





The Hill, Ellerslie

Landscape Effects Assessment
Prepared for Fletcher Residential Limited

4 November 2021



Document Quality Assurance

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Cover photograph: Ellerslie Racecourse. Site Photo towards Maungakiekie- Julia Wick, 28 September 2021

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1.0 Introduction

Boffa Miskell Limited has been requested by Fletcher Residential Ltd and Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Incorporated, (also referred to as the Auckland Racing Club) to prepare an assessment of landscape effects in respect of a proposed comprehensively designed residential development on a large site fronting Ladies Mile at Ellerslie Racecourse, Ellerslie (the Site). This assessment supports an application by these parties for the project to be identified as a referred project under the Covid-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Act 2020.

The Site comprises part of the Auckland Racing Club, Ellerslie Racecourse but is surplus to the racing club's requirements due to the forthcoming cessation of steeplechase races at Ellerslie. It occupies elevated ground at the eastern end of the racetrack with frontage to Ladies Mile and access from the cul-de-sac head of Derby Downs. The proposal is for a diverse residential development with a series of different housing typologies.

Overall, the Project as illustrated by the Indicative Concept Plan on page 9 (figure 7) includes a development of 192 large market apartments within 3 individual buildings, 62 retirement lite apartments within a single complex, 38 detached houses (1-2 storey) and 53 Duplex or Terrace Houses (2-3 storey). Under the referral request the Project is described as "a development of approximately 370 dwellings" enabling the potential for additional apartments or terraces within the same general bulk and form, if this emerges through the detailed design phases.

The overall building bulk and massing has been distributed across the Site. The buildings range from single storey detached houses through to apartment buildings. Heights comprise of typically six living levels atop partial basements (with Apartment Building A 'retirement lite' being 7 storeys over 1 basement). The building heights will comply with the 25m height control under the Special Purpose Zone and they also comply comfortably with the locally significant volcanic viewshaft height overlay which passes over the Site.

In terms of potential visual effects, this assessment focuses on the height, scale and massing of the proposal and the appropriateness of the development as a whole on the urban receiving environment. In particular, the nature and level of potential effects that the increase in height, scale and form of the development, will have on the urban character and amenity of the locality as well as on views and visual amenity of the surrounding viewing audiences has been assessed.

The assessment considers the proposed development in the context of the existing as well as future built environment. The Site is located within the Special Purpose - Major Recreation Facility Zone of the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP). It is also subject to the Ellerslie Racecourse, Sub precinct overlay.

Boffa Miskell has a long history and involvement with the Auckland Racing Club (ARC) at the Ellerslie Racecourse. We have assisted ARC over many years with earlier approved plan changes and with wider masterplanning previously working with Urban Designer Clinton Bird.

Involvement commenced on this particular masterplanning project in early 2021 working for Auckland Thoroughbred Racing Incorporated (ATRI) also known as Auckland Racing Club (ARC) we worked with Ignite architects, Harrison Grierson, and Tattico providing input to the ARC essential development outcomes and preliminary site masterplanning.

In mid-2021 the ATRI called for expressions of interest to develop the approximately 6.3 hectare Site known as "The Hill" at Ellerslie Race Course. The expression of interest process included the requirement to submit an "Indicative Concept Plan" (ICP). From this process Fletcher

Residential Limited (Fletcher) was selected as the preferred tenderer and began work on evolving the Indicative Concept Plan (ICP) (initially developed in-house) and associated Design Statements for the Site. In September 2021 Fletcher engaged Brewer Davison (Urban Design / Masterplanning / Architecture) and Boffa Miskell (Landscape Design and Assessment) to further develop and refine the ICP for referral and ultimately for resource consent under the Covid19 Fast Track consenting legislation. Boffa Miskell landscape architects will ultimately prepare the Landscape Concept Plan package to accompany the resource consent application.

Two pre-application meetings have been held with Auckland Council on the 13th and the 18th of October 2021 to discuss preliminary design and outcomes for the Site.

2.0 Methodology

Tuia Pito Ora / The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects has recently endorsed (May 2021) new draft guidance for the assessment of landscape under the RMA context in Aotearoa / New Zealand. The interim / draft guidance replaces earlier guidance and landscape architects' reliance on other international best practice / guidance. The draft guidance, *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines [Final draft subject to final editing, graphic design, illustrations, approved by Tuia Pito Ora / NZ LA 5 May 2021]*, has been used to guide the methods adopted in this assessment.

A number of site visits have been undertaken in the process of undertaking the assessment including for the purpose of taking photographs in order to prepare visual simulations and to illustrate the Site and its landscape context. Four visual simulation viewpoints have been selected to prepare bulk model views (refer Graphic Supplement).

As part of our assessment, the Site has been observed from both proximate and more distant locations within the established urban fabric of the locality.

In assessing the scale of landscape effects a seven-point scale of effects has been applied, as recommended in *Te Tangi a te Manu* comprising: very low, low, moderate low, moderate, moderate high, high and very high a description of which is included in **Appendix 1**. Effects have been assessed in terms of the values of the landscape having first understood its characteristics in terms of the physical, associative and perceptual realms of the landscape. Importantly it is acknowledged that change in a landscape does not of itself generate adverse effects.

3.0 Site and Landscape Context

The subject Site is large in the context of the urban residential grain of the surrounding area being approximately 6.3 hectares in area. It is located at the eastern end of the existing Ellerslie Racecourse track. As such the Site adjoins the open expanse of the racecourse to the west and south and an urban residential / street front context to the north, east and southeast. The elevated nature of parts of the Site provides for a wide outlook including to a number of Auckland's volcanic maunga. The Site is roughly triangular in shape with a long street frontage

to Ladies Mile to the north. The Site's southern and western boundaries abut the Ellerslie Racetrack defined by the white post and rail track boundary fence.

The eastern boundary interfaces with a pocket of residential development accessed by Hunterville Court and Derby Downs Place. These sites predominately include one and two storey residential dwellings.

To the north western boundary there is another smaller pocket of residential properties located from a Right of Way off Ladies Mile. Dwellings on these properties are two storey and elevated with views south out over the Ellerslie Racecourse.

To the north of the Site immediately across Ladies Miles are a number of large one and two storey standalone houses. These are typically set back from Ladies Mile, behind tall boundary fencing / walls with established garden vegetation. These residential properties are typically orientated with their principal living and outdoor space to the north with expansive views out over Remuera / Meadowbank away from the Site.

To the south of the Site is Derby Downs Domain at the end of Derby Downs Place and Lonsdale Street. This domain is an approx 0.2ha flat grassed area, with a number of mature and substantial specimen trees and Palm trees throughout. A footpath connects to the south between Derby Downs Place and Lonsdale Street.

To the south-west of the Site the land is vacant (apart from two large storage sheds and mature landscaping) but is zoned Terrace House and Apartment Building and is subject to the Ellerslie 1 Precinct provisions. The planning provisions envisage residential development between 4 to 8 levels as a restricted discretionary activity and also identify private road and pedestrian connections through this Site to Morrish Street and Mitchelson Street.



Figure 1: Site Context Plan showing the Site and adjoining area. Refer Graphic Supplement Figure 2

The Site is greenfield and relatively undeveloped. The grassed steeplechase course wraps around the northern and eastern edge of The Hill. There are a number of horse jumps and fencing that form the steeplechase track. An existing pond primarily used for irrigation is

located at a low point in the southern part of the Site close to the Derby Downs cul-de-sac head. This engineered pond is concrete lined, fully fenced with exotic Willow trees to the edges. Immediately to the south of the pond is a small, sealed area that is used for storage of equipment. There is vehicular access from the end of Derby Downs to an underpass under the racetrack to the central open space. This access is used primarily for service access and on race days for parking in the centre of the track. The primary public access to the Golf Driving Range in the centre of the track is from Ascot Ave in the west.

The Site is mainly open and in grass. There is some perimeter planting including well established vegetation along the corrugated iron fenced Ladies Mile frontage. This vegetation mostly comprises overgrown native and exotic shrubs / small trees / weed species such as Pittosporum and Five Finger as well as Privet. There are a number of mature Pohutukawa trees within this boundary vegetation. The Pohutukawa trees are not scheduled in the AUP as notable or protected, they are however important specimen trees within this frontage. An Arborists report by Stuart Barton of Arbor Connect identifies four of the Pohutukawa to be significant and nine of eleven in total that would be suitable / worthy of retention.

In the wider context (refer Figure 2 below) Ladies Mile traverses the ridgeline and highpoint of the local area, with the land sloping away to the south and north from the ridge. The Site is located on the ridge and slopes down to the west and north west providing good access to the sun and expansive views over the Ellerslie Racecourse and the suburbs of Ellerslie and Greenlane.

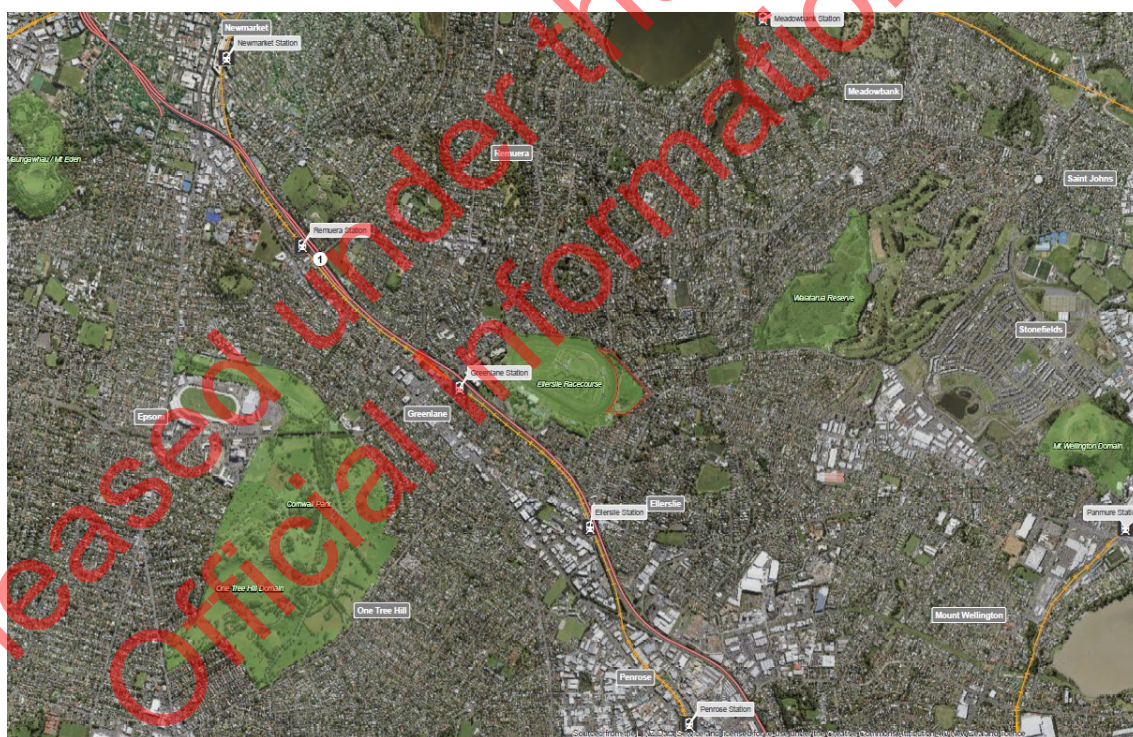


Figure 2: Aerial photograph showing the Site and wider context. (Source: Auckland Council Geomaps)

There are also views from the Site to key defining maunga on the Auckland isthmus including Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill) 2km to the south west, and further afield Te Kōpuke (Mount St John) 4km to the north west, Ōhinerau (Mount Hobson) located 2km to the north west and distant views to Te Pane o Mataoho / Te Ara Pueru / Māngere Mountain 7km to the south west. (Refer figures 3 & 4 below).



Figure 3: Site Photo looking west with views towards Maungakiekie, Te Kōpuke and Ōhinerau



Figure 4: Site Photo looking south with views towards Te Pane o Mataaho / Te Ara Pueru / Māngere Mountain

The southern boundary of the Site is located within 900m of the closest shop of Ellerslie village. This traditional retail main street features a number of shops and amenities including supermarkets, cafés, dairy, butcher, chemist, greengrocer, and takeaways.

The Site is adequately well connected to a variety of transport modes, including walkable access to multiple bus stops and frequent bus services at the outer perimeter of Ellerslie and Greenlane train stations, where the train to the central city takes 15mins¹. The Site is also located in proximity to the Greenlane major motorway interchange. There are a number of bus routes and bus stop locations along Ladies Mile.

There are a number of examples of new, larger scale residential development occurring within the Ellerslie area and within the neighbouring suburb of Remuera. These include examples such as 'Element on Ellerslie', 'Wairua' and '308' in Remuera.

In summary, the Site occupies a large sloping area of land with frontage to Ladies Mile and access from the Derby Downs cul-de-sac. The Site adjoins one and two storey residential development to its east and north eastern boundaries with a long northern frontage to Ladies Mile. There are some good specimen Pohutukawa trees located along the Ladies Mile frontage. The Site is zoned Special Purpose - Major Recreation Facility Zone under the AUP. It has a relatively immediate relationship with the neighbourhood shops at Ellerslie Village and is

¹ The frequency is understood to increase with the completion of CRL

connected to the Ellerslie and Green Lane train stations, bus routes and the wider transport network.

4.0 Statutory Context

The Site is zoned Special Purpose - Major Recreation Facility Zone and the Ellerslie Racecourse Precinct (I312.) under the AUP (Refer figure 5 below). The zone extends across the majority of the Ellerslie Racecourse, with a small area to the south of the Racecourse zoned Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB). The zoning immediately surrounding the Site to the north and east is Residential – both Single House Zone and Mixed Housing Suburban Zone. Refer figure 5 below.

The AUP Ellerslie Racecourse Precinct provisions which apply to The Hill enable buildings up to 25m as a permitted activity as long as they are located outside the 20m interface control area which applies along the external boundary perimeter of The Hill Site and comply with 2.5m + 45 degree height in relation to boundary control that applies along adjoining residential zone boundaries. Effectively compliance with the interface control will also achieve compliance with the height in relation to boundary standard. The provisions would permit a 25m high grandstand or function centre potentially arcing the full perimeter of the racecourse track.

The Special Purpose – Major Recreation Facility Zone is linked to Auckland events and facilities in this particular case the primary purpose of racing and events at Ellerslie. The standards and assessment criteria in the Ellerslie Racecourse Precinct (while not technically relevant) are helpful to assess including the interface control (I313.6.8) and the effects of buildings in the following assessment criteria;

- (4) Any new buildings, external building alterations or additions to a building for a primary, compatible, or accessory activity greater than 25m and up to 35m in height and/or which does not comply with height in relation to boundary standards:
 - (a) The visual effects of the additional bulk and scale of buildings on the amenity of private properties, streets and public open spaces.
- (5) Any new buildings, external building alterations or additions to a building for a primary, compatible, or accessory activity not meeting Standard I313.6.8.
 - (a) The visual effects of the building design and external appearance on the amenity of private properties, streets and public open spaces.

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) suggests that apartment style development, up to and above six storeys, will increasingly be seen as appropriate and desirable close to established centres and transport corridors such as Ladies Mile and transport nodes such as rail stations (Ellerslie and Greenlane).

The proposal envisages a change in use of the subject Site which would be annexed from the Racecourse and converted to greenfield residential development. With the cessation of steeple chase racing the large Site is surplus to requirements in respect of the ARC and has significant potential for urban intensive residential development with prime amenity and good accessibility to local facilities and transport modes.

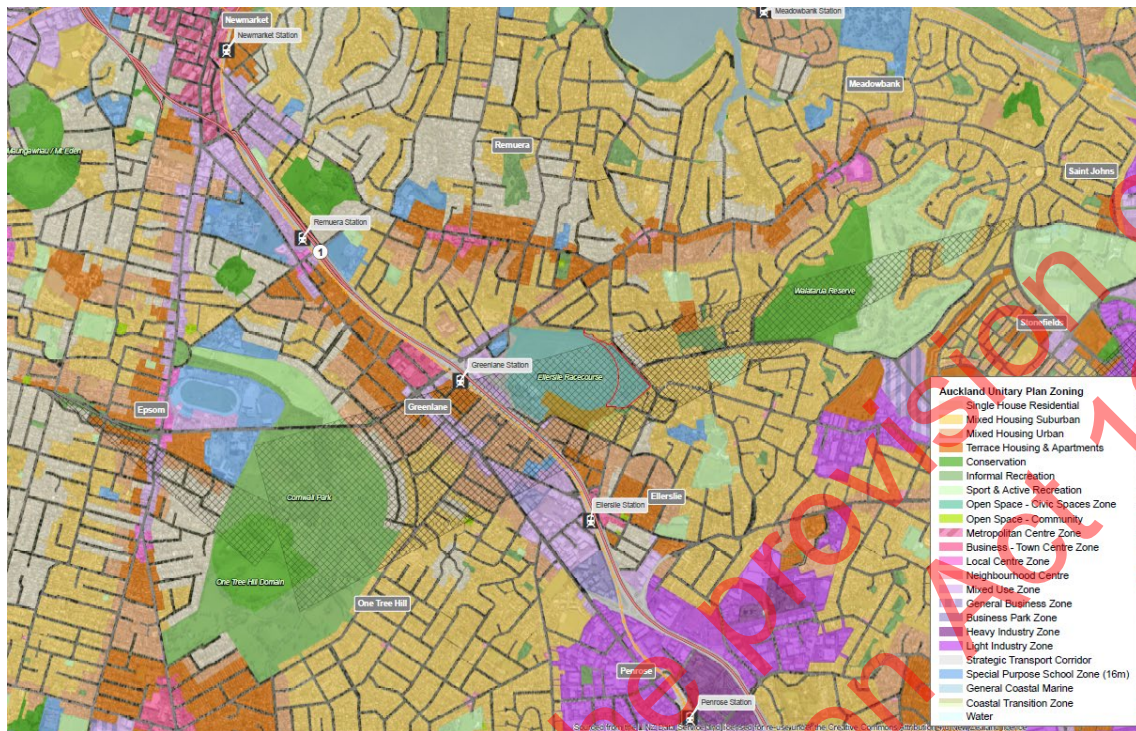


Figure 5: Statutory Context, Auckland Unitary Plan Overlay. Site is Special Purpose Major recreation Facility Zone with O10 Locally Significant Volcanic Viewshaft overlay. (Source: Auckland Unitary Plan)

The Site is subject to a number of volcanic viewshaft overlays. The majority of these viewshaft are located on the western edge of the racecourse, with only the Locally Significant Viewshaft from O10 (One Tree Hill) affecting the proposed Site. The origin of this local viewshaft is from the intersection of College and Merton Roads 2.8km from the Site. The height limit set by the viewshaft in this location is 24m to Ladies Mile and 36-38m towards the lower portions of the Site (refer figure 6 below). The heights enabled by the viewshaft have informed the proposed bulk, massing and height for the proposal with the proposal achieving compliance in respect of these height overlays.

1.1 Viewshaft Maximum Heights

Maximum Building Height Range Above Ground (Apx.)



Figure 6: Diagram that indicates the maximum Building Height Range above ground (approx) due to Volcanic Viewshaft

The Site is not subject to any Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape overlays (ONFL) nor is it subject to a special character overlay.

5.0 The Proposal

The massing and Site configuration of the proposal is clearly illustrated in the set of architectural drawings prepared by project architects and masterplanners Brewer Davidson in close collaboration with Fletcher Living's in house masterplanning team. Brewer Davidson have also prepared a number of renders using their 3D model to illustrate the proposed development (Refer Indicative Concept Plans – 3D Renderings).

The Project layout has been informed by a number of key Landscape moves. These have been adopted in the overall master planning of the 'The Hill'. This includes creating a unique and special place to live by connecting distant views of the surrounding landscape and a strong visual connection through to the iconic Auckland Racing Club. Clear pedestrian connections for residents and the public where people are welcomed into the development through the use of slow vehicle movement, shared spaces and external connections to the wider Ellerslie area.

The Project is illustrated in the below indicative concept plan (ICP) (refer figure 7 and 8 below). This indicative plan sets out the key bulk and location elements of the proposed development. This includes buildings, vehicle and pedestrian access routes as well as outdoor living areas and open space.



Figure 7 Indicative Concept Plan



Figure 8: View South-West from above Abbotts Way looking over The Hill across Ellerslie Racecourse with Maungakiekie - One Tree Hill, in the distance and Maungawhau - Mt Eden, off to the right – Source Brewer Davison, Indicative Concept Plan – 3D Renderings.

The proposal is for a diverse residential development with a series of different typologies. Overall, the Project as illustrated by the ICP includes a development of 192 large market apartments within 3 individual buildings, 62 retirement lite apartments within a single complex, 38 detached houses (1-2 storey) and 53 Duplex or Terrace Houses (2-3 storey). Development is proposed to be set around a hillside in a way that works with and reflects the underlying landform and emphasises the green space.

The project will have good permeability with pedestrian access through to transport and shopping opportunities at Ellerslie and Greenlane. The proposed development will not be gated and will enhance the wider pedestrian / cycle connectivity in the local area. A public accessway from Ladies Mile opposite Abbots Way to the edge of the Racecourse will be available through the Apartment grounds. The proposed density and mix of the development is also partially driven by identified traffic capacity for the area. A looped public road is provided from Ladies Mile (avoiding the Abbots Way intersection) and access is provided from an extension to Derby Downs Place with signalised intersection with Ladies Mile.

Some, and potentially all, of the nine Pohutukawa trees adjacent to Ladies Mile identified in the Arborist Report as worthy of retention will be retained and protected as part of the development. Particular focus in this regard will be on the four trees identified as significant. These trees will provide a frontage to the apartment precinct within the development and assist with the integration of the larger buildings to this public street interface.

The proposed development will be carefully designed to enable the protection of these trees. Buildings have been positioned in the ICP well beyond the dripline to maximise the probability that as many as possible will be able to be kept. The character of amenity of these trees will be enhanced through the removal of the competing weed species and other undergrowth along Ladies Mile.

The Site is also well visually connected to wider areas of public open space including Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill), Te Kōpuke / Titikōpuke (Mt St John), Ōhinerau (Mount Hobson) and Te Pane o Mataoho (Mangere Mountain) (Refer figure 9 below).

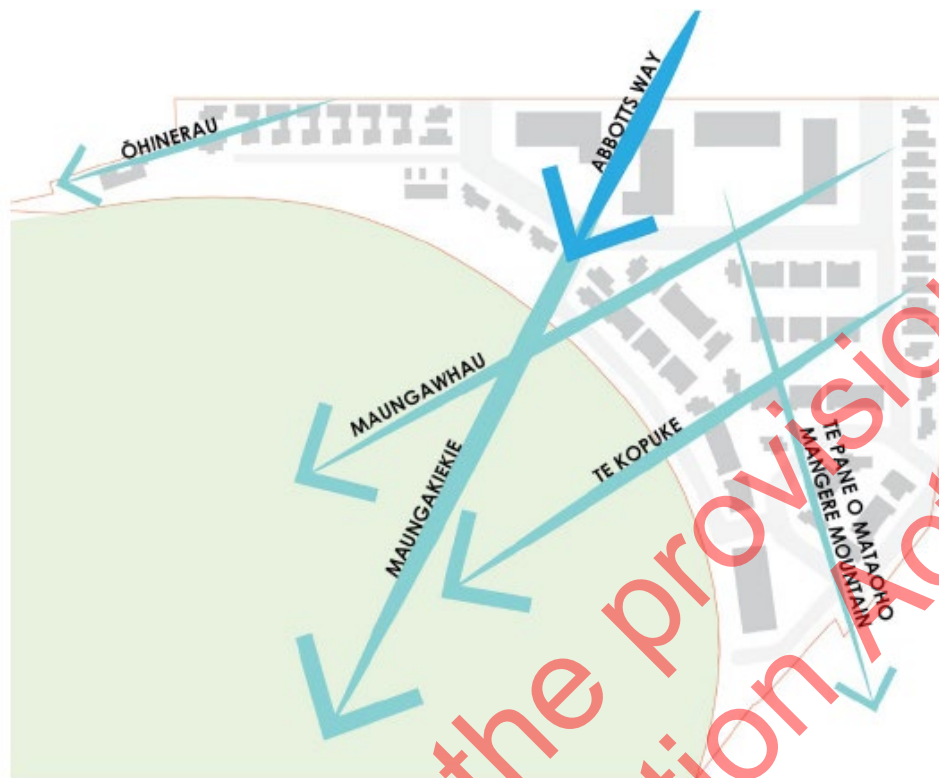


Figure 9: Diagram illustrates wider visual relationships to surrounding landscape and key public open space

Overall the building bulk and mass has been carefully distributed within the Site providing generous building separation and a range of interface conditions. The height of the proposed development is driven by the 25m height control underlying the zone rather than for the potential for greater heights capped by the volcanic viewshaft. By locating the taller components to the Ladies Mile frontage of the Site the height and building grain / scale has been placed in careful consideration of directly adjoining residential neighbours. The seven storey Retirement Lite building is located to the lower 'basin' of the Site. Height is separated from residential neighbours by proposed terrace housing to the southern boundary.

Spatially the Project is split into three main 'zones' (refer figure 10 below). These are an expansive flat area in the vicinity of and south of the existing pond; a mostly narrow 'shelf' or 'plateau' of land elongated along the Ladies Mile ridge (including much of the existing steeple chase track), and the southwest-sloping land between.

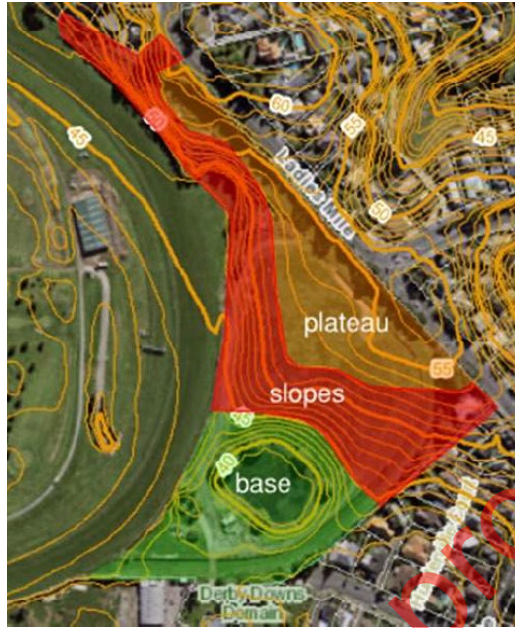


Figure 10: Landform Zones (Source Fletchers EOI Submission)

'The Plateau' Apartments

The widest area of the plateau is proposed for an integrated apartment complex bounded by Ladies Mile and a proposed public loop road. This precinct of three six storey apartment buildings will include a mix of apartment sizes. These buildings are set with the lowest living level similar to the level of Ladies Mile, activating this street edge. No height in relation to boundary controls apply to the street boundary. Parking is proposed in two levels of basement for Building B, with the Site slope incorporating a common parking area with landscaped podium for the other three buildings. This carpark basement is accessed at grade from the loop road.

The road contour in effect means the podium sits typically one to two levels above it. The transition is handled by a planted embankment, in effect setting the buildings on a green "base".

The buildings within the Plateau Apartments are oriented to create varied open spaces and viewshaft opportunities between the buildings. Building C1 aligns with the approach of a vehicle emerging from Abbots Way, a view which can be celebrated in its architecture, while just west of the building, a viewshaft to the racecourse at pedestrian level is created from Ladies Mile, near the location where a pedestrian crossing Ladies Mile from Abbots Way will first appreciate the expansive vista across the racecourse and to the cityscape and maunga beyond.

'The Slopes' – Detached and Duplex Housing

Due to inherently smaller platform requirements, premium two storey detached and duplex houses are proposed for the sloping middle belt of the Site. The proposal will include several different designs.

Existing planning controls in relation to these external boundaries will be met by the proposed detached house positions and levels. The detached house Site levels along the south eastern boundary reflect the underlying topography and slope down from Ladies Mile to Derby Downs Place.

Open space in this area includes a steep planted embankment, which will be commonly managed and provides a planted green base to the proposed building

'The Base'

At the base of the slope a flatter area of land will be created (through utilising fill from the upper plateau). This area will accommodate a 'retirement lite' development along with further detached and terraces houses arranged around a loop road. Retirement lite seeks to provide vertical housing for older residents. The principals of connection will be continued throughout this area to ensure the occupants of the proposed retirement building and the base are can connect well with the surrounding The Hill development and wider Ellerslie Area.

In summary, the proposal is for the type of more intensive, urban, mixed use development and supported by the NPS-UD. The proposal will create a distinctive, residential community with generous provision of open space that is publicly accessible and available for residents to enjoy.

The Site is located in close proximity to rail and bus public transport as well as other walkable amenities such that buildings up to six storeys could be anticipated with the future implementation of the policy direction of the NPS_UD. The taller buildings on Site have been positioned with consideration to the varied nature of the adjoining activities with much of the taller development located fronting Ladies Mile.

6.0 Visual Catchment and Viewing Audiences

The Proposal will be seen within its immediate urban context from Ladies Mile and the end of Derby Downs and in a slightly wider catchment from Green Lane East, the Auckland Southern Motorway, and other adjacent suburban streets such as Morrin Road. Fourteen properties adjoin the eastern boundary and a further five properties adjoin or across a JOAL from the immediate northern western boundary. There are a number of single and two storey houses to the immediate north of the Site across Ladies Mile.

The wider visual catchment extends to elevated properties in the neighbouring suburbs of Remuera, Green Lane and Ellerslie as well as views from the surrounding maunga of Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill), the south east of Ōhinerau (Mount Hobson) and Te Kōpuke (Mount Saint John). Other views from the surrounding environment are largely curtailed by the intervening landform, vegetation and built form.

The primary public and private viewing audiences can therefore be identified as:

- People using the adjacent streets as pedestrians or in vehicles on the road network from up to approximately 800m of the Site on Ladies Mile, Green Lane East, the Southern Motorway and more immediately adjacent streets such as Morrin Road and Derby Downs Place.
- People using Derby Downs Domain, a small open space to the south of the Site;
- People in properties in the adjacent area including those most proximate on Ladies Mile, Hunterville Crescent and Derby Downs Place; and
- People in more distant locations with views to the Site, including the slopes within Ellerslie and Remuera and from elevated positions on the surrounding Maunga.

7.0 Assessment of Effects

7.1 Landscape Effects

Landscape, and consequent 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 into the landscape. Landscape effects arise when such change affects the values of that landscape either in beneficial or adverse ways.

The landscape effects generated by any particular proposal can, therefore, be perceived as:

- positive (beneficial), contributing to the visual character and quality of the environment.
- negative (adverse), detracting from existing character and quality of environment or
- neutral (benign), with essentially no effect on existing character or quality of environment.

The degree to which landscape effects are generated by a development depends on a number of factors, these include:

- The degree to which the proposal contrasts, or is consistent, with the qualities of the surrounding landscape.
- The proportion of the proposal that is visible determined by the observer's position relative to the objects viewed.
- The distance and foreground context within which the proposal is viewed.
- The area or extent of visual catchment from which the proposal is visible.
- The number of viewers, their location and situation (static, or moving) in relation to the view
- The backdrop and context within which the proposal is viewed.
- The predictable and likely known future character of the locality.

The quality of the resultant landscape, its aesthetic values and contribution to the wider landscape character to the area.

Change in a landscape and 'visibility' of a proposal does not of itself, constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect.

Landscape Effects

The Proposal is sited in proximity to Ellerslie suburb on the eastern slopes of the Ellerslie Racecourse. This area can be expected to transition over time to a more intensive, urban residential character and amenity. The conversion of large, 6.3 hectare greenfield Site to a predominantly residential development will result in a change to the landscape.

The existing Site currently forms part of the open, grassed racecourse. It has no buildings and accommodates the grassed steeplechase track. It has a secondary function accommodating a stormwater management pond and small storage area as well as providing access to the track underpass and central racecourse. The Site is currently fenced and screened with vegetation from the surrounding roads and community and is largely screened from public view. The proposed change in land use should not be unexpected and is consistent with both the AUP vision for urban intensification and in line with that which is occurring on larger sites within the locality.

Similar scaled apartment development already exists in the locality of Ellerslie and Remuera. The nature of the development is not therefore unexpected in this part of Auckland and is foreshadowed by the aspirations of the AUP. The proposal will respond to the Auckland housing demand utilising a large greenfield site which has been highly modified and is able to facilitate high-quality housing at a greater level of urban intensity in support of key transport nodes and routes.

The bulk and massing of the proposal provides for a diverse mix of housing typologies and height in a way that seeks to reduce the potential impact on the surrounding area and in particular adjoining residential neighbours. Taller buildings are generally set to the centre, lower 'basin' and northern section of the Site fronting Ladies Mile, with the buildings stepping down in both height and scale to the more sensitive residential boundaries adjacent. Compliance with height in relation to boundary controls at the boundaries will ensure there is no adverse shading impacts as a result of the proposal.

The proposal will work with the existing topographical characteristics of the sloping Site. Earthworks will be required to provide a suitable ground plane and form the underground basements and access. Overall, the development has been designed to set around a hillside in a way that works with and responds to the landform and emphasises the outlook to green open space.

The retention of some of the well formed Pohutukawa trees adjacent to the Ladies Mile boundary will provide scale and assist with the integration of taller buildings along the Ladies Mile street frontage. Additional proposed planting (refer BML Landscape Key Moves) will otherwise complement the street frontages and provide for a high level of onsite amenity with the provision of amenity planting, tree planting, and areas of lawn.

The proposal is located with good separation distance from the surrounding maunga including Te Kopuke (Mount Saint John), Ōhinerau (Mt Hobson), Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill) and will not compromise their presence as natural landforms with cultural significance comprising open space in the urban landscape. Public views from the Site and surrounding area to the maunga will be substantially enhanced through the proposal. Opportunities for views of maunga have been embodied in the development of the building layouts, most particularly towards Maungakiekie from Ladies Mile opposite Abbots Way. These will strengthen these public visual connections from the Site to the wider Auckland landscape.

The Site is subject to a locally significant Volcanic viewshaft (O10). The proposed height of the development is well below the height of the viewshaft and the development will not obscure any protected, significant or memorable views of the maunga. The proposed development will enjoy views of the maunga as part of the amenity for the residents.

The stormwater pond to the southern extent of the Site will be infilled and removed as part of the development. This pond was historically man made as part of the racecourse development and does not contribute significant amenity to the Site and surrounding area. Overall, the removal of this stormwater pond is not considered to generate adverse effects.

In summary therefore the Proposal will signal the progressive intensification of this part of Ellerslie area. The high-quality development will complement the character of the locality and positively address the Site's street frontages. The buildings will have a presence in the landscape and be seen both as part of the adjoining streetscape and in wider views, however the scale of the development is not such that it will particularly stand out or be incongruous within the existing or future anticipated built form, character and amenity of the locality. The proposal, whilst introducing a change, will therefore provide an overall positive contribution to the evolving urban landscape of this part of Auckland.

7.2 Visual Effects

In order to assist in understanding the extent to which the development will be seen and the nature and scale of its appearance in the urban landscape a series of four bulk and massing visual simulations have been prepared, in addition to the architectural renders by Brewster Davidson.

The visual simulations, prepared by Boffa Miskell, are attached to refer **Graphic Supplement: Visual Simulations**. The viewpoints for the visual simulations have been selected to demonstrate a representative range of more proximate public views. The visual simulations are provided to assist in envisaging the proposed bulk and massing of the proposal in the context of the existing environment.

Viewpoint 1 is located on Ladies Mile near to intersection of Peach Parade looking south toward the Site. The Site is within the centre of the view. The single and two storey residential properties adjacent Ladies Mile are visible to the left of the image. There are a number of large-scale trees and planting along the northern boundary of the subject Site, visible in the centre of the image.

VS 1A - C shows the proposed view. In this 'proposed view' the 1 – 2 storey detached houses fronting Ladies Mile (building typology E and A) can be clearly seen in the centre of the view. The taller apartment buildings located to the east of the Site are not visible in this view due to intervening built form, vegetation and topography changes. The removal of the established vegetation in this area is the most notable change to this view. It is noted that the proposed simulations do not include landscape treatment to this interface and therefore new vegetation along this interface can be reasonably anticipated as part of future development. Overall, the buildings will create a strong and prominent frontage to Ladies Mile that is in keeping with the height profile of the surrounding residential context.

Viewpoint 2 is located on Abbots Way looking south west towards the Site. The proposed Site is directly within the centre of the view. The existing Ellerslie Raceway sign, current green corrugated iron fencing and established vegetation form the northern boundary of the proposed Site. The signalised intersection with Ladies Mile is in the centre of the view. There are a number of large scale trees along this northern boundary including a number of established Pohutukawa trees that are prominent specimens to this frontage. To the left and right of the image are single and two storey dwellings that have access from Ladies Mile.

In the 'proposed view' (VS 2A - C) the apartment buildings fronting Ladies Mile can be clearly seen in the centre of the view. C1 located in the centre of the view, B to the right and C2 to the left. Due to the topography rising up from Abbots way in this location the visual prominence of these buildings is somewhat heightened. The retention of the large scale Pohutukawa trees assist with the integration of the scale of the proposed buildings. The proposed viewshaft established from Abbots way and the deliberate angling of the building ensures that on approach there will be clear connecting views out to Maungakiekie from the Abbots Road

intersection. Overall whilst being a larger scale buildings they are not out of context with the surrounding Abbots Way and Ladies Mile environment.

Viewpoint 3 is located on the residential street of Umere Crescent looking in a north west direction towards the Site. Within the centre of the view of the two storey residential houses located at 9 – 14 Hunterville Crescent. Ladies Mile is located to the right of the view and continues down the hill to the left of the view. Built form in this area is principally residential dwellings both single and two storey standalone buildings with established gardens and vegetation.

In the proposed view (VS 3A - C) the proposed development is largely screened by the intervening, closer proximity, residential development. In this view Apartment C3 can be seen fronting on to Ladies Mile and a portion of the Retirement lite Building A to the left of the view. Overall whilst being a slightly larger scale development it is not out of context with the surrounding residential environment. The existing residential properties on Hunterville Crescent and the intervening vegetation largely screen the proposed development from view.

Viewpoint 4 is located on the residential dead-end street of Derby Downs looking in a north west direction towards the Site. Within the centre of the view is vegetation that is located on the edge of the subject site. Derby Downs reserve is located to the left of this. Built form in this area is typically single storey to two storey residential development with established gardens and vegetation.

In the proposed view (VS 4A-C) the proposed development will be a clearly visible element in the view. The proposed retirement lite building will be seen in the distance behind the two storey residential development. The provision of generous offset distances and the proposed detached house at the closest point and terrace housing beyond will provide a suitable transition in scale and prevent any adverse dominance effects in these views. It is noted that as part of the development there will be a proposed landscape treatment (both street trees and on-lot trees on the closest housing sites) to this interface and therefore new vegetation along this interface can be reasonably anticipated as part of future development. This will assist with softening views of the development from this location.

On further development the application will need to consider the design of these interfaces to ensure to avoid an overbearing appearance or effects on privacy / residential amenity. The proposed façade and materials along this boundary and intervening on Site landscaping will also assist in reducing perceived bulk and dominance on these more sensitive residential neighbours.

Views from the wider context

Views from elevated locations further from Site such as Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill), the south of Ōhinerau (Mount Hobson) and Te Kōpuke (Mount Saint John) will provide the greatest public opportunity to view down onto the development. When seen from distant elevated viewpoints, the proposed development comprising its taller buildings will be of a height and scale that is clearly taller than some of the surrounding one and two storey houses in the established residential environment. However, the Proposal will be seen in the context of the intensification of urban Auckland, key transport corridors and other newer infill development to which it will strongly relate in height and scale. The proposed landscape design and earthworks strategy provides for buildings set within a context of vegetation and open space, this approach assists in visually softening the scale of the development. In time the development will become increasingly visually characterised by extensive mature planting counterbalanced by larger scaled apartment and a range of attached and detached dwellings.

From a wider viewing audience given the height of the buildings and their situation within the landscape there will be locations from a wider area where the development (or parts of the development) can be seen. However, there will be elements within the landscape such as existing vegetation and built form that partially screens one of more components of the development from view. Such views will also have urban foreground and middle ground context within their views. Overall, it is considered that views of the proposed development, at a distance, in an increasingly intensified urban context are not considered to generate adverse visual effects.

Volcanic Viewshaft

While the Site is located within a volcanic view protection area. The proposed height of the development is well below the height enabled under the viewshaft. The proposed development is not expected to result on any loss of important public views towards the surrounding maunga. The proposed development provides a new public viewshaft through the built form across the Site to Maungakiekie. This viewshaft located on axis with Abbotts Way is considered to strengthen public views to Maungakiekie and reconnect the surrounding urban area to the volcanic landscape which defines much of the amenity of urban Auckland.

Views from immediate context

The majority of houses in the residential catchment to the north and north east are orientated to the north with their primary outdoor areas facing north and / or in rear gardens. The proposed development will be visible to the south of their properties but will not result in adverse shading or other effects. The scale of the Ladies Mile road reserve and retention of up to nine mature Pohutukawa trees along this frontage will assist in ameliorating the scale of the development and maintain some of the established street front amenity. The opening up of the Ladies Mile frontage will also introduce new wide scaled views to the maunga, Maungakiekie in particular enhancing the amenity of the locality.

For the residential catchment to the south and south east the residential area is well treed generally limiting long distance views from the predominantly one and two storey houses. Whilst the proposed development will sit above the height of its existing suburban residential neighbours the extent to which it will be visible in the everyday amenity of this housing will be limited with very little change to the established residential character or amenity of the neighbourhood.

Some more proximate houses including those directly adjacent or obliquely opposite on Hunterville Crescent and Ladies Mile will have clearer views of the proposal. The proposed detached housing along the eastern boundary has been consciously scaled to provide for a transition to the scale of the neighbouring established houses abutting the Site at the south eastern boundary.

On further development the application will need to consider the design of these interfaces to ensure to avoid an overbearing appearance or effects on privacy / residential amenity. The proposed façade, materials and compliance with HIRB controls along this boundary and intervening on Site landscaping will also assist in reducing perceived bulk and dominance on these more sensitive residential neighbours.

Visual Effects - Conclusion

Collectively the visualisations and related 3-dimensional analysis of the proposal demonstrate that the proposed bulk and massing can be accommodated within the established and anticipated future urban character and amenity of the locality.

In terms of potential adverse visual effects these are considered to be between **low - very low**, or negligible. The development will have a presence in the landscape but will not be overly dominant or incongruous to neighbours. Overall, whilst a low level of visual effects will be generated in respect of some viewers overall the proposal is considered to enhance the visual character and amenity of the locality and contribute positively to the anticipated residential intensification of this part of urban Auckland.

The development provides for a diversity of building typologies, height and residential living options. In summary, the development will provide an interesting, well-designed high-quality outcome that will create less than minor adverse visual, or dominance effects.

8.0 Assessment in Relation to Statutory Provisions

The AUP and more recent NPS-UD is seeking to achieve more compact, quality, taller urban forms of development in locations that have the range of proximity to services and facilities including public transport, that this Site, being adjacent Ladies Mile and in close proximity to Ellerslie and Green Lane Rail Station enjoys.

Specific commentary is provided below in relation to AUP. In summary, the Site is zoned Special Purpose - Major Recreation Facility Zone and located within the Ellerslie Racecourse Precinct (I312.). The Ellerslie Racecourse Precinct and the relevant objectives and policies under the AUP are related to the primary compatible and accessory use of the Site as a major horse racing venue.

The proposed activity and its associated building form and open spaces and roading will not compromise the primary purpose of racing and events at Ellerslie Racecourse. The development of the land is considered to further enhance racing and events and provide positive outcomes in that regard.

The standards and assessment criteria in the Precinct overlay are helpful to assess and the effects of buildings (including the interface control (I313.6.8)). The building heights will comply with the 25m height control under the Special Purpose Zone.

In terms of the Site and locality, the proposed development is considered a more positive outcome than a 25m high grandstand in this location, for the following reasons:

- The proposal has good permeability with pedestrian access through to transport and shopping opportunities at Ellerslie and Greenlane. The proposed development will not be gated and will enhance the wider pedestrian / cycle connectivity in the local area.
- Some or all of the nine Pohutukawa trees adjacent to Ladies Mile will be retained and protected as part of the development. These trees will provide a frontage to the development and assist with the integration of the larger buildings to this public street interface.
- The proposal will enhance connections to the wider areas of public open space including Maungakiekie (One Tree Hill), Te Kōpuke / Titikōpuke (Mt St John), Ōhinerau (Mount Hobson) and Te Pane o Mataoho (Mangere Mountain); and

- The overall building bulk and mass has been carefully distributed within the Site providing generous building separation and a range of interface conditions.
- The retirement lite building, positioned adjacent the track edge is in a similar position to where you could expect to see a grandstand building of a similar bulk and scale. A proposed retirement lite building will have more variation and interest in the proposed façade and materials that will assist in reducing perceived bulk and dominance of the building.

As described in section 4.0 earlier the Site is subject to a number of volcanic viewshaft overlays. The majority of these viewshaft are located on the western edge of the racecourse with only the Locally Significant Viewshaft from O10 (One Tree Hill) affecting the proposed Site.

Under D14. of the AUP the purpose of the Volcanic Viewshafts Overlay is to appropriately protect significant views of Auckland's volcanic cones. By doing so the overlay contributes to Auckland's unique identity by protecting the natural and cultural heritage values of significant volcanic cones.

The origin of this local viewshaft is from the intersection of College and Merton Roads 2.8km from the Site. The height limit set by the viewshaft in this location is 24m to Ladies Mile and 36.5m towards the lower portions of the Site. The heights enabled by the viewshaft have informed the proposed bulk, massing and height for the proposal, with the proposal achieving compliance in respect of the viewshaft height.

While the Site is located within a volcanic view protection area. The proposed height of the development is well below the height enabled under the viewshaft. The proposed development is not expected to result on any loss of important public views towards the surrounding maunga. The proposed development provides a new public viewshaft through the built form across the Site to Maungakiekie. This viewshaft located on axis with Abbotts Way is considered to strengthen public views to Maungakiekie and reconnect the surrounding urban area to the volcanic landscape which defines much of the amenity of urban Auckland.

9.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and amenity of this part of Ellerslie. The large site can be expected to be developed for a more intensive residential purpose. The mixed residential typologies and layout of the buildings ensure that the effects of the development will have little impact beyond the Site. Where additional height fronts Ladies Mile this streetscape is considered to have the scale and capacity to accommodate and even benefit from the additional height, particularly when considered in respect of the NPS-UD.

The Proposal will signal the progressive residential intensification of this part of Auckland. The high-quality development will complement the character of the locality and positively address the Site's street frontages. The buildings will have a presence in the landscape and be seen both as part of the adjoining streetscape and in wider views, however the built scale is not such that it will particularly stand out or be incongruous within the existing or future anticipated built form, character and amenity of the locality.

On development the proposal will need to ensure that the architectural design and layout of the development reduces any visual bulk in the neighbourhood environment and creates a desirable residential amenity for future residents. The proposed façade strategy should feature different materiality and balcony treatments seek to break up the mass of the development whilst still achieving an overall sense of unity and quality.

Development of this Site is considered to be well aligned with the NPS-UD, vision of the AUP and RPS. Care has been taken in the overall masterplanning to provide generous onsite open space amenity and well-scaled vegetation to separate and break up the built form of the development, creating a distinctive urban community accessible to the public and integrated into the wider community and urban environment.

The publicly accessible through site links will enhance the amenity of the locality for residents as well as for the wider local area and support a walkable local neighbourhood in a way that is very desirable to the intensified urban nature of the locality.

The proposal will not compromise the character or amenity of the wider landscape or maunga.

It is noted above that while development brings considerable change to a landscape, it is not necessarily negative or adverse. The Site has not been within the public amenity of the locality, being set behind solid fencing and boundary planting. The development will open up new access including open space, walkways and views that will enhance the amenity of the locality.

Overall, it is considered that design of the development will have beneficial effects alongside low to very-low adverse (negligible) visual effects such that overall adverse effects will be less than minor. 'The Hill' is the type of quality, higher intensity residential development anticipated by and advocated for through the Auckland Plan, Unitary Plan, RPS and NPS-UD. It demonstrates a level of quality residential amenity sought for higher density living in a suburban context in Auckland in a location that is relatively well provided in respect of transport options and access to local amenities including the Ellerslie town centre.

Appendix 1: BML 7 Point Scale of Effects

22 October 2021

This table is used to guide an assessment of the level of effects associated with a proposal. It comprises 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>
Moderate - Low:	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 view

Table .Determining the overall level of landscape and visual effects

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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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