

To: Michael Campbell + Ila Daniels
(Campbell Brown Planning)

Ryan Matthews + Stefan Powney
(Tuakiri Property)

Date: Friday, May 29, 2026

From: Matthew Jones, Isthmus Group Ltd (IGL)

Job No: 5202

Subject: Tuakiri Dairy Flat Masterplan, Dairy Flat, Auckland – Fast-track Consent Referral
Application: Landscape Memorandum

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Isthmus Group Ltd has been engaged by Tuakiri Property Limited to provide masterplanning, urban design and landscape assessment commentary in support of the Fast-track consent referral application (“**the application**”) for a proposed development on a site in Dairy Flat in north Auckland.
- 1.2 The approximately 77.9ha application site (“**the site**”) consists of some ten adjoining properties and is situated between Kahikatea Flat Road (north) and Horseshoe Bush Road (south). Refer **Image A** below.



Image A: Site aerial plan with aerial (not to scale, north up page).

- 1.3 As part of the application, Isthmus has been requested to provide an outline of the design of the proposed development and assessment commentary related to the future development of

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the site, including its appropriateness from a landscape perspective. This includes the site's context in its wider and localised setting, the site attributes and characteristics, the key design moves and principles, and landscape character. This memorandum should be read in conjunction with the 'Tuakiri Dairy Flat Masterplan – Illustrative Masterplan' document (dated 29 May 2026), prepared by Isthmus which also forms part of the referral application.

- 1.4 For the preparation of this memorandum, I confirm that I have visited the site and its surrounding environment. The memorandum has been prepared in accordance with the landscape assessment principles outlined in *Te Tangi a te Manu* (Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines).

2 SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 2.1 The site is located on rural land at Dairy Flat, north of Auckland. As outlined above, it consists of the amalgamation of some ten properties set between Kahikatea Flat Road and Horseshoe Bush Road.

The Site

- 2.2 The site has rolling topography with a central basin with rising topography to its northern and southern boundaries, up to Kahikatea Flat Road and Horseshoe Bush Road, respectively. An intricate stream network catchment flows west-east through the centre of the site, including a number of smaller tributary arms, and provides a definitive landscape feature.
- 2.3 The site is currently in open pasture, with a number of clusters of established trees, shelter belts which align with property boundaries and vegetation along the respective stream margins (refer **Image A** above). There are a number of small constructed ponds on the site, with a larger wetland system within the site's central eastern reaches.

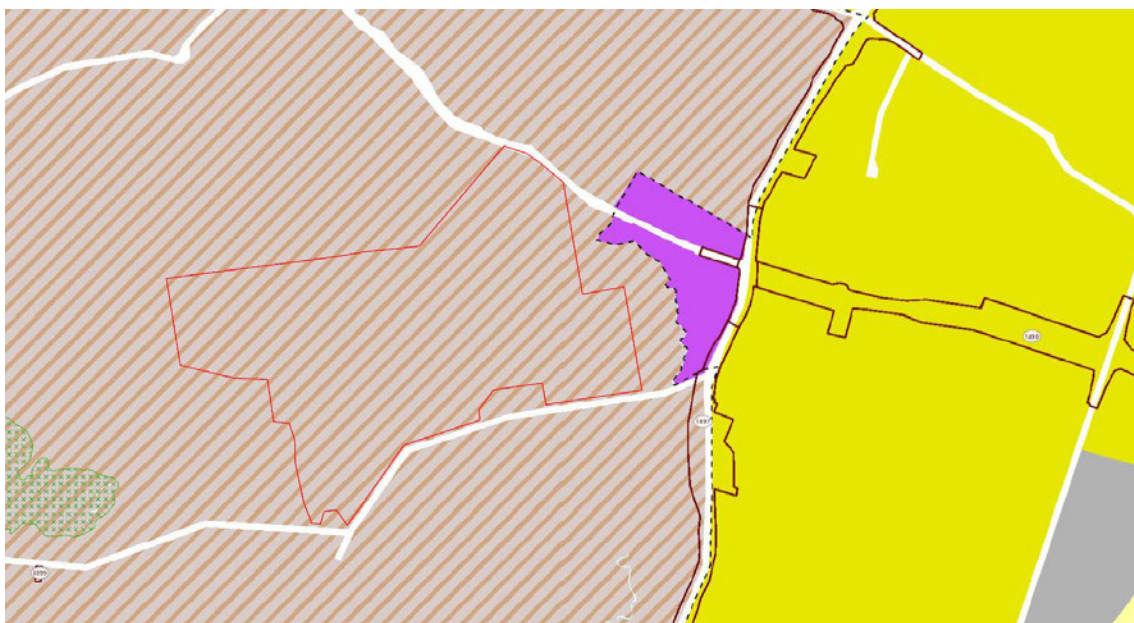


Image B: Plan illustrating the site and the localised context of the AUP:OP zoning (not to scale, north up page).

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- 2.4 There is a limited number of buildings and structures on the site. These include existing houses and farm sheds, but also includes buildings associated with the rural land uses and areas where service trucks are stored.
- 2.5 The site is located on land zoned *Rural – Mixed Rural* under the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) (**AUP:OP**) west of the settlement at Dairy Flat. It is proximate to the western edge of the Auckland Council rural urban boundary (**RUB**), separated by one land parcel (by approximately 100m). Refer **Image B** above – RUB is the black dashed line.
- 2.6 The RUB predominantly extends north-south along Dairy Flat Highway but deviates along the western side of the Dairy Flat settlement, around a series of industrial and commercial land uses. The Dairy Flat settlement is also where Kahikatea Flat Road, Horseshoe Bush Road and Dairy Flat Highway meet.
- 2.7 This site is not subject to any landscape related overlays of note under the AUP:OP. As such, it is not identified as being within any outstanding natural feature, landscape, or character overlays, nor is it identified to have any high natural character values. There are also no significant indigenous vegetation areas or notable trees within the site. The site zoning and overlays relevant to landscape are illustrated in **Image B**.
- 2.8 Two central parts of the site are classified as Land Use Capability Class 3 (**LUC3**)¹ relating to its arable soils. Refer **Image C** below.



Image C: Extent of Land Use Capability Class 3 (LUC3) soils illustrated by yellow hatch (not to scale, north up page).

¹ Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research
https://ourenvironment.scinfo.org.nz/maps-and-tools/app/Land%20Capability/lri_luc_main

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Wider Context

- 2.9 The immediate context of the site and surrounds is best characterised as being peri-urban, with both urban and rural features fragmented throughout. This is outlined below.
- 2.10 To the north and south of the site are other properties zoned *Rural – Mixed Rural* under the AUP:OP. These properties have similar existing pastoral land uses, which includes clusters of trees and shelterbelts. There is relatively low settlement density in the wider area, with the majority of houses located proximate to the respective roads, many of which are in clusters.
- 2.11 Further to the northeast of the site is Silverdale and further north, flanking both sides of State Highway 1 is Milldale and Millwater. These areas are predominantly residential, but include areas of commercial, local centre, industrial and general business land uses.
- 2.12 To the west of the site, beyond the property boundary is an area of indigenous vegetation which is identified as a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) under the AUP:OP. This is shown on **Image B** above and Image D below (green hatch). To the immediate south of the site, across Horseshoe Bush Road is the Redvale Landfill & Energy Park, run by Waste Management NZ.
- 2.13 The Dairy Flat settlement is zoned *Business – Light Industry* under the AUP:OP and consists of industrial and commercial uses which service the local and wider area.

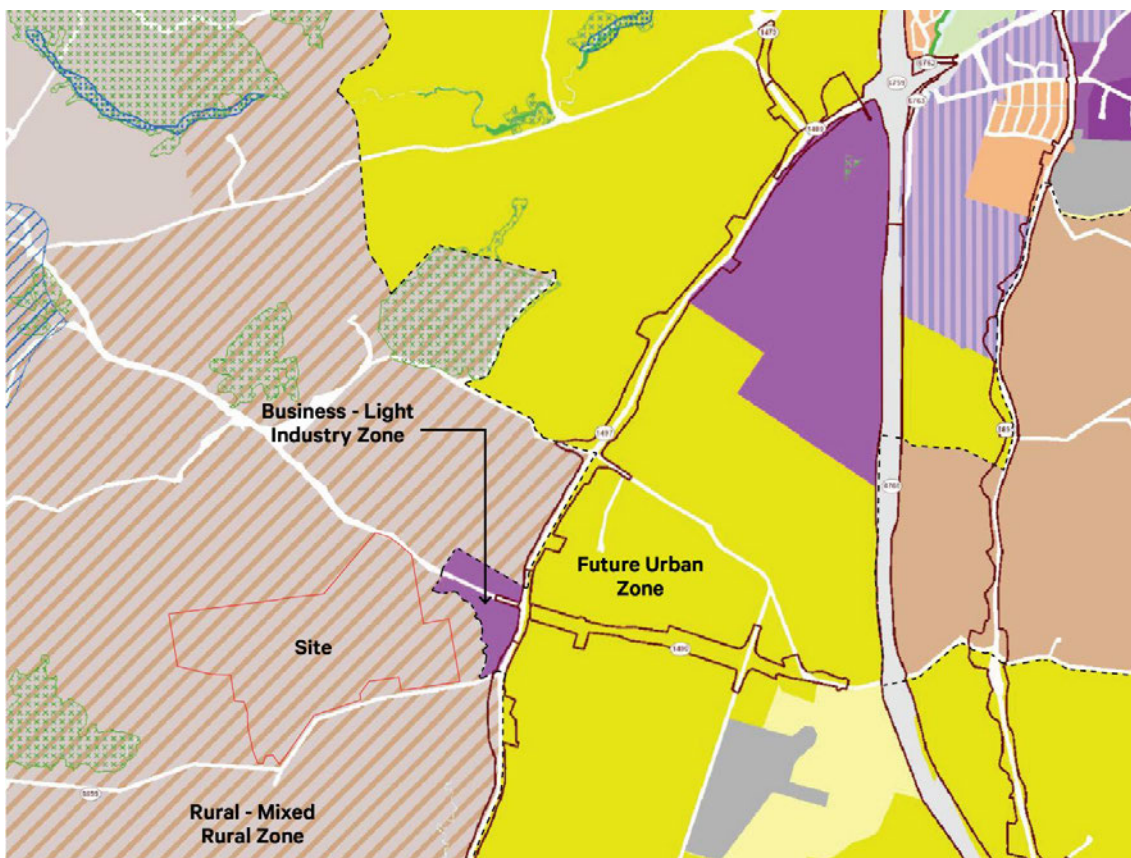


Image D: Plan illustrating the site and the wider context of the AUP:OP zoning (not to scale, north up page).

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- 2.14 To the east of the Dairy Flat settlement, immediately beyond Dairy Flat Highway and within the RUB, is land zoned *Future Urban (FUZ)*, which anticipates urban use and intensification in the land extending across to State Highway 1. Refer **Image D** above. Dairy Flat School is located to the south of the site on the Dairy Flat Highway and a childcare centre is located to the north. Both of these sites are located within the FUZ.
- 2.15 In early 2026, the AUP:OP was updated to illustrate the rezoning of the area of FUZ land between the Dairy Flat Highway and State Highway 1 (northeast of the site) to *Business - Light Industrial* zone (**LIZ**). The wider area, known as the *Silverdale West Dairy Flat Industrial Area Structure Plan*, is a comprehensive blueprint that has been developed by Auckland Council to transform approximately 1,400 hectares of greenfield rural land from FUZ into a major hub for light and heavy industry. Strategically located south of the Silverdale motorway interchange, the structure plan area spans between State Highway 1 to the east and Dairy Flat Highway to the west. The site is located opposite the Gateway Entrance Point to the Silverdale West Dairy Flat Industrial Area (Refer **Image E** below).

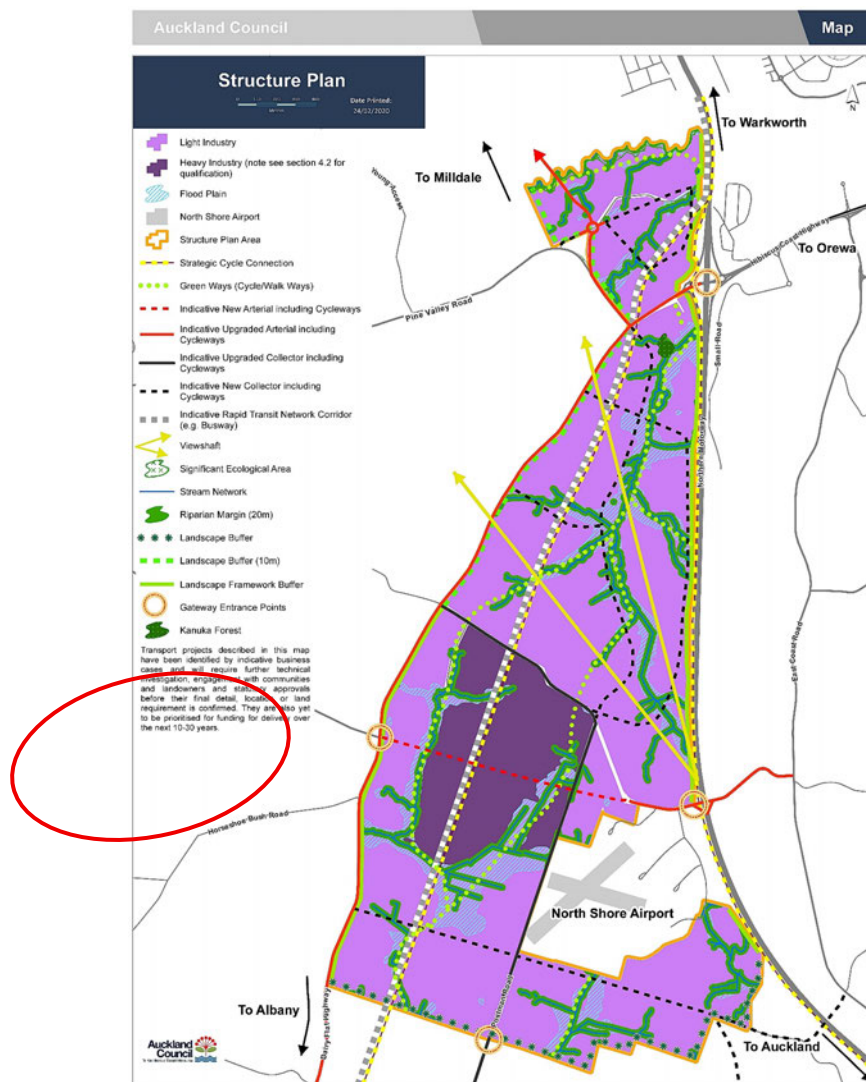


Image E: Silverdale West Dairy Flat Industrial Area Structure Plan, with the site indicatively illustrated by a red circle. (not to scale, north up page).

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- 2.16 The northern area of the Silverdale West Structure Plan located close to the Silverdale motorway interchange, has recently gone through a Private Plan Change process (PC103). PC103 provides for the rezoning of some 107Ha of FUZ land to LIZ. This area can be seen as the upper triangular purple area on **Image D**.
- 2.17 Also, to the southeast of the site (within the FUZ land) is the consented Auckland Surf Park facility. The FUZ is generally located on the eastern side of Dairy Flat Highway, albeit that there are areas located on the western side of Dairy Flat Highway that are also zoned as FUZ, indicating that Dairy Flat Highway is not necessarily a hard line as an urban boundary.
- 2.18 In relation to the transport network, the Dairy Flat area is connected by a number of roads which include the east-west aligned Kahikatea Flat Road, Horseshoe Bush Road and Wilks Road West (to the north). These provide a connection between Dairy Flat and the wider Silverdale area and Waitoki and Kaukapakapa to the west. Dairy Flat Highway provides a north-south arterial road which extends from Albany (to the south) through Dairy Flat to Silverdale to the north, at which point it connects with State Highway 1.
- 2.19 Under the *Te Tupu Ngātahi Supporting Growth* programme², Dairy Flat Highway has been designated as a new Rapid Transit Corridor (**NOR1** – Designation 1497³) to be upgraded to an urban arterial corridor between Albany and Silverdale. This is to accommodate the anticipated growth in the area and will include an increase to the number of vehicle lanes within the carriageway, and inclusion of walking and cycling facilities (active modes) and other associated systems such as stormwater management. **Image F** below illustrates the NOR1 designation in the context of the site, the FUZ land and Dairy Flat.
- 2.20 As illustrated, the NOR1 designation alignment runs near the eastern side of the site. It will provide for a bi-directional busway, although no stations are identified along the portion of NOR1 as it passes the site, with the only identified locations (subject to a separate designation process) being to the north at Pine Valley Road and Milldale. I understand that future additional station locations will be identified through structure planning of the balance of FUZ land across the Dairy Flat area.

² By Auckland Transport (AT) and NZTA Waka Kotahi.

³ Per the AUP:OP.

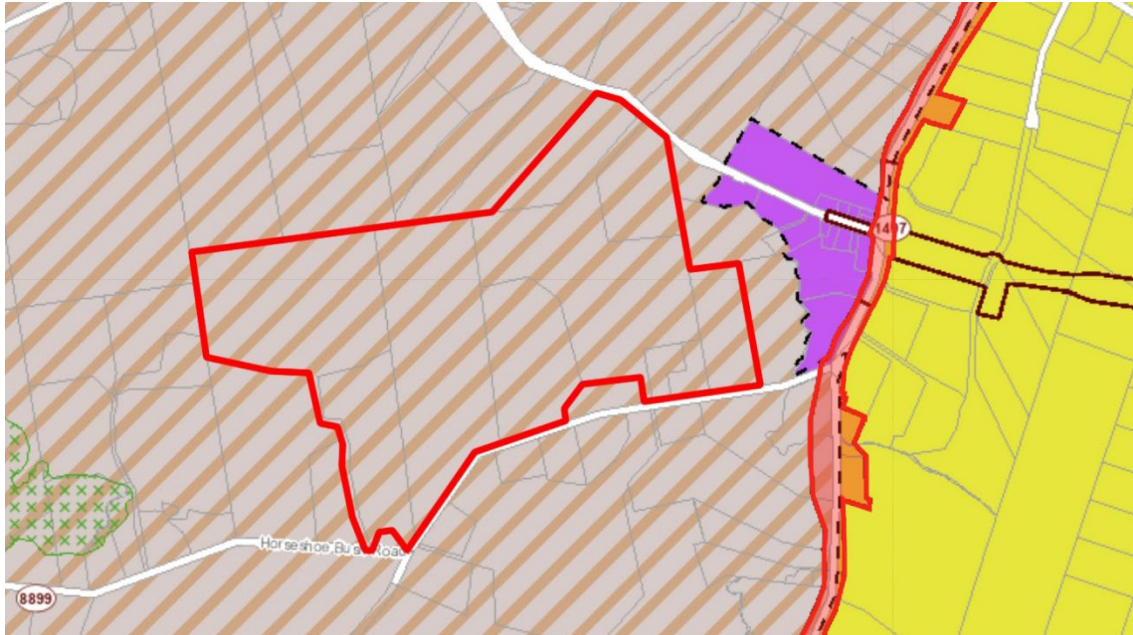


Image F: Plan illustrating the alignment of NOR1 (Designation 1497) in the context of the site (red fill) (not to scale, north up page).

3 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Proposal is outlined in detail within the planning assessment for this referral application. However, those matters relevant to the landscape assessment are outlined below:
- Site Area: Approximately 77.9 hectares
 - Indicative Yield: Approximately 1,000 – 1,100 residential sites
 - Community Village Centre: Approximately 1,900m², with 1200m² as proposed Gross Floor Area (GFA)
 - Blue / Green Open Space Area: Approximately 18.5 hectares of open space and landscape enhancement across the site.
- 3.2 The Tuakiri Dairy Flat Masterplan establishes a place-led framework for residential development, grounded in the site's landscape context and its relationship to the local and wider environment.
- 3.3 The masterplan layout centres around a set of key moves and overarching principles, informed by the site's context, its landscape attributes, connections, and the ambition to create a well-connected and cohesive neighbourhood. These key moves include: (refer **Image G** below)
- The central stream network provides a landscape framework for the overall structure of the masterplan,
 - Being responsive to the site's rural setting, including through edge treatment and vegetation along the northern, western and southern frontages to the site,

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- Defined landscape-led character development areas which respond to the natural attributes of the site,
- Establishing a clear and legible movement network hierarchy, and
- Providing a masterplan which will support and strengthen existing urban centres and activities in the site's wider context.



Image G: Illustrative Masterplan (not to scale, north up page).

- 3.4 At a strategic level, the key moves establish a clear spatial structure for the site, shaping how development, open space, and movement align to form a coherent and legible neighbourhood. They respond to the opportunities and constraints of the site, balancing environmental, social, and functional considerations to create a place that is both connected and distinctive.
- 3.5 The opportunities and constraints of the site were mapped and analysed as part of the design process. This included mapping components such as landform and topography (including catchments and the central stream network), existing slope and aspect (solar) analysis, key interfaces, frontages and sensitive edges, and how built elements such as houses and roads could integrate into this setting.
- 3.6 This site analysis informed the design process for the masterplan and established the opportunities for development across the site and the areas to be managed. The central stream catchments (including flood prone areas) and the associated areas of established vegetation were identified and retained. This formed the basis for a strong landscape framework and overall development structure, which includes:

- Response to the underlying topography and enhancement of the existing landscape patterns;
- Identification of the key sensitive edges of the site and responsiveness to its rural setting, and its location proximate to the surrounding urban structure and identified urban centres;
- The development of landscape-led character areas relating to the identity, variety and block patterns across the site. This also included the road arrangements. These responded to the natural attributes of the site (e.g. topography and solar orientation); and
- The identification of areas for landscape enhancement assisted with the site layout and provide a buffer between the proposed development areas. These form a contiguous vegetation pattern across the site, which would also form part of the open space and amenity features of the neighbourhood.

3.7 With regard to connectivity, the Proposal has movement networks which provides a legible structure across the site. This includes a primary north-south axis road connecting Kahikatea Flat Road and Horseshoe Bush Road. A secondary 'loop' road connects to and from this central axis road and provides access to the development and character areas within the western reaches of the site. There are a number of local streets which connect to these roads. Pedestrian and cycle connections are also integrated throughout, including bridges at key locations across the stream corridors, supporting movement across the wider network.

4 EVALUATION AND COMMENTARY

4.1 Having undertaken an evaluation of the proposed masterplan from a landscape perspective, the site is appropriate, has the capacity to absorb urban development and can be supported for the following reasons:

- The site is located proximate to the settlement of Dairy Flat, situated at the 'pinch point' between Kahikatea Flat Road (north) and Horseshoe Bush Road (south), near where these roads intersect with Dairy Flat Highway (east);
- Its location in the context of the FUZ land to the east of Dairy Flat Highway and the emerging development (e.g. the Significant Light Industrial zone spatial extent and Auckland Surf Park) and anticipated development within that area;
- Its connection and proximity to Dairy Flat Highway (the main north-south arterial), which has been designated for upgrade to a rural arterial connection through this area – based on anticipated urban intensification;
- The site's immediate context and the surrounding area is peri-urban, with both urban and rural features and land uses;
- The design identifies and protects existing landscape features across the site (e.g. streams and wetlands, and areas of vegetation) and these provide key structuring elements in the masterplan's design;

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- It retains, protects and enhances the existing stream catchments / drainage patterns across the site through the provision of extensive planting along their margins;
- The site has rolling topography and is set within a natural basin shaped by the central stream network. The layout responds to the underlying topography and its associated slope and aspect;
- The masterplan has been designed based upon this central landscape framework which identifies a series of separate yet integrated development character areas, responding to the identification of sensitive landscape areas;
- The landscape framework will provide a natural buffer between these development areas, enabling physical and visual separation and breaking up the overall extent of development;
- The central landscape framework will be enhanced through landscape treatment and regenerative planting. This will provide long term benefits, enhancement of natural characteristics of the streams, and an increase the ecological and environmental qualities of the site within a central, contiguous landscape corridor. It also provides the structure for walking and cycling connectivity through open space and recreation areas. The landscape framework will also be complemented by a comprehensive street tree strategy;
- The design has provided a carefully considered response to the existing topography and potential landform modification required;
- The design provides for varied lot sizes, arrangements, and yield across the site, within the respective character development areas. This includes 'more intensive' development anticipated within the central and eastern parts of the site, proximate to Dairy Flat;
- A sensitive transition is provided to the site's surrounding rural context. This is achieved through a combination of a transition to larger lot sizes and increased areas of vegetation and buffers proposed along the site's northern, western and southern frontages. This will assist with the transition and integration of the development into the broader rural landscape;
- The site is devoid of any landscape related overlays or significant features per the AUP:OP; and
- The design provides a logical and legible street network circulation and hierarchy which connects into the wider network and adjacent amenities.

4.2 In relation to visual amenity, a high proportion of the site is located within a basin of rolling topography. The basin setting and anticipated buffer planting and larger lot sizes around the site's periphery will minimise and soften any views into the site. The central landscape framework is extensive and will form a physical and visually contiguous pattern which will also assist with visually breaking up concentrations of future houses and provide a vegetated backdrop and foreground, depending on the location of the viewer. The planting proposed around the sensitive boundary edges and frontages will also provide a buffer and visual

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softening, including to those properties in closer proximity. It will also provide a visual backdrop against which future development is seen in longer views.

- 4.3 The design illustrates a spatial form and arrangement which responds to the key landscape features of the site, identified through the opportunities and constraints analysis, and the site is well located in relation to its specific, localised and wider landscape and emerging urban land use context.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Overall, in relation to landscape matters, with regard to the site context, existing fragmented land use patterns, and the emerging planned urban development and employment node, in my opinion the Proposal is suitable for the site. It will contribute to the quality of housing choice and support this emerging node and the wider Dairy Flat / Silverdale community, including the consented Auckland Surf Park. The proposed design responds to the site and integrates with its surrounding context, achieving a well-functioning urban environment as anticipated by the National Policy Statement – Urban Development.