Assessment of Landscape Effects Memo
Substantive Application for Waikato Thoroughbred Racing, Waikato Racing Club, Cambridge
September 2026

**Introduction**

This memo updates the Referral Application Assessment of Landscape Effects April 2026 (Rev 02) prepared on behalf of Waikato Thoroughbred Racing. The original author is unavailable to update the April 2026 (Rev 02) version to consider changes reflected in the Substantive Application September 2026.

**The Purpose of the Memo**

This memo provides a supplementary landscape assessment in support of the Substantive Application to be read in conjunction with the Assessment of Landscape Effects dated April 2026 (Rev 02) for the Referral Application. The Referral Assessment's methodology, baseline landscape characterization and effects framework remain current and are adopted in full for the purposes of this memorandum.

The role of this memo is to confirm the landscape effects assessment in light of the detailed design development that has occurred between the referral and substantive application stages. Where design refinements have resulted in any change to the assessed degree of effect at particular viewpoints, those changes are identified and the updated assessment provided. This has been undertaken in line with Te Tangi a te Manu, Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines.

**Methodology**

The substantive application design has been reviewed to confirm whether the effects ratings in the Referral Assessment remain appropriate in light of design development. Where the detailed

design has resulted in any refinement to the assessed degree of effect at a given viewpoint, this is noted and an updated rating is provided.

Through the detailed design process, the spatial arrangement of key project components has been refined. The core elements of the proposal – three racetracks, bloodstock and stabling, a commercial area, senior living development and rural residential lots – remain consistent with the referral application.

The principal design refinements are:

- The redistribution of 3 x racetracks on the site
- The northwest corner of the proposal adjacent to SH1 and the north end of Pencarrow Road will change from a mid-sized racetrack to a cluster of 1-2 storey buildings housing land uses such as bloodstock
- The western edge will accommodate the commercial area and main hub building, relocated from the mid-southern part of the site
- The southwest corner will change from a 1-2 storey cluster of bloodstock buildings to 1-2 storey senior living development with a larger overall footprint
- The southeast corner retains the same arrangement of large lot rural residential sections
- The northeast corner remains largely the same with stables against rural residential boundaries, although more condensed along the southern edge of the neighbouring residential boundaries.

**Degree of Effect**

The Referral Assessment authored by SLR determined the degree of effect on the landscape in the short-term to be a **Low-Moderate** degree of adverse effect to the landscape and a **Low** adverse effect in the medium and long term based on, amongst other attributes, the substantial plantings associated with and the type of development. Having reviewed the substantive application design, this memorandum confirms that the overall assessment of landscape effects remains broadly consistent with the Referral Assessment, with minor adjustments at specific viewpoints reflecting detailed design refinements. The overall degree of adverse effect remains within the **Low** to **Moderate** range.

**Justification**

In all cases, large scale tree plantings along boundaries and within the site, earth mounding and noise attenuation structures have been proposed by the project Landscape Architects to mitigate landscape effects on neighbouring residents (stationary receivers) and other effected parties within the view catchment, including motorists on Pencarrow, Hooker & Duncan Roads and SH1.

**Credentials**

Mike Thomas, a Principal from Arcadia, has authored this memorandum. Mike is a Registered Landscape Architect and a Fellow of the NZ Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA). Additionally, he is a registered member of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, a member of the UDF and he sits on the Auckland Urban Design Panel as a respected advisor to Auckland Council on behalf of the NZILA.

Mike has been practicing as a private consultant for 30 years in New Zealand, Hong Kong, China and Australia on a wide range of projects including large scale transportation, master planning, housing and public realm.

**Assessment**

**Table 1** below compares the April 2026 Referral Application proposal with the updated September 2026 Substantive Application proposal. The same viewpoints used in the SLR Assessment of Landscape Effects April 2026 (Rev 02) have been used for consistency. Changes between the schemes from each viewpoint have been described, comparing the magnitude of change and associated landscape effects between the two schemes. The Associative Effects column has been excluded due to the "no change" status common to all viewpoints and to optimise space. A **Summary of Effects** follows the table to finalise the assessment of the Substantive Application scheme.

| **View point** | **Location** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | **Physical Effects** (increase in built form) | **Perceptual Effects** (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | **Mitigation and Justification** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **Visual Effect** Short term | **Visual Effect** Long term |
| **1** | NW corner of site – from SH1 | Features a cluster of 1 & 2 storey buildings housing bloodstock and commercial precinct / village centre | Additional buildings | Increase in adverse visual effect for motorists on SH1 (at 100km/hr), and for residents at the north end of Pencarrow Road (stationary receivers). Increase in noise for residents at the north end of Pencarrow Road | Existing large lot rural residential properties either side of the site along the SH1 frontage feature mature screen plantings (NZTA and private). Proposal will provide screen plantings along the SH1 boundary and large trees around the proposed buildings to largely screen and reduce the scale of buildings from SH1 over time. The architecture of the proposed buildings will have an equestrian typology, a typical feature in this area | Low-Moderate | Low |

| **View point** | **Location** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | **Physical Effects** (increase in built form) | **Perceptual Effects** (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | **Justification** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **Visual Effect** Short term | **Visual Effect** Long term |
| **2** | Roadside, near 587 Pencarrow Road, along the western boundary | Approx 30% more 1-2 storey buildings | Additional buildings | Minor increase in adverse visual effect for residents at the north end of Pencarrow Road (stationary receivers). Minor increase in noise for residents at the north end of Pencarrow Road | Extensive large tree plantings, earth mounding and the slip road are retained to soften the impacts of the proposal and integrate with local landscape context over time | Low-Moderate | Low |
| **3** | Roadside near 535 Pencarrow Road, along the western boundary | Harness track | No change | No change | Extensive large tree plantings, earth mounding and the slip road are retained to soften the impacts of the proposal and integrate with local landscape context over time | Low | Very Low |

| View point | Location | Substantive - Sept 2026 | Physical Effects (increase in built form) | Perceptual Effects (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | Justification | Substantive - Sept 2026 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Visual Effect Short term | Visual Effect Long term |
| 4 | Roadside, near 20 Hooker Road | Senior living precinct with single story buildings at the edges and 1-2 storey special care and admin in the centre | Change of built form scale – more smaller scale buildings, and plantings along boundary and between | More urban land use than stable buildings. Increased landscape visual effect | Finer grained and smaller buildings behind a planted boundary along the road frontage with opportunity for more plantings between buildings | Moderate | Low-Moderate |
| 5 | Roadside near 48A Hooker Road | Wetlands with racetrack behind, boundary plantings with large lot rural residential housing | Reduced built form and removal of entrance | Minor decrease in landscape visual effect, with less traffic movements and associated noise | Improvement with significant plantings along the boundary edge, within residential lots and wetland and remnant stand of kahikatea behind | Low-Moderate | Low |

| **View point** | **Location** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | **Physical Effects** (increase in built form) | **Perceptual Effects** (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | **Justification** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **Visual Effect** Short term | **Visual Effect** Long term |
| **6** | Roadside near 82 Hooker Road | Large lot rural residential housing with boundary plantings and on-lot plantings | No change | No change | Boundary plantings and on-lot plantings will mature over time to reduce the landscape visual effects on the surrounding landscape | Moderate | Low-Moderate |
| **7** | Roadside near 136 Hooker Road | Large lot rural residential housing with boundary plantings and on-lot plantings | No change | No change | Boundary plantings and on-lot plantings will mature over time to reduce the landscape visual effects on the surrounding landscape | Moderate | Low-Moderate |
| **8** | Roadside near 165 Hooker Road | Large lot rural residential housing with boundary plantings and on-lot plantings | No change | No change | Boundary plantings and on-lot plantings will mature over time to reduce the landscape visual effects on the surrounding landscape | Moderate | Low-Moderate |

| View point | Location | Substantive - Sept 2026 | Physical Effects (increase in built form) | Perceptual Effects (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | Justification | Substantive - Sept 2026 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Visual Effect Short term | Visual Effect Long term |
| 9 | Roadside near 18 Duncan Road | Large lot rural residential housing with boundary plantings and on-lot plantings | No change | No change | Boundary plantings and on-lot plantings will mature over time to reduce the landscape visual effects on the surrounding landscape | Moderate | Low-Moderate |
| 10 | Roadside near 70 Duncan Road | Private lot with boundary behind. Addition of timber noise attenuation wall on boundary | No change | No change | Timber noise attenuation wall will appear similar to a typical residential fence | Moderate | Low-Moderate |
| 11 | Roadside near 107 Duncan Road | Features increased (3 x) equestrian training stables along the southern boundary of residential lots | Additional buildings | Increase in adverse visual effect from additional buildings for residents (stationary receivers). Additional noise | Two layers of trees between boundaries and stables will screen over time | Low-Moderate | Low |

| **View point** | **Location** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | **Physical Effects** (increase in built form) | **Perceptual Effects** (changes to human experience – visual, noise, smell, character) | **Justification** | **Substantive - Sept 2026** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **Visual Effect** Short term | **Visual Effect** Long term |
| **12** | Roadside near 104C Duncan Road | Features more intensified equestrian training and stables along the southern boundary of residential lots | Additional buildings | Increase in adverse visual effect from additional buildings for residents (stationary receivers). Additional noise | Two layers of trees between boundaries and stables will screen over time | Low-Moderate | Low |
| **13** | Northeastern corner of the site | As above for viewpoints 11 & 12. Additionally, racetrack is closer to the boundary and the addition of a native forest & track | Additional buildings | Increase in adverse visual effect from additional buildings for residents (stationary receivers). Additional noise from stables and closer proximity of racetrack | Two layers of trees between boundaries and stables will screen over time. Additional of native bush trail will provide a more pleasant outlook and additional screening over time | Low-Moderate | Low |

## Summary Findings

Refer to Referral Application Assessment of Landscape Effects April 2026 (Rev 02). The methodology and key findings remain current with minor changes.

Following a more detailed design process, the assessed landscape effects at the majority of viewpoints (7 to 13) remain unchanged or have improved relative to the Referral Assessment. At 6 viewpoints predominantly to the north and west of the site where building precincts have been refined through design, the assessed short-term visual effect has moved marginally within the Low to Moderate range. In all cases, long-term effects remain with the range assessed at Referral, reflecting the planting and mitigation strategy that has been carried through and enhanced.

The key findings of the referral assessment are confirmed in light of the substantive application design, with the following updates to reflect detailed design development.

Potential landscape effects of the proposal have been assessed in Section 4 of the Referral Assessment against the values of the existing landscape character as described in Section 3. The Assessment has considered effects on physical and perceptual including visual, and associative aspects of the landscape for the site and local surrounding landscape. The findings have considered the statutory context and construction activity.

The key findings of this assessment are:

I. The site and immediate surrounds are collectively an attractive rural landscape with attributes of note but lack features of regional significance. For these reasons the existing landscape is assessed to have a **Moderate** landscape value.

II. The landscape relevant objectives and policies of the district plan seek to maintain and enhance the rural and landscape characteristics of an area. They provide for rural industries and built form providing they maintain rural character and amenity. From a landscape perspective with the exception of the removal of high-quality soils from the site, inherent in the proposal, the development is considered to appropriately mitigate landscape effects to the rural character and provide a proposal in keeping with the rural character of the area.

III. The proposal will result in a **Low - Moderate** degree of adverse physical effect to the landscape character and values of the site and surrounds during construction and until proposed planting has established. Thereafter the proposal is assessed as having **Low** physical effect to the landscape.

IV. The visual catchment, for any potentially meaningful view of the proposal, is contained within a maximum 500m radius of the site to the west, south and east. However, within that 500m

radius views of the site are frequently obscured by built form, topography and existing vegetation.

V. For the community living, visiting, working and moving past the site and surrounds the proposal and its construction will have limited adverse perceptual effects. The proposal will be visible depending on proximity, intervening and proposed vegetation in the short, mid and long term but will be largely assimilated into the landscape in the mid to long term. For the reasons outlined above adverse perceptual effects, including visual, to the landscape are assessed as **Low - Moderate** in the short-term receding to **Low** in the medium term.

VI. Detailed findings (Refer section 4.2.1) that contributed to the above assessment of perceptual effect were taken from representative viewpoints to the surrounds of the site. They found that visual effects ranged between **Moderate** for four viewpoints to the southeast corner to ~~**Low**~~ **Low - Moderate** for the majority of other viewpoints along the north and western edges due to the consolidation of built form in these locations in the short term to ~~**Low Moderate**~~ **Moderate** to ~~**Very Low**~~ **Low - Moderate** for all viewpoints in the mid and long term due to a comprehensive planting approach.

VII. It is assessed that there will be a ~~**Low**~~ **Low - Moderate** degree of adverse effect on the associative values of this landscape, predominantly arising from the resultant loss of rural character to the northwest, southeast and southwest corners of the site.

Taking these ratings together, the proposal is assessed as having a **Moderate** degree of adverse effect to the landscape in the short term and a **Low-Moderate** degree in the medium and long term. These findings are consistent with the overall assessment envelope established at referral, with the marginal movement in short-term ratings attributable to design refinements in the northern and western building precincts.