

Delmore Fast-Track

04/05/2026 – Auckland Council Response

Annexure 27:

Landscape

Delmore Fast Track Application

To: Auckland Council – Landscape Architecture

From: Chris Campbell – Senior Associate (Landscape Architect) – Greenwood Associates; Charlotte MacDonald – Barker & Associate

Date: 16 April 2026

Re: Landscape Architecture Response Memorandum

1.0 Technical Specialist Memo – Landscape Architect

From:

Helen Mellsop

Qualifications
& Relevant
Experience:

I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture and Diploma of Horticulture, and have 24 years of experience in landscape planning, landscape assessment and landscape design. I am a registered landscape architect and a full member of Tuia Pito Ora, the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects. I have prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for resource consent applications, plan changes, notices of requirement for designation and fast-track applications and have appeared as an expert witness before consent authorities and the Environment Court on multiple occasions. I am accredited to sit on Resource Management Act hearing panels under the Ministry for the Environment's 'Making Good Decisions' programme and was appointed to Auckland Council's independent commissioner panel for the 2021-2023 and 2024-2026 terms.

Preparation in
Accordance
with the Code
of Conduct:

I confirm that I have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses ([Code](#)), and have complied with it in the preparation of this memorandum. I also agree to follow the Code when participating in any subsequent processes, such as expert conferencing, directed by the Panel. I confirm that the opinions I have expressed are within my area of expertise and are my own, except where I have stated that I am relying on the work or evidence of others, which I have specified.

Signature:



Date:

21 April 2026

2.0 Original Specialist Review Memo

- The proposal would result in a complete change of landscape character from rural to urban. The urban character would be consistent with that of adjacent and nearby urban development at Ara Hills, West Hoe Heights and Strathmill.

- The visual and rural amenities of adjoining properties directly south of the proposal would be significantly compromised by the proposal, particularly during the construction period.
- The proposal would result in moderate-high adverse effects on landscape character and values during construction and moderate adverse effects on completion, reducing to low-moderate over time as street tree and revegetation planting matures.
- The development has relatively poor connectivity (vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist) both within the site and with surrounding rural and urban areas. While pedestrian connectivity has been improved in the new application, additional pedestrian/cycle connections are recommended.
- The steep topography of the site means that substantial earthworks would significantly modify the natural landform. However retention and protection/revegetation of intermittent and permanent water courses and wetlands means that the natural patterns of the landscape would be retained to some extent. The naturalness of wetlands and streams within the site would be enhanced and some public access would be provided to and along stream courses. Public connections through the SEA to Nukumea Reserve are not included in the application.
- Roads and development have in the main been located to follow land contours and to minimise the extent of earthworks required. The decision to provide level building platforms on each proposed residential lot has increased the extent of earthworks and associated retaining walls and resulted in steep batters above stream gullies. These even steep batters, managed as mechanically stabilised earth (MSE) retaining walls would detract from the naturalness of the gullies.
- Proposed street tree and amenity planting is generally appropriate in location, size and species mix. The revegetation planting mix requires amendments.
- Detailed soft and hard landscape design plans would be required for communally owned bush and riparian areas, the Significant Ecological Area, walkways and any other community facilities.
- The draft specifications for landscape implementation and maintenance do not currently cover all required aspects.
- The proposed conditions of consent do not currently provide sufficient certainty that the existing SEA and proposed walkways and any other community facilities on communally owned land would be consistently maintained and protected in perpetuity.

3.0 Updated Response to Applicant's Memo

Initial updated landscape plans (dated 10 April) have been provided, together with a response memo from Greenwood Associates and Barker & Associates (dated 16 April).

Apart from the pedestrian connectivity issues, which have not been addressed, the changes to plans and conditions proposed in the landscape response memo would resolve my concerns if implemented. However I have not at this stage been able to review final updated landscape plans, an updated planting and maintenance plan, or an updated set of conditions that responds to the recommendations in my previous memo.

4.0 Conclusion

At the time of writing no evidence has been provided that the landscape issues identified in my 25 March 2026 memo have been resolved. Responses from Greenwoods Associates and Barker & Co. on the 16 April indicate that there is potential for them to be largely resolved (with the exception of pedestrian connectivity recommendations), but I have been unable to confirm that due to lack of updated plans and conditions.

Delmore Fast Track Application

1.1 Introduction

This memorandum responds to the Technical Specialist Memo prepared by Auckland Council (Landscape Architecture) in relation to the above fast-track application (as lodged). This response addresses:

- Further information requests / technical queries; and
- Recommended amendments to consent conditions.

1.2 Response to Further Information Requests / Technical Comments

Information Request from Council on the lodged material	Applicant Response	Council Specialist Response
Pedestrian connectivity within and beyond the development remains relatively poor and does not support a walkable and connected neighbourhood. While the proposed pedestrian connections across gullies and through proposed revegetation areas within the site are positive, additional connections from Road 03 to Road 04, from Road 16 to Road 17, and from Road 24/JOAL 38 to Road 22 are recommended. These connections would provide significantly more direct pedestrian access to neighbourhood parks and/or the commercial area from Stage 1B and 2C, as well as improving connectivity across the development.	As discussed with Council, comments regarding connectivity will be addressed through the urban design response memorandum.	No additional connections are shown in the initial updated landscape plans (10 April). The urban design response memo dated 16 April does not specifically comment on this issue.

Road connectivity from Stages 2A-1 and 2A-2 to Te Ara Hills has not been provided, despite such a connection being shown as anticipated on the Ara Hills 2024 Structure Plan and Ara Hills Illustrative Masterplan (Figures 2 and 3 in Appendix 14 Concept Structure Plan. Pedestrian connections to the unformed legal road from Stages 2A-1 and 2A-2 are shown on the plans – I recommend that these be constructed as shared pedestrian/cyclist paths to at least allow cycling connectivity through to Ara Hills.	As discussed with Council, comments regarding connectivity will be addressed through the urban design response memorandum.	No additional detail provided on pedestrian connections to the unformed legal road shown in initial updated landscape plans (10 April). The urban design response memo dated 16 April does not specifically comment on this issue.
The Greenwood Associates landscape response states that fences on private lots between amenity gardens/lawns and the covenanted 'Lot Revegetation Mix' PM planting areas would be 1.2m high and visually permeable. However, the landscape plans still show 1.8m visually permeable fences in these locations. I recommend that the plans be updated to accord with the statement in the landscape response memo.	Greenwood Associates will revise landscape plans to be consistent with the landscape response memo. The updated set of plans will be available 20 April.	Updated plans provided on 10 April do not include the sheets which show fencing, and no additional plans have been provided. If the fencing change has been made in plans provided to the Panel, this issue would be resolved.
Neither the Greenwoods Landscape Plans nor the Greenwoods Planting and Implementation Plan propose any weed control or infill planting within the SEA in proposed Lot 1920. There are relatively large areas of gorse-dominant vegetation on the lower edges of the SEA (refer Figure 11 in the Viridis Ecological Impact Report). The B&A Objectives and Policies Assessment states that removal of weeds (eg gorse) would occur in the	Greenwood Associates acknowledges the risk of these areas acting as a seed source for further spread of gorse across the wider landscape and will update the planting and implementation plan (specification) to provide measures for removal of gorse and revegetation of these areas. Amendments to the planting and implementation plan are also being undertaken to address comments from the Department of Conservation.	Issue would be resolved if the planting and implementation plan was updated as proposed. No amended planting and implementation plan was available for review.

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SEA, but the landscape plans and specifications do not currently include this scope of work. Weeds within the SEA would provide a seed source for spread into the planned revegetation areas. It is possible that the exclusion of the SEA may be the result of ongoing discussions between the applicant and the Department of Conservation/Auckland Council regarding ownership, management and development of this area adjacent to Nukumea Reserve. However given the current ownership I recommend that weed control and infill planting within the SEA be included in the landscape plans, and that ongoing plant and animal pest control within the SEA be included in the maintenance requirements both during Phase 1 (consent holder) and Phase 2 (Residents Society).	The applicant will provide this plan as soon as practicable.	
The AEE states that walking tracks and lookout points within proximity to the neighbouring Nukumea Reserve form part of the open space network for the development (AEE p53) but these elements are not shown on the landscape plans and there are no requirements within the conditions to ensure that this recreational infrastructure is implemented. A condition addressing this discrepancy is recommended below.	Greenwood Associates will update the full set plans to show these tracks and look out points. The updated set of plans will be available 20 April, preliminary landscape plans updated have been included.	Preliminary updated landscape plans dated 10 April do not show the tracks and lookout points. No additional plans were available on 21 April. This issue would be resolved if final updated plans showed these elements.
I am unsure whether there are any conditions that would require implementation of planting in the	Response to recommended / amended conditions are provided below in section 1.3.	

communal revegetation areas prior to s224(c) certification for each stage. A condition is recommended below.		
I am unsure whether there are any conditions that would require implementation of planting in the communal revegetation areas prior to s224(c) certification for each stage. A condition is recommended below.	Response to recommended / amended conditions are provided below in section 1.3.	

1.3 Response to Recommended / Amended Conditions

Condition Request from Council on the lodged condition document (Appendix 44 to the AEE)	Applicant Response	Council Specialist Response
78. It is unclear whether this document is a draft of the Implementation and Management Plan required by Condition 78. It appears to cover most of what would be required in this plan but there are some missing elements: - Timing of when revegetation planting will be undertaken in relation to the stages of development. I recommend that a table be included that sets out which areas of planting will be implemented prior to s224(c) certification for each stage of the development; - Weed control and any required infill planting within the SEA in Lot 1920;	The applicant accepts in principle a new ecological management plan, which would sit alongside the planting and implementation plan. This requires a co-ordinated approach between landscape and ecology and therefore we cannot provide a final set of conditions at this time. The applicant intends to provide this by 20 April. With regard to the walkways within the commonly-owned bush lots, the intention is that these will be constructed by the consent holder at the relevant stage of development works, and maintained by the Residential Society thereafter. Conditions will be proposed to clarify this.	Amended/new conditions addressing this issue have not yet been provided.

- Specifications for construction and long term maintenance of walkways, steps, signage and any furniture or other infrastructure within the commonly-owned bush lots; - Pest animal control during Phase 2 (Residential Society responsibility) is limited to monitoring for pest animals that might impact the revegetation planting. In order to realise the ecological benefits of the revegetation planting, I recommend that pest animal control during this phase also include the control of pests such as possums, rats and mustelids that impact native fauna in the bush areas (refer also to recommendations regarding pest animal control in the ecological review from Nick Goldwater of Wildland Consultants). I also recommend an amendment to Condition 78 to ensure that implementation and maintenance specifications for walkways, steps, signage and any furniture or other infrastructure within the commonly-owned bush lots are also included in the Implementation and Maintenance Plan and that responsibility for long term maintenance of these recreational facilities is transferred to the Residents Society.		
<u>78. Prior to the issue of section 224(c) for the relevant stage, the consent holder must provide to the Monitoring Team Leader for certification a finalised set of detailed soft and hard landscape design drawings and supporting written</u>	As per comment above.	Amended/new conditions addressing this issue have not yet been provided.

documentation prepared by a landscape architect or SQEP for landscaping works. The submitted information must be in general accordance with the Landscape Plans referred to in Condition 1. The landscape design drawings, specifications and maintenance requirements must, at a minimum, include the following matters:

a. Planting for the purpose of protecting or enhancing landscape and amenity values, including:

i. The location of all landscape/amenity planting areas.

ii. A plant schedule based on the submitted planting plan(s) which details specific plant species, plant sourcing, the number of plants, and height and/or grade (litre) / Pb size at time of planting;

iii. Specifications for site preparation, including methods for weed control and protection of retained indigenous vegetation, soil preparation, planting implementation, mulching, and irrigation;

iv. Specifications and a programme for active maintenance of planting areas over a period of at least 5 years, including plant replacements, weed control and pest animal control;

b. Plans denoting the design of retaining walls, fences, steps, walkways, wayfinding signage and lookouts (including those located in revegetation

<u>and/or ecological enhancement areas covered by Condition 79) and</u> <u>c. The final location, height, materiality and treatment of retaining walls, both within private lots and communally-owned areas.</u> <u>d. Methods for ensuring maintenance of hard and soft landscaping in perpetuity;</u> <u>e. Delegation of responsibilities between the consent holder and the Residential Society.</u>		
<u>79 . The consent holder must prepare and submit to Council for certification, an Ecological Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist for all revegetation planting and ecological enhancement areas (including all SEA areas, existing protected consent notice areas, and proposed areas for offset planting). The Plan must include as a minimum:</u> <u>(a) The location of all ecological revegetation planting</u> <u>(b) Planting schedules for ecological revegetation planting (to include species, number of plants, spacings, etc);</u> <u>(c) Infill planting schedules for gaps created in existing bush covenant and SEA areas following pest plant control activities.</u> <u>(d) The details and timing of revegetation planting</u> <u>(e) Confirmation that plants will be ecosourced from the Tamaki or Rodney Ecological Districts;</u>	As per comment above.	Amended/new conditions addressing this issue have not yet been provided.

(f) Confirmation that the required extent of revegetation required under the BOAM has been achieved (excluding landscape and amenity planting areas covered under Condition 78);

(g) A programme and specification for ongoing control of pest plants and pest animals in perpetuity;

(h) Maps of pest animal control devices across the site;

(i) Methods for ensuring maintenance of revegetation areas in perpetuity; and

(j) Delegation of responsibilities between the consent holder and the Residential Society, as follows:

(k) The consent holder is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of all new revegetation planting until 80% canopy closure has occurred and a minimum survival rate of the plants being 90% of the original density through the entire planting area(s) has been achieved over a minimum 5-year defects liability period commencing on the completion of planting work.

(l) Once all new planting is established, the Residential Society is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and ongoing eradication of pest plants and animals.

Advice note: Pest plant control means that there are no mature, fruiting and / or flowering individuals of weed species present within the

<u>covenant area and any weed species present are dead. In addition, there must be no areas where weed species are smothering and / or out competing native vegetation including suppressing the natural regeneration processes. Pest animal control means meeting Council's minimum requirements and national standard best practice methods for control of these species to an acceptable level.</u>		
Subdivision Condition 113 The reference in the tables for Stages 1 and 2 Ownership and Management Responsibilities for bush areas and private lot bush covenant areas refers to the Implementation and Maintenance Plan approved under Condition 1. This should instead refer to Condition 78, as the draft Plan submitted as Appendix 47.3 to the AEE does not currently cover all necessary aspects (eg. timing of implementation for each stage, weed and animal pest control in the SEA, long term animal pest control).	These conditions will be amended to refer to the relevant management plan.	
Condition re timing of implementation of hard and soft landscape works within bush lots 1901, 1904, 1905, 1908, 1910, 1920 and 1922. Currently there does not appear to be a condition requiring implementation of revegetation and hard landscape works (walkways etc) prior to s224(c) certification for each stage. Condition 80 gives the timing for landscape implementation on	Auckland Council Parks has requested conditions relating to the implementation of landscaping works within drainage reserves and parks. For the avoidance of duplication and because differing conditions have been proposed by Council, we defer to the Parks response.	

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private lots but there does not appear to be similar conditions for other proposed planting. Condition 130 of the final conditions for the previous application covered the timing of landscape works in the neighbourhood parks and drainage reserves, but this does not appear to be included in the current condition set. I am unsure of the best position or wording for these conditions but tentatively recommend the following: <u>Prior to the issue of section 224(c) certification for any stage or sub-stage, all hard and soft landscape works within the neighbourhood parks in Stage 1 (recreation reserve Lot 1800) and Stage 2 (recreation reserve Lot 5020) and the drainage reserves (Lots 1601-1609, 1616, 1621-1627) must be implemented in accordance with the certified landscape plans.</u> <u>Prior to the issue of section 224(c) certification for any stage or sub-stage, all hard and soft landscape works within the relevant balance lots for the stage (Lots 1901, 1904, 1905, 1908, 1910, 1920 and 1922) must be implemented in accordance with the certified landscape plans.</u>	With regard to the planting for the balance lots, this is accepted and will be incorporated into the updated condition set.	
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