. - The proposal will be viewed in the context of existing built elements adjacent and within the river such as Finlay Park, Epworth Camp, jetties, pylons, and rural-residential dwellings, limiting its contrast with the surrounding environment. - The development avoids areas of higher natural character (such as native forested banks or rocky gorge sections), ensuring that the more sensitive and less-modified parts of the river landscape remain unaffected.	Low Moderate	Low-Moderate
Direct Landscape Effects	- The conversion of 45.61 ha of farmland to an 73-lot rural lifestyle subdivision will result in a major and permanent loss of the site's existing open rural landform and pastoral character. - Landform modification is confined within the site boundaries, with surrounding landforms and wider river terraces remaining largely untouched. - Retention of Natural Features – Existing gullies and vegetation within the site will be retained and enhanced with native planting, helping to maintain and strengthen key natural landform features. - Visual Integration Through Design – The proposal includes building setbacks, recessive architectural design, and layered native planting to	Moderate	Low-Moderate

	Description of Effect	After Construction Prior to Mitigation	After Mitigation Establishment (5-7 years)
		Level of Effect (adverse)	Level of Effect (adverse)
	integrate built form with the natural landform, visually softening the subdivision and reinforcing the riparian landscape. Limited Wider Landscape Impact – While there is substantial localised change, the broader rural landform character along the Waikato River remains largely intact, with effects mostly contained to the site and immediate surroundings.		
Biophysical -Vegetation effects	- Loss of Pastoral Vegetation – Existing farmland (pastoral grass cover) will be replaced with built development and associated landscape planting, resulting in a permanent change to the current vegetation pattern. - Retention of Key Natural Features – Existing gullies and some native vegetation within the site will be retained, protecting their ecological and visual value. - Introduction of Native Planting –Native planting is proposed along the gullies, riparian margins, and within the subdivision to enhance biodiversity, soften built form, and improve ecological connectivity. - Retention of Riparian planting along River embankment (outside of the Site) assisting with landscape context and planting connectivity to proposed planting. - Long-Term Vegetation Maturity – Over time, maturing native plantings will further integrate the development into the landscape, mitigating visual effects and contributing to habitat restoration.	Low-Moderate	Low
Landscape Character Effects	- Effects on landscape character during construction would arise from the earthworks and changes arising from exposed soils. - The effects on landscape character are anticipated to increase incrementally as construction progresses through each stage of the development. - Following construction there will be a change in landscape character from a rural productive landscape to a landscape containing development - Proposed planting around wetland and stream margins will assist the development with integrating into its landscape context	Moderate – site level, Low Moderate – wider landscape	Low-moderate – site level, Low, wider landscape

6.0 Statutory Assessment

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
<u>Rural Lifestyle Zone</u>		
RLZ-O2 <i>To avoid the establishment of non-rural based activities that do not have a legitimate need for a rural location, or which are potentially incompatible with activities that require such a location, including for reasons of reverse sensitivity.</i>	Achieves	The subdivision meets the anticipated lot sizes set out for a rural lifestyle zone. The proposed subdivision seeks to meet the anticipated outcomes of this zone in terms of elements.
RLZ-O3 <i>To identify and address possible effects from activities in rural areas in catchments in the district, and on the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and its catchment during decision making.</i>	NA	NA to Landscape Effects considerations.
RLZ-P3 <i>Provide for the subdivision, use, and development of land for rural lifestyle activities in specifically zoned places.</i>	Achieves	Proposed subdivision falls entirely within the proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone.
RLZ-P4 <i>To minimise the potential for adverse effects of rural lifestyle subdivision, use, and development at the interface of the RLZ with other zones.</i>	Achieves	Provides for separation from the Rural zone to the east with the separation of Horahora Road and inclusion of mitigation planting along the road corridor, within the subdivision and at the northern and southern ends of the development where it interfaces the Rural Zone.
RLZ-P5 <i>Promote rural residential development only in zoned locations which:</i> a) <i>Achieve cluster development, and avoids the layout of lots in a lineal pattern along roads</i> b) <i>Separates access and through-traffic functions in an effective manner</i> c) <i>Requires adequate separation distance from the Waikato River and hydroelectric power operating easements</i> d) <i>Requires adequate separation distance between the national electricity transmission lines and new rural residential development</i> e) <i>Safeguards the landscape character, visual amenity and biodiversity values of the Waikato River valley by encouraging development to be sited and designed to be sympathetic with the landform and landscape, and existing vegetation, and the building materials</i>	Achieves	Zoning of the Rural Residential Zones across the District and along Horahora Road provide for clustered development along the Waikato River, avoiding linear strip development. Within the development clusters of housing are serviced in a northern cluster, central and southern cluster with vegetation and gullies providing separation between. Integrative approaches to native vegetation along the river boundary

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
<i>and cladding of structures do not dominate the outlook visually or physically from or to the locality.</i> f) <i>Avoids, remedies or mitigates reverse sensitivity effects, including by imposing appropriate standards and conditions on development.</i>		interface contributes to the river margin and the character of the Waikato River. Proposed native vegetation responds to the landscape character, visual amenity and biodiversity values of the Waikato River
ECO-01 <i>To provide for the maintenance of the ecological values in the rural area and to conserve the cultural and heritage values of sites, while enabling primary production and other activities in a rural location.</i>	NA	NA – Refer to Ecological Assessment
ECO-02 <i>To safeguard the significant ecological, indigenous biodiversity, and natural values of the Waikato River and its margins while enabling existing rural land-uses and electricity generating infrastructure and electricity transmission and distribution lines.</i>	NA	NA – Refer to Ecological Assessment
ECO-03 <i>To identify and maintain or enhance the values of the district's indigenous biodiversity including by protecting areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.</i>	NA	NA – Refer to Ecological Assessment
ECO-05 <i>To recognise and promote the intrinsic values of indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems.</i>	NA	NA – Refer to Ecological Assessment
<u>Natural Environment Values – Natural Character</u> NATC-02 <i>To preserve the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers (and their margins) in the district, and protect them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i>	Achieves	Existing native vegetation cover in the gullies and wetland will be enhanced as part of the proposal . The river margin and native vegetation cover within the development will mitigate the inclusion of additional built form, and enhance the biotic attributes across the site as compared to the pastoral block land use currently existing.
NATC-03 <i>To identify and address possible effects from activities in rural areas in catchments in the district, and on the health and well-being of the Waikato River and its catchment during decision-making.</i>	NA	Not Landscape expertise matters for addressing
NATC-P1		

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
<i>Manage the adverse effects of land-use change or intensification, upon wetlands, and waterways.</i> NATC-P2 <i>Promote land management practices that are consistent with:</i> <i>The productive capabilities of the soil/land resource, and</i> <i>The natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins,</i> NATC-P3 <i>Subdivision use and development should be of a density, scale, intensity and in a location that preserves the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins, in the district. In particular, consideration should be given to existing indigenous vegetation and habitat values, the restoration potential of an area, the ecological linkages with other significant natural areas and their potential for enhancement.</i> NATC-P5 <i>Esplanade reserves and esplanade strips shall be created in identified high priority locations, to provide ecological linkages, improve water quality and enhance public access to lakes and rivers and their margins within the district.</i> NATC-P <i>To implement the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision and land-use within areas with natural values and located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, including by:</i> <i>(a) requiring building setbacks from waterways</i> <i>(b) creating esplanade reserves or strips</i> <i>(c) managing activities within natural areas</i> <u>Natural Features and Landscape</u> NFL-O1 <i>To provide for the protection of outstanding landscape values, and to conserve the cultural and heritage values of sites, while enabling primary production and other activities in a rural location.</i> NFL-O2 <i>To recognise the outstanding natural features and landscapes in the district and protect the landscape values within these areas from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</i> NFL-O3	NA NA Achieves Achieves AEE Achieves Achieves Achieves	NA – Refer to Ecological Assessment All identified natural areas including gullies and wetlands have been protected from Rural Lifestyle built development and highlighted for enhancement planting As above Refer to AEE for scheme allotment design decisions. All identified natural areas including gullies and wetlands have been protected from Rural Lifestyle built development and highlighted for enhancement planting Those values identified include the provision of pastoral agricultural land use of the existing site. The property has been identified in the previous District Plan as land suitable for rural lifestyle and was then zoned as Rural Lifestyle Zone. This gives clear direction that subdivisions such as

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
<i>To maintain and enhance public access to lakes and rivers in the district, particularly those locations identified as being of high priority due to their ecological or recreational values, where public access is compatible with protecting ecological values.</i>	Achieves	Public access is provided for through the Recreational Reserve.
PA-O2 <i>To improve public access to the Waikato River, Te Waihou and other waterways within the District to better enable recreational and cultural opportunities.</i>	Achieves	Public access is provided for through the Recreational Reserve.
PA-O3 <i>To safeguard the natural and recreational values of the Waikato River and its margins while enabling existing rural land-uses and electricity generating infrastructure and electricity transmission and distribution lines.</i>	Achieves	As above – addressed at Zoning
PA-O4 <i>To recognise and provide for the relationship Raukawa and the Te Arawa River Iwi as Tangata Whenua have with the Waikato River within the district.</i>	Achieved in part	The focus of the development seeks to enhance the native vegetation cover, however further engagement is required to determine if this is provided for at a site specific level.
Policies PA-P1 <i>Esplanade reserves and esplanade strips shall be created in identified high priority locations, to provide ecological linkages, improve water quality and enhance public access to lakes and rivers and their margins within the district.</i>	AEE	Refer to AEE for scheme allotment design decisions.
PA-P2 <i>To implement the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision and land-use within areas with natural values and located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, by creating esplanade reserves or strips.</i>	Achieves	All identified natural areas including gullies and wetlands have been protected from Rural Lifestyle built development and highlighted for enhancement planting
PA-P3 <i>Improve public access to and along the Waikato River, Te Waihou and other waterways by requiring esplanade reserves or esplanade strips at sites identified on the</i>	Achieves	Public access is provided for through the Recreational Reserve.

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
<i>planning maps at the time of subdivision and by keeping options open for future public use of the river edge through enforcing building setbacks.</i>		
PA-P4 <i>Establish and manage a network of well-maintained public reserves that serve neighbourhood, town and district-wide needs for active and passive recreation and biodiversity corridors, including linked parks and walkways along the urban streams.</i>	Achieves	Public access is provided for through the Recreational Reserve.
<u>Subdivision</u> SUB-03 <i>To ensure safe and efficient subdivision, well-integrated with the functions of different roads, and which is designed to provide for appropriate alternative transport modes (particularly walking and cycling).</i>	Achieves	
SUB-04 <i>To recognise the outstanding natural features and landscapes in the district and protect the landscape values within these areas from inappropriate subdivision.</i>	Achieves	In the context and scale of the ONL, and the underlying zone – the proposal maintains the values of the ONL and the natural values of the Waikato River through lot size, clustering and provision of open space and enhanced vegetated areas.
SUB-05 <i>To preserve the natural character of wetlands, lakes and rivers (and their margins) in the district, and protect them from inappropriate subdivision.</i>	Achieves	All identified natural areas including gullies and wetlands have been protected from Rural Lifestyle built development and highlighted for enhancement planting
SUB-P6 <i>Avoid subdivision in the rural area that does not have an operational or other legitimate requirement for a rural location.</i>	NA	NA
SUB-P7 <i>Provide for the subdivision of land for rural lifestyle activities in specifically zoned locations.</i>	Achieves	Subdivision is set within rural lifestyle zone.
UB-P13 <i>To achieve the Objectives of the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River by managing subdivision within rural areas and towns located within the River catchment in a way that restores and protects the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River, including by:</i> <i>(a) Limiting rural residential development to specific zoned areas</i> <i>(b) requiring setbacks from waterways</i> <i>(c) including standards for vegetation disturbance, earthworks, silt and stormwater control</i>	Achieves	Subdivision is set within rural lifestyle zone. Setbacks are provided for and native planting provided for to assist in enhancing the natural character of the Waikato River and tributaries.

Provision	Achieves / Does not Achieve	Assessment
(d) managing the effects of large-scale land-use change (e) maintaining significant indigenous biodiversity associated with the River (f) creation of new esplanade reserves or esplanade strips.		Refer to Ecological Assessment for Biodiversity effects.

7.0 Recommendations

The overall design for the proposed subdivision incorporates rural characteristics and responds to the landscape context adjacent to the Waikato River, albeit in the context of rural lifestyle density and land use change. There are in relation to provision of open space, stormwater swales and the wider connection and interface treatments with the rural zone and Waikato River. The objective of the following mitigation and design control measures are to ensure that development that occurs within the site is in such a way that landscape and visual effects are considered acceptable.

Register a Consent notice with the subdivision.

It is recommended to issue a consent notice with the subdivision which will require: -

- i. Design standards: -
 - a. That an 800m² building platform is identified on the lot (at time of building consent for the first structure on the property) which must contain the principal dwelling and any detached sheds. In ground swimming pools and tennis courts can be outside of the platform identified, as can be the driveway.
 - b. That the height of structures on the lot must be no more than 6m from the final ground level following the earthworks consented as part of the subdivision
 - c. That the colour chart for all dwellings and accessory buildings must be in accordance with the colour chart (*Select colour palettes that have a reflectance value of less than 20% for roofs and 30% for walls (Refer to the Resene British Standard 5252 Range as a guide only. All colours and materials must be approved).*
 - d. That detached accessory buildings, water tanks or other vertical infrastructure to be located beside or behind the dwelling when viewing from the Waikato River.
 - e. Preference for open frontages facing river and gully spaces, however where fencing is required a 1.2m maximum height (post and rail or post and wire/netting fenced is to be used). Side boundary fencing shall not be placed within the 10m Esplanade Strip and continual public pedestrian access across property river frontages shall be provided for in perpetuity.
 - f. Use of dark tinted glass, but not mirror glazing, is required.

Note: If these requirements cannot be complied with at time of Building Consent application, then a land use consent will be required.

- ii. Boundary setbacks (River)
 - a. That any structures shall be setback a minimum of 25m from the top of the bank of the Waikato River.
- iii. On Lot Landscaping
 - a. That the landscaping shown as “on lot planting” on the Landscape Master Plan must be planted prior to issue of the Code of Compliance for the principal dwelling on the property;
 - b. That the “on lot planting” must be maintained in perpetuity, and any dead or dying plants must be replaced as soon as practicable.
- iv. Boundary interface planting, native trees and site wide mitigation landscaping.
 - a. That the landscaping shown as “Boundary interface planting, native trees and site wide mitigation” must be maintained in perpetuity in accordance with the Landscape Implementation and Maintenance programme, and any dead or dying plants must be replaced as soon as practicable.
- v. Landscape Design Approval
 - a. Future dwellings shall be in accordance with the approved Design Guidelines. The lot owner is required to confirm compliance with these guidelines via written confirmation from developer’s representative. The written confirmation must be provided to Council with the Building Consent application.

Recommended Consent Conditions: -

1. Prepare Landscape Mitigation and Design Control Measures and Outcomes

It is recommended that the landscape concept masterplan be further developed as part of consent requirements to create a LVAMPP (Landscape, Visual Amenity and Mitigation Planting Plan) which is in general accordance with the Landscape Master Plan submitted with the consent. This must be submitted to Council as a condition of consent, and be satisfied prior to s224 for each stage. This must include the following: -

- I. Detailed landscape and planting plans for the development including site wide, on lot planting and tree options.
- II. Consideration of the Western Boundary (Waikato River interface) and Gully Frontages including any specific requirements for lots located along river interface. The Waikato River and gully network within the subdivision is a key natural feature, which are to be protected and enhanced as part of the subdivision lot development.
- III. A schedule of the species to be planted (site wide mitigation only), including the name (including botanical name), numbers, location, spacing and size of plant species at time of planting, planting density, average height of each after 10 years of planting and at maturity, details on the timing of plantings and details of the existing planting to be retained;
- IV. Implementation and maintenance programme prepared by a suitably qualified landscape architect.
- V. Measures to minimise clearing or storing of existing topsoil to preserve soil quality for placement and for planting;
- VI. Proposed site preparation and plant establishment; and
- VII. Ongoing and long-term vegetation maintenance and monitoring requirements.

2. Implement the Approved LVAMPP

The certified LVAMPP shall be implemented:

- I. That the “Boundary interface planting, native trees and site wide mitigation” planting must be planted on the lots in accordance with the LVAMPP prior to the issue of s224 for each stage.
- II. The boundary interface planting, native trees and site wide mitigation must be implemented within a planting season (April – September).
- III. A consent notice be registered as outlined above, requiring future implementation of the LVAMPP for the “on lot planting” areas.

3. Prepare Design Guidelines

It is recommended design guidelines are provided for the future subdivision. The purpose of the design guidelines is to ensure a high-quality and well design rural lifestyle development is achieved. To make sure that this is achieved a level of supervision and control is required to protect the interest of future residents in relation to the nature and type of construction that is permitted within the development. These guidelines also provide certainty to Council the that the objectives outlined in this report are met.

The design guidelines will be development based on the landscape concept masterplan:

- Design approach.
- Provide built form look and feel (particularly along rural interface and spatial bulk and location and setback arrangement)
- Boundary treatments (particularly around road frontages, river and rural boundaries)
- Acceptable exterior cladding
- Colour chart (*Select colour palettes that have a reflectance value of less than 20% for roofs and 30% for walls (Refer to the Resene British Standard 5252 Range as a guide only. All colours and materials must be approved).*)
- Fencing options, typology, mood board, and location plan
- Paving / driveway treatments and mood board
- Must be consistent with the Master Plan prepared and the LVAMPP.
- Approval Process

Design guidelines are also to be used by property owners, building companies, architects, and builders.

8.0 Conclusion

The proposed site provides for rural lifestyle development within the existing zoning framework, while appropriately responding to the site's landscape qualities and surrounding environment. The landscape is identified as being sensitive and obtaining amenity value for the district, and the site is located within an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL).

The design responds to the natural landscape and environmental features by retaining trees along the river embankment and the restoring of the existing gully landscape. Although the site's overall topography will undergo significant recontouring to accommodate rural lifestyle development – including the construction of lots, buildings, roads and stormwater swales and infrastructure, the proposed layout aligns with the Rural Lifestyle Zoning that the site currently has.

Ecological responsiveness has guided the landscape design, considering the site's relationship to the Waikato River Waikato River and its rural environment. This includes maintaining ecological habitats via consent notice protection and ongoing management, ensuring planting connectivity and implementing building setbacks and design recommendations. The staged development will create a change from rural-to-rural lifestyle development and will introduce new elements and built form visually into the landscape. Notably, the substantial earthworks will permanently alter the natural terracing and landform of the site.

It is anticipated that the engagement and collaborative design process with Mana Whenua and South Waikato District Council will progress with the more detailed design of the open space and site wide planting components of the project to ensure the subdivision is embedded into the landscape.

The future rural residential built form will respect and maintain a connection to the site's natural landscape attributes and the broader Horahora and Waikato River context. The landscape concept masterplan and design recommendations including a design panel approval process—including appropriate native planting, gully restoration, building setbacks, open space reserve with access to the River—will ensure integration with the surrounding environment.

This design approach provides an appropriate interface between the proposed development, the river, and the rural environment. The subdivision will transform the site to create new rural residential opportunities that align with the anticipated Rural Lifestyle Zoning while also acknowledging the Outstanding Natural Landscape that exists.

Appendix 1: Natural Character and Landscape Effects Assessment Method

5 December 2022

Introduction

The Natural Character and Landscape Effects Assessment (NCLEA) process provides a framework for assessing and identifying the nature and level of likely effects that may result from a proposed development. Such effects can occur in relation to changes to physical elements, changes in the existing character or condition of the landscape and the associated experiences of such change. In addition, the landscape assessment method includes an iterative design development process, which seeks to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects (see **Figure 1**).

This outline of the landscape and visual effects assessment methodology has been undertaken with reference to **Te Tangi A Te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines** and its signposts to examples of best practice, which include the **Quality Planning Landscape Guidance Note**¹⁰ and the **UK guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment**¹¹.

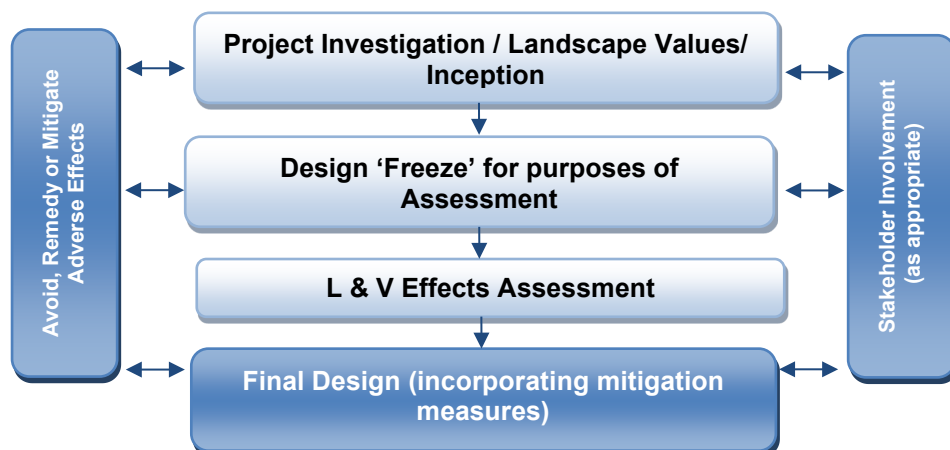


Figure 1: Design feedback loop

When undertaking any landscape assessment, it is important that a **structured and consistent approach** is used to ensure that **findings are clear and objective**. Judgement should be based on skills and experience and be supported by explicit evidence and reasoned argument.

While natural character, landscape and visual effects assessments are closely related, they form separate procedures. Natural character effects consider the characteristics and qualities and associated degree of modification relating specifically to waterbodies and their margins, including the coastal environment. The assessment of the potential effects on landscape considers effects on landscape character and values. The assessment of visual effects considers how changes to the physical landscape affect the viewing audience. The types of effects can be summarised as follows:

Natural Character effects: *Change in the characteristics or qualities including the level of naturalness*

¹⁰ <http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/index.php/planning-tools/land/landscape>

¹¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)

Landscape effects: *Change in the physical landscape, which may affect its characteristics*

Visual effects: *Consequences of change on landscape values as experienced in views*

The policy context, existing landscape resource and locations from which a development or change is visible, all inform the 'baseline' for landscape and visual effects assessments. To assess effects, the first step requires identification of the landscape's **character** and **values** including the **attributes** on which such values depend. This requires that the landscape is first **described**, including an understanding of relevant physical, sensory and associative landscape dimensions. This process, known as landscape characterisation, is the basic tool for understanding landscape character and may involve subdividing the landscape into character areas or types. The condition of the landscape (i.e. the state of an individual area of landscape or landscape feature) should also be described together with a judgement made on the value or importance of the potentially affected landscape.

Natural Character Effects

In terms of the RMA, natural character specifically relates to the coastal environment as well as freshwater bodies and their margins. The RMA provides no definition of natural character. RMA, section 6(a) considers natural character as a matter of national importance:

...the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.

Natural character comprises the natural elements, patterns and processes of the coastal environment, waterbodies and their margins, and how they are perceived and experienced. This assessment interprets natural character as being the degree of naturalness consistent with the following definition:

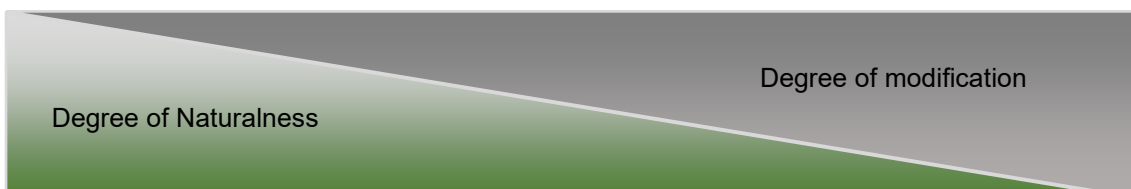
Natural character is a term used to describe the naturalness of waterbodies and their margins. The degree or level of natural character depends on:

- *The extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur;*
- *The nature and extent of modifications to the ecosystems and landscape/seascape;*
- *The highest degree of natural character (greatest naturalness) occurs where there is least modification; and*
- *The effect of different types of modification upon the natural character of an area varies with the context and may be perceived differently by different parts of the community.*

The process to assess natural character involves an understanding of the many systems and attributes that contribute to waterbodies and their margins, including biophysical and experiential factors. This can be supported through the input of technical disciplines such as marine, aquatic and terrestrial ecology, and landscape architecture.

Defining the level of natural character

The level of natural character is assessed in relation to a seven-point scale. The diagram below illustrates the relationship between the degree of naturalness and degree of modification. A high level of natural character means the waterbody is less modified and vice versa.



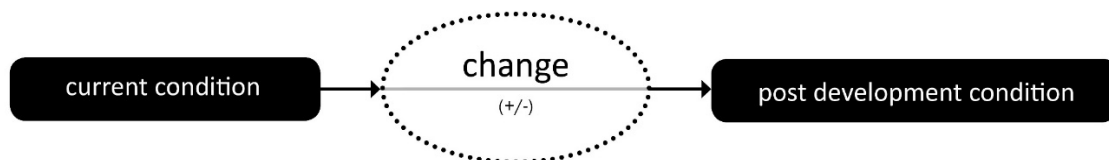
Very High	High	Moderate - High	Moderate	Moderate - Low	Low	Very Low
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Scale of assessment

When defining levels of natural character, it is important to clearly identify the spatial scale considered. The scale at which natural character is assessed will typically depend on the study area or likely impacts and nature of a proposed development. Within a district or region-wide study, assessment scales may be divided into broader areas which consider an overall section of coastline or river with similar characteristics, and finer more detailed 'component' scales considering separate more local parts, such as specific bays, reaches or escarpments. The assessment of natural character effects has therefore considered the change to attributes which indicate levels of natural character at a defined scale.

Effects on Natural Character

An assessment of the effects on natural character of an activity involves consideration of the proposed changes to the current condition compared to the existing. This can be negative or positive.



The natural character effects assessment involves the following steps:

- assessing the existing level of natural character;
- assessing the level of natural character anticipated (post construction); and
- considering the significance of the change

Landscape Effects

Assessing landscape effects requires an understanding of the landscape resource and the magnitude of change which results from a proposed activity to determine the overall level of landscape effects.

Landscape Resource

Assessing the sensitivity of the landscape resource considers the key characteristics and qualities. This involves an understanding of both the ability of an area of landscape to absorb change and the value of the landscape.

Ability of an area to absorb change

This will vary upon the following factors:

- Physical elements such as topography / hydrology / soils / vegetation;
- Existing land use;
- The pattern and scale of the landscape;
- Visual enclosure / openness of views and distribution of the viewing audience;
- The zoning of the land and its associated anticipated level of development;
- The scope for mitigation, appropriate to the existing landscape.

The ability of an area of landscape to absorb change takes account of both the attributes of the receiving environment and the characteristics of the proposed development. It considers the ability of a specific type of change occurring without generating adverse effects and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

The value of the Landscape

Landscape value derives from the importance that people and communities, including tangata whenua, attach to particular landscapes and landscape attributes. This may include the classification of Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape (ONFL) (RMA s.6(b)) based on important physical, sensory and associative landscape attributes, which have potential to be affected by a proposed development. A landscape can have value even if it is not recognised as being an ONFL.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change judges the amount of change that is likely to occur to areas of landscape, landscape features, or key landscape attributes. In undertaking this assessment, it is important that the size or scale of the change is considered within the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration of change, including whether the change is reversible. In some situations, the loss /change or enhancement to existing landscape elements such as vegetation or earthworks should also be quantified.

When assessing the level of landscape effects, it is important to be clear about what factors have been considered when making professional judgements. This can include consideration of any benefits which result from a proposed development. **Table 1** below helps to explain this process. The tabulating of effects is only intended to inform overall judgements.

Contributing Factors		Higher	Lower
Landscape (sensitivity)	Ability to absorb change	The landscape context has limited existing landscape detractors which make it highly vulnerable to the type of change resulting from the proposed development.	The landscape context has many detractors and can easily accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences to landscape character.
	The value of the landscape	The landscape includes important biophysical, sensory and shared and recognised attributes. The landscape requires protection as a matter of national importance (ONF/L).	The landscape lacks any important biophysical, sensory or shared and recognised attributes. The landscape is of low or local importance.
Magnitude of Change	Size or scale	Total loss or addition of key features or elements. Major changes in the key characteristics of the landscape, including significant aesthetic or perceptual elements.	The majority of key features or elements are retained. Key characteristics of the landscape remain intact with limited aesthetic or perceptual change apparent.
	Geographical extent	Wider landscape scale.	Site scale, immediate setting.
	Duration and reversibility	Permanent. Long term (over 10 years).	Reversible. Short Term (0-5 years).

Table 1: Determining the level of landscape effects

Visual Effects

Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects. They are consequences of change on landscape values as experienced in views. To assess the visual effects of a proposed development in a landscape, a visual baseline must first be defined. The visual 'baseline' forms a technical exercise which identifies the area where the development may be visible, the potential viewing audience, and the key representative public viewpoints from which visual effects are assessed.

The Sensitivity of the viewing audience

The sensitivity of the viewing audience is assessed in terms of assessing the likely response of the viewing audience to change and understanding the value attached to views.

Likely response of the viewing audience to change

Appraising the likely response of the viewing audience to change is determined by assessing the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and the extent to which their interest or activity may be focussed on views of the surrounding landscape. This relies on a landscape architect's

judgement in respect of visual amenity and the reaction of people who may be affected by a proposal. This should also recognise that people more susceptible to change generally include: residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views; visitors to heritage assets or other important visitor attractions; and communities where views contribute to the wider landscape setting.

Value attached to views

The value or importance attached to particular views may be determined with respect to its popularity or numbers of people affected or reference to planning instruments such as viewshafts or view corridors. Important viewpoints are also likely to appear in guide books or tourist maps and may include facilities provided for its enjoyment. There may also be references to this in literature or art, which also acknowledge a level of recognition and importance.

Magnitude of Visual Change

The assessment of visual effects also considers the potential magnitude of change which will result from views of a proposed development. This takes account of the size or scale of the effect, the geographical extent of views and the duration of visual change, which may distinguish between temporary (often associated with construction) and permanent effects where relevant. Preparation of any simulations of visual change to assist this process should be guided by best practice as identified by the NZILA¹².

When determining the overall level of visual effect, the nature of the viewing audience is considered together with the magnitude of change resulting from the proposed development. **Table 4** has been prepared to help guide this process:

Contributing Factors		Higher	Lower	Examples
The Viewing Audience (sensitivity)	Ability to absorb change	Views from dwellings and recreation areas where attention is typically focussed on the landscape.	Views from places of employment and other places where the focus is typically incidental to its landscape context. Views from transport corridors.	Dwellings, places of work, transport corridors, public tracks
	Value attached to views	Viewpoint is recognised by the community such as an important view shaft, identification on tourist maps or in art and literature. High visitor numbers.	Viewpoint is not typically recognised or valued by the community. Infrequent visitor numbers.	Acknowledged viewshafts, Lookouts
Magnitude of Change	Size or scale	Loss or addition of key features in the view. High degree of contrast with existing landscape elements (i.e. in terms of form scale, mass, line, height, colour and texture). Full view of the proposed development.	Most key features of views retained. Low degree of contrast with existing landscape elements (i.e. in terms of form scale, mass, line, height, colour and texture). Glimpse / no view of the proposed development.	- Higher contrast/ Lower contrast. - Open views, Partial views, Glimpse views (or filtered); No views (or obscured)
	Geographic extent	Front on views. Near distance views; Change visible across a wide area.	Oblique views. Long distance views. Small portion of change visible.	- Front or Oblique views. - Near distant, Middle distant and Long distant views
	Duration and reversibility	Permanent. Long term (over 15 years).	Transient / temporary. Short Term (0-5 years).	- Permanent (fixed), Transitory (moving)

Table 2: Determining the level of visual effects

Nature of Effects

In combination with assessing the level of effects, the landscape and visual effects assessment also considers the nature of effects in terms of whether this will be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in the context within which it occurs. Neutral effects can also occur where landscape or visual change is benign.

¹² Best Practice Guide: Visual Simulations BPG 10.2, NZILA

It should also be noted that a change in a landscape does not, of itself, necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect. Landscape is dynamic and is constantly changing over time in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways; these changes are both natural and human induced. What is important in managing landscape change is that adverse effects are avoided or sufficiently mitigated to ameliorate the effects of the change in land use. The aim is to provide a high amenity environment through appropriate design outcomes.

This assessment of the nature effects can be further guided by **Table 2** set out below:

Nature of effect	Use and Definition
Adverse (negative):	The activity would be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform which results in a reduction in landscape and / or visual amenity values
Neutral (benign):	The activity would be consistent with (or blend in with) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape maintaining existing landscape and / or visual amenity values
Beneficial (positive):	The activity would enhance the landscape and / or visual amenity through removal or restoration of existing degraded landscape activities and / or addition of positive elements or features

Table 1: Determining the Nature of Effects

Cumulative Effects

This can include effects of the same type of development (e.g. bridges) or the combined effect of all past, present and approved future development¹³ of varying types, taking account of both the permitted baseline and receiving environment. Cumulative effects can also be positive, negative or benign.

Cumulative Landscape Effects

Cumulative landscape effects can include additional or combined changes in components of the landscape and changes in the overall landscape character. The extent within which cumulative landscape effects are assessed can cover the entire landscape character area within which the proposal is located, or alternatively, the zone of visual influence from which the proposal can be observed.

Cumulative Visual Effects

Cumulative visual effects can occur in combination (seen together in the same view), in succession (where the observer needs to turn their head) or sequentially (with a time lapse between instances where proposals are visible when moving through a landscape). Further visualisations may be required to indicate the change in view compared with the appearance of the project on its own.

Determining the nature and level of cumulative landscape and visual effects should adopt the same approach as the project assessment in describing both the nature of the viewing audience and magnitude of change leading to a final judgement. Mitigation may require broader consideration which may extend beyond the geographical extent of the project being assessed.

Determining the Overall Level of Effects

The landscape and visual effects assessment concludes with an overall assessment of the likely level of landscape and visual effects. This step also takes account of the nature of effects and the effectiveness of any proposed mitigation. The process can be illustrated in Figure 2:

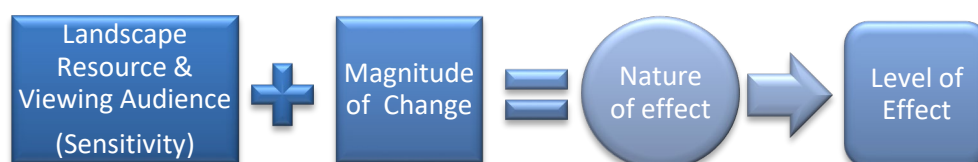


Figure 2: Assessment process

¹³ The life of the statutory planning document or unimplemented resource consents.

This step informs an overall judgement identifying what level of effects are likely to be generated as indicated in **Table 3** below. This table which can be used to guide the level of natural character, landscape and visual effects uses an adapted seven-point scale derived from Te Tangi A Te Manu.

Effect Rating	Use and Definition
Very High:	Total loss of key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. amounts to a complete change of landscape character and in views.
High:	Major modification or loss of most key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. little of the pre-development landscape character remains and a major change in views. <u>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</u> <i>High: adjective- Great in amount, value, size, or intensity.</i>
Moderate- High:	Modifications of several key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. the pre-development landscape character remains evident but materially changed and prominent in views.
Moderate:	Partial loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. new elements may be prominent in views but not necessarily uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape. <u>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</u> <i>Moderate: adjective- average in amount, intensity, quality or degree</i>
Low – Moderate:	Minor loss of or modification to one or more key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. new elements are not prominent within views or uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape.
Low:	Little material loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics. i.e. modification or change is not uncharacteristic or prominent in views and absorbed within the receiving landscape. <u>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</u> <i>Low: adjective- 1. Below average in amount, extent, or intensity.</i>
Very Low:	Negligible loss of or modification to key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, i.e. approximating a 'no change' situation and a negligible change in views.

Table 3: Determining the overall level of landscape and visual effects

Determination of “minor”

Decision makers determining whether a resource consent application should be notified must also assess whether the effect on a person is less than minor¹⁴ or an adverse effect on the environment is no more than minor¹⁵. Likewise, when assessing a non-complying activity, consent can only be granted if the s104D 'gateway test' is satisfied. This test requires the decision maker to be assured that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be 'minor' or not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the relevant planning documents.

These assessments will generally involve a broader consideration of the effects of the activity, beyond the landscape and visual effects. Through this broader consideration, guidance may be sought on whether the likely effects on the landscape or effects on a person are considered in relation to 'minor'. It must also be stressed that more than minor effects on individual elements or viewpoints does not necessarily equate to more than minor landscape effects. In relation to this assessment, low-moderate level effects would generally equate to 'minor' (see **Table 4**). Where low effects occur, it may be necessary to assess whether this is minor.

The third row highlights the word 'significant'. The term 'significant adverse effects' applies to particular RMA situations, namely as a threshold for the requirement to consider alternative sites, routes, and methods for Notices of Requirement under RMA s171(1)(b), the requirements to consider alternatives in AEEs under s6(1)(a) of the 4th Schedule. It may also be relevant to tests under other statutory documents such as for considering effects on natural character of the coastal environment under the NZ Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) Policy 13 (1)(b) and 15(b).

very low	low	low-mod	moderate	mod-high	high	very high
less than minor		minor	more than minor			

¹⁴ RMA, Section 95E

¹⁵ RMA Section 95D

significant¹⁶

Table 4: Determining adverse effects for notification determination, non-complying activities and significance

¹⁶ To be used only about Policy 13(1)(b) and Policy 15(b) of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS), where the test is 'to avoid significant adverse effects'.

Appendix 2: Landscape Masterplan



HORAHORA ROAD SUBDIVISION

LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

JUNE 2026



DOCUMENT QUALITY ASSURANCE

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCE FOR CITATION:

Boffa Miskell, 2026. Horahora Road Subdivision Landscape Masterplan. Report by Boffa Miskell Limited for Kevin and Lynn Tylee.

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LANDSCAPE DESIGN INTENT

INTRODUCTION

The Landscape Masterplan (LMP) applies to the 83 lot subdivision of Lot 1 DPS 21946 Horahora Road, Arapuni, Putāruru.

This LMP responds to the unique characteristics of the site and the wider environmental overlays in order to ensure effects of the subdivision layout, future building design and mitigation planting are less than minor.

The LMP provides building design guidelines, and the methods for implementation and maintenance of mitigation works. Managing the development of each house site and planting is critical to the integration of the development with the natural and surrounding environment. Mitigation planting will take several years of implementation and intensive maintenance before it provides the full extent of its intended mitigation.

SCOPE

The landscape design concept includes:

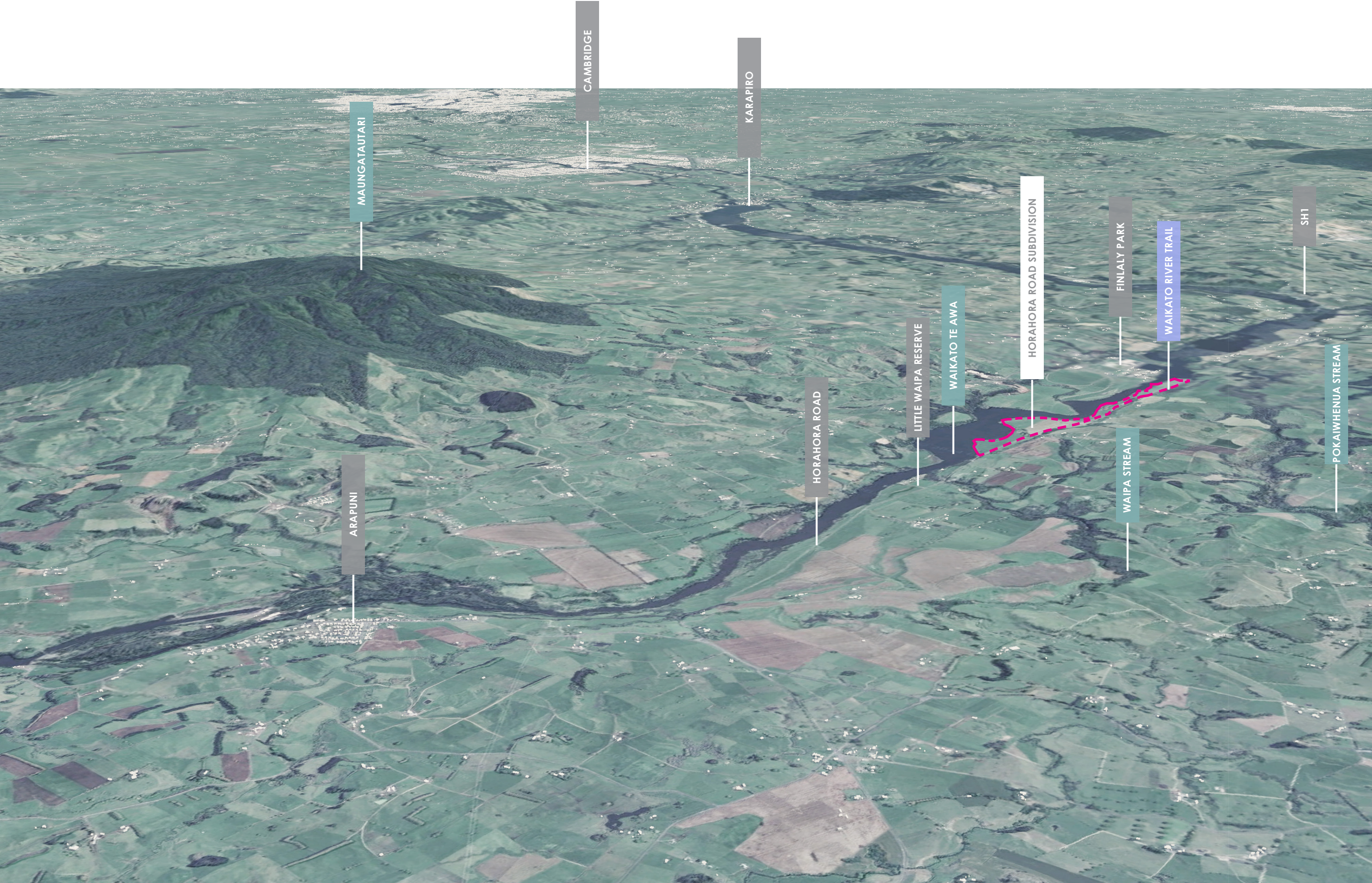
- Site Context
- Landscape Masterplan - Stage 1, Stage 2, and Stage 3
- Look and Feel
- Connectivity
- Open Space
- Landscape Planting Strategy
- Lot Design

The preparation of the Landscape Masterplan has been the result of collaboration with the wider design team including the disciplines of Planning, Landscape Planning, Ecology, Stormwater, Transport, and Civil Engineering.

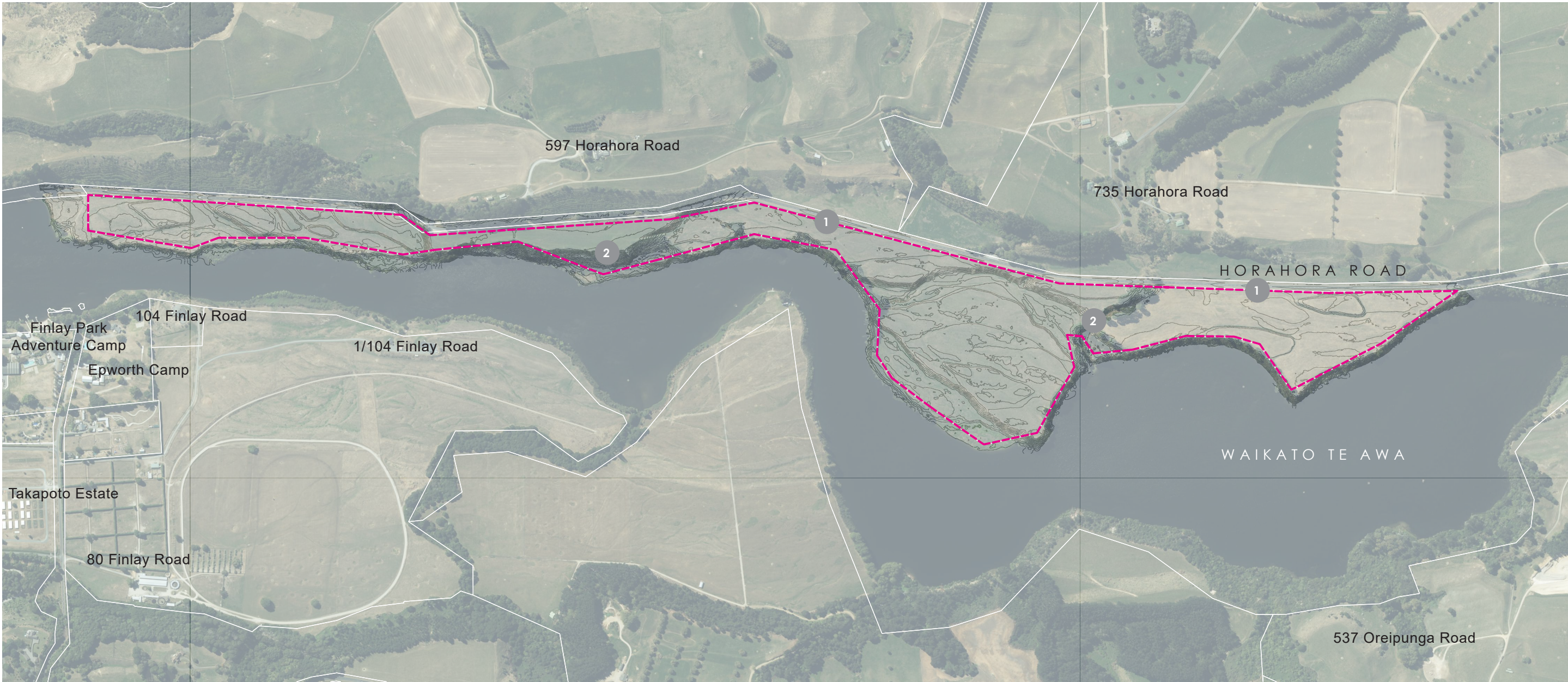
The report is to be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment, and other specialist reports including Earthworks, Stormwater for swale and wetland design requirements, and Ecological Impact Assessment for specific ecological mitigation such as bats and gully restoration.



CONTEXT - BROAD



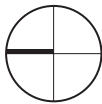
CONTEXT - SITE SPECIFIC



KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1. Existing Accessways
- 2. Existing Gully

SCALE 1:10,000 @ A3



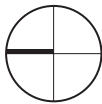
LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



KEY

- Site Boundary
- - 10m Esplanade Strip

SCALE 1:10,000 @ A3



LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

STAGE 1



KEY

- Stage Boundary
- 10m Esplanade Strip

Landscape Planting

-  Horahora Road Boundary Interface Planting
-  Site-wide Mitigation Planting
-  Clusters of Native Trees
-  On-lot Planting

- 1. Proposed Accessways
- 2. Existing Gully

Planting & Natural Feature Protection

- 3. Planting & Natural Feature Protection Areas
- 4. Ecological Reserve
Planting in accordance with the Ecological Management Plan (EMP)
- 5. Existing Wetland

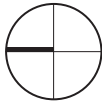
Connectivity

- 6. Waikato River Trail
- 7. Proposed Cycleway
- 8. Proposed Walkway

Open Space

- 9. Recreational Reserve

SCALE 1:5,000 @ A3



LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

STAGE 2



KEY

- Stage Boundary
- 10m Esplanade Strip

Landscape Planting

- Horahora Road Boundary Interface Planting
- Site-wide Mitigation Planting
- Clusters of Native Trees
- On-lot Planting

- 1. Proposed Accessways
- 2. Existing Gully

Planting & Natural Feature Protection

- 3. Planting & Natural Feature Protection Areas
- 4. Ecological Reserve
Planting in accordance with the Ecological Management Plan (EMP)
- 5. Existing Wetland

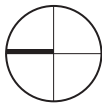
Connectivity

- 6. Waikato River Trail
- 7. Proposed Cycleway
- 8. Proposed Walkway

Open Space

- 9. Recreational Reserve

SCALE 1:5,000 @ A3



LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN

STAGE 3



KEY

- Stage Boundary
- 10m Esplanade Strip

Landscape Planting

-  Horahora Road Boundary Interface Planting
-  Site-wide Mitigation Planting
-  Clusters of Native Trees
-  On-lot Planting

- 1. Proposed Accessways
- 2. Existing Gully

Planting & Natural Feature Protection

- 3. Planting & Natural Feature Protection Areas
- 4. Ecological Reserve
Planting in accordance with the Ecological Management Plan (EMP)
- 5. Existing Wetland

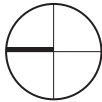
Connectivity

- 6. Waikato River Trail
- 7. Proposed Cycleway
- 8. Proposed Walkway

Open Space

- 9. Recreational Reserve

SCALE 1:5,000 @ A3



LOOK AND FEEL

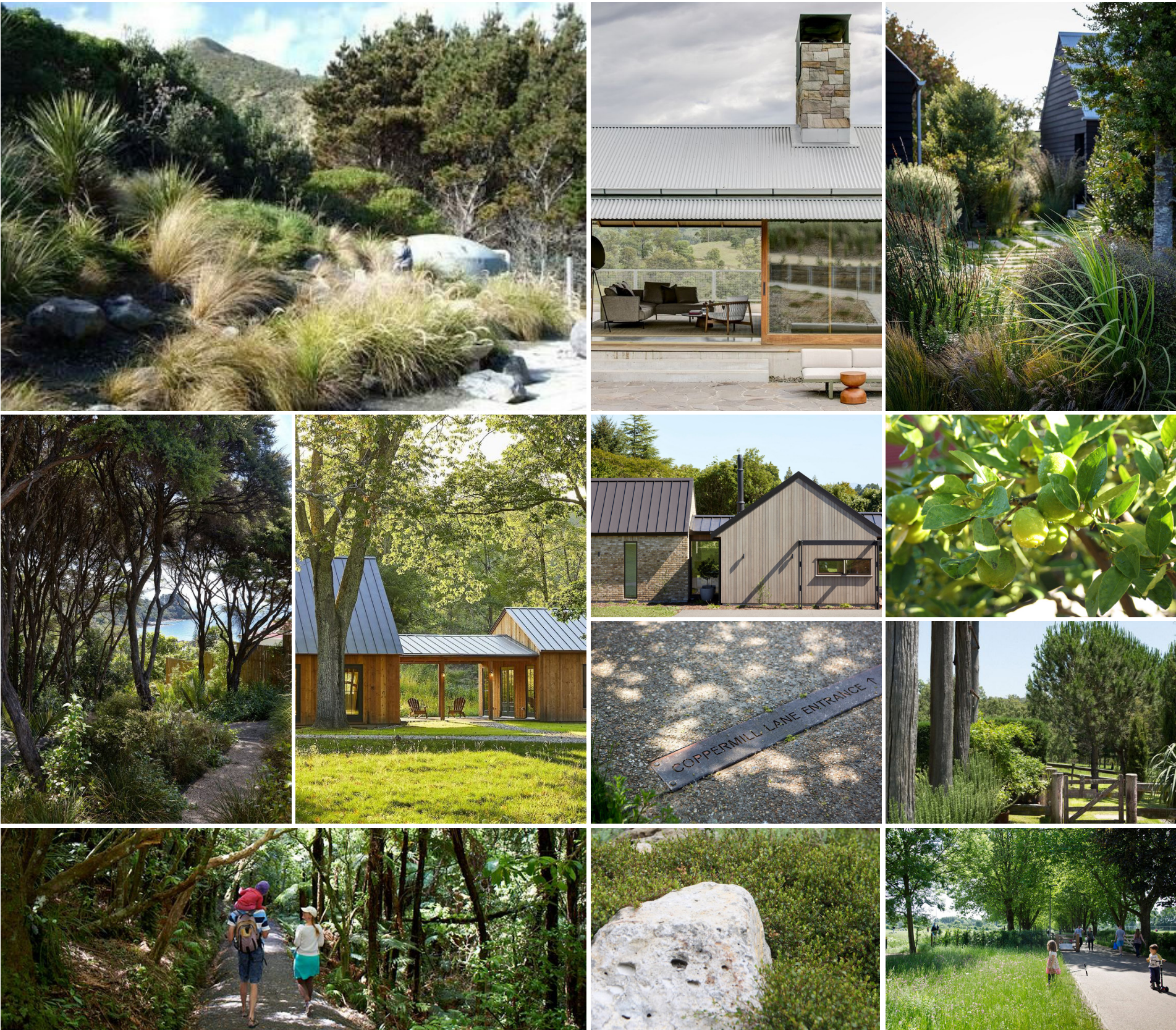
The look and feel of the subdivision is characterised by a natural palette of materials with recessive tones, architectural form drawing inspiration from modest vernacular forms complementary to the rural riverside setting and a native plant palette endemic to the river terraces.

The development celebrates nature and local context through considered design of both built form and landscape mitigation measures embodying the patterns and look and feel of the surrounding rural landscape. Planting has been carefully placed to maintain the beautiful views to the surrounding river, farmland and Maungatautari Mountain beyond.

The native vegetation cover is required to be managed in perpetuity and encouraged to grow to its natural height and form. Planting should be organic in shape and form and avoid straight unnatural lines within the landscape.

Quality materials should be used in the construction of all facets of the houses, fences, walls, and landscape features to ensure durability and functionality. Retaining walls and cut banks should be sympathetic to the land, stepped and follow the natural landform and contours. Retaining walls should be made from natural earth, timber, or local stone materials.

Point Wells Garden by Andy Hamilton Studio



Precedent Projects

CONNECTIVITY

WALKING AND CYCLING

A series of interconnected trails and way-finding are proposed for recreational access for walking and cycling and will link to the Te Awa River Ride.

The multi-purpose Waikato River Trail stretches more than 60 kilometres along the Waikato River, from Ngaruawahia in the north to Karapiro, Horahora and Arapuni in the south.

MITIGATION AND ECOLOGICAL PLANTING

Existing vegetation and habitats should be protected and connected across the subdivision with ecological and site-wide mitigation planting. A native plant palette has been carefully selected to re-establish local biodiversity, identity and connection to place. The planting will provide a strong visual and ecological connection to Maungatautari.

RURAL CHARACTER AND AMENITY VALUES

To maintain rural character and countryside living amenity values pathways should be a combination of compacted gravel, mown meadow, board-walk and natural stone steppers. Non-permeable surfaces should be kept to a minimum.

Infrastructure, services and facilities should be shared wherever possible to reduce unnecessary duplication or development. For example shared driveways, lanes and wastewater treatment systems.

Kerb and channel can be considered to be an urbanising element and is therefore not preferable in rural developments. Wherever possible grassed swales should be used for stormwater management.

Property boundaries should be demarcated by visually permeable post and rail fences or wire and batten fences allowing views across the open countryside.

Entrance ways should be low key so that they integrate with the visually permeable fence lines and allow views across the open countryside. The size, form and style of the entrance way should be carefully considered. Entrance ways should be designed and constructed in a more traditional manner and of traditional materials such as timber or stone.



Precedent Projects

OPEN SPACE

STRATEGY

Open spaces contribute to communities, enhance people’s quality of life and access and engagement with nature, and preserve and protect the natural environment. The masterplan ensures that amenity values associated with countryside living are maintained through the protection of open space, views and existing landscape patterns.

RECREATIONAL RESERVE

The location of the Recreational Reserve along the river allows for people to connect with the river and wider landscape. The reserve is characterised by large open fields for informal play and access to the river, framed by tracts of native vegetation and rural amenity planting. Picnic areas under the shade of tree canopies provide spaces for neighbours and visitors to gather and supervise children’s play.

ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT RESERVES

Connecting these areas to each other helps build the wider ecological network and allows indigenous fauna to move more easily between habitat areas.



Precedent Projects

LANDSCAPE PLANTING STRATEGY

STRATEGY

The landscape planting strategy guides native restoration and enhancement planting in areas that need it most and ensures that existing ecological systems, including areas of native bush, waterways and their riparian margins are protected, ecological links are enhanced or created and steep or eroding slopes are stabilised and planted.

Mitigation planting around building sites will provide screening and softening of structures and create shelter and private space. Planting should follow the contours and be responsive to the shape of the land. This helps avoid the creation of sudden changes in patterns along property boundaries that do not fit in with the natural landscape patterns.

The native plant palette has been selected to re-establish local biodiversity, identity and connection to place. Multiple vegetation ‘tiers’ are proposed from herbaceous plants, shrubs, canopy, and emergent trees to form diverse habitat niches. Flowering and fruiting species will extend the food supply for native fauna across the seasons.

LANDSCAPE PLANTING ZONES

The planting consists of six planting zones: Planting & Natural Feature Protection Areas; Ecological Reserve Planting; Horahora Road Boundary Interface Planting; Site-wide Mitigation Planting, On-Lot Amenity Planting and Clusters of Native Trees.

Each Planting & Natural Feature Protection Area is important in contributing to the landscape identity and ecological diversity of the site and wider region and should be protected in perpetuity.

Planting in the Ecological Reserves should be in accordance with the Ecological Management Plan (EMP).

IMPLEMENTATION AND LONG TERM MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

As part of the consent conditions a detailed Landscape, Visual Amenity and Mitigation Planting Plan (LVAMPP) will be developed. This be developed in consultation with Ecologist’s and Mana Whenua.

The objectives of this plan are to ensure the appropriate integration of the proposed subdivision into the receiving environment. This involves the appropriate design, implementation and management of built form and mitigation planting in order to ensure adverse effects upon the receiving environment are minimised and appropriate.

The LVAMPP will include the following:

- Plant Propagation and Supply
- Site Preparation
- Planting, Quality Control, Inspections, and Reporting
- Maintenance and Monitoring



Precedent Projects

LANDSCAPE PLANTING ZONES

HORAHORA ROAD BOUNDARY INTERFACE PLANTING



Precedent Project

Shrubs - Over 2.0m

- 1. Coprosma propinqua (mingimingi)
- 2. Coprosma robusta (karamū)
- 3. Olearia rani (heketara)
- 4. Pittosporum tenuifolium (kōhūhū)
- 5. Pseudopanax arboreus (puahou)
- 6. Schefflera digitata (patete)

Shrubs - Under 2.0m

- 7. Brachyglottis repanda (rangiora)
- 8. Coprosma rhamnoides (twiggy Coprosma)

Herbs and Grasses

- 9. Austroderia fulvida (toetoe)
- 10. Phormium cookianum (wharariki)

LANDSCAPE PLANTING ZONES

SITE-WIDE MITIGATION PLANTING AND ON-LOT PLANTING



Precedent Project

Trees

- 1. Alectryon excelsus (tītoki)
- 2. Aristotelia serrata (makomako)
- 3. Beilschmiedia tawa (tawa)
- 4. Cordyline australis (tī kouka)
- 5. Elaeocarpus dentatus (hīnau)
- 6. Hoheria sexstylosa (houhere)
- 7. Knightia excelsa (rewarewa)
- 8. Kunzea robusta (kānuka)
- 9. Leptospermum scoparium (mānuka)
- 10. Plagianthus regius (mānātu)
- 11. Sophora microphylla (kōwhai)

Shrubs - Under 2.0m

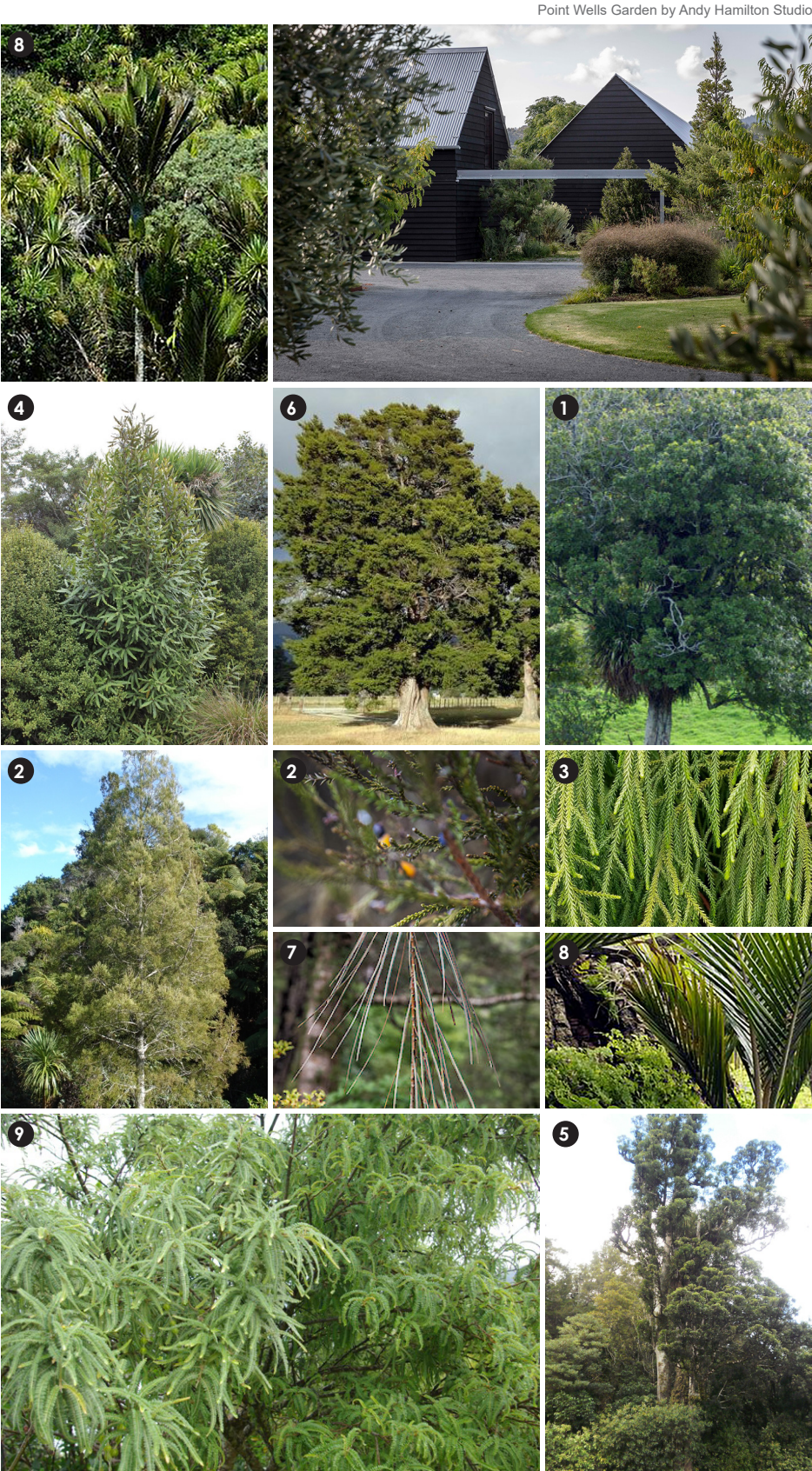
- 12. Brachyglottis repanda (rangiora)
- 13. Coprosma rhamnoides (twiggy Coprosma)

Shrubs - Over 2.0m

- 14. Coprosma propinqua (mingimingi)
- 15. Coprosma robusta (karamū)
- 16. Olearia rani (heketara)
- 17. Piper excelsum (kawakawa)
- 18. Pittosporum tenuifolium (kōhūhū)
- 19. Pseudopanax arboreus (puahou)
- 20. Schefflera digitata (patete)
- 21. Veronica stricta (koromiko)

LANDSCAPE PLANTING ZONES

CLUSTERS OF NATIVE TREES



Precedent Project

Trees

1. Alectryon excelsus (tītoki)
2. Dacrycarpus dacrydioides (kahikatea)
3. Dacrydium cupressinum (rimu)
4. Knightia excelsa (rewarewa)
5. Laurelia novae-zelandiae (pukatea)
6. Podocarpus totara (tōtara)
7. Pseudopanax crassifolius (horoeke)
8. Rhopalostylis sapida (nīkau)
9. Sophora microphylla (kōwhai)

LANDSCAPE PLANTING ZONES

AMENITY PLANTING



Hedge planting

- 1. Griselinia littoralis (kāpuka)
- 2. Olearia paniculata (akiraho)
- 3. Pittosporum tenuifolium (kōhūhū)

Amenity planting (Mix 1)

- 4. Austroderia fulvida (toetoe)
- 5. Cordyline australis (tī kouka)
- 6. Phormium cookianum (wharariki)

Amenity planting (Mix 2)

- 7. Dianella nigra (tūrutu)
- 8. Machaerina sinclairii (pēpepe)
- 9. Muehlenbeckia axillaris (pōhuehue)

Amenity planting (Mix 3)

- 10. Arthropodium cirratum (rengarenga)
- 11. Carex virgata (pūkio)
- 12. Chionochloa flavicans (tussock)
- 13. Lobelia angulata (pānakenake)

Amenity planting (Mix 4)

- 14. Leptospermum scoparium 'Wiri Donna' (mānuka cultivar)
- 15. Leptospermum scoparium 'Wiri Sandra' (mānuka cultivar)
- 16. Muehlenbeckia astonii (tororaro)
- 17. Pseudowintera colorata (horopito)

LOT DESIGN - BUILT FORM

OBJECTIVE

To design the buildings to reduce the visual prominence they may have within the landscape, and to review the landforms surrounding the site, and design buildings that respond to the natural and cultural patterns of the landscape.

The design, visual quality, and character of the interface between the house and the site’s river frontage is of key importance.

OUTCOMES

Design Controls

Houses shall be designed to positively address the street, front doors and indoor living areas shall have a relationship with the street. Windows from living areas shall be included in the front of each house and shall face the street.

Relationship Between Adjoining Buildings

When designing a new house, there should be a consideration of the relationship with any existing neighbouring houses (if applicable). The relationship between the living area, windows, doorways, and house frontages should be taken into account.

This holistic design approach will ensure that potential negative design outcomes will be avoided.

Impact on neighbouring properties shall be reduced by incorporating design techniques such as modulating mass and scale.

All buildings shall be single storey or split level buildings that are no more than 6.0m above the subdivision development ground level.

River and Gully Frontages

The Waikato River and gully network within the subdivision is a key natural feature, which are to be protected and enhanced as part of the subdivision lot development.

- No garages, water tanks, or other vertical infrastructure shall be located or visible from the river or gully frontages.
- There is a preference for open frontages facing the river and gully spaces, however where fencing is required a maximum 1.2m high post and rail or post and wire/netting fence is to be used.
- Use of dark-tinted glass is required. Mirror glazing is not permitted.

Architectural Design

Roof Form

The following roof designs are permitted:

- Gable end roofs.
- Combination gable and hip roofs.
- Mono-pitch roofs.
- Full hip roofs are permitted, but must incorporate roof feature elements or height variations on key frontages.

The following roof designs are not permitted:

- Flat roofs.
- Full hip roofs with no feature or height variation.

Roof Materials

The following roof materials are permitted:

- Corrugated profile pre-painted steel roofing (e.g., Colorsteel®, Metalcraft Roofing, or similar).
- Tray and trapezoidal profile pre-painted steel roofing (e.g., Colorsteel®, Metalcraft Roofing, or similar).
- Selected pre-formed steel roof tiles (flat profile only).
- Flat profile concrete roof tiles (Monier Horizon™ or similar).
- Natural quarried slate roof tiles.
- Cedar shingles.
- Fibre-cement roof tiles.

The following roof materials are not permitted:

- All scalloped profile concrete or clay roof tiles.
- Decramastic roof tiles.



LOT DESIGN - COLOUR + MATERIAL

Wall Cladding Materials

The following materials are permitted:

- Smooth plastered, concrete panel systems (e.g., Celcrete®, or similar) or brick only.
- Traditional-style pointed and painted brick.
- Painted timber or Linea® weatherboard.
- Vertical natural cedar timber.
- Board and batten (must be stained or painted in approved colours).
- Natural stone.
- Large format, light coloured, straight-edged brick (e.g., Premier™ Country Brick, or similar).
- Tray and trapezoidal profile pre-painted steel.

The following materials are not permitted:

- All other brick cladding.
- All corrugated profile metal wall cladding.
- Flat panel cladding systems (e.g., Axon™, Stria™, Titan™ or similar).

Natural timber or pre-coloured aluminium doors and windows are to be used. The following aluminium joinery and door colours are permitted:

- Matt Black.
- Dark Grey / Charcoal / Ironsand.
- Light Grey / Ghost Grey / Sandstone Grey.
- Karaka.
- Titania.

Material Combinations

Two to three complementary cladding materials are to be used per house. The front façade cladding shall be applied in a ratio of 1:3, however brick cladding is not to exceed 50 percent of any publicly visible frontage.

OBJECTIVE

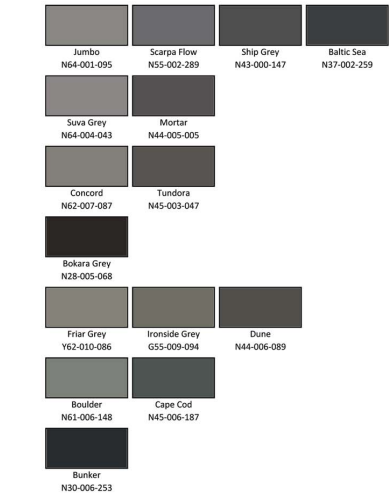
To design the building to reduce the visual prominence it may have within the landscape through the use of recessive building colours and materials sympathetic to the colours of the surrounding landscape.

OUTCOMES

- Select materials that respond to the natural landscape and native vegetation.
- Roofing materials shall be a recessive colour with a reflectance value of no greater than 20%.
- Design buildings that use natural materials including natural stone, timber, concrete, and cladding that has a reflectance value of less than 30% for walls, and less than 20% for roofs.
- Select colour palettes that have a reflectance value of less than 20% for roofs, and less than 30% for walls (Refer to the Resene British Standard 5252 Range as a guide only. All colours and materials must be approved).
- Use natural material finishes such as stone and timber which will weather naturally.
- Apply dark oxide colouring to concrete materials to reduce the reflectivity of the material.
- Timber cladding and other natural elements (stone) naturally weathered or stained dark.
- Painted timber, block-work, or other materials may be used and must contribute to receding the building into the landscape.
- The reflectance value of surfaces, including joinery, gutters, downpipes, cladding, and roofing materials shall be no greater than 30% for walls, and no greater than 25% for roofs.

Avoid

- Materials that are smooth and create a high level of reflectivity.
- Extensive use of materials that are dominant in the urban environment (e.g., brick and tile, plastered finishes). Some use is suitable but balanced with the selection of materials and colours that are responsive to the natural environment.



LOT DESIGN - SITE

OBJECTIVE

To design the site in such a way that adverse effects are mitigated through ecological enhancement, retention of broad natural landform, nestling and screening of built form, and preservation of view-shafts framed by vegetation.

OUTCOMES

Earthworks

- No earthworks or grading other than the minimum required for driveways or underground services is permitted outside the house site area.

Placement

- All buildings shall be located within the Defined Building Areas and a 800m² building area, including ancillary buildings, garden sheds, pools, and above ground water tanks.
- A maximum building height of 6 metres (above finished ground level).

Retaining Walls

- Not permitted.

Hard Surfaces

- Driveways with flush kerbs and either grass or planted swales for stormwater management.
- Asphaltic concrete, exposed aggregate concrete driveways, or gravel driveways.
- Impervious outdoor areas, including patios, outdoor entertainment areas, and turning areas within the driveway, shall all be located within the Defined Building Areas.

Fencing

- 1.2m high timber post and rail fencing (stained in approved colours or left to weather naturally).
- All fencing within the development is required to be stained using an environmentally friendly exterior water-borne timber stain (Resene® Sheer Black (WW0801) Water-borne Woodsman, or similar approved).
- 1.2m high post and wire fencing.
- Front gates and fencing shall be visually permeable (e.g., post and rail, or stone pillars and wrought iron).

Lighting + Utilities

- All exterior lighting shall be contained within the Defined Building Area, and shall be down lights only. Flood lighting is not permitted within the sites.
- All utilities and services shall be located below ground. No above ground wiring is permitted. Aerials, satellite dishes, and other utilities shall be contained within the 6.0m building height plane.
- Downward facing bollard lighting is acceptable to demarcate driveway entrances.

Water Tanks

- All water tanks shall be screened from view (from the river and gullies) and buried a minimum of 2/3. Materials and colours shall be harmonious with the dwelling. Water tanks shall be installed on each respective lot within the corresponding Defined Building Area.

Vegetation

- Native vegetation, as detailed in the Landscape Mitigation Plan shall be implemented prior to Section 224(c) final approval and sign-off.
- Vegetation cover shall be managed in perpetuity and shall be allowed to grow to its natural height and form.

AVOID

- Plain white concrete driveways.
- Vertical cut embankments, and retaining walls.
- Closed board fences, and gates.
- Earthworks that visually scar the landscape and are in-congruent with the natural landform.



LOT DESIGN - DESIGN GUIDELINES APPROVAL PROCESS

The Landscape Masterplan provides recommendations for futre building and design guidelines.

To make sure that intended design outcome is achieved, a level of supervision and control is required to protect the landscape values within the site and surrounding environment, as well as the interests of all future residents in relation to the nature and type of construction and planting that is permitted within the development.

This required level of control will be achieved in the form of design guidelines and private covenants. The owners of each new title will need to comply with those requirements when building within the development.

It is proposed the guidelines will be used by: by property owners, Architects and Architectural Designers, Builders, Landscape Architects and Landscapers.

Exact details of the approval process are to be confirmed but the intent is for plans and drawings to be submitted to a Design Review Panel prior to submitting plans for building consent approval to Council. The Design Review Panel will be able to approve or decline any submitted design at their discretion, if it is not determined to be keeping with the intent of the Design Guidelines. This will be a process managed by the developer.

There is also proposed to be a consent notice registered to each title which will require a sign off letter from the developers’ urban design panel stating that they have met the requirements of the design intent. The basic requirements (e.g maximum height, colours, landscaping) can be stated within the consent notice also.

It is intended that the design review process for the architectural and landscape architectural designs for each lot will be a condition of consent (via a consent notice) to ensure that the design outcomes of this application are achieved. The implementation of the Design Review Panel is discussed further in 6.0 Recommendations in Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment.

Drawings and information requirements provided to the Design Review Panel shall include the following details:

- All plans and drawings should be legible and to scale, with north arrow, Lot / DP, street name, applicant name and correct details.
- The site plan must include the proposed house and garage location, setbacks, contours, driveways, ancillary structures and service locations.
- Floor Plans and Elevations – A full set of floor plans and elevations are required for the house and garage.
- Landscape Plan must include the proposed On-Lot Planting, Horahora Road Boundary Interface Plan and Clusters of Native Trees. Fencing types and heights, washing lines, bin and service areas, swimming pool and spa pool, garden sheds, pergola and trellis structures and lawn areas.
- Landscape Management and Maintenance for maintaining planting.
- Materials, Colours and Finishes Schedule – A materials, colours and finishes schedule is required for all external building materials including roofing, walls, doors, windows, garage doors, structures and fencing.
- List of all Non-Compliances – It will be the designer’s responsibility to provide a list of all non-compliance issues with the Rules and Design Guidelines.

Any subsequent variations to approved plans will be required to be reissued for review and approval by the Design Review Panel.

Development Control Approval Form

Lot Number: _____
Client Name: _____
Submission Date: _____
Plans Referenced for approval:

Submitted Plan meets Development Control Guidelines - APPROVAL	☒
Submitted Plan DOES NOT Meet Development Control Guidelines	☐
Submitted Plan COMPLIES with street tree, light post and storm-water drain locations	☐
Colour & material palette HAS BEEN submitted ☒	Colour & material palette HAS NOT BEEN submitted ☐
Landscaping plan HAS BEEN submitted ☒	Landscaping plan HAS NOT BEEN submitted ☐

Development Controller Comments:
Approval for layout of home, Materials, Landscaping plan and key architectural features has been granted.
Approved by:
Name: Tim Utteridge Date: 18/11/2024 Signature: _____

Submitted plans that DO NOT meet Development Control Guidelines are to be resubmitted for approval following consideration of the Development Controller’s comments. Colour and material palette must be submitted for Development Controller approval prior to any ordering of materials or construction works commencing on site. No plans are to be submitted to the Waikato Regional Council for Building Consent prior to Development Control Approval. Development Control Approval does not in any way imply compliance with Building Code, Resource Consent or District Plan requirements. The property owner / builder is responsible for checking with the relevant parties or authorities regarding statutory requirements and co-ordination with subdivision services, trees and infrastructure. Please ensure site & driveway layout meets on-site manoeuvring requirements.



About Boffa Miskell

Boffa Miskell is a leading New Zealand professional services consultancy with offices in Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Queenstown. We work with a wide range of local and international private and public sector clients in the areas of planning, urban design, landscape architecture, landscape planning, ecology, biosecurity, cultural heritage, graphics and mapping. Over the past four decades we have built a reputation for professionalism, innovation and excellence. During this time we have been associated with a significant number of projects that have shaped New Zealand's environment.

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Appendix 3: Graphic Supplement

HORAHORA ROAD SUBDIVISION

GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT

JULY 2025



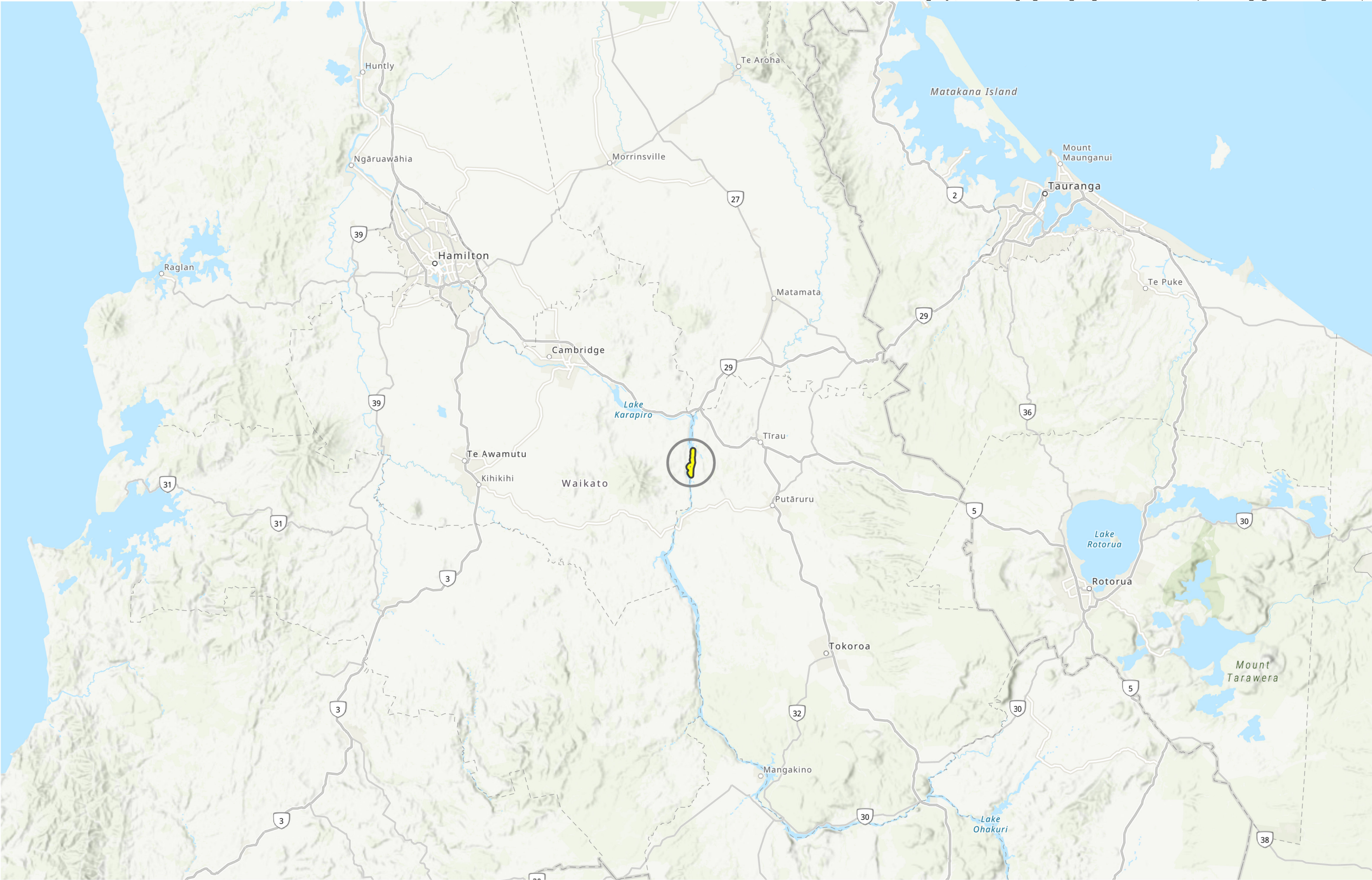
Horahora Road Subdivision



Contents

MAPS

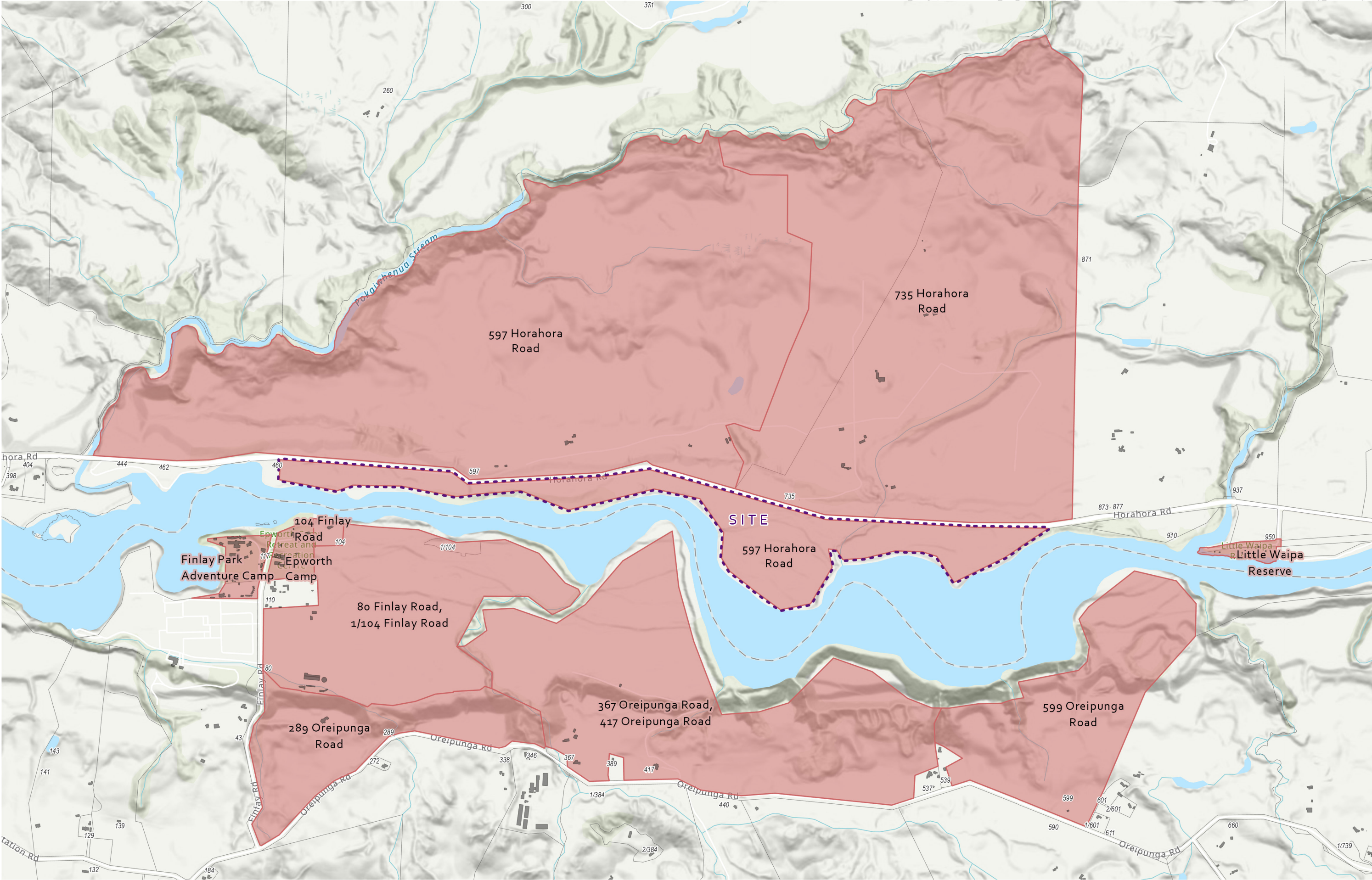
MAP 1:	Site Context Plan
MAP 2:	Planning Context
MAP 3:	Site Layout
MAP 4:	Photography Viewpoint Locations
MAP 5:	Private Properties Map
MAP 6:	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Combined)
MAP 7:	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 1)
MAP 8:	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 2)
MAP 9:	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Stage 3)

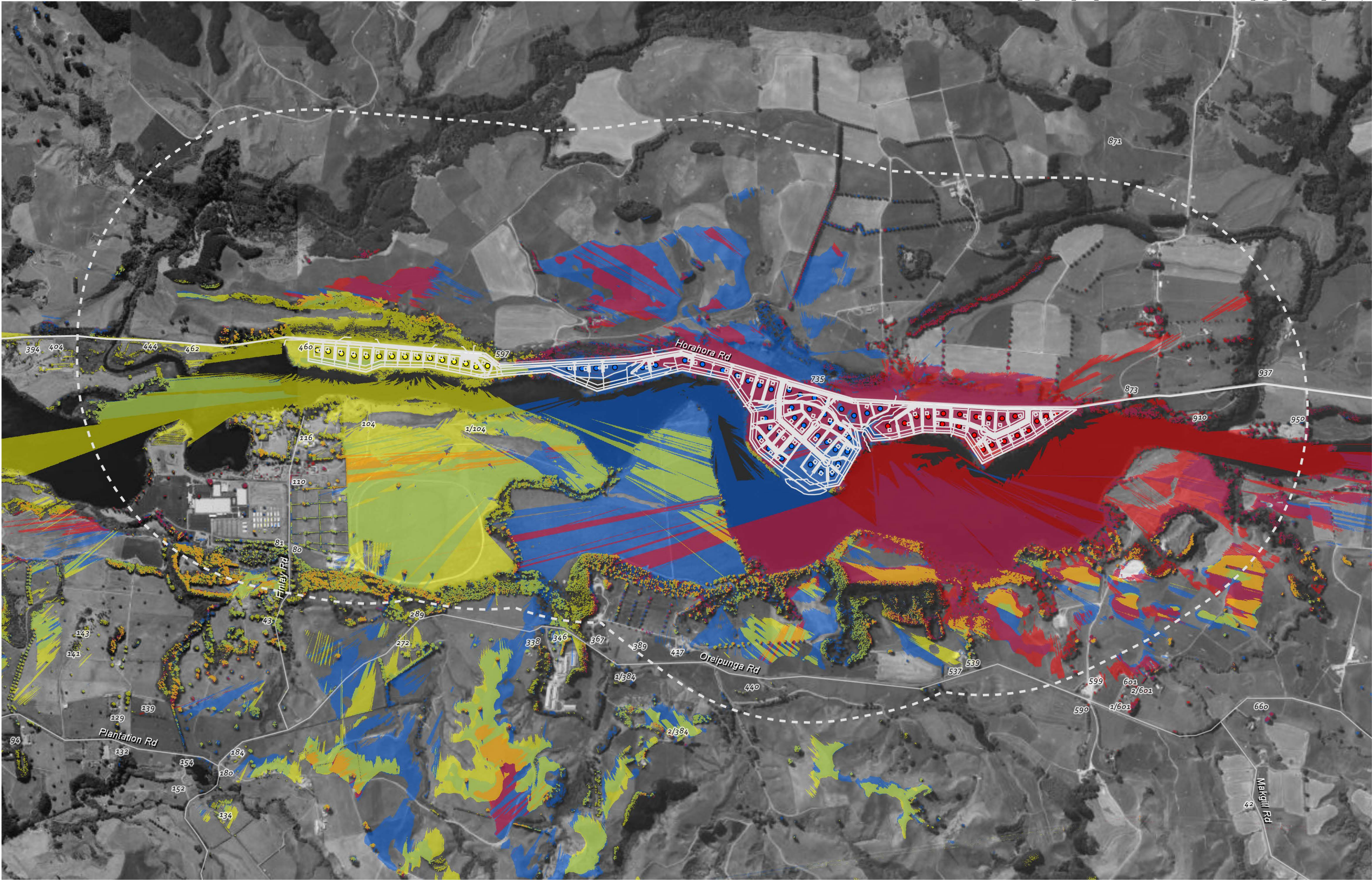


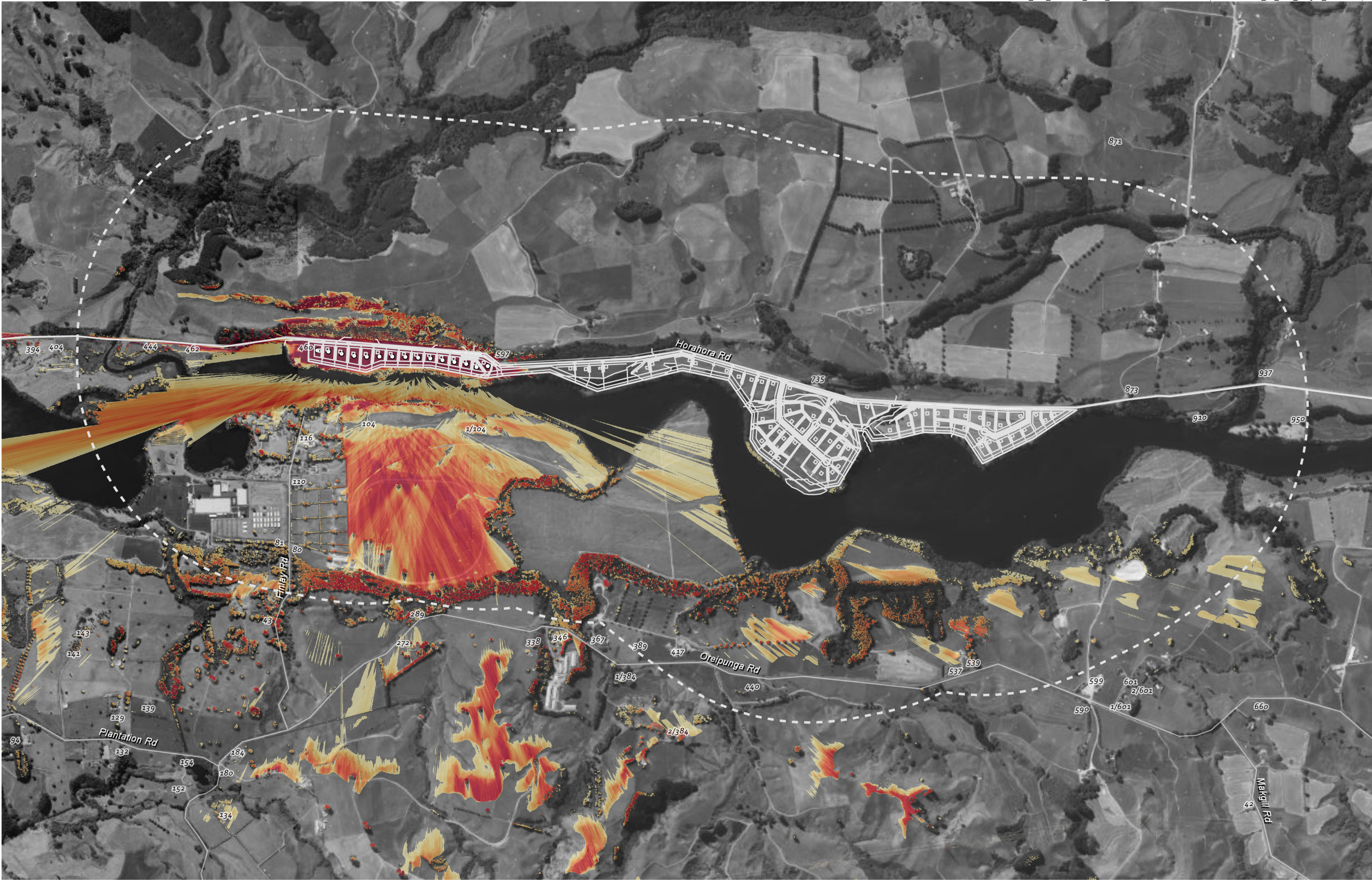




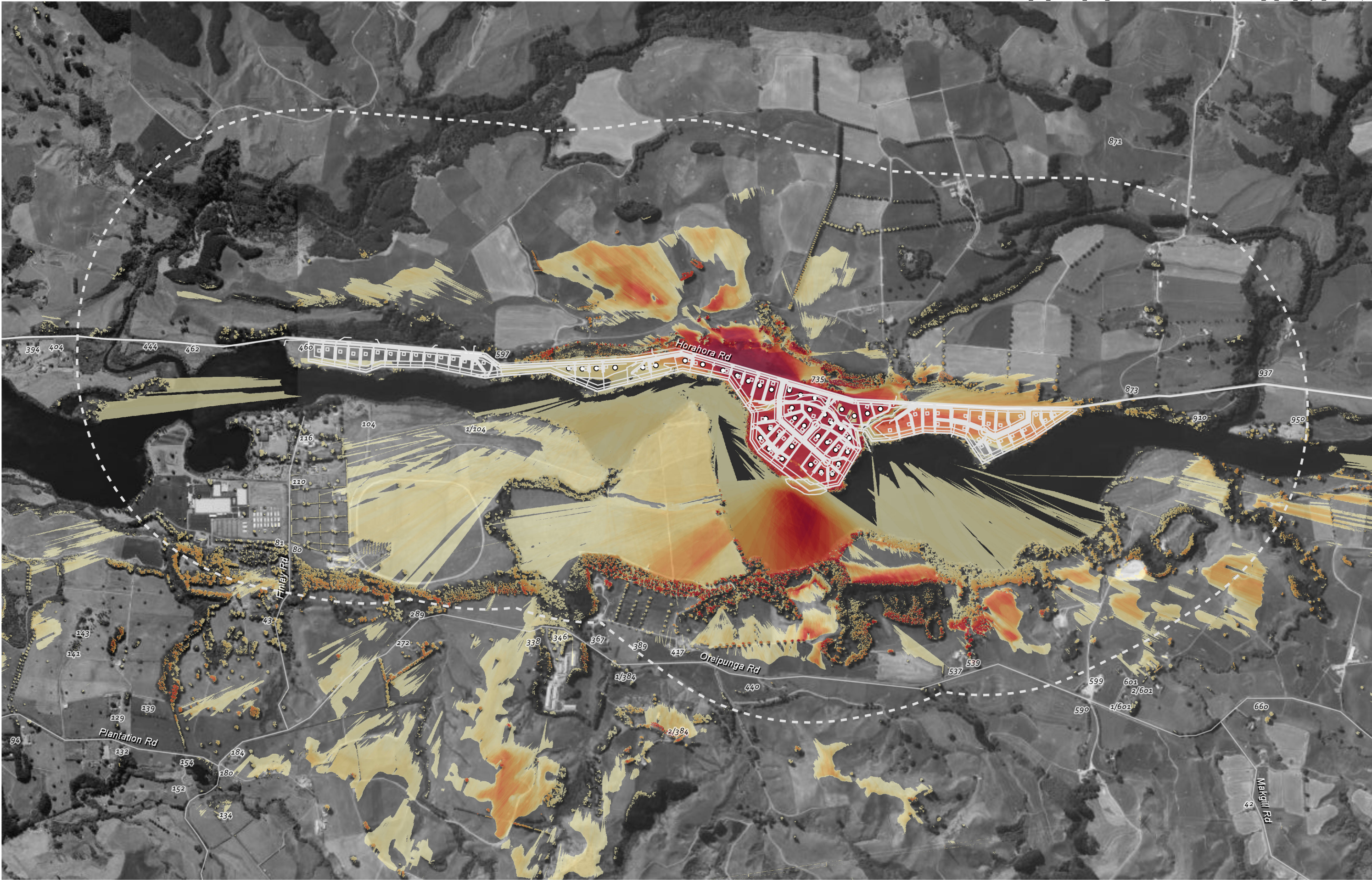














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