

# Addendum to Landscape Assessment Report for 250, 256 West Hoe heights –

Date: 11/06/2025

Prepared for: Vineway Ltd.

Site Location: 53A, 53B & 55 Russell Road (Stage 1) / 88, 130 & 132 Upper  
Ōrewa Road (Stage 2), Wainui, Auckland

Report Number: 250604-LVA-ADD-J002180-DELMORE-R01

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QA/QC Check: Richard Greenwood

The purpose of this addendum is to provide a response to the following feedback received from Auckland Council's landscape specialist, Helen Mellsop on 16/05/2025 (note my emphasis added to highlight the key requirements);

*'The Landscape Assessment Report submitted with the application is not fully in accordance with Te Tangi a te Manu NZILA Aotearoa Landscape Assessment Guidelines. I recommend the following additions/revisions to the report:*

- *Inclusion of an evaluation of landscape values and valued attributes in the 'Existing Environment' section of the report. While landscape character is described in 3.24 to 3.31, there is no evaluation of landscape values as set out in paragraphs 5.28 to 5.34 of Te Tangi a te Manu.*
- *Revision of Section 6 Assessment of Landscape Effects to include effects on physical, associative and perceptual attributes of the landscape (rather than just physical attributes), including effects on the landscape values identified previously in the report (refer Chapter 6 of Te Tangi a te Manu).*

*Happy to discuss further with Greenwoods next week on the site visit.'*

The subsequent sections will address each of these queries and serve as an

addendum to the submitted report 'Delmore – 53A, 53B & 55 Russell Road (Stage 1) / 88, 130 & 132 Upper Ōrewa Road (Stage 2), Wainui, Auckland – Landscape Assessment Report – Issue: FINAL / Issue Date: 11 February 2025), please note that herewith I will refer to this report as the 'original landscape assessment'

## 1. EVALUATION OF LANDSCAPE VALUES

The sections of the Te Tangi a te Manu guidelines referred to by Ms. Mellsop (sections 5.28 to 5.34) are reproduced below;

*5.28 – Character and value are different but interdependent. All landscapes have character and value. Identifying each landscape's values is fundamental to its management. While evaluation can be conceived of as a subsequent step to characterisation, values typically become apparent through the process of interpreting a landscape's character. Interpreting a landscape's character will point to its values and evaluating a landscape's values will point to the attributes on which those values depend. Interpreting character and values is therefore typically an iterative process.*

*5.29 – The purpose of identifying landscape values is to maintain and improve such values. But landscape values are managed through the physical attributes that embody the values. It is important that the values are explained in terms of the physical attributes on which they depend. For example, the values of a settled valley enclosed by open pastoral hills may depend on avoiding buildings on skyline ridges. Conversely, the values of a of an incised landscape of bush-clad valleys may depend on building on the ridges and avoiding the valleys.*

*5.30 – Consider potential values as well as existing values. Such potential may entail enhancing landscape values or restoring areas that have been degraded. Potential values can be realised through design (see Chapter 7).*

*5.31 – Criteria are sometimes used to evaluate landscapes. Such criteria should be consistent with the concept of 'landscape' as defined in Chapter 4. That is, the criteria should recognise landscape's physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions and reflect the fact that character and value arise from the interaction between the dimensions.*

*5.32 – However, criteria can be problematic. Values are specific to each landscape in its context. While desired outcomes are sometimes framed as generic criteria (such as the extent of naturalness, openness, or rural character), such matters are a generalisation of each landscape's specific character. Do not let a focus on generic parameters lead you to overlook each landscape's values that arise from its specific character and unique context. For example, district plans often have policies about maintaining rural character. Such character ranges from sheep-and-beef hill country, to*

*orchards, cropping, dairying, and lifestyle landscapes. The specific attributes of rural character, therefore, vary considerably, and will determine what may or may not be appropriate. Context is everything.*

*5.33 – Be cautious with rating (scoring) individual attributes to evaluate landscapes for the following reasons:*

- Conceptually, landscape is the interplay of dimensions—not the sum of their parts.*
- Value is embodied in specific character and attributes, not the generic criteria/factors that typically make up a scoring framework.*
- The relative significance of any criterion/factor depends on context.*
- While in practice a high score for one dimension is often mirrored by high scores in the other dimensions (given that the physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions typically resonate with each other), such self-reinforcing tendencies do not always hold true and should not be misconstrued. It is possible for a landscape to have a single over-riding reason for its value.*
- Some criteria/factors, particularly in more detailed schema, may be in opposition (for example, rarity vs representativeness, historic heritage vs naturalness).*

*5.34 – It is more credible to treat landscape criteria as pointers than part of a mathematical formula. Ultimately, reasons and explanation in support of professional judgement are more important than prescribed criteria.'*

## *LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS*

Through sections 3.10–3.23, of the original landscape assessment, I identified the following landscape elements across the site;

Natural elements:

- Seven gullies and associated streams across site, with the majority lying in a north – south arrangement,
- 'Natural' vegetation that is associated with the aforementioned gullies,
- 'Utilitarian' planting such as shelter belts, which are arranged in a geometric manner (i.e.: rows, blocks) and provided to assist with agricultural activities (i.e.: shelter belts) or as forestry blocks intended for harvest (typically pine blocks at the upper, steeper portions of the site),
- A rolling landscape, typical of the surrounding environment, with the aforementioned gullies creating a series of ridgelines across the site,
- Ridgelines allowing for views across the landscape towards the

coastline providing an associative link between the site and the coastal surrounds, emphasising that the site is in close proximity to a coastal community (creating a greater 'sense of place').

#### Cultural elements:

- I identified the following cultural elements at the site that could be readily associated with a rural environment;
  - Post and wire fencing,
  - Paddocks containing livestock,
  - Sheds (both in use and derelict),
  - Numerous vehicular tracks,
  - Interplay between the aforementioned utilitarian planting and the naturally occurring planting.
- I also identified that the site does sit within a wider landscape that is *'undergoing change with a greater amount of residential built-form being established through the landscape and replacing the rural landscape, this change can be seen in Figure 7 this change is also present in an increasing number of rural-residential properties to the west of the site, which has led to a traffic volume on Upper Ōrewa Road that is more akin (based on my site observations) to an urban environment than a rural one.'*
- I also identified an associative link between the site and the aforementioned surrounding changing landscape through the noises that can be heard within the site, with typical rural noises (bird calls, insects, livestock) heard against the low-level din (i.e.: low-level background noise) of a constant vehicular noise emanating primarily from SH1 and to a lesser degree, the surrounding residential areas to the east of the site. This associative juxtaposition also ties into the aforementioned views from the upper reaches of the site wherein the changing landscape (in the form of suburban residential communities) can be seen.
- Another cultural element, the works largely in conjunction (in terms of this site) is the wider urban patterning, that as mentioned in the 'natural elements' section above becomes visible (and hence, associative) with the site, of particular importance to the site is the position of the neighbouring development to the north (Ara Hills), which currently serves as the urban edge, with the site serving as the rural edge, the proposed development will see the site take on the function of being the rural-urban interface.

#### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Within section 3.31 of the original landscape assessment, I identified the landscape character as being;

*'Traditionally rural in character with urban influences from an ongoing change in land use patterning.'*

This identification was based on the interplay between the aforementioned 'landscape elements', therefore the below assessment will provide my assessment of these elements, which will constitute my 'evaluation of the landscape elements'

Natural Elements:

*Gullies and ridgelines + Native Vegetation + Rolling Landscape:*

I consider that these elements combined form the greatest constituent element of the prevailing landscape character, as this feature is present not just across the site but also the wider landscape, both in the areas considered to be more 'traditionally rural' and those that have been developed.

The presence of the gullies has created watercourses which have provided areas of native vegetation across the landscape.

Within the more 'traditionally rural' areas of the landscape these gullies define the placement of the cultural rural elements and allow for the retention of trace natural character elements across the landscape, the high points of these gullies also provide the aforementioned views, which allow for an association between the site and the wider landscape, particularly the coastal edge, providing a 'sense of place' which may not necessarily be perceptible when located at a lower elevation.

They also contribute to the ambient noises around the site (which can be described as 'more traditional rural noises') by providing habitat for birds across the site.

When considering the developed areas within the wider landscape, the rolling topography of the ridgelines and gullies remains across these developed areas, with natural vegetated areas remaining within these developed areas (predominantly along stream corridors) which allows for an associative connection with what the landscape had been prior to development (in terms of patterning and potentially land use), with the retention of vegetation corridors allowing for the continuation of bird life habitat across the landscape.

Therefore, I consider that the preservation of these gullies through the landscape is critical to preserving local landscape character elements within the landscape and allowing the retention of natural processes across the landscape.

This was further discussed through section 3.38, within the 'Landscape Sensitivity to

Absorb Change' section of the original landscape assessment (which are considered to be outcomes that allow for successful management of the landscape values), with the sections referring to this landscape element outlined below (note emphasis added);

- *Infrastructure elements (roads and lots) to be sympathetic to the prevailing landforms to minimise the amount of land modification and allow the general rolling topography to be maintained* (whilst it is reasonable to assume that land modification will be required to change the land use from traditionally rural to urban this should be undertaken in a manner that preserves the rolling landscape topography and allows natural drainage patterns to be maintained).
- *Retention of naturally occurring vegetation through the site, specifically that associated with riparian corridors (both permanent and intermittent streams) to ensure that natural hydrological processes across the site are retained where practicable but also bird and insect habitat are retained* which will allow for the noises outlined in section 3.22 to remain across the site in conjunction with the urban noises that will be an expected outcome of a contemporary residential development.
- *Allowing for public access to the higher reaches of the site* (which will not be developed due to the presence of an SEA and unsuitable topography) this will allow the general public to experience a landscape asset that is currently only accessible to the current occupants of the site.
- *Ensuring that built-form on localised ridgelines is not perceived as ribbon development (Ribbon development occurs when a row of identical built form is placed atop a ridgeline) when viewed within the wider landscape* this is especially prevalent at the western ridgeline as this will act as the transition between the urban edge and the adjacent 'traditional rural landscape'.

These points were used as the basis of the future assessment against the landscape values and contributed to the final rating of landscape effects given in the conclusion (section 8) of the original landscape assessment.

Cultural Elements:

Rural elements within site + shelter belts:

I consider that the identified rural elements within the site include:

- Post and wire fencing,
- Paddocks containing livestock,
- Sheds (both in use and derelict),

- o Numerous vehicular tracks,
- o Interplay between the aforementioned utilitarian planting and the naturally occurring planting.

These are of less importance in the landscape to defining landscape character, as they are expected within a rural setting and their retention and/ or presence in a developed landscape does not necessarily lead to an association with the landscapes previous land use, and thus whilst they might satisfy the requirement to retain cultural elements on a micro level, on a macro level they are largely imperceptible when compared to observations/experiences at a 'micro level' as they are not of the same 'broad stroke' quality that the aforementioned landforms possess within the landscape.

I also consider that whilst the shelter belts across the site could be considered to be 'natural elements', given that they are not necessarily occurring organically, they are considered to be 'cultural elements' as they are organised in a rectilinear fashion and are generally considered to be cultural interventions within the landscape, therefore retention of these elements can assist in retaining some trace elements of rural character, however I consider shelter belt planting to be of less cultural importance than retaining naturally occurring vegetation within the gullies as these represent a deeper connection to the landscape, as naturally occurring areas of vegetation generally pre-date areas of utilitarian planting, it is also functionally redundant to main large shelter belts within an urban environment as this can lead to reverse sensitivity effects such as excessive shading of large number of residents leading to thermal comfort issues during colder months.

However, retention of some of these elements (in the case of the site, the forestry blocks would be the most practical to retain, due to their positions at the periphery of the site) would allow for the retention of some trace elements of rural character across the wider landscape.

#### *Ambient Noise within the landscape + Extension of the urban edge:*

Continuing the urban edge across the site also contributes to the prevailing landscape character (as identified within sections 3.24 – 3.31 of the original assessment), particularly from the point of view of ensuring a continuation of the urban fabric, as there is an inherent risk to the degradation of the wider landscape character values if the development is perceived to be a standalone element rather than a continuation of the existing urban fabric, this could occur through different lot sizes than what is present in adjacent developments or varying general typologies (i.e.: a complete development with terrace houses next to one of standalone dwellings could be viewed / perceived as a standalone entity rather than part of a wider urban fabric), this was addressed in the original landscape assessment within section 3.38 of the 'Landscape Sensitivity to Absorb Change' section as follows (note *emphasis* added below):

- *Consistency in lot sizes and built-form arrangement with the nearby urban environment so that the proposed development is not perceived as a standalone development but rather part of the wider urban fabric.*
- *Ensuring that built-form on localised ridgelines is not perceived as ribbon development (Ribbon development occurs when a row of identical built form is placed atop a ridgeline) when viewed within the wider landscape, this is especially relevant at the western ridgeline as this will act as the transition between the urban edge and the adjacent 'traditional rural landscape'.*

The presence of development across the site also has the potential for effects on the ambient noise values of the wider landscape, by introducing more vehicular movements across the landscape, specifically on Upper Ōrewa Road, where additional vehicular noise may compete with the traditional ambient noises present in a rural area, thus introducing urban elements to the landscape. Therefore, notwithstanding future anticipated zoning,, whilst a nearby resident may not be able to necessarily see the development (particularly those to the west of the site, and to the south), experiencing increased traffic noise may give a perception that they are within an urban environment, this was addressed in the original landscape assessment within section 3.38 of the 'Landscape Sensitivity to Absorb Change' section as follows (note emphasis added below):

- *Managing vehicular access to the site to ensure that traffic volumes in roads in more 'traditional rural' areas do not play host to the majority of vehicular traffic accessing the site, it would be preferable if Grand Drive in Ōrewa carried more of this vehicular traffic in order to reduce ambient vehicle noise in more traditionally rural areas to the west of the site.*

## 2. EFFECTS ON PHYSICAL, ASSOCIATIVE EFFECTS AND PERCEPTUAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE LANDSCAPE (RATHER THAN JUST PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES)

In answer to the second query from Ms. Mellsop (outlined in the title of this section), I will utilise the outtakes from section 3.38 of the original landscape assessment as I consider that applying these across the site will 'manage the landscape values' thus I will, by way of reply to each of these points provide a response to how the physical, associative, and perceptual attributes have been managed.

*'Infrastructure elements (roads and lots) to be sympathetic to the prevailing landforms to minimise the amount of land modification and allow the general rolling topography to be maintained (whilst it reasonable to assume that land modification will be required to change the land use from traditionally rural to urban this should be undertaken in manner that preserves the rolling landscape topography and allows natural drainage patterns to be maintained).'*



The rolling landscape topography has been largely preserved, with proposed roads being sympathetic to the existing ridgelines and gullies and placed in such a manner that these gullies and ridgelines can be maintained, with the alignment of existing farm tracks used as a basis for the road network. This has contributed to the proposed cut and fill strategy being largely sympathetic to the local topography and allows for the retention of much of the existing landform, particularly at higher elevations.

The proposed dwellings have been located away from the gullies, which has allowed for the retention of the rolling landscape (as has been achieved on other recent developments within the wider landscape). This achieves a logical continuation of the nearby urban fabric, rather than making large incisions into the landscape to accommodate these roads and associated built-form.

Therefore, these measures (continuing the urban fabric across the rolling landscape and retention of the vegetated gullies) ensures that the development will be perceived as a logical continuation of the prevailing landscape patterning across the wider landscape, thus being sympathetic to the local emerging landscape values and landscape character.

*'Consistency in lot sizes and built-form arrangement with the nearby urban environment so that the proposed development is not perceived as a standalone development but rather part of the wider urban fabric.'*

Consistency with lot sizes with Ara Hills to the north-east of the site has been achieved, therefore this represents a logical continuation of the surrounding urban fabric and thus a logical extension of the existing rural-urban edge across the landscape.

Therefore, from the perspective of comparison to the existing nearby urban fabric, the proposal will not be perceived as a separate stand-alone development but rather a part of the wider urban fabric.

*'Retention of naturally occurring vegetation through the site, specifically that associated with riparian corridors (both permanent and intermittent streams) to ensure that natural hydrological processes across the site are retained but also bird and insect habitat are retained which will allow for the noises outlined in section 3.22 to remain across the site in conjunction with the urban noises that will be an expected outcome of a contemporary residential development.'*

As outlined above, the proposed road and dwelling layouts allow for the retention of the naturally occurring vegetation within the aforementioned gullies across site. This allows for the continuation of a wider landscape patterning wherein developed areas retain these vegetated areas across site, which ensures that the development will be perceived as a logical continuation of the existing landscape character values of the wider landscape by not introducing a development that can be viewed as

'standalone'. The proposed layout also allows for the retention of the existing SEA and covenanted areas across the site.

The retention of these areas of native vegetation has also provided for their enhancement through native revegetation planting, which will lead to a potential increase in bird life across the site, which will, in turn, potentially increase the level of bird noise within the landscape, which will allow for nearby residents, most likely those at the edges of the development and near the proposed revegetation areas to maintain elements of the local 'rural noise'.

*'Managing vehicular access to the site to ensure that traffic volumes in roads in more 'traditional rural' areas do not play host to the majority of vehicular traffic accessing the site, it would be preferable if Grand Drive in Ōrewa carried more of this vehicular traffic in order to reduce ambient vehicle noise in more traditionally rural areas to the west of the site.'*

This has been considered by the applicant with the main entrance to the site defined as the Grand Drive intersection, with Upper Ōrewa Road providing secondary access. As council has earmarked this site for future development, there is an expectation that there will be an increase in traffic within the surrounding road networks. However, the proposed arrangement minimises the extent of traffic utilising Upper Ōrewa Road, thereby limiting the increase in vehicular noise in this area. (Note that this assessment is based on the current receiving environment, however upon the introduction of the NoR 6 Road and subsequent linkages to Upper Ōrewa Road, traffic volumes to/from the site utilising Upper Ōrewa Road will likely increase.

*'Allowing for public access to the higher reaches of the site (which will not be developed due to the presence of an SEA and unsuitable topography) this will allow the general public to experience a landscape asset that is currently only accessible to the current occupants of the site.'*

Access has been provided to the higher reaches through a combination of the proposed walking track and roading/footpath network.

This allows for the activation of a landscape asset, that is currently un-utilised due to access being prohibited due to sitting on farmland.

This will allow the general public to access the views available across the wider landscape, providing an experience that is not currently available and will provide an appreciation of the current interplay between the traditional rural landscapes and recently developed areas and an appreciation of the rural-urban edge.

As outlined previously the community (when accessing these elevated points of the site) can potentially gain a greater 'sense of place' that the site and landscape are part of a larger coastal community, something that is not readily perceptible when

sitting at lower elevations due to lack of view towards the coastline and the absence of any 'coastal noise' and vegetation that might be commonly perceived as sitting in proximity to a coastal environment (i.e.: that with larger glossy leaves, that naturally occur at coastal margins).

By retaining and enhancing these areas and providing pedestrian and vehicular access to the site, the wider public can experience these assets, particularly those at higher elevations where a walking track is proposed. Use of this walking track will allow for views across the landscape and will allow those within the wider community to be able to gain a greater 'sense of place', being part of a larger coastal community. This is something that is not readily perceptible when sitting at lower elevations due to lack of views towards the coastline, the absence of any 'coastal noise' and the absence of vegetation that might be commonly perceived as sitting in proximity to a coastal environment (i.e.: that with larger glossy leaves, that naturally occur at coastal margins).

*'Ensuring that built-form on localised ridgelines is not perceived as ribbon development (Ribbon development occurs when a row of identical built form is placed atop a ridgeline) when viewed within the wider landscape, this is especially prevalent at the western ridgeline as this will act as the transition between the urban edge and the adjacent 'traditional rural landscape'.*

The western ridgeline also represents the point of the new urban-rural edge. Larger lots will be placed at this edge, with dwellings set down into the landscape to allow for varied heights of built-form at this ridgeline. Planting will also be incorporated in order to reduce any perception of 'ribbon development'.

This treatment also allows for the updated 'urban-rural' edge to not be represented as a hard built edge but rather a vegetated one, that in terms of visual perception from the west can be considered more sympathetic as it provides something of a graduated transition within the landscape.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Whilst the preceding analyses was not included within the original landscape assessment, I did consider it existentially when reaching my conclusions on the level of the landscape effects of the proposal across the wider landscape.

Therefore, the previously ascribed rating of the landscape effects being **Low**<sup>1</sup> provided within section 8 of the original landscape assessment remains unchanged.

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<sup>1</sup> Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022