

Boffa Miskell



Rangitooopuni

Urban Design and Landscape Effects Assessment
Prepared for Rangitooopuni Developments Limited Partnership
Lots 1 & 2
1 May 2025





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Appendix 1: Forest Harvest Plan

1.0 Introduction

Te Kawerau ā Maki (TKAM) are the owners of 3,275 ha of the Rangitōopuni-Riverhead Forest. This whenua was transferred to TKAM as commercial redress as part of the settlement of its Waitangi Tribunal claim. TKAM in partnership with Avant Property Development Limited (Rangitōopuni Developments Limited Partnership, the applicant) propose to develop a 208 lot residential subdivision and 296 unit retirement village (260 villas and 36 care units) on the southern portion of the 3,275 ha of Rangitōopuni-Riverhead Forest. The site is comprised of Lot 1 (222.75 ha) and Lot 2 (173.6 ha), a total site area of 395 ha in the ownership of Rangitōopuni Land Holdings Limited Partnership.

The exotic *Pinus radiata* forest established on 3,275 ha landholding is managed under a lease agreement to a forestry management company with rotations comprising a 25 – 30 year timeframe. TKAM aspire to transition part of the land under the established commercial exotic forestry regime to a large scale restored indigenous forest cover with associated residential activities comprising in Lot 1 low density residential, 'countryside living' development and in Lot 2 a rural lifestyle retirement village, both set in a context of healing the landscape to a cover of indigenous vegetation and associated riparian, wetland and terrestrial forest habitats.

The overall development is framed by TKAM cultural understanding of the landscape and the association of the Riverhead area with the Iwi's ancestral connections / whakapapa.

Boffa Miskell landscape architects and urban designers have formed part of the project team for Rangitōopuni, commencing in 2019 to explore development opportunities for the landholding. The Lot 1 & Lot 2 Landscape Concept plan has been prepared by Boffa Miskell. We have worked closely with Maven civil engineers, Engeo and GWE geotechnical engineers, Bioresearches ecologists, CFG Heritage, archaeologists, Commute transport planners, Property Economics economists, Campbell Brown planners, Crosson architects with Design Group Stapleton Elliot (DGSE) architect (for Lot 2 Retirement Village and input to Lot 1 Design Guidelines) and the client TKAM / Avant project team in the development of the Lot 1 & Lot 2 proposals for resource consent.

This Urban Design and Landscape Effects Assessment (UDLEA) is set out under the following headings:

- Methodology;
- Site and Context;
- Statutory / Planning Context;
- The Proposal;
- Visual Catchment and Viewing Audiences;
- Assessment of Effects; and
- Summary and Conclusion.

2.0 Code of conduct

In preparing this assessment, the report authors have read and made themselves familiar with the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses, contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. Other than where stated, we confirm that the matters addressed in this report are within our areas of expertise and that we have not omitted to consider material facts known to us that might alter or detract from our assessment and the opinions we express.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Urban Design

The potential urban design effects (both beneficial and adverse) of the proposal are assessed from a synthesis of:

- Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) provisions as relevant to an urban design assessment, including those within: Chapter H19 Rural Zones (and in particular, H19.7 Rural – Countryside Living Zone); Chapter E21 Treaty Settlement Land; and Chapter E39 Subdivision – Rural;
- Urban design guideline documents, including: *The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol*, and Auckland Council's *The Auckland Design Manual*;
- An understanding of the characteristics of the Site and the wider area;
- General good urban design practice.

3.2 Landscape Effects Assessment

This assessment is consistent with the concepts, principles, and approaches in 'Te Tangi a te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

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 Manu¹, as set out below:



¹ "Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines" (July 2022) Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects <www.nzlia.co.nz> at [6.2.1].

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, change in a landscape does not of itself generate adverse effects.

4.0 The Site and Context

4.1 Regional Context

The area known as the Riverhead Forest comprises land held in the ownership of Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara (as commercial redress settlement land), Watercare and Te Kawerau Iwi Settlement Trust (TKAM) (as commercial redress settlement land). A 3,275 ha area in the ownership of TKAM comprises the largest, portion of the Riverhead Forest. Figure 1 below illustrates the TKAM landholdings with Lots 1 & 2 identified.

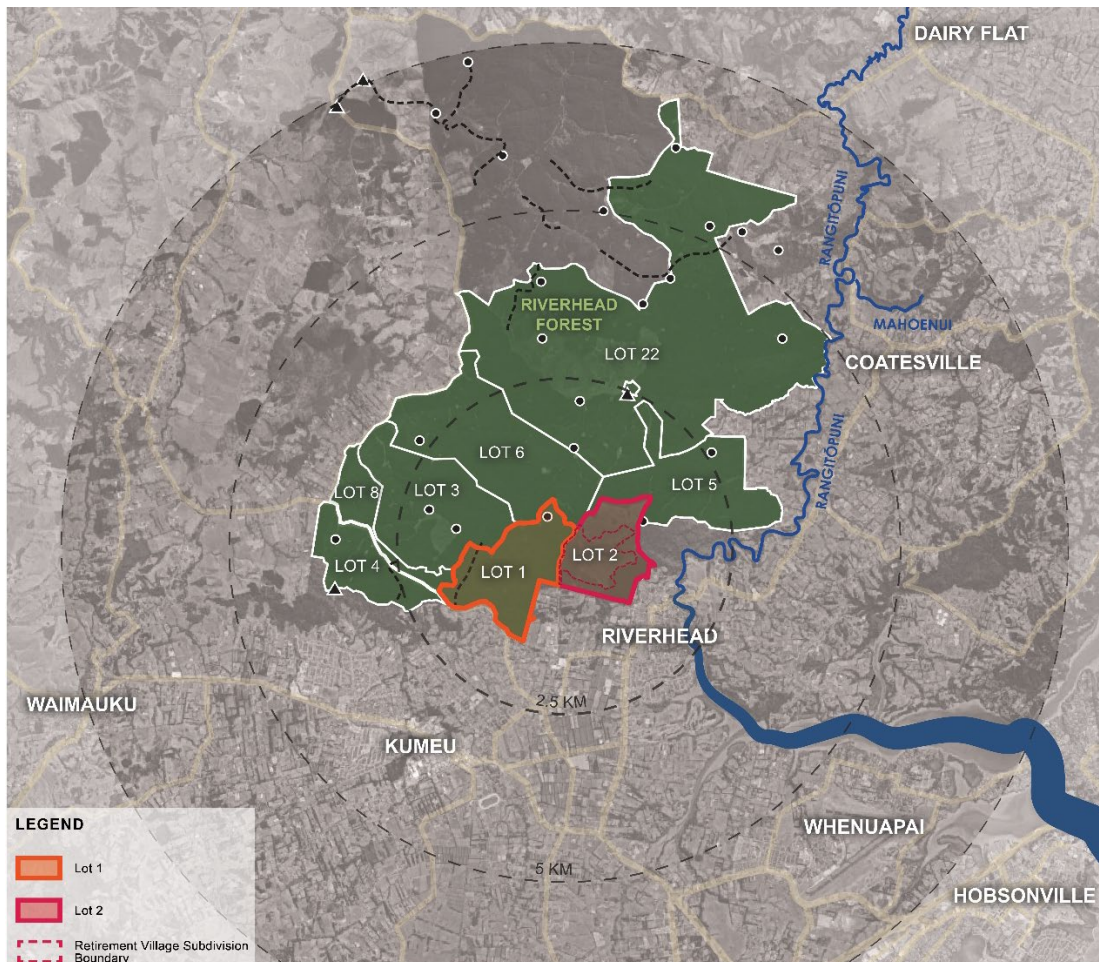


Figure 1: TKAM landholdings in the Riverhead / Rangitōopuni Forest, with the subject Lots 1 & 2 identified.

Riverhead Forest / Rangitōopuni lies in the north of the Auckland Region. It provides a visual and physical backdrop to the rural service and lifestyle townships of Kumeū, Huapai and Riverhead, which are settlements planned for urban growth in the north-west of Auckland as

part of the wider urban growth of the region. The Forest also provides the western hill backdrop to the areas of Coatesville and Dairy Flat in the east and Helensville in the west.

Riverhead Forest / Rangitopuni comprises elevated land and the upper portion of a series of hydrological catchments which flow variously to the upper reaches of the Waitematā Harbour, the closest being at Riverhead, and to the Kaipara Harbour in the west. These are sensitive receiving environments, and it is recognised that the management of the quantity and quality of water flowing from the land will be a key consideration in relation to any future land use change.

TKAM's land ownership is currently primarily managed under a lease agreement by a third party forestry operator, for commercial *Pinus radiata* forestry, with a harvest cycle of approximately 26 years. **Appendix 1** shows the planned forest harvest regime. Forest harvest is regulated by the provisions of the National Environment Standard – Production Forestry. Most of the forest on Lot 1 has been harvested between 2019-2024, with one section of forest adjacent to Old North Road remaining to be harvested in 2025. In Lot 2, the forest was replanted in 2021.

The plantation Pine forest to the north of Lots 1 and 2 remains under its commercial forestry regime with harvest cycles from 2025-2028+. For the purposes of this application, the northern forest is currently proposed to be maintained under its production forest lease arrangement.

Whilst private land in the ownership of TKAM, the Riverhead Forest has historically and continues to be used by the public for a range of recreational activities, primarily walking / cross country running and mountain biking, with informal access gained along forestry access tracks. This public recreational use of the forest is proposed to be maintained and accommodated within the development.

The site is situated between the Kumeū-Huapai and Riverhead settlements, approximately 4km from Kumeū-Huapai to the west and 2.5km to Riverhead to the south-east, refer Figure 2 below (a full size, A3 version of this Regional Context plan is included in the Boffa Miskell Lot 1 & Lot 2 Landscape Concept package dated April 2025).

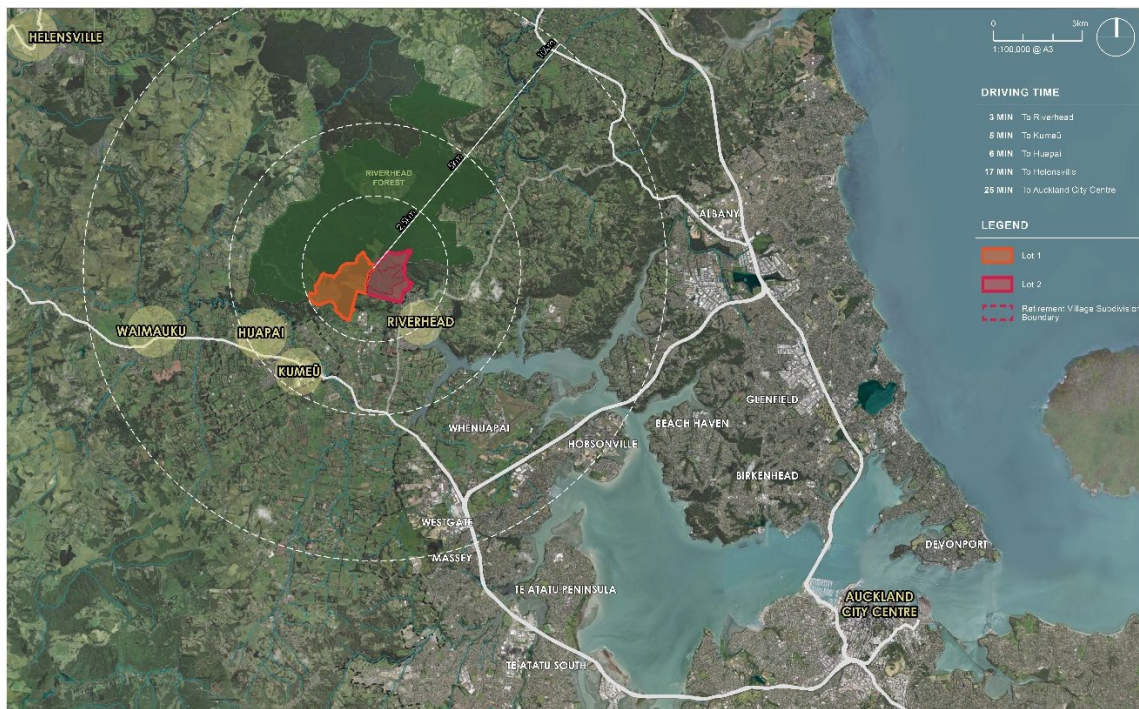


Figure 2: Regional Context and the relationship of the Riverhead Forest / Rangitopuni to the settlements of Huapai, Kumeu and Riverhead and the wider northern part of the Auckland Region.

Kumeū and Huapai function as twin town centres, connected by an approximately 60 ha area of Light Industrial zoned land. This corridor of light industry and small businesses along State Highway 16 (SH16) effectively links the two townships while providing a range of services and employment opportunities.

Large tracts of Future Urban Zone (FUZ) land surround Kumeū-Huapai, providing for significant urban growth in this area in the future. This growth is also supported by an aspiration for improved rapid bus public transport to the north-west of the city. Te Ara Hauāuru – Northwest Rapid Transit is a Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency medium term project investigating options for fast, frequent and reliable transport in the north-west. The Supporting Growth Alliance has developed a long-term Strategic Plan for the Northwest which includes a rapid transit corridor from Kumeū to a new interchange at Brigham Creek on SH16 which would connect to the Northwest Rapid Transit project.

Riverhead is a low-density residential settlement generally comprising stand-alone dwellings on large lots, serviced by a compact local centre, with a few pockets of recently constructed medium density residential housing. The settlement has a small core of local shops on the Coatesville Riverhead Highway (SH28) at the corner with Maude Street, as illustrated in the photograph, Figure 3, below.



Figure 3: Riverhead local centre at the corner of the Coatesville Riverhead Highway (SH28) and Maude Road.

There is also a range of distributed retail, commercial and community facilities, as well as many home businesses. The Hallertau Brewery, on the southern outskirts of the settlement, and The Riverhead (1857) 'New Zealand's Oldest Riverside Tavern' on the Rangitooopuni Stream, an upper reach of the Waitematā Harbour, to the east provide local and wider regional F&B destinations in Riverhead.

Private Plan Change 100 (PPC100) to the AUP proposes to change the zoning of FUZ land to the immediate west of the existing urban area of Riverhead to a mix of Residential - Mixed Housing Suburban, Residential – Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings and Business – Local Centre. A hearing for this plan change has been scheduled for 19 May – 21 May 2025.

4.2 The Site

The Site, comprising Lot 1 and Lot 2 of the TKAM landholding, is located in the southern part of the Riverhead Forest, to the north of the established settlement of Riverhead, refer Figure 4 below.

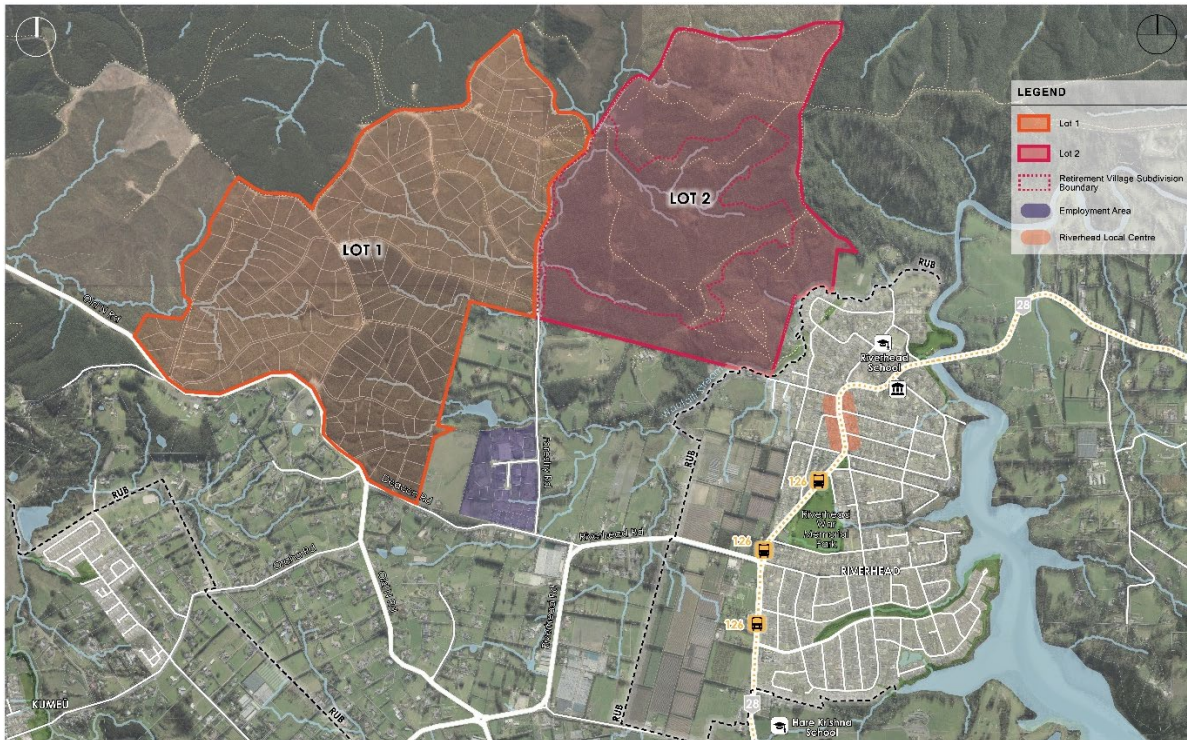


Figure 4: Rangitōopuni Riverhead: Proposed Development – Lots 1 & 2 Site boundary

Lot 1 has a section of public frontage to Old North Road to the south-west. All other boundaries are either within the forest (to the north and west), or to rural lifestyle neighbours to the east and south. Old North Road passes through a portion of the forest in the west. Huapai is located away to the south, separated from the Site by intervening ridgelines. The settlement of Riverhead some 1.7km (from the existing urban edge of Riverhead to the closes corner of Lot 1 on Old North Road) away to the east.

The majority of the Site (all of Lot 2 and most of Lot 1) lies within the upper reaches of a tributary catchment of the Wautaiti Stream. This stream flows around the western and northern edge of the existing Riverhead settlement to join the Rangitōopuni Stream, which forms a northwestern upper reach of the Waitematā Harbour. A portion of Lot 1 in the west lies in the upper reaches of the catchment of the Ararimu Stream, which flows west to the Kaipara Harbour.

The majority of the Site is located in the north / south aligned valley system of the upper Wautaiti Stream catchment which comprises many un-named tributary waterways. Forestry Road, which extends north from Deacon Road, extends up the base of the valley. Forestry Road is a public road in the south, currently changing to a gated, locked, private road as it extends into the Riverhead Forest. Figure 5 below shows the topography of the Site (contours, rivers and permanent streams), which is dissected with a series of sub-catchments and streams.

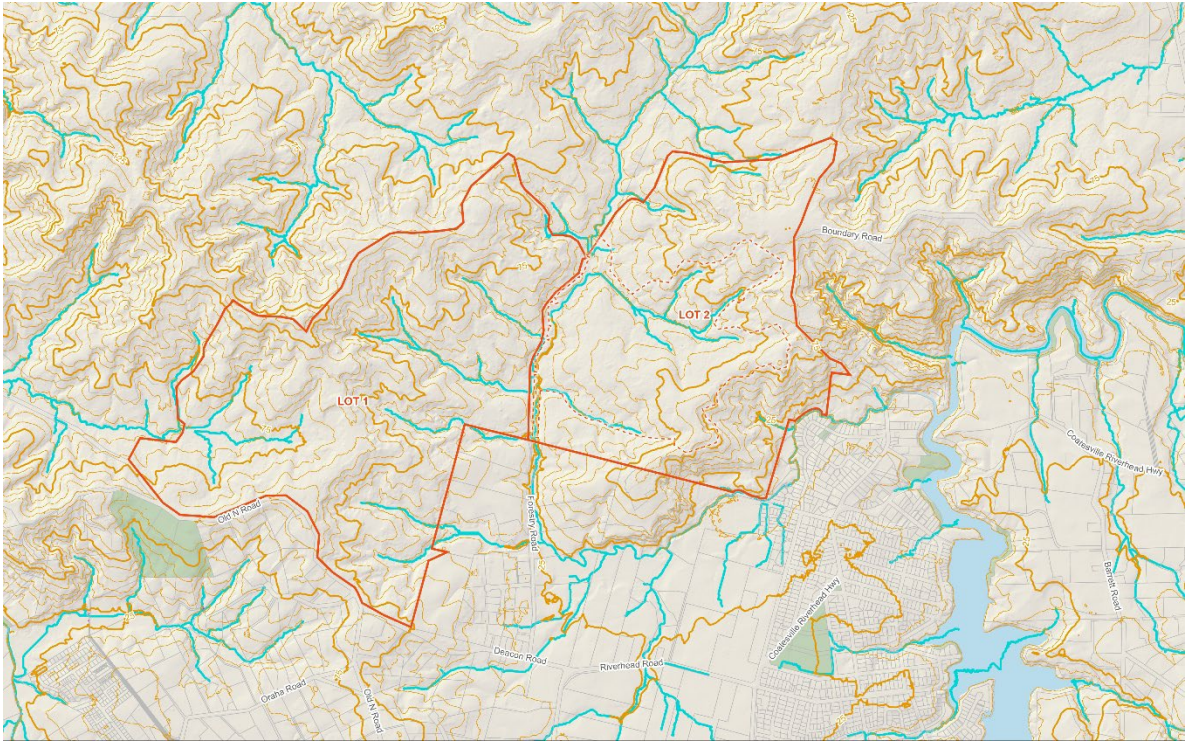


Figure 5: Site and surrounding area topography and the network of permanent streams & rivers (source GeoMaps).

The main permanent stream in the Site, which follows the valley floor, and is generally deeply incised, has a section with series of small rock pools and exposed rock as illustrated in the photograph, Figure 6 below.



Figure 6: View looking toward the small pool and exposed rock along the stream corridor in the base of the valley.

The Site does not contain any identified Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs). The Site has an extensive network of permanent, intermittent and ephemeral streams. The deforested streams range in ecological value from **low, moderate and high** (see section 3.9.2 of the Biosearches Ecological Impact Assessment). Overall, the forested streams, both intermittent and permanent, are considered to be of **high** ecological value. The streams, situated under mature pine forest with indigenous understorey, are relatively unmodified and show natural characteristics in the bed, banks and substrates throughout.

Biosearches has identified and classified all waterways / streams and wetlands within the site as illustrated in Figure 7 below.

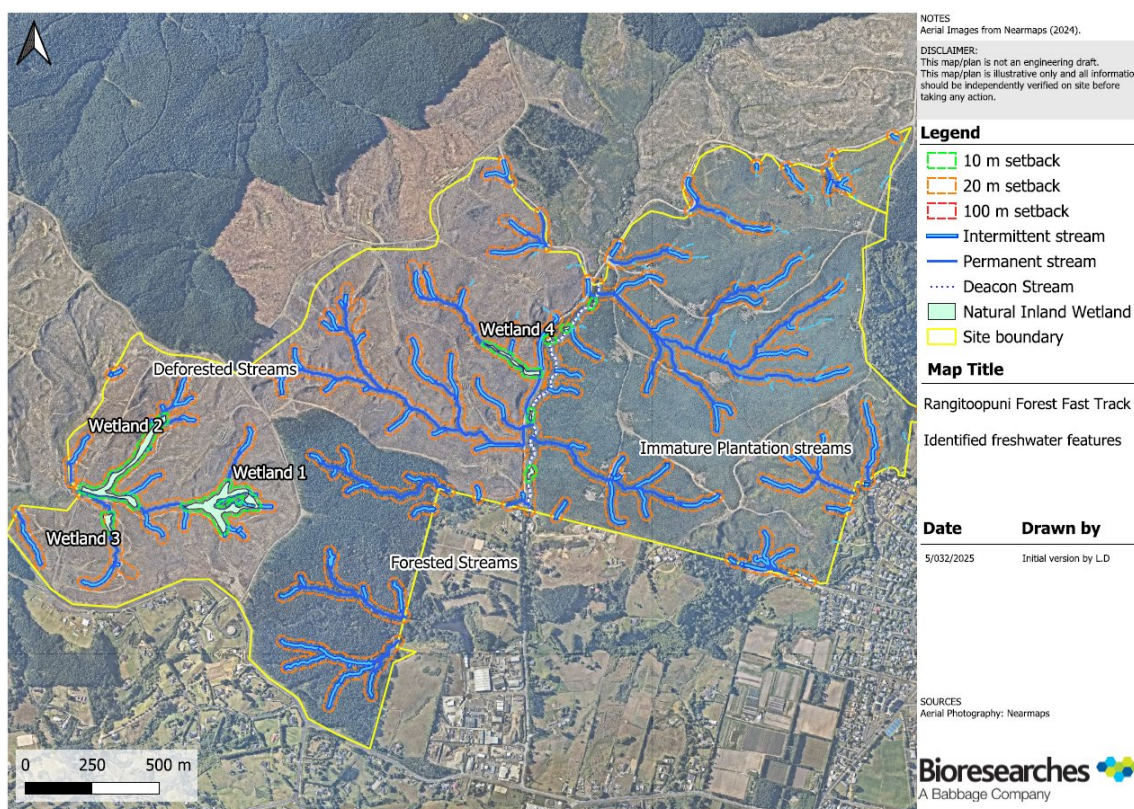


Figure 7: Freshwater features identified within the Project Area, and their associated naming system (Biosearches Figure 8)

Most of the watercourses within the Site feature riparian margins that support some level of mixed exotic and native broadleaved scrub. With the forestry lease terminated and in preparation for the proposed development, substantial areas of Lots 1 and 2 have had their exotic *Pinus radiata* production forest harvested and not replanted. Those areas presently in plantation Pine within the development areas of Lots 1 and 2 will be cleared as part of the future development. In Lot 2, production Pine forest will be retained outside of the identified retirement village development and landscape restoration / revegetation footprint.

The wider Rangitōopuni forest area, not within the application Site, contains two identified SEAs. These comprise kauri, podocarp, broadleaved forest and areas of Raupō wetland.

To the southeast / east of Lot 2 there is a steep vegetated escarpment which provides a backdrop to Riverhead. Lot 2 comprises part of this escarpment backdrop, with the Wautaiti

Stream winding a course along its base. Figure 8 below illustrates a view of the escarpment backdrop to Riverhead.



Figure 8: The Riverhead Forest vegetated backdrop to the Riverhead settlement seen from the corner of Duke Street and Wautaiti Drive, including part of Lot 2

There are a number of existing forestry roads, typically along ridgelines, located through the Site and wider Forest. These are associated with the established production forestry land use. As already noted the network of forestry roads are extensively used by the public for active recreation, including off-road cycle / mountain bike riding, walking, running and dog walking. The Site is devoid of built development.

5.0 Statutory / Planning Context

5.1 Overview

The substantial majority of Lots 1 and 2 are zoned Rural - Countryside Living ('Countryside Living'). Small areas of the very northern parts of both lots are zoned Rural – Rural Production. Lots 1 and 2 are Treaty Settlement Land and are therefore subject to the provisions of AUP Chapter E21. Figure 9 below illustrates the zoning.

The Chapter E21 Treaty Settlement Land provisions apply over the Site's underlying zoning. The provisions provide that where the underlying zone and E21 rules provide for the same activity, the less restrictive rule applies.² The provisions recognise *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* principles including the principles of redress and activity protection. They apply to land acquired by Mana Whenua through Treaty settlement legislation (as is the case with Lots 1 and 2). The provisions enable Mana Whenua to use and develop land acquired the land to support their social and economic development, in accordance with mātauranga and tikanga.

² AUP Chapter E21, E21.1 Background.

The Countryside Living Zone provides for rural lifestyle living.³ Rural character and amenity values are to be maintained,⁴ with land use activities restricted to those that are appropriate for the typically smaller site sizes than in other rural zones.⁵ The Zone is described in the AUP as follows:⁶

There is a diversity of topography, land quality and landscape character within the zone which results in a diversity of site sizes. The zone is the receiver area for transferable rural site subdivision from other zones.

This zone incorporates a range of rural lifestyle developments, characterised as low-density rural lifestyle dwellings on rural land. These rural lifestyle sites include scattered rural dwellings sites, farmlets and horticultural sites, bush dwelling sites and papakāinga.

Some parts of the zone reflect historical subdivision patterns, while other areas were established on rural land that did not have significant rural production values, and was often associated with steep topography and poor soils. Bush lots enabled the protection of indigenous vegetation cover as part of the subdivision process.

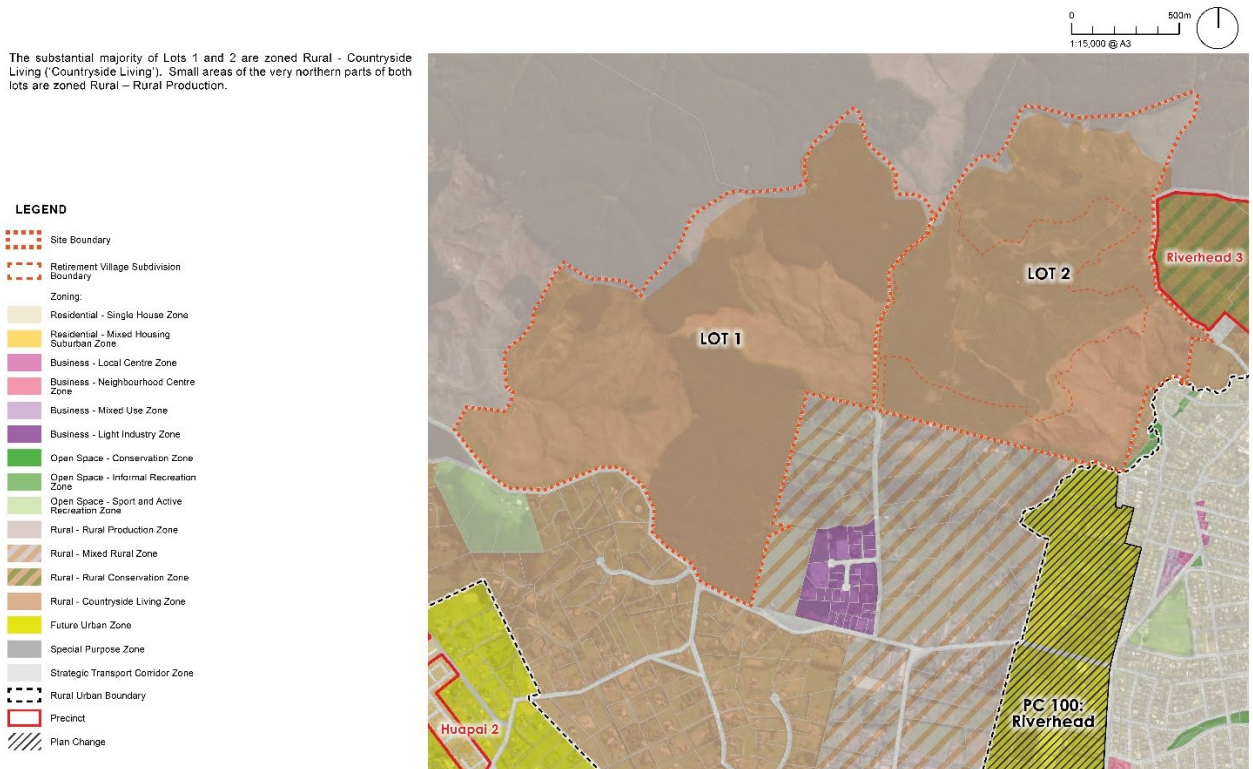


Figure 9: AUP Zoning in respect of Lot 1 and Lot 2.

³ AUP Chapter H19, H19.7.1 Zone description, Objective H19.7.2(1) and Policy H19.7.3(5).

⁴ AUP Chapter H19, Objective H19.7.2(2), Policy H19.7.3(1).

⁵ AUP Chapter H19, Objective H19.7.2(4).

⁶ AUP Chapter H19, H19.7.1 Zone description.

5.2 Objectives and policies framework

AUP objectives and policies of particular relevance to this UDLEA are repeated below.

Treaty Settlement Land

E21.2. Objectives

- (1) Mana Whenua have flexibility to use and develop Treaty settlement land in accordance with mātauranga and tikanga while ensuring appropriate health, safety and amenity standards are met.*
- (2) Mana Whenua use and develop land acquired as commercial redress to support their social and economic development.*
- (3) Mana Whenua can access, manage, use and develop land acquired as cultural redress.*

E21.3. Policies

- (1) Provide for an appropriate character, scale, intensity and range of development on Treaty settlement land across Auckland, including in coastal areas and outside the Rural Urban Boundary, recognising that the purpose of the Treaty settlement land provisions is to give effect to the outcomes of Treaty settlements to promote the cultural, social and economic development of Mana Whenua.*
- (2) Provide for a range of activities, including dwellings for papakāinga, marae and associated facilities, customary use, cultural and commercial activities, on Treaty settlement land.*
- (4) Avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on neighbouring properties while recognising that the Treaty settlement land provisions facilitate a scale, intensity and range of activities that may not be anticipated in the zone of the site.*

Overall, the objectives and policies signal an enabling approach to development on Treaty Settlement Land, and the reasons for that approach.

Countryside Living Zone

H19 Rural Zones- Objectives- General Rural

H19.2.3 Objectives – rural character, amenity and biodiversity values

- (1) The character, amenity values and biodiversity values of rural areas are maintained or enhanced while accommodating the localised character of different parts of these areas and the dynamic nature of rural production activities.*
- (2) Areas of significant indigenous biodiversity are protected and enhanced.*

H19 Rural Zones- Policies- General Rural

H19.2.4 Policies – rural character, amenity and biodiversity values

- (1) Manage the effects of rural activities to achieve a character, scale, intensity and location that is in keeping with rural character, amenity and biodiversity values, including recognising the following characteristics:*

- (a) a predominantly working rural environment;*
- (b) fewer buildings of an urban scale, nature and design, other than residential buildings and buildings accessory to farming; and*
- (c) a general absence of infrastructure which is of an urban type and scale.*

H19.7 Rural - Countryside Living Zone

H19.7.2 Objectives

- (1) Land is used for rural lifestyle living as well as small-scale rural production.*
- (2) The rural character, amenity values, water quality, ecological quality, historic heritage values and the efficient provision of infrastructure is maintained and enhanced in subdivision design and development.*
- (4) The type and nature of land-use activities provided for are restricted to those appropriate for the typically smaller Site sizes.*

H19.7.3 Policies

- (1) Locate and design subdivision and development to maintain and enhance rural character and amenity values and avoid an urban form and character by:
 - (a) designing subdivision and development (including accessways, services, utilities and building platforms) to be in keeping with the topography and characteristics of the land;*
 - (b) minimising earthworks and vegetation clearance for accessways, utilities and building platforms;*
 - (c) avoiding locating accessways, services, utilities and building platforms where they will result in adverse effects on water quality, wetlands, riparian margins, historic heritage sites or scheduled sites and places of value or significance to Mana Whenua. Where avoidance is not possible, mitigation measures must be proposed so that any adverse effects are minor;*
 - (d) identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement of existing areas of native vegetation, wetland areas, riparian margins or the coastal edge;*
 - (e) encourage landscape planting that reinforces local vegetation patterns; and*
 - (f) identifying and where appropriate, requiring, the provision of walkway, cycleway and bridle path networks.**
- (3) Avoid or mitigate adverse effects in relation to reverse sensitivity and rural character and amenity by restricting the range of land-use activities in the zone.*
- (4) Discourage activities that will result in adverse effects such as noise, dust, traffic volumes, odour, visual effects and effects on health, safety and cultural values and significantly reduce the rural character and amenity values of the zone.*
- (5) Acknowledge that the rural character and amenity values associated with this zone reflect its predominant use for rural lifestyle living rather than for rural production activities.*

Indigenous forest revegetation

As discussed in section 6.0, a key component of the Proposal is planned extensive indigenous revegetation across the Site and restoration and protection of wetlands and streams. The AUP offers a strong policy foundation for these initiatives, as demonstrated in the following examples:

*The character, amenity values and biodiversity values of rural areas are maintained or enhanced while accommodating the localised character of different parts of these areas and the dynamic nature of rural production activities.*⁷

*Areas of significant indigenous biodiversity are protected and enhanced.*⁸

*Enable opportunities to protect existing Significant Ecological Areas or provide opportunities to enhance or restore areas to areas meeting criteria of Significant Ecological Areas.*⁹

*Indigenous biodiversity is maintained through protection, restoration and enhancement in areas where ecological values are degraded, or where development is occurring.*¹⁰

5.3 Subdivision and density

The Site is subject to three 'layers' of AUP planning provisions that manage its potential subdivision and density. These are: the underlying Chapter E39 rules for subdivision in the Countryside Living Zone; the Kumeū-Huapai Subdivision Variation Control; and the Treaty Settlement Land provisions.

The Chapter E39 subdivision rules enable subdivision in the Countryside Living Zone to a minimum net site and average net site area of 2ha.¹¹ The Kumeū-Huapai Subdivision Variation Control, which applies to the Countryside Living zoned parts of the Site, modifies this by enabling minimum net site areas of 8,000m² and a minimum average net site area of 1ha where subdivision occurs by way of Transferable Rural Site Subdivision.¹²

Reflecting the enabling approach to development of Chapter 21 to Treaty Settlement Land, the rules of that chapter permit one dwelling per hectare with up to 10 dwellings per site in rural zones.¹³

6.0 The Proposal

The Proposal comprises two components of residential development. On Lot 1, a freehold title countryside living residential subdivision is proposed (average Lot size of 1 ha) and a small community facilities area for residents. On Lot 2, a retirement village comprising 260

⁷ AUP Chapter H19, Objective H19.2.3(1).

⁸ AUP Chapter H19, Objective H19.2.3(2).

⁹ AUP Chapter H19, Policy H19.2.4(3).

¹⁰ AUP Chapter B7, Objective B7.2.1(2).

¹¹ As a discretionary activity. Refer to AUP Chapter E39, rule E39.4.2(A14) and standard E39.6.5.2.1.

¹² As a restricted discretionary activity. Refer to AUP Chapter E39, rules E39.4.2 (A20), (A21), (A21C), (A22) and (A24).

¹³ AUP Chapter E21, rule E21.4.1(A3).

standalone villas, with a central ‘village’ amenities area that includes a publicly accessible café, alongside a residents-only restaurant, bar and lounge, and a range of health / wellbeing / wellness / recreational amenities. A small 36 bed care facility is proposed as part of this central village area.

Both the Lot 1 and 2 proposals include substantial environmental enhancement through broadscale revegetation of the former production forest landscape and associated indigenous forest, riparian and wetland habitat creation / enhancement. The proposal is for a whole of landscape scaled reversion of production forest to a stable, long-term, indigenous cover of vegetation enabled through a relatively low scale of development. Substantial habitat enhancement will be achieved, with the Site also providing service to the wider ecological connectivity of the landscape - extending from the off-shore islands, Tiritiri Matangi in the east across to the Waitakere Ranges in the west, as illustrated in the diagram, Figure 10 below.

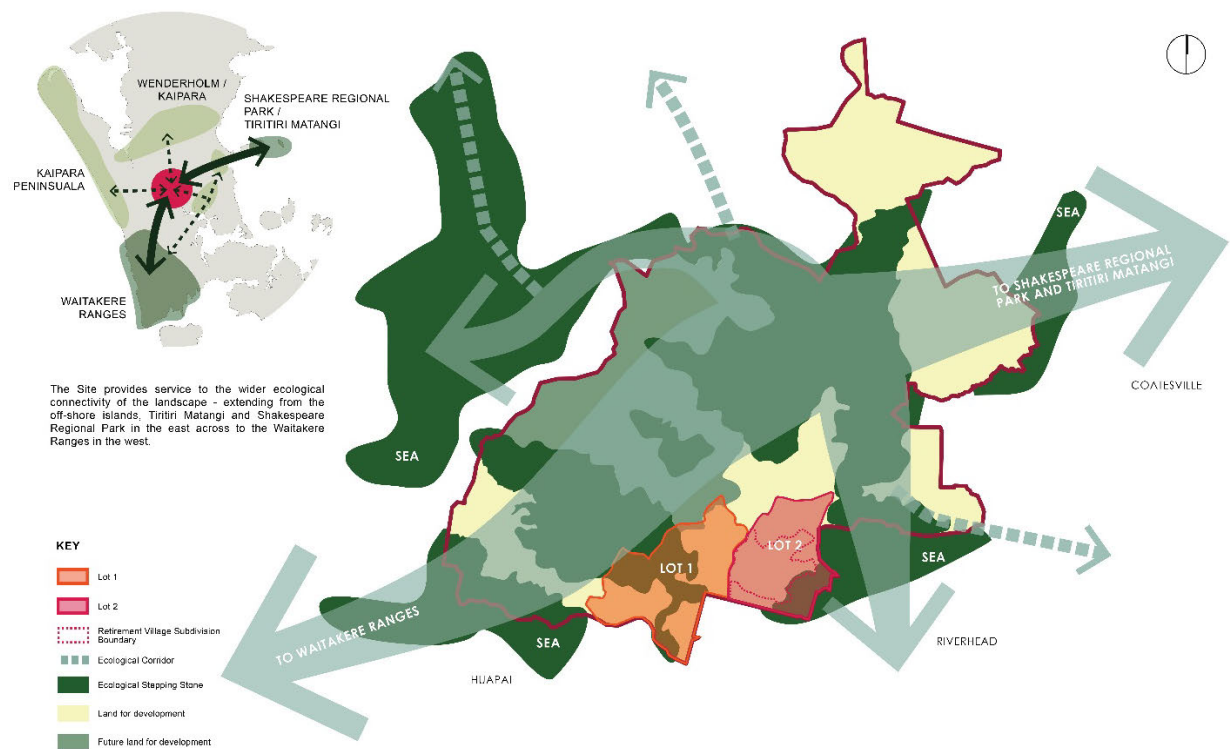


Figure 10: Landscape scaled ecological enhancement and connectivity benefits.

By returning commercial plantation land to indigenous ecosystems, the project will provide a significant uplift ecological function and biodiversity gains on a regional scale through the promotion of native forests within an exotic dominant landscape, indigenous stepping stone habitat and migration pathways, freshwater connectivity and provision of fish spawning habitat, increases in water quality through restoration of headwater streams and wetlands. Additionally, the revegetation will provide permanent food and resting, and breeding resources for indigenous birds (both forest and wetland), bats and lizards, with extensive pest animal and plant control allowing for these fauna populations to persist and grow during a period of biodiversity decline and degradation.

6.1.1 Lot 1 Development

Lot 1 lies in the southwest of the Riverhead Forest. It has a southern boundary to Old North Road. Forestry Road, currently a private road internal to the forest but proposed to extend further as a public road to access Lots 1 and 2 as part of the Proposal, forms a boundary in the north-east, with the southern section of this eastern boundary comprising adjacent large lot private properties. The other western and northern boundaries to Lot 1 are to adjoining areas of the Riverhead Forest in TKAM ownership. These areas will remain, for the time being at least, in production forestry.

The Proposal for large lot countryside living residential development and the integral landscape restoration of Lot 1 is detailed in the document 'Lot 1 Countryside Living' prepared by Boffa Miskell. This includes the overall subdivision layout, staging, examples of typical lot layouts including plan and cross section, as well as typical road and private way road cross sections.

The concept for Lot 1 is guided by three key moves:

- *Ecological Restoration and Revegetation*
Including wetland, stream and forest restoration and enhancement and habitat creation;
- *Countryside Living*
Homes located on identified building platforms nestled into the revegetated and restored ecological landscape; and
- *Public access*
Public recreational access to the Riverhead Forest is maintained and enhanced including through the provision of covenanted access to trails; parking areas; and access to the café in the retirement village in Lot 2.

In total, 208 lots are proposed in fourteen development stages on Lot 1. Figures 10 and 11 below illustrate the proposed Development Layout and Staging for Lot 1. The total area of Lot 1 is 222.69ha, the area associated with proposed access and the establishment of individual building platforms on the lots and recreational amenities is 34.3ha, meaning that some 188.4ha will be outside of the development area and planted / revegetated.

Lot 1 has three points of vehicular access, being from Old North Road, Browns Road and Link Road off Forestry Road in the north of Lot 1. Figure 11 below illustrates the overall Lot 1 Masterplan and Figure 12 the Staging Plan. The Lot 1 community will be gated for vehicular access, with the public retaining the right of access for recreational cycling, walking / running / dog walking, as currently occurs in the Forest.

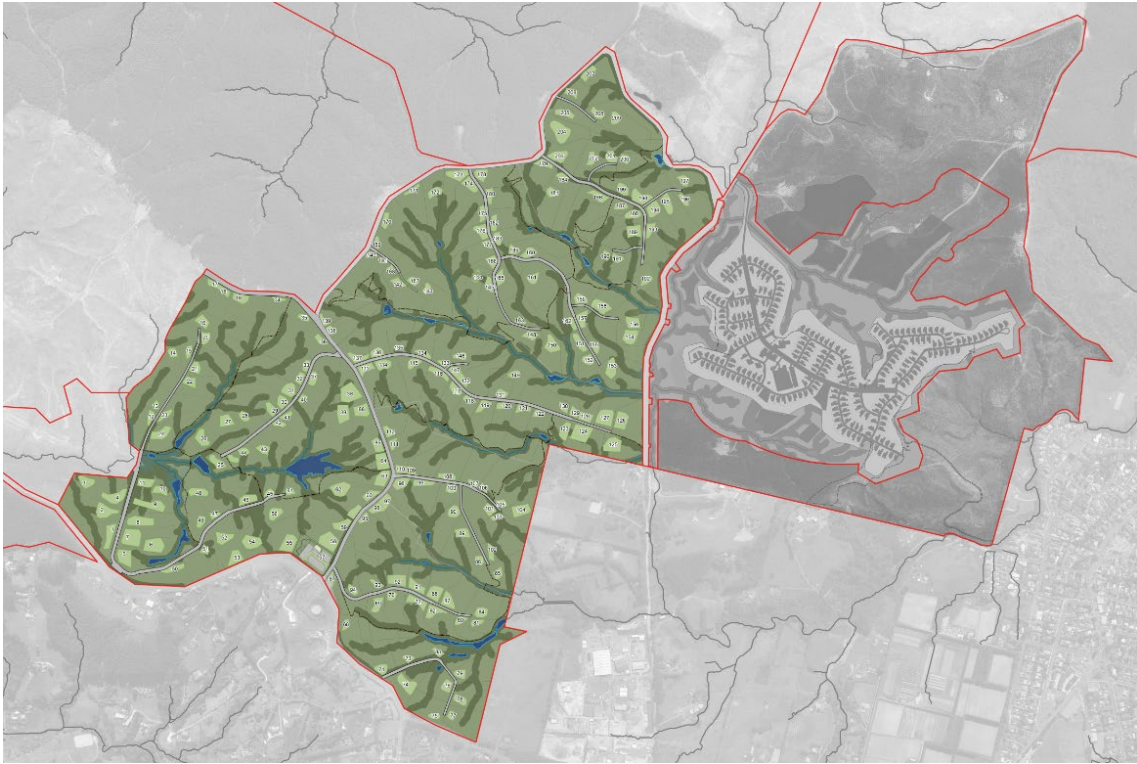


Figure 11: Overall Lot 1 Development Layout

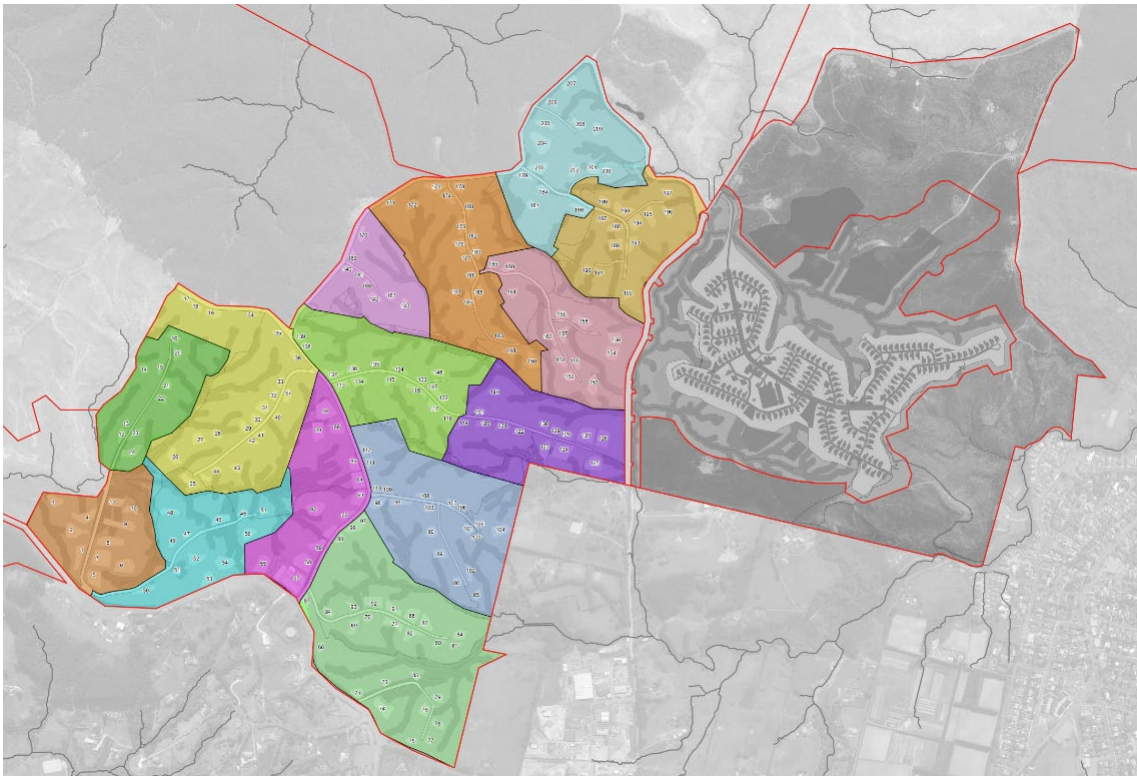


Figure 12: Lot 1 Staging Plan, fourteen stages of development are proposed starting in the south adjacent to Old North Road.

The layout of the low-density residential lots has been determined by Lot 1's topography, required setbacks from wetlands, and the location of permanent and ephemeral watercourses. Existing forestry roads have provided a starting point for access, with roads generally following ridgelines and house sites selected in proximity to accessways in locations where buildable residential platforms can be accommodated.

Each large lot will accommodate a substantial area of revegetation as well as a defined development area. In terms of area, the Lot 1 development footprint comprising roads and building platforms will comprise some 34.3ha of the total Lot 1 site area whilst the area revegetated will comprise 188.4ha. This constitutes a significant landscape-scaled enhancement of the environment, converting plantation Pine forest back to an indigenous cover of vegetation with enhanced habitats for wildlife.

Revegetation will be undertaken in a targeted way that responds to specific site conditions including aspect, position on slope (ridge vs valley), proximity to waterways, soil conditions and the like using guidance set out in Chapter E15 Vegetation management and biodiversity and more specifically Auckland Council's 'Te Haumanu Taiao, Restoring the natural environment in Tāmaki Makaurau'.

The revegetated area will be covenanted in perpetuity, with the lot owner required to retain the indigenous vegetation cover. The Site revegetation will be managed comprehensively through to full establishment, with each resident in each stage required to pay an annual levy to support the full revegetation and ongoing management of the Site. A Residents' Association will be established, with the annual levy providing for management of the forest, pest and weed control, the upkeep of access roads / private lanes, the recreational trails (publicly accessible by easement), and the private (resident's only) community facilities.

Lot Layout

Building platforms have been defined for all lots, with the remainder of the Lot area comprising indigenous forest restoration including riparian corridors and wetlands. Figure 13 below illustrates the typical lot information in plan and cross section.

LOT 1 : STAGE 2 - TYPICAL LOT LAYOUT

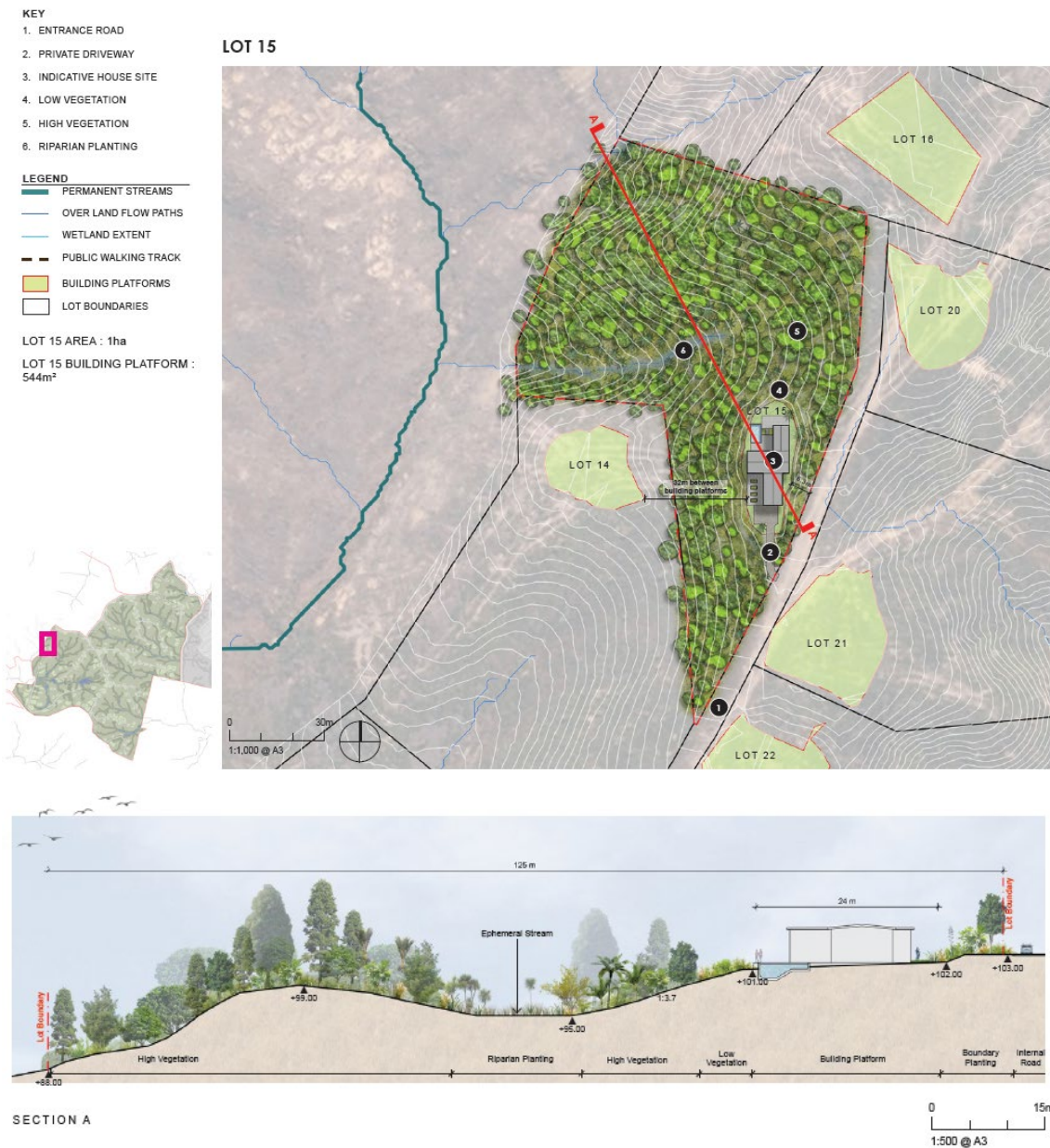


Figure 13 Illustrating typical building platform identification, on lot landscape features and revegetation areas in plan (top) and section.

Design Guidelines for buildings in Lot 1 have been developed collaboratively by Boffa Miskell with Crosson architects (Refer Rangitooopuni Design Guidelines March 2025). All lot owners will be required to use the Guidelines for guidance in site planning, building bulk and form modulation, architectural vernacular and the selection of materials and colours. The intent of the Guidelines is to ensure future buildings within the countryside living residential subdivision have an appropriate rural vernacular and establish an appropriate, quality, built environment that complements the natural characteristics of the Site.

All proposed buildings, and landscape within the building platform areas will be subject to a Design Review Panel (DRP) process, with assessment against the Guidelines. The purpose of

this process will be to ensure that building and landscape design achieves a high quality integration into the Lot 1 environment and surrounding landscape. The Panel will be operated by the Residents' Association and comprise four representatives including: a representative from Rangitooopuni Developments LP, an architect, a landscape architect and a member of the Residents' Association. The composition of the DRP and the rules governing submissions and design review have been modelled from other similar successful panels including those for Esk Hills, Hawkes Bay, Te Arai, and Bream Head.

Roading

All roading within Lot 1 will be private, with the countryside living community gated for vehicular entry. Roads and accessways are designed to have a low-key, rural vernacular, with a single crossfall and side drainage to a vegetated swale. The scale of the roadway will be dependent on the number of lots serviced. Figure 14 below illustrates the typical cross section for a roadway accessing one to five lots, with a wider 6.0m carriageway for roadways accessing six or more lots.

TYPICAL PRIVATE WAY CROSS SECTION - SERVING 1 TO 5 LOTS

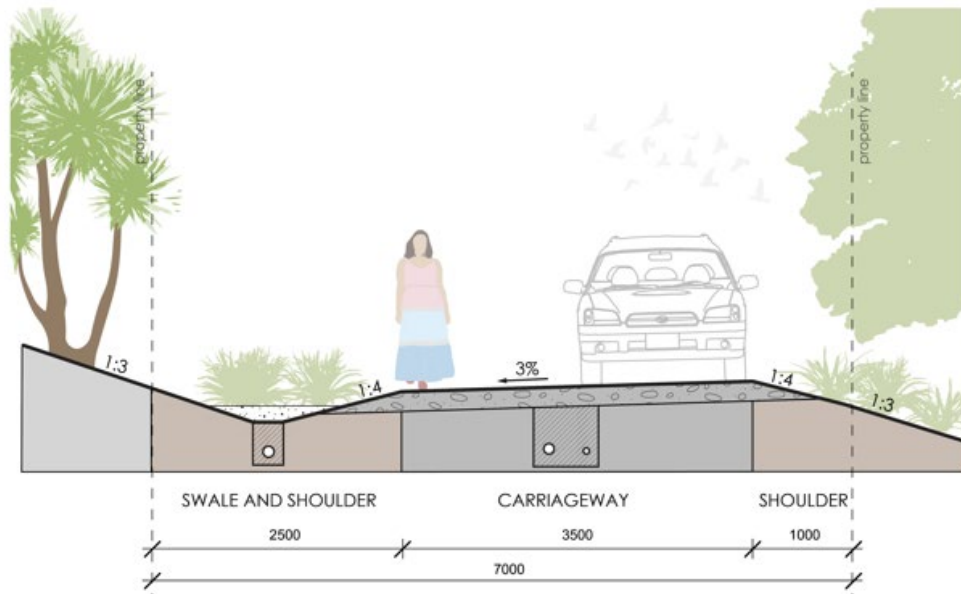


Figure 14: Typical cross section for a private roadway accessing between one and five lots.

Communal Facilities

Communal facilities are proposed to be located adjacent to Old North Road at the Browns Road entrance to the Lot 1 community. It will include a publicly accessible carpark, accessed from outside of the gated Lot 1 environment. This will provide parking for public users of the recreational trails within Lot 1 and the wider Riverhead Forest. In addition, this facility will have adjacent private amenities for the use of Lot 1 residents and their invited friends and family. Figure 15 below illustrates the proposed layout and amenities incorporated within this southern, public and private facility.



Figure 15: The publicly accessible car park and private, residents' only, Countryside Living communal facilities area at the entry to the Lot 1 from Old North Road.

Earthworks

Earthworks in Lot 1 are limited to the development areas (roading and defined building platforms in each lot) as illustrated in the Maven civil engineering Cut and Fill drawing Figure 16 below.

The countryside living development, and its associated earthworks are proposed to be staged over 14 stages starting in the south, refer Staging Plan (Figure 12 at page 16 above). Earthworks will firstly involve the stripping of topsoil and unsuitables, which will be stockpiled temporarily and re-laid over finished platforms with excess spread over revegetation areas. There is an excess of clay cut in each stage of the proposed earthworks as documented on the Maven Cut / Fill plan. Excess cut will be re-laid on-site in an area of Lot 1 to the north of the retirement village as illustrated in Figure 16. The intent of excess clay fill area landform is to lift the contours over the fill zone to replicate the underlying topography and tie in with the adjacent contours. By creating a single fill area for the excess cut the filling of valleys and waterways will be avoided. The fill zone will be grassed and surrounded by vegetation.

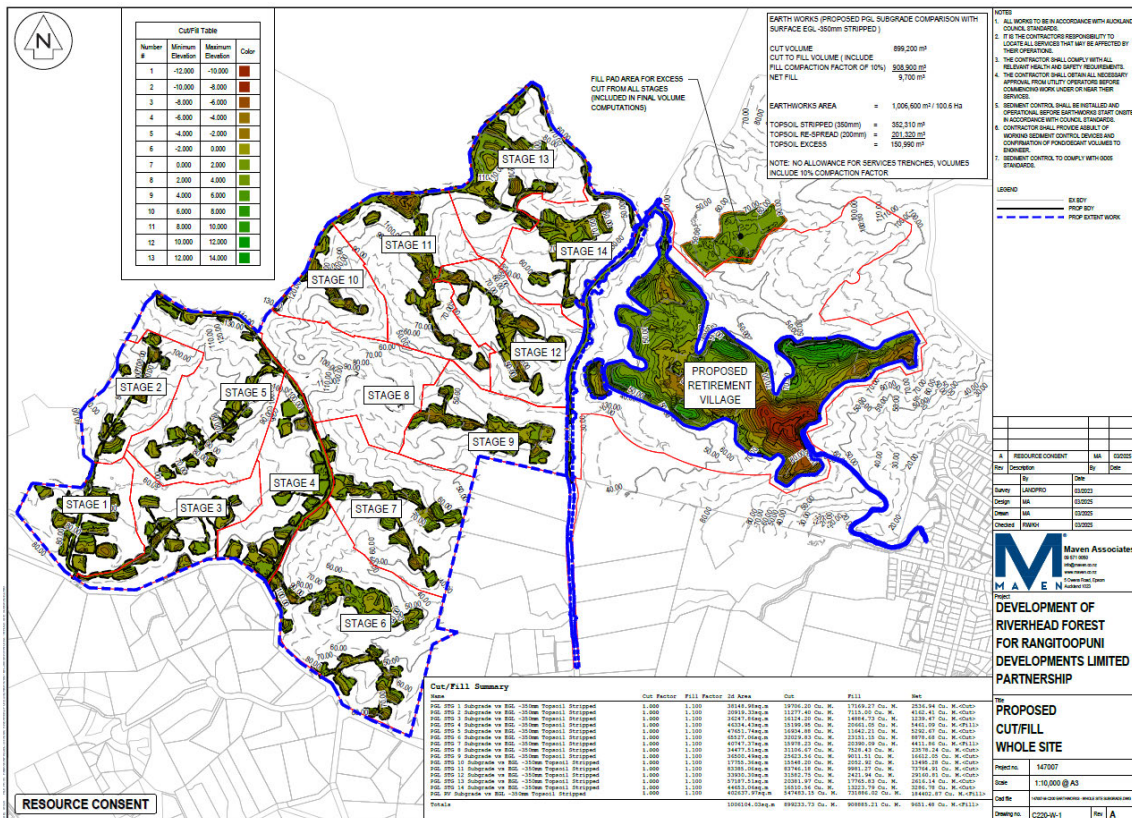


Figure 16: Extent of Lot 1 earthworks footprint.

Areas outside of the accessways and proposed individual building platform for each Lot will be retained unmodified and revegetated relative to their habitat characteristic. The pattern of accessways following ridgelines, where forestry access roads / tracks are already established and the location of building platforms adjacent to the accessway corridors, is evident from the earthworks Cut and Fill plan.

Homes will rely on tank water with wastewater disposal fields kept away from waterways and disposed to land within the lot's revegetation area, also thereby providing irrigation to support the establishment of the native vegetation in that area.

6.1.2 Lot 2 Development

Lot 2 lies in the south-east of the Riverhead Forest. It has a western boundary with Forestry Road, which will be extended as a public road as part of the Proposal. It has no current frontage to a public road. It lies to the east of Lot 1 and adjoins other land in the Riverhead Forest to the north and north-east which is in the ownership of TKAM. Along its southern boundary and the southern part of its eastern boundary, towards Riverhead, the Lot 2 boundary adjoins private land in a number of existing large lot titles. This area includes a small portion of land subject to PPC100.

The Lot 2 proposed retirement village, including its curtilage of indigenous forest restoration, areas required for wastewater disposal fields and the Lot 1 and 2 excess cut fill area, occupies a portion of Lot 2, being 76.6ha of the total 173.6ha Lot. Some 91.2ha of Lot 2 outside of the retirement village 'Lot' footprint will remain in its current production Pine forest cover. The

retirement village proper is nested within an extensive curtilage of native forest revegetation that extends down to encompass the riparian corridors of the adjacent tributary stream corridors to the north and south of the broad ridge that it occupies. As such the retirement village footprint occupies 32.3ha within the wider 76.6ha retirement village development area as illustrated in Figure 17 below. The retirement village footprint has been located to sit fully on the west side of the ridgeline that defines the escarpment which backdrops Riverhead in the north-west. It occupies an existing broad, west facing ridgeline which has a natural gradient and width to accommodate the retirement village with associated earthworks. Existing streams are retained to finger into the village footprint.

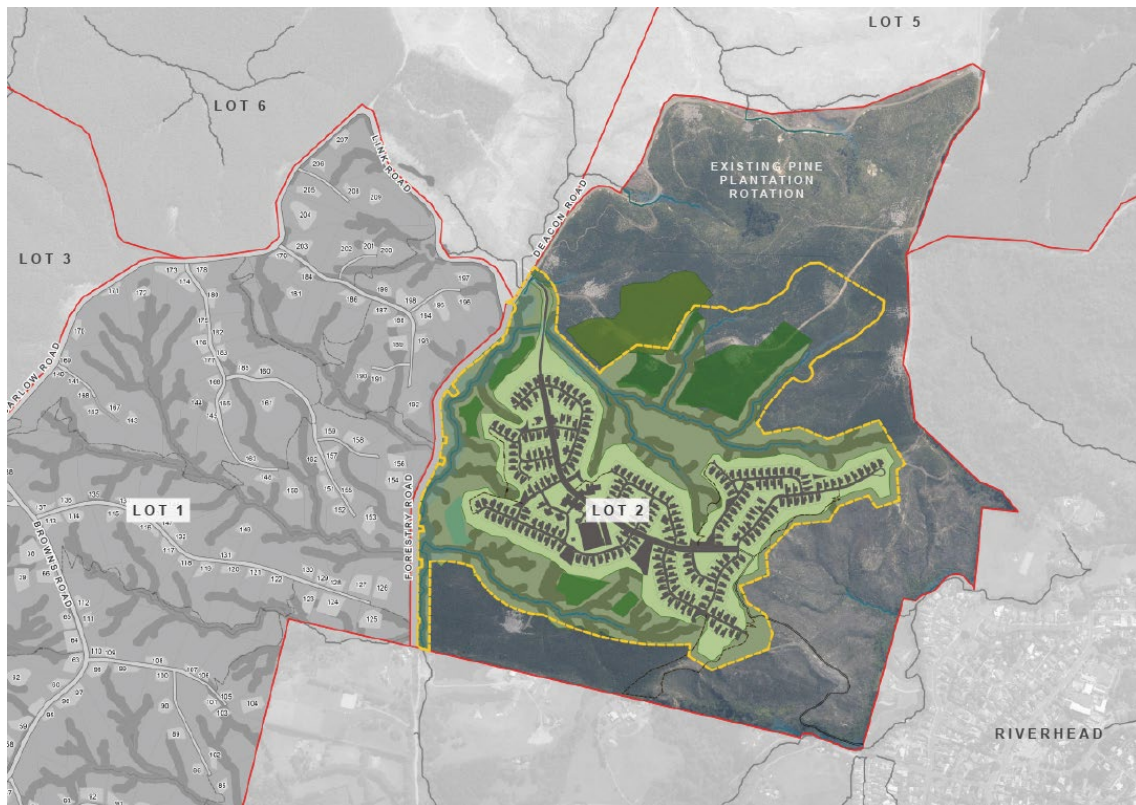


Figure 17: Retirement village extent of occupation of Lot 2 including its revegetation curtilage and primary retirement village footprint, streams are retained and finger up into the village.

The Proposal for the Lot 2 retirement village and the integral landscape restoration / landscape management of Lot 2 is detailed in the document 'Lot Two Retirement Village' prepared by Boffa Miskell. This includes the overall development footprint, village masterplan, landscape strategy, staging, amenity areas and facilities, as well as typical street cross sections. Crosson architects with Design Group Stapleton Elliot (DGSE), who are the retirement village joint masterplanners (with Boffa Miskell) and project architects, have prepared the Architectural package for the Proposal 'Rangitooopuni Lifestyle Village Concept Design – Architectural Drawings', dated 28th March 2025.

The Masterplan for the retirement village is based on a series of Landscape and Design Principles and draw on the cultural narrative of the toopuni or cloak, traditionally made from the skin of the kurī (dog) and its awe (tassels) reflecting the stream corridors that finger into the village.

In total 260 villas in a series of neighbourhoods defined by the Site's topography are proposed, as illustrated in the Masterplan, Figure 18 below.



Figure 18: Lot 2 retirement village masterplan.

The layout of the retirement village incorporates a central spine road with looped and cul-de-sac streets extending from the central spine. Vegetated stream corridors finger up to into the village, with rain gardens and stormwater ponds located to capture and filter run-off before entering streams. Vegetated batter slopes manage the gradient of the Site's west facing slope with bulk earthworks designed to give the site a more or less even 1 in 20 slope. This supports walkability in the village.

Development of the village will be staged, starting in the west at the lower end of the Site. This first stage includes a garden pavilion community facility. This comprises a social building, glass house atrium, utility shed, raised vegetable potager beds, hot house, orchard, flower gardens and recreational lawn (pétanque / croquet). Figure 19 below illustrates the Garden Pavilion. This facility will provide a social focus for the village community until full village amenities are provided.



Figure 19: Stage One, Garden Pavilion social and recreational amenities.

The main Village amenities are located in a central heart, they incorporate a publicly accessible café as well as residents only restaurant, bar and lounge, and wellness / recreational amenities. These facilities will create a social heart to the Village, providing the opportunity for the wider community to access and enjoy the amenities and enabling wider social interaction within the Village for residents, families and friends. Figure 20 below illustrates the overall plan layout of the Village main amenities. Figure 21 is a rendered perspective of part of the Village heart from the Crosson / DGSE Concept architectural pack.

A care facility, with 32 care suites and 4 care rooms (36 total), is located proximate to the Village heart to the south-east, enabling residents to age in place within the community.

The retirement village villas are all single storey in heights and designed with a rural vernacular of buildings forms, predominantly gabled roofed, with natural cladding materials – including timber, concrete as well as long run, flat tray iron and some corten steel - and colours suited to integration with the natural landscape.



Figure 20: Village heart including publicly accessible café, residents only facilities and 36 bed care facility.



Figure 21: Rendered perspective of part of the Village heart including publicly accessible café, residents only facilities.

Walking tracks are designed and positioned to support an active lifestyle within the Village. These are connected into the wider recreational trails of the Forest, enabling more active residents to access and benefit from the wider range of recreational and environmental amenities in the Forest.

A 3m wide, concrete surface walking track, also accessible to 4wd golf carts is proposed to connect down the escarpment in Lot 2 to Riverhead. The proposed track joins an existing track at the end of Mill Grove, which crosses over the Wautaiti Stream tributary into the Mill Grove cul-de-sac, and thereby accesses the settlement of Riverhead. Given the nature of the escarpment topography, the track will have a consistently steep, 1 in 8 maximum, gradient. It will provide access up into the Village, with its public café amenity, and to the Forest for Riverhead residents as well as a walking and golf cart connection for more able Village residents to and from Riverhead.

Earthworks are proposed to facilitate the retirement village development within the footprint area as illustrated in the Maven civil engineering drawing below, Figure 22. The existing broad west facing ridge of the Site topography supports the creation of a development platform with a general 1 in 20 gradient. The earthworks footprint responds to the retention of the waterways, identified by Bio researchers, that finger into the Village drawing the revegetated surrounding landscape curtilage into the Village. There is an excess of cut within the retirement village footprint. As with the Lot 1 excess cut, excess stripped topsoil and unsuitables will be redistributed to areas proposed for revegetation whilst excess subsoil clay will be relocated to the fill area in the north of Lot 2 and rehabilitated with a cover of grassland having a rural character.

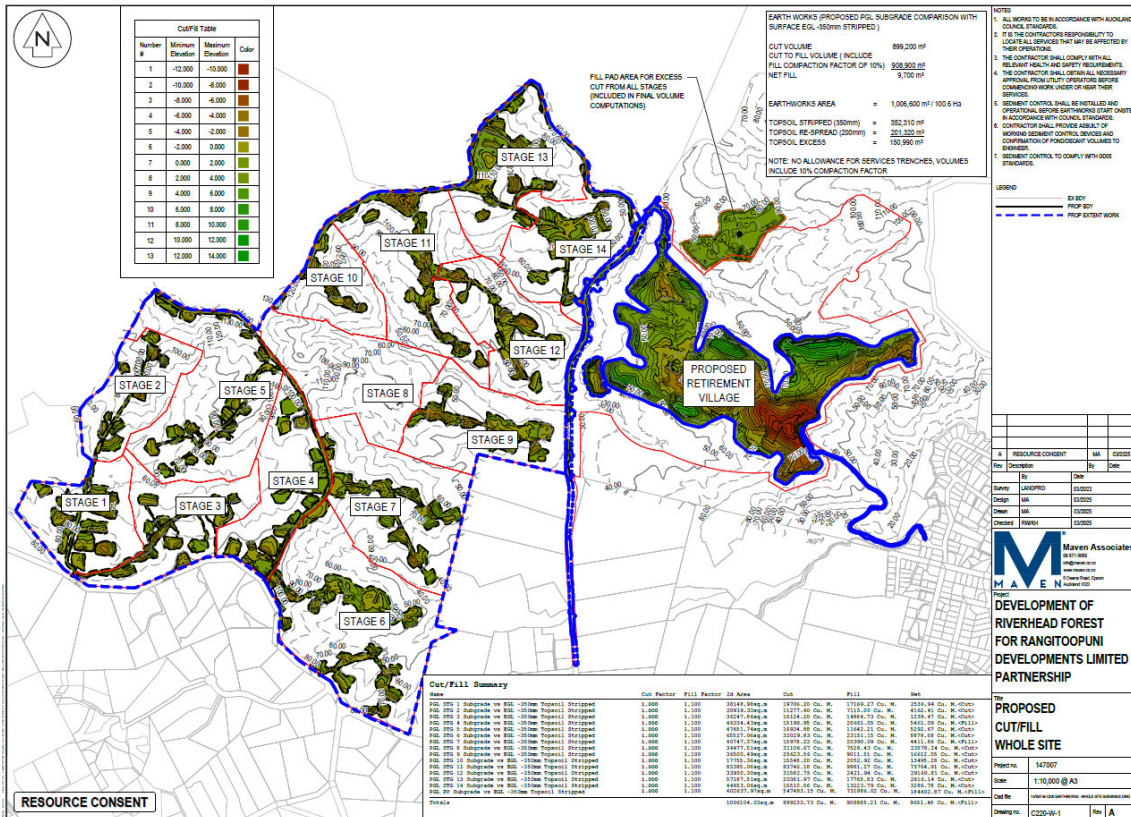


Figure 22: Maven civil engineering Cut / Fill drawing illustrating the earthworks extent for the Lot 2 retirement village.

The remote nature of the retirement village requires independent provision of water for firefighting. A number of water storage tanks to provide the required storage volume for firefighting will be accommodated close to the entry to the Village on the north side of the entry spine road. These will be set back from the road to enable screen planting. The Village's wastewater treatment plant will be located on the south side of the spine road opposite and similarly set back and screened with roadside planting. Service access to both the wastewater treatment plant and water storage tanks will be provided.

Wastewater will have primary treatment on-site, with the treated wastewater disposed to land. Wastewater irrigation lines will be located well away from waterways within the Lot 2 revegetation area. Areas used for wastewater disposal fields will be left unmodified and not used for the spreading of surplus topsoil / unsuitables. The use of the wastewater for irrigation will assist in the establishment of the revegetation areas and their long-term growth. Species will be selected to ensure the vegetation will thrive in the wetter soil conditions of the disposal field.

7.0 Visual Catchment and Viewing Audiences

Whilst large in area, Lots 1 and 2 have limited visibility in the wider locality outside of the site due to natural topography. Lot 1 has a southwestern boundary to a short section of Deacon Road and to Old North Road. However, these are the sites' only existing public road frontages. Planting is proposed along these road frontages, such that in time views will be to a vegetated road edge rather than extending into the Site. Forestry Road currently transitions from public to private road at the Lot 1 / 2 boundary. As part of the proposal, Forestry Road will be extended into the Site to access Link Road west into Lot 1 and the spine road accessing the retirement village to the east.

Significantly, the Lot 2 retirement village proposal does not extend development over the ridgeline into the escarpment that visually backdrops Riverhead. A planted ridgeline will be maintained, with the top row of villas set back a minimum of 10m from the face of the ridge. Some of these properties will enjoy distant skyline views but will not view down into Riverhead, with these lower views screened by landform and vegetation.

Public access to the private land of Riverhead Forest for recreational purposes including off-road cycling, walking, running, dog walking and the like, will be maintained. This includes to areas within Lots 1 and 2, as well as the wider plantation forest area to the north. These recreational users, there at the grace a favour of the owners, will experience change to the landscape including the conversion of plantation forest to extensive areas of indigenous forest revegetation and the introduction of large lot countryside living lots in the west of the valley and the retirement village in the east.

The Site adjoins a small number of private, large lot properties on the outskirts of Riverhead, these include along the southeastern and a section of southern boundary to Lot 1 and along the southern and a section of eastern boundary to Lot 2. In total there are about thirteen adjoining lots with an associated low level of rural residential development. Some dwellings located on these lots will have middle distance views toward the proposed countryside living and retirement village development. This is in the context of the current production pine forest landuse and the

combination of ongoing production pine forest rotation and indigenous forest revegetation of substantial areas of Lots 1 and 2.

In summary therefore the primary viewing audiences for the Proposal include:

- People on the adjacent road network, primarily a short section of Deacon and Old North Roads.
- People accessing the Forest (private land) for recreation.
- People living on adjoining rural lifestyle lots.
- People in the wider area in elevated locations with views into the southern catchment of the Riverhead Forest incorporating Lots 1 & 2.

8.0 Assessment of Effects

8.1 Landscape Effects Assessment

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.

8.1.1 Landscape Effects

Lot 1:

The majority of the Lot 1 area has been cleared of its earlier production Pine forest landcover and is in an open barren landcover awaiting the establishment of private access roads and building platforms for the 208 lot countryside living residential development along with its proposed extensive landscape remediation, native revegetation programme including riparian corridor and wetland enhancement. Figure 23 below, illustrates the current post Pine harvest character of the landscape.



Figure 23: Photograph (March 2025) looking toward Old North Road showing the current post Pine forest harvest nature of the Lot 1 landscape.

A substantial portion of the Lot 1 land area will be left unmodified in terms of topography, with earthworks limited to the small scaled rural character private roadways 6m and 3m (with passing bays) carriageways and the formation of individual building platform areas for the proposed countryside living residential lots (minimum 1ha lots). Roadways will, to the extent possible, follow ridgelines and make use of already established access formed to service the long-established plantation Pine forest regime. In total some 34.3ha will be earth-worked for accessways and building platforms with the remaining area of the 222.7ha planted / revegetated.

Soils within the Lot 1 area are not identified as highly productive and are generally heavy clay soils. The land has been managed under an extensive production forestry regime and will in large part be restored to an indigenous cover of vegetation including forest, riparian and wetland habitats. Weed and pest control will be established and maintained comprehensively across the property under the requirements of the Lot 1 Residents Association (refer Rangitooopuni Landscape Management Plan, 28|03|2025, which incorporates weed and pest control).

Future dwellings will, in the long-term, have a native bush context with a low level of presence in the landscape. The Rangitooopuni Lot 1 Design Guidelines for dwellings and other structures advocate for a rural vernacular and use of natural materials to assist in setting houses into the forest landscape.

Given the past production forestry landuse, the proportionally limited development footprint; the relatively low overall volume of earthworks; the small-scale nature of the private roads; the small number of future dwellings across the 222.70ha Lot 1 landholding; and the extensive landscape restoration proposed, the Lot 1 countryside living subdivision proposal is assessed to bring about **positive / beneficial** landscape effects. Water quality will be protected and enhanced, a range of ecological habitats (terrestrial, wetland and freshwater / riparian) improved, and the ecological values of the site restored / remediated. The change in landuse to a permanent indigenous forest landcover will have significant beneficial landscape outcomes over the former production forestry regime. Future dwellings will be managed through the Design Review Panel process in line with site specific Guidelines and will be subservient to the landscape, set in a bush context and will have limited presence in the scale of the Lot 1 landscape.

Lot 2:

Lot 2 is largely in an early phase of a production Pine rotation (planted in 2021) The part of Lot 2 to be occupied by the retirement village and its curtilage of indigenous revegetation will be cleared of Pine trees with proposed earthworks to establish a gentle broadly 1 in 20 gradient up the site, in line with the present slope of the ridge. The platform will vary in width relative to the presence of the intermittent and permanent stream corridors that finger up into the retirement village site as illustrated in the Landscape Strategy diagram below, Figure 24.



Figure 24: Landscape Strategy diagram illustrating the way in which the site of the retirement village is tied into the landscape with revegetated riparian corridor fingers / awe (tassels) extending up into the village, creating neighbourhoods.

In total approximately 32.3ha of the 173.6ha Lot 2 area will be recontoured for the retirement village, the excess cut, as for Lot 1, will be redistributed in the fill area to the north of the Village in Lot 2. Whilst the retirement village site as a whole will be modified to enable the development, the landform will be tied to the established pattern of waterways with the riparian corridors fingering up into the village, revegetated and enhanced. The village will be contained within an extensive curtilage of indigenous vegetation (30.9ha) with the balance area of Lot 2, comprising some 81.78ha, retained under its current regime of production Pine forest. The wider retirement village 'Lot' will incorporate the primary and secondary wastewater disposal fields, which will be revegetated with a cover of indigenous species planting, as well as the fill area accommodating excess cut from Lots 1 and 2 which will be grassed. These two areas, located to the north of the retirement village will have a context of production Pine forest, also within the 89.8ha retirement village 'Lot'.

Soils within the Lot 2 area are not identified as highly productive. The transitioning of the extensive curtilage of the retirement village site and the protection of its stream corridors will protect and enhance the soil mantel giving it a permanent cover of indigenous vegetation.

Within the village a high standard of architecturally designed housing and extensive, quality landscape is proposed with a series of parkland open spaces providing social and recreational activities for residents. In total some 260 villas are proposed along with a 36 bed care facility, and residents' common amenities including café, restaurant, bar, lounge and separate wellness centre designed to create a village heart. The café will be open to the public, moving the retirement village away from a stand-alone, gated community, to one that is part of, and inviting to, a wider community. The village will also be publicly accessible to people walking from Riverhead via the proposed escarpment track giving greater direct recreational access for the community into the village and Forest.

In landscape terms therefore, the proposed retirement village will be well contained within the large Lot 2 area framed within an extensive curtilage of restored indigenous forest. Earthworks and the establishment of the development footprint have been determined by the natural slope of the land and the pattern of waterways, which are retained and finger into the development with enhanced riparian corridors. Whilst the village itself is more intensive in terms of a form of clustered urban development than anticipated within the Countryside Living zone, the Site is subject to the Treaty Settlement Land provisions (E21) of the AUP, which enable a more flexible planning approach. These provisions recognise the importance of facilitating Mana Whenua's cultural, social, and economic development. While the village is a concentrated development, the overall balance area of the Lot will comprise extensive indigenous and plantation Pine forest, which will help integrate the development within the landscape. Additionally, the design responds to the intent of the Treaty Settlement provisions by accommodating an appropriate scale and intensity of development while ensuring environmental and amenity outcomes are maintained. The village will have a rural, forest context and containment. Enhancement of the stream corridors and the establishment of some 30.9ha of indigenous vegetation cover (vis a vis the 32.3ha site area of the retirement village footprint) as part of the retirement village concept will generate **beneficial / positive** landscape effects, enhancing the character and quality of the landscape.

Cumulative Biodiversity Enhancement Lots 1 and 2

The project will result in long-term rotational pine plantation being replaced with indigenous ecosystems, restoring terrestrial forest, natural inland wetlands, and riparian margins. As part of the project the restored indigenous vegetation will be subject to extensive pest plant and animal control, protection and maintenance, which will lead to significant, landscape scaled, ecological gains, with 222ha of managed revegetation occurring resulting in a 54% [current indigenous vegetation on site = 8.4ha or 2% of the site area] increase in native vegetation.

Forestry Road

The portion of Forestry Road accessing Lot 1 and 2 will be upgraded from its current private, forestry road formation to meet AT standards for a public rural road. The road will follow its current alignment up the valley floor with some modification to its vertical alignment to manage flood risk. Changes to the public extent of Forestry Road will bring it in line with other rural roads in the locality and are not expected to generate adverse landscape effects. The upgraded road will provide wider public access benefits for the community and provide access both to the Forest and to the publicly accessible retirement village café.

8.1.2 Visual Effects

The visual catchment in respect of the Lot 1 and Lot 2 sites is limited.

Lot 1 has a small proximate visual catchment relative to the adjacent road network, Deacon and Old North Roads, however there is a limited extent of visibility available in views from these transport corridors, particularly once vegetation has established within the site, and the presence of a low level of development, including structures and dwellings, is consistent with the established character of the wider landscape.

Elevated properties in the wider area will have the potential to view across to the Lot 2 countryside living development, however the low density, clustered nature of the proposal is not out of character with the landscape. Design controls on houses including the use of materials and colours that relate to the rural landscape context will assist in setting future housing development on the defined building platforms into the landscape.

As the extensive indigenous forest cover across the site establishes, the predominant quality of the land will be one of forest cover. In contrast to the cyclical production forest regime comprising 25 – 28 year rotations and clear felling of large swathes of the landscape, the establishment of a permanent forest cover will enhance the more proximate, middle and long distance visual outlook of properties in the wider area. The proposed extensive forest remediation proposed is not considered to be required by way of mitigation of any visual effects arising from the 208 lot countryside living development. This transition in landuse / landcover will provide a further enhancement of the landscape, generating further positive landscape as well as visual outcomes resulting in a significant enhancement to the landscape and its visual character and amenity.

Lot 2 is visually contained within the valley with very limited off-site visibility. The development has been purposefully contained to the eastern side of the ridge that defines the backdrop to the settlement of Riverhead to maintain the natural, vegetated backdrop to the established urban area and its periphery. In terms of views from Riverhead, the Lot 2 Proposal will have very limited presence. Lighting within the village will be designed and managed to remain low level, with measures in place to minimise light spill and prevent any noticeable illumination along the ridgeline. In terms of Riverhead, the visual context of the settlement is therefore considered to be unchanged with **no visual effects** generated by the proposal.

There are two large lot rural residential properties adjoining the southern boundary of Lot 2: one accessed from Forestry Road, just adjacent to the current end of the public road (number 100 Forestry Road) and one accessed off a long driveway from the Duke Street in the east (30B Duke Street). These properties both have elevated buildings, including sheds and dwellings close to the Lot 2 boundary that have the potential to view over the Riverhead Forest valley towards the retirement village. That said, the main house on 100 Forestry Road is located further south down the slope with an outlook over Riverhead with no outlook toward the proposed retirement village and the dwelling at 30B Duke Street appears to be primarily oriented toward the southeast, overlooking Riverhead and not focused or particularly gaining views toward the proposed retirement village. Figure 25 below illustrates a view from the site of the retirement village to some of the buildings on the 100 Forestry Road property which gain middle distance views toward the proposed retirement village. This also illustrates the relationship of the Pine forest to the boundary of that property.



Figure 25: Photograph looking from the retirement village site towards buildings located in the middle distance, on the property at 100 Forestry Road.

The part of Lot 2 adjoining these properties is under a plantation Pine cover (planted 2021) which will be maintained with the village located some 200m+ distant on the next ridge over. Views in this direction have long encompassed a production forest regimen. As the current Pine forest cycle progresses, views toward the proposed retirement village will be screened by the pine trees. Based on likely timeframes the proposed earthworks activities to establish the village are likely to be screened from these two properties with the village as it establishes also screened. At a future time when the Pine is harvested the indigenous forest curtilage to the village will have established softening its edges and providing a level of screening. Given the separation distance between the properties and the village; the presence of the established plantation Pine rotation; the curtilage of indigenous forest regeneration and overall site layout including the fingers / awe (tassels) of vegetated riparian corridors extending up into the village; and the established context of views from these properties encompassing a wide diversity of land use and development intensity, the effect of change to the views from these properties is assessed to be **low adverse** and **benign / no effect** when screened by the adjacent Pine forest.

For any elevated viewer in the wider context that has the potential to view into the valley such people are located at a greater distance than those in the two properties discussed above. No other such properties are assessed to experience any adverse visual effects as a result of the proposed Lot 2 retirement village development.

As noted above, the site, albeit private land, is accessed freely by the public for a range of recreational uses, including off road cycling / mountain biking, running, walking and dog walking. These users have the potential to gain closer views of the development on both Lots 1 and 2 as public access to the forest, including the two development areas, is intended to continue to be accommodated. Access to the forest for such recreational purposes is also seen

as a key attraction for the countryside living residential subdivision and to some extent, the retirement village communities. Whilst members of the public as recreational users will have the potential to gain close access to the Lot 1 and Lot 2 development areas, the primary experience of these areas will remain one of a vegetated landscape serviced with a low density of accessways. These users will also have the benefit of access to the retirement village café. Overall, the experience for recreational users will be maintained and in some way enhanced. People will be able to access the more remote, challenging, plantation Pine forest in the north and be able to access a regenerated indigenous forest, including the observation of that restoration of the landscape over time. This recreational use will be supported by access to a small offering of amenities including parking and the retirement village café. Overall, the amenities of the recreational experience of the Riverhead Forest will be maintained and enhanced for the public.

8.1.3 Conclusion: Landscape and Visual Effects

Overall, the Lots 1 and 2 proposals are assessed to generate largely **positive** landscape and visual effects. The development components of the countryside living residential subdivision and retirement village proposals are well-contained and designed with high quality architectural design and materiality in a way that will set them well into their landscape context. The extent of conversion of plantation Pine forestry land to a long-term indigenous forest mantle with associated waterway / stream and wetland enhancement, will contribute a substantial environmental benefit to the site and locality with flow on habitat enhancement effects for the wider connectivity of indigenous biota. A very limited number of established rural lifestyle properties will have the potential to experience the retirement village in the middle distance of their view, a view which has and will continue to encompass a rotation Pine forestry regime. Potential adverse visual effects in respect of this visual catchment are assessed to be **low**, and / or benign depending on the phase of the Pine rotation. People in the wider visual catchment, where elevated properties could gain more distant views will not experience adverse visual effects given the limited extent of visibility, ie the largely hidden location for the retirement village and varied topography of the clustered countryside living lots. These viewers will more likely benefit from the transition of a substantial swathe of the current plantation Pine forest to an indigenous forest cover. Recreational users of the Riverhead Forest will have their access maintained and enhanced with associated beneficial effects. Residents of Riverhead will have the vegetated escarpment backdrop to the settlement retained and pedestrian access to the Forest enhanced again resulting in beneficial outcomes.

8.2 Urban Design Assessment

The following section provides an analysis of the urban design merits of the Proposal against the methodology set out at section 3.1. Having reviewed relevant AUP objectives and policies and considered the potential urban design effects of the Proposal, the development is assessed under the following headings:

- Character effects;
- Residential amenity effects;
- CPTED / safety effects;
- Effects on neighbours; and
- Positive effects.

8.2.1 Character effects

The Countryside Living Zone provides for a rural character, including rural lifestyle living.¹⁴ The Treaty Settlement Land provisions anticipate that land to which it applies will be developed with a character, scale, intensity and range of development appropriate to that land, recognising that the purpose of Treaty Settlement Land provisions is to give effect to the outcomes of Treaty settlements to promote the cultural, social and economic development of Mana Whenua.¹⁵ The following considers the character effects of the Proposal within this context.

- Experience of the Site's character effects is dependent on the extent of views to the development and the number of people who will be subject to these views. The Landscape Effects Assessment in this report (section 8.1) finds that there will be generally limited views to the Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision and the Lot 2 retirement village from the surrounding area, including the settlement of Riverhead. This is due to factors such as intervening ridgelines and the placement of building platforms. Both the Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision and Lot 2 retirement village will be served by private roads, with that part of Forestry Road which is within the Site (currently private), being the sole proposed public road. This, and the fact that the Lot 1 and Lot 2 private roads are not through routes to other areas, means that the level of public access by vehicle to the developments can be expected to be largely confined to invited visitors and guests of residents. Members of the public will move through the Site, but this will be by foot or bike, along the publicly accessible trails which are proposed to be retained and developed, with their numbers being limited to those normally associated with such recreational trails.
- For those members of the public who enter Lot 1, their experience will be of a rural bush lifestyle subdivision. There will be occasional views to detached, widely separated houses, surrounded by open space. These views will emerge and disappear as people move through the Lot due to rising and falling topography and ridgelines and the increasing screening effect of the canopy of revegetated bush. The quality of design and of these houses and the quality of their response to their rural landscaping setting, in form, appearance and hard and soft landscaping, can be expected to be high as a result of the proposed Rangitooopuni Design Guidelines and the DRP process.
- Construction of the Lot 1 houses will occur over several years, during which time proposed revegetation of the currently cleared landscape will further reduce the visibility of houses.
- For those members of the public who enter Lot 2, again being predominantly invited visitors and guests, when travelling up the 'spine road', their experience will be of first moving through a canopy of revegetated bush (as planting grows over time) to see clusters of small scale villas adjoining the spine road set in planted surrounds, before moving up to the 'village heart' of the Amenity, Wellness and Care buildings. Clustered buildings are not typical of the rural environment, however, as discussed within the landscape and visual assessment, views to the village from outside the Site will be very limited.
- As shown within the architecture plans, village buildings will have a form and appearance consistent with that found in rural areas, adopting a rural vernacular appearance of gable end roofs, smaller massing volumes, and materiality referencing

¹⁴ AUP Chapter H19, Objective H19.7.2(1).

¹⁵ AUP Chapter E21, Policy E21.3(1).

natural materials. The village heart buildings have a more 'urban scale' than the villas, however, this is not unanticipated by the Site's Countryside Living Zone, with Policy H19.2.4(1) contemplating that there will be such buildings, but that their number be 'fewer.' The moderately larger massing of the village heart buildings will be successfully broken down into smaller volumes, each with their own gable roof forms, suggesting a discrete grouping of rural structures.

- The proposed Browns Road communal facilities hub is of a small size that can be comfortably such that its scale will not undermine the Site's rural character. Both publicly accessible parking and residents' parking for this facility are set behind planting, screening it from view.
- Potential adverse effects on rural character are also reduced by the minimisation of earthworks, resulting in a response to landscape of development sitting lightly on the landform. In Lot 1, earthworks retain the underlying ridge and valley form and are limited to those necessary to establish the rural character roadways and discrete building platforms. For Lot 1 future houses, the Design Guidelines require that the positioning of buildings minimises any further earthworks within the building platform and that earthworks outside the platform are generally not permitted, with limited exceptions. Likewise, in Lot 2, while increased earthworks are necessary to achieve accessible gradients (generally 1 in 20), these are moderated by the retirement village's position on an area of relatively flatter slope.
- The rural character of the Site has been reinforced by the management of features typically associated with urban land use, such as retaining, fencing and road design. Retaining is minimised in the development, with level building platforms largely achieved by the use of battered slopes. There are some low height retaining walls between retirement village villas, but these are less than 1m in height, and are integrated into planting. The retirement village does not use fencing as a boundary treatment between villas and the Lot 1 Design Guidelines limits the use of fences and retaining to within building platforms, requiring that (where used) they are of a rural vernacular. The design of private roads adopts a rural character of no kerbs, channels or grade separated footpaths, except within the retirement village, where these features are integrated into planting.
- A significant positive benefit of the development, in character terms, is the proposal for Site revegetation. The Countryside Living Zone anticipates a relatively wide variance in what 'rural character' is. Reading the Zone provisions as a whole, it includes landscapes clearly modified by human activity, such as hills cleared of vegetation post commercial forest harvesting (as is currently the case on much of the Site), and farm pastureland. It also includes landscapes in which buildings are visible (albeit with fewer being of an urban scale, nature and design). Amongst this variance, the Zone provisions are neutral and do not express a preference. In the writers' view, as a response to both the Site's context as a backdrop to nearby urban settlements and as experienced by the public when using its recreational trails, the proposal to revegetate the Site, which in the longer term will result in an extensive native bush canopy, is a highly preferential character outcome, resulting in significant visual amenity and sense of place outcomes for future residents and the wider community.

In summary, the Proposal will result in a rural character generally consistent with that anticipated by the Site's Countryside Living zoning and the Treaty Settlement Land provisions. Any potential adverse character effects of this are appropriately managed by: the well-considered placement of building platforms relative to ridgelines and views (reducing the potential for views to buildings, both from within and outside the Site); the proposed rural

vernacular design of buildings; reducing the level of earthworks to only those necessary to achieve discrete building platforms and access roadways; the active management of features associated with urban development, including retaining and fencing; and the significant screening to buildings that will occur over time with Site revegetation. The Site's revegetation will also have a considerable positive character effect, consistent with the thrust of AUP policies, which encourage indigenous biodiversity and native vegetation restoration and enhancement.¹⁶ This will achieve a native bush canopy backdrop to nearby urban settlements, which unlike the canopy of a commercial forest operation, will not be subject to on-ongoing cycles of harvesting, removal and replanting.

8.2.2 Residential amenity effects

The Countryside Living Zone does not expressly manage residential amenity. However, given the non-complying activity status of the overall application, this is considered to be a desirable area of urban design assessment. The assessment below considers the Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision and the Lot 2 retirement village in terms of the extent to which they provide for or enable residential amenity aspects including views, outlook, privacy, and sunlight, in addition to wider amenity considerations, such as site legibility and access to recreational and service amenities.

Residential lot amenity

No houses are proposed to be consented through the current application for the Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision. However, the spacing and positioning of house building platforms, for which consent is sought, indicates that future houses will benefit from the opportunity for good levels of solar access, privacy from neighbours (achieved by considerable separation distances, level differences, and Site revegetation), outlook, and views over the wider landscape.

Villas within the retirement village are well placed to take advantage of outlook over revegetated stream corridors and Site planting, in addition to out over the wider landscape. Villas are positioned such that they avoid direct overlooking of each other's habitable rooms and outdoor living spaces, providing for a good level of privacy. Outdoor living spaces for villas are generally well positioned to optimise sunlight access. Villas on the south side of village streets generally have north facing outdoor living spaces and/or have outdoor living spaces to their rear which offer the benefit of high amenity landscape views.

Villa typologies are generously sized with well-proportioned rooms, allowing for good internal amenity.

Wider amenity

When moving through the Site, both Lot 1 and Lot 2 residents will benefit from the significant visual and recreational amenity of views to the revegetated surrounding landscape, including stream corridors, and access to Site and wider Riverhead Forest recreational trails.

Retirement village residents will be able to enjoy the communal amenity benefits of services in the Amenity and Wellness buildings, in addition to the Garden Pavilion. The wider public will also benefit from planned access to the café within the retirement village.

Future residents within the Site will be outside a convenient walking or cycling distance to the amenities and services of nearby existing urban settlements, such as Riverhead. This is

¹⁶ AUP Chapter H19, Policy H19.7.3(1) and AUP Chapter B7, Objective B7.2.1(2).

normal, however, within a Countryside Living Zone environment, with it expected that residents primarily access such services by car. More active retirement village residents (and members of the public who choose to use it) will have the option of walking to Riverhead via the proposed track down the slope on the eastern side of the Village.

Lot 1 residents will enjoy access to the private communal facilities in the Browns Road community hub, with the public being able to park vehicles in a carpark which forms part of the hub, as a starting and end point for accessing the walking and cycling trails through the Site.

Both the Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision and Lot 2 retirement village have street networks that provide for legible and connected environments commensurate with the expectations of their development forms. Roads in the Lot 1 subdivision have a good level of connectivity to a wider network of recreational trails. The placement of roads, generally on existing forest tracks on ridgelines, provides for views out over the wider environment and contributes to sense of place outcomes.

Retirement village streets have a clear and legible structure of the village spine road, which gently curves through the village, off which there are a series of streets that link back to the spine road. This structure also provides generally good levels of accessibility to the centrally positioned village heart and the opportunity for the grouping of villas into clusters separated by landscaping.

8.2.3 CPTED / Safety effects

The Lot 1 Design Guidelines do not set an expectation for providing opportunities for passive surveillance from houses over public / publicly accessible areas. Managing such an outcome is not considered necessary within the proposed countryside living residential subdivision given the comparatively lower level of housing (compared to an urban environment), and the lower incidence of crime in rural areas.

Similarly, the need to provide for passive surveillance is not considered to be a key driver within the retirement village, also due to its rural location and the resulting likely low level of people passing through the village who are not residents, staff or invited guests. Nonetheless, the village performs well in terms of passive surveillance. Villas are oriented to present their 'fronts', including front doors and windows to habitable rooms, to the 'local' streets of the neighbourhood clusters they are within. The villas present long elevations to the village spine road, with varying degrees of overlooking of it dependent on level relative to the road. This combined with the activity on the spine road resulting from the regular and frequent movement along it, as the main connector within the village and the street to which the village Amenity, Wellness and Care buildings front, will provide for good observation of the road.

Of more direct relevance to safety outcomes within the Site is the approach to lighting of streets and roads, and how this contributes to pedestrian safety. It is TKAM's intention to pursue a 'dark sky' policy for the Site. Consistent with this approach, low level lighting is used along streets and walkways within the retirement village, with a focus on bollard lighting. Similarly, within the Lot 1 subdivision, lighting of roads is limited to around intersections. This is consistent with the approach used on roads within existing Countryside Living Zone subdivisions in the wider area, which generally do not have street lighting.

Overall, the development is considered to incorporate CPTED and safety features appropriate to its rural location and commensurate with the intensity of its use.

8.2.4 Effects on neighbours

Given the distance of retirement village buildings from neighbouring properties, and likewise the distance of houses which are enabled on building platforms provided for in the countryside living residential subdivision from these properties, potential adverse effects on neighbours are limited to those from a perception of any change in character resulting from views to the Site. The landscape visual assessment finds that views from neighbouring properties are limited and generally distant, with any such views reducing over time as planting within revegetated areas establishes itself. Within this context, the adverse effect on neighbouring properties, resulting from any change in character from development on the Site from that anticipated by the Countryside Living Zone and Treaty Settlement Land, is considered to be very low.

8.2.1 Positive effects

As discussed, in part, in the assessment above, the Proposal will have a number of positive effects from an urban design perspective. These include:

- adding to the variety of housing forms and typologies in the wider northwest Auckland area;
- providing a native bush backdrop to the nearby urban settlements of Coatesville, Riverhead, and Kumeū/Huapai, as planting within planned revegetated areas establishes itself over time;
- maintaining public access to recreational trails through the area; and
- providing high amenity living opportunities for residents in an area of revegetating natural bush.

9.0 Summary and Conclusion

The Proposal will have largely **positive** landscape, visual and urban design effects/impacts, with any potential adverse effects/impacts appropriately managed, as summarised below:

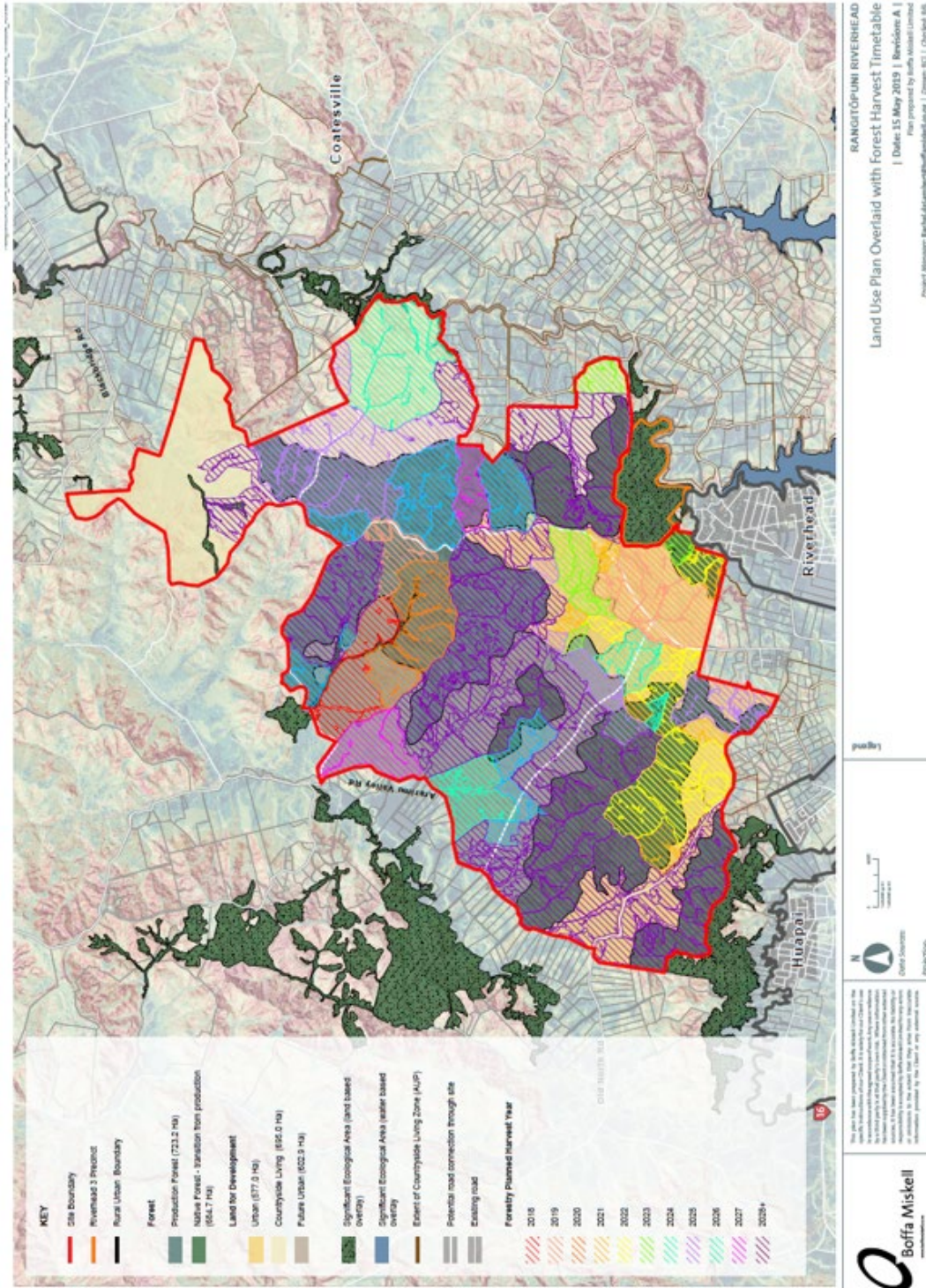
- Building platforms for future Lot 1 countryside living residential subdivision and the Lot 2 retirement village are positioned so that there will be a limited extent of visibility to them from the surrounding area. The overall potential for adverse visual effects of the development is very low.
- The design of the future houses within the countryside living residential subdivision will be subject to review by a Design Review Panel, against Design Guidelines, which will ensure their integration into their landscape context.
- The retirement village is of a high-quality architectural design, using elements of rural vernacular architecture, including breaking up of building volumes, gable roofs, and cladding materials and colours that reflect the surrounding rural environment.
- Residents will benefit from views out over a revegetated landscape, in an environment that provides for a good level of outlook, privacy and sunlight access, in addition to access to recreational trails and small, bespoke community amenity hubs.

- The development layout and features, including street design, will result in CPTED outcomes appropriate to the rural location of the Site and the intended uses.
- Residents of Riverhead will have the vegetated escarpment backdrop to the settlement retained and the wider locality enhanced through Site revegetation, they will also have their pedestrian access to the Forest enhanced again resulting in beneficial outcomes.
- Recreational users of the Riverhead Forest will have their access maintained and enhanced, including access to rehabilitated indigenous forest areas.

Significantly the Proposal will result in the long term retirement of land from rotational production exotic forestry with replacement by indigenous ecosystems, restoring terrestrial forest, natural inland wetlands, and riparian margins. The restored indigenous vegetation will be subject to extensive pest plant and animal control, protection and maintenance, which will lead to significant, landscape scaled ecological gains, with approximately 219ha of managed revegetation occurring. This is 55% of the total site area (an increase from the 8.4ha or 2% of the total site area currently in indigenous vegetation, representing a significant increase in native vegetation and associated diverse habitats. Ecological function and biodiversity gains will be achieved on a regional scale, providing a substantial positive landscape effect.

Overall, in regard to landscape and visual and urban design effects/impacts, the Proposal provides for an appropriate character, scale and intensity of development of Treaty Settlement Land and represents a markedly superior outcome than a standard Countryside Living Zone subdivision or rural lifestyle development, sensitively responding to and enhancing its landscape setting, to the benefit of both future residents and the wider community.

Appendix 1: Forest Harvest Plan



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