

LA4

**Brookvale Green Residential Development
Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 Substantive Application
174 and 176 Brookvale Road – Havelock North, Hawke's Bay**

Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment



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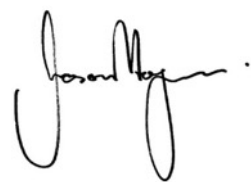
**Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment
Quality Assurance Statement**

Prepared by:



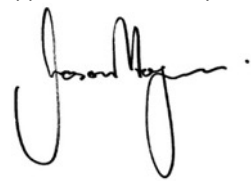
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Brookvale Green FTAA Substantive Application

174 and 176 Brookvale Road – Havelock North, Hawkes' Bay

Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is submitted in support of the Substantive Application ('**Application**') to the Environmental Protection Authority ('**EPA**') by Vermont Street Partners No. 4 Limited ('**VSP**') for the 'Brookvale Green' residential development ('the **project**') at 174 and 176 Brookvale Road, Havelock North ('the **Site**'), under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 ('**FTAA**').
- 1.2 LA4 Landscape Architects ('**LA4**') have been engaged by VSP to undertake a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment ('**LVA**') of the project.
- 1.3 This assessment investigates the existing character of the Site and surrounding environment, identifies the key landscape and visual features of the site and describes the implications of the project on the landscape values and visual amenity of the Site and surrounding Havelock North area. Investigations of the Site and surrounding environment were undertaken in June 2025.

2. The Project

- 2.1 Brookvale Green provides a unique opportunity to deliver a comprehensive residential community comprising of approximately 203 new dwellings within a well-connected, high-quality and distinctive living environment. The project is designed to create a defined rural/urban boundary while enhancing the Site's natural ecological features.
- 2.2 A defining characteristic of the Site are the two stream corridors, one meandering through the centre and the other forming the northern boundary. These features are central to the design approach, providing a strong landscape framework that has shaped the layout of streets, lots, and open spaces. The streams contribute significantly to the Site's visual amenity, support ecological values, and provide opportunities for walking, cycling, and passive recreation. Their integration into the development ensures a strong connection to the Site's natural character, while the northern stream establishes a soft green edge that reinforces the relationship with the wider rural landscape.
- 2.3 The residential community of Brookvale Green is guided by a series of design principles focused on delivering a liveable, connected and green environment, with enhanced public spaces and diverse housing options. The five-stage development is structured around a central loop road that extends from Brookvale Road and runs through the heart of the Site. This loop is supported by local streets and pedestrian and cycle connections to enable a legible grid structure. A variety of housing typologies and densities are proposed to meet the evolving and growing needs of the housing market, ensuring choice and flexibility for future residents. Together, these elements will support the creation of a diverse, visually interesting neighbourhood with a strong sense of place.
- 2.4 A Masterplan has been prepared for the Site and is appended to the substantive application.

Landscape Development and Ecological Restoration

- 2.5 The design principles for the development centre on delivering a liveable, connected and green environment, with enhanced public open spaces and diverse housing options. The two stream corridors within the Site provided the landscape framework to which the development has been shaped, including the layout of streets, lots, and open spaces.

- 2.6 The landscape strategy includes:
- Removal of the existing exotic shelterbelts
 - Removal of the eucalyptus trees within the Council Reserve Strip and massed planting with indigenous tree and shrub species
 - Enhancement of the streams including noxious weed removal, stream protection, and extensive riparian planting
 - Planting and ecological and walkway connections
 - Vegetated open space corridor along the northern stream
 - Vegetated landscape buffer at the northern and eastern rural boundaries; and
 - Street tree plantings throughout the development.

Refer to the LA4 Landscape Architects Landscape Development Plans in **Annexure 3**.

- 2.7 From the outset, the masterplan has integrated the Site's existing watercourses as central elements in its design and layout so as to avoid or minimise ecological degradation. Watercourses 1 and 2 flow from the northwest to the southeast through the centre of the Site. Watercourse 3 flows along the Site's northern boundary.
- 2.8 The proposed works involve the realignment of a section of Watercourse 1, including the temporary removal of wetlands located within the existing channel. These works will result in a reestablished stream channel that continues to provide water conveyance and drainage functions and wetland margins which are extended through targeted revegetation plantings. Significant ecological restoration is proposed, including riparian revegetation along the stream margins, and the establishment of ecological buffers along both watercourses aimed at restoring more natural stream functions and improving both onsite and downstream water quality.
- 2.9 Overall, the realigned stream habitat will have higher ecological values, diversity and structural complexity than currently exists. Watercourse 2 will be similarly restored through targeted revegetation planting, resulting in a total area in excess of 4 hectares of indigenous species revegetation of riparian margins. These areas will be managed through ongoing pest plant and animal control. The on-site stormwater infrastructure, including treatment and detention measures are expected to support the achievement of water quality objectives by reducing contaminant loads and maintaining hydrological balance.

Council Reserve Strip

- 2.10 Works are to be undertaken in the adjacent 10m wide Council Reserve Strip along the western boundary. This includes removal of the mature eucalyptus trees, construction of some retaining walls along the site boundary, battering the slope and revegetation planting with indigenous tree and shrub species.

Landscape Management Plan

- 2.11 A Landscape Management Plan ('LMP') will be required as a condition of consent for the substantive application and submitted post consent. The purpose of the LMP is to guide the implementation, long-term care, maintenance, and performance of the landscape areas within Brookvale Green to ensure that all landscaping meets the consent conditions, design intent, and community expectations. The LMP will ensure that the development will deliver successful environmental, ecological, visual and community benefits. The LMP sets out the management aims and objectives for the Site along with the specific management objectives for each landscape component, and the associated maintenance works required on a regular basis.
- 2.12 The aim of the LMP is to coordinate a high standard for maintenance and management of all the landscape elements across the Site to ensure successful visual integration of the

development proposal into the surroundings and to protect and enhance the natural and ecological values of the stream corridors in accordance with the design objectives. This includes the appropriate maintenance of the proposed landscape components within an easily maintained comprehensive landscape framework that will provide a diversity of landscape experiences for the users, residents and visitors. The objectives are summarised as follows:

- To ensure that all landscaped areas are established and maintained in a condition that contributes to the visual amenity of the development
- To integrate the new development and mitigate reverse sensitivities by establishing and maintaining a dense vegetated buffer to the surrounding rural production area to the north and east
- To establish and maintain tree, shrub and groundcover planting to provide an overall landscape framework and landscape character
- To maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecological values; and
- To ensure a high standard of sustainable management of all the landscape areas in a neat, tidy and substantially pest and weed-free condition

- 2.13 Management of all landscaped areas will be undertaken in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

3. Assessment Methodology

- 3.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of the project on this landscape is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of this project on them. In accordance with the Resource Management Act (1991) ('RMA') this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the project combined with existing developments. The following methodology used in this assessment is in accordance with the guidelines contained within Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2022 ('TTatM').

Background Review

- 3.2 A review of the background information and plans was undertaken in relation to the landscape character and visual amenity aspects of the project. Key landscape and environmental factors which could potentially be affected by the project were identified and reviewed.

Statutory Context

- 3.3 A review of the relevant statutory provisions was undertaken to identify the key landscape character and visual amenity related objectives and policies. The purpose of reviewing the statutory provisions was to help frame the landscape assessment, providing a structured basis for evaluating the project's effects on landscape values.

Site and Landscape Evaluation – Landscape and Visual Environment

- 3.4 Detailed site investigations and an analysis of the Site and surrounding Havelock North environment were undertaken. The landscape character, natural character, visual and amenity values were identified and outlined, and a photographic record of the Site and surrounding environment compiled. Key landscape features and elements were identified, and an analysis of the landscape values and the landscape's ability to accommodate future development enabled by the project was undertaken.

Conclusions

- 3.5 An evaluation of the project as a whole considering all the preceding analysis was undertaken in relation to potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity values. Conclusions were made in relation to the potential landscape effects of the project on the Site and surrounding Havelock North environment.

4. The Site and Wider Landscape Context

The Site

- 4.1 The Site is located at 174 and 176 Brookvale Road, approximately 3.5km to the west of Havelock North's village centre in the Hawkes Bay. It comprises a total area of approximately 24.3 hectares on the northern edge of Havelock North's urban residential boundary. Under the Operative Hastings District Plan ('HDP'), the Site is zoned Plains Production Zone.

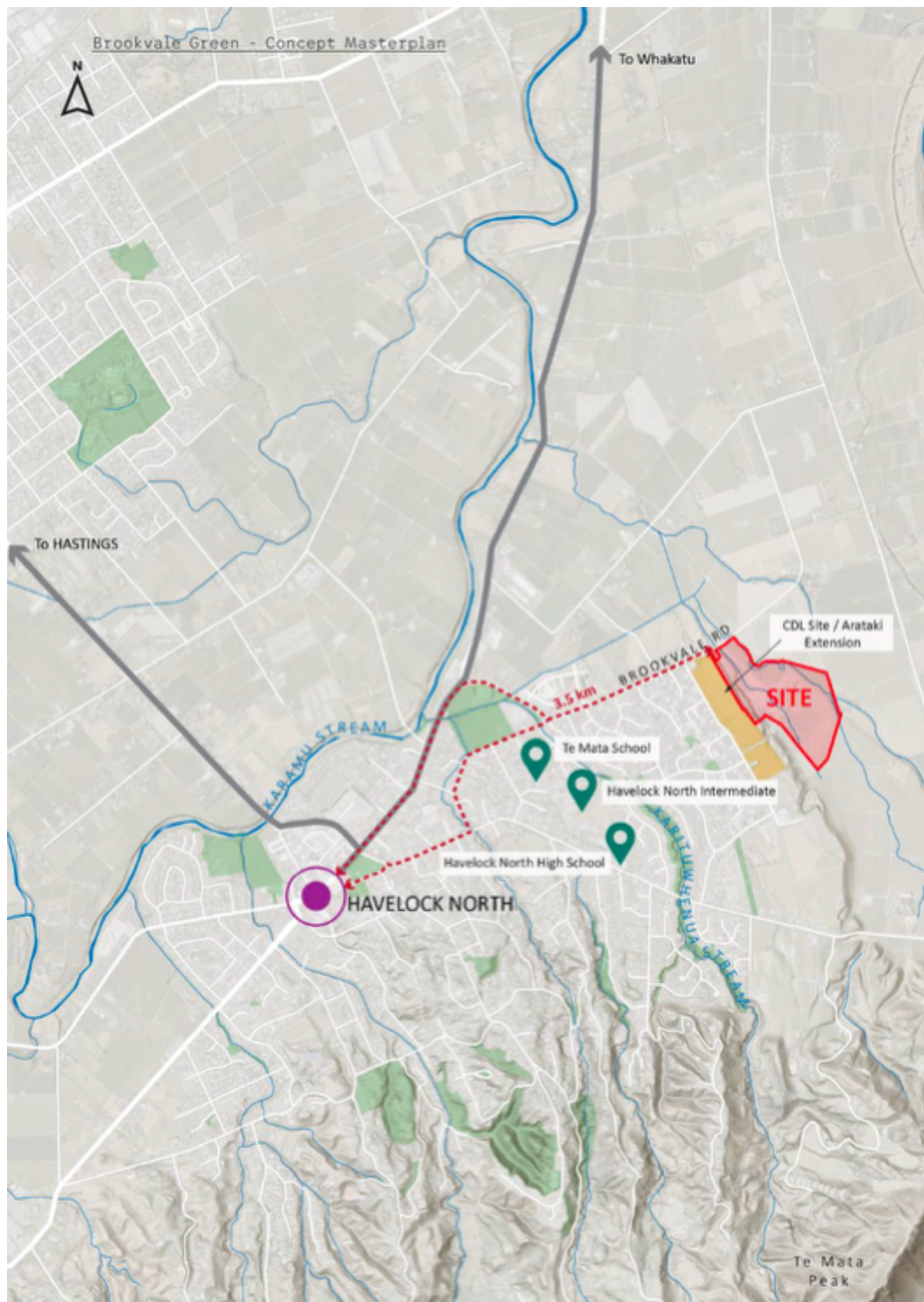


Figure 1: Site location context map (Source: B&A)

- 4.2 The Site comprises a number of activities including the previous Te Mata Mushroom factory in the southwestern part of the Site (which ceased operations in 2022) with a large number of remaining buildings including packing sheds, warehousing, packhouses, compost bunkers, implement sheds, office space and staff amenities. Large areas of yard space, storage, vehicle manoeuvring, loading and parking is also associated with the buildings. Other activities within the Site include a commercial nursery supplying bare-rooted horticultural stock, a directional drilling contractors yard, bulk cartage yard, excavating contractor, pool company, bed manufacturer and joinery factory.



Figure 2: Site location within the surrounding context (Source: B&A)

- 4.3 The landform within the Site is predominantly flat but rises steeply between 3-4m along the south-western boundary up towards the adjacent CDL / Arataki Extension land. The land drops down to a permanent stream (Watercourse 3) extending along the northern part of the Site, overgrown with predominantly weed species and some willow trees. An intermittent stream (Watercourse 1 and 2) also traverses the Site in a south-easterly direction in a more formed channel flanked in a number of locations with flax plantings (*Phormium tenax*). Both streams are tributaries to the Karamū Stream further to the west. Artificial drainage channels traverse the Site in a number of locations.
- 4.4 Vegetation within the Site is characteristic of its previous rural uses comprising a number of exotic shelterbelts, flax plantings and semi-mature specimen trees located throughout the Site. Oriental planes (*Platanus orientalis*) extend along the southern side of the main access drive and beside a number of the metalled access tracks throughout the Site. Mature tree plantings of oriental plane, tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), oak (*Quercus spp.*) and willow (*Salix spp.*) are established in the north-eastern corner of the Site. A stand of gum trees (*Eucalyptus spp.*) are in the south-eastern part of the Site, contiguous with eucalyptus plantings in the adjoining narrow steep embankment of Hastings District Council ('HDC') owned reserve. Shelter belt plantings include she-oak (*Cassuarina cunninghamiana*), olive (*Olea spp.*), macrocarpa (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) and tarata (*Pittosporum eugenioides*). Refer to **Annexure 1 – Site Photographs**.



Figure 3: Site aerial (Source: B&A)

- 4.5 The Site is predominantly surrounded by rural and rural residential land to the north, south and east. The adjoining rural land ranges in size from 7.6ha – 60ha and are primarily made up of open, flat paddocks, vineyards and agricultural land, accessible from Arataki Road, Brookvale Road and Te Mata Mangateretere Road.
- 4.6 The adjoining properties to the southwest range from 0.9ha – 5.2ha and contain rural residential activities. Directly to the west, the Site adjoins the Arataki Extension site (or CDL Land New Zealand Limited site) which is situated between the Site and the existing urban edge of Havelock North at Arataki Road. A rural lifestyle property including commercial business, the Shaggy Range Dog Daycare Centre and Village Christmas Trees, adjoins the Site to the southwest and the Te Mata Estate Winery adjoins the Site to the southeast.

The Wider Landscape Context

- 4.7 The Site is located within the central Heretaunga Plains and associated low-lying river terraces at the base of the Te Mata Peak foothills. These open hills and Te Mata Peak, form a prominent backdrop to the Site. The settlement of Havelock North primarily consists of low density residential and rural-residential housing, with only a relatively small and compact industrial and commercial centre.
- 4.8 The Site is situated between existing residential activities to the west, rural-residential activities to the southwest and rural land to the north, southeast and east. It adjoins the CDL site / Arataki Extension land to the west which is an approved Fast-track listed project and included in the Napier Hastings Future Development Strategy ('FDS'). The Arataki residential area is characterised by predominantly standalone, single level dwellings typically on 400m² – 750m² sites. Arataki Honey is located on the eastern edge of the suburb with its factory, processing facility and visitors centre.
- 4.9 The rural area to the north and east comprises numerous orchards and vineyards, with industry based around its fruit and wine production, and a horticultural research centre. Te Mata Estate Winery adjoins the Site to the southeast with its extensive production vineyard. Horticultural activities prevail further to the east with primarily orcharding activities on the fertile plains extending up from the Tukituki River.
- 4.10 The wider area around Havelock North, particularly the prominent peak of Te Mata o Rongokako (Te Mata Peak), holds deep cultural and spiritual significance to local Māori,

especially Ngāti Kahungunu. Further to the north, the landscape opens up into the Heretaunga Plains, a fertile, flat agricultural area shaped by the Ngaruroro and Tukituki Rivers. These plains are characterised by a mix of farms, lifestyle blocks, and market gardens.

- 4.11 The wider Heretaunga Plains covers an area from Waipatiki to the north, Waimarama to the south, Maraekakaho to the west and the Pacific Coast to the east and includes the urban settlements of Havelock North, Hastings and Napier. The fertile soils of the plains are characterised by orchards, vineyards and croplands, and industry generally based around horticulture.

5. Relevant Statutory Provisions

- 5.1 A comprehensive outline of the project relating to statutory and non-statutory provisions is provided within the substantive application Planning Report prepared by Barker and Associates Limited. This section of the assessment outlines, by way of background, the provisions most relevant to landscape character and visual amenity matters. The purpose of the review is to help frame the landscape assessment rather than to undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the provisions which has been covered in the Planning Report.

- 5.2 The following statutory documents are of particular relevance to this assessment:

- Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 ('FTTA')
- Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA')
- Operative Hastings District Plan 2002 ('HDP')

Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

- 5.3 The Brookvale Green project is a referred project under the Fast-track Approvals Act. This includes requirements to assess applications under the RMA under Schedule 5 as set out below.

Resource Management Act 1991

- 5.4 Part 2 of the Resource Management Act 1991 sets out the purpose and principles of the RMA. Part 2, Section 5 states that the purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Section 6 of the RMA sets out matters of national importance that must be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

- 5.5 Section 7 identifies a range of matters that shall be given particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the RMA, including Section 7(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and Section 7(f) the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment. Effects relevant to Sections 7(c) and 7(f) of the RMA are addressed in this assessment.

Hastings and Napier Future Development Strategy

- 5.6 The Hastings and Napier Future Development Strategy ('FDS') is intended to guide the location of urban, industrial and commercial development in the two districts over the next 30 years. It is a requirement of the Government's National Policy Statement – Urban Development ('NPS-UD'). The FDS builds on and replaces Heretaunga Plains Urban Development Strategy ('HPUDS') as the key strategic growth document for Hastings and Napier, responding to the new requirements of the NPS-UD and other recent national direction, including the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 ('NPS-HPL'). The Site is not identified as a new or expanded residential area in the FDS.

Hastings District Plan (Operative in Part)

- 5.7 The HDP outlines a number of objectives and related policies relevant to landscape character and visual amenity. Within the HDP, the Site is currently zoned Plains Production. The Site has

not been identified as having any landscape overlays or significant ecological features. There are also no Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features within the immediate vicinity of the Site.

5.8 The main relevant sections of the HDP relating to the landscape character and visual amenity are:

- Section 2.4 – Urban Strategy
- Section 6.2 – Plains Production Zone
- Section 8.2 – Havelock North Residential Environment
- Section 30.1 – Subdivision and Land Development

5.9 With respect to the matters addressed in these objectives, policies and assessment criteria, I comment as follows:

- i) Development within the Site would achieve a comprehensive residential environment and allow for a range of housing densities and typologies. Potential adverse effects of urban activities on the environment would be avoided, remedied or mitigated in accordance with the operative HDP provisions.
- ii) Development enabled by the project would be largely in keeping with the existing urban built form of the Arataki Road land to the west and is a logical extension to the adjacent consented CDL urban development.
- iii) The Site has the capacity to visually absorb development enabled by the project without adversely affecting the rural character of the surrounding land to the north, east and southwest. An appropriate transition would be achieved to the rural area to the north and northeast through the 40m wide extensively vegetated stream corridor with riparian and terrestrial buffer planting. The 15m wide planted buffer to the east similarly provides a good transition to the Te Mata Estate Winery. The interface with the Shaggy Range Dog Daycare and Village Christmas Tree land to the southwest is appropriately treated with the 5m wide planted buffer with evergreen trees and shrub underplanting (in addition to the existing shelterbelt along their boundary).
- iv) The large size of the Site means greater co-ordination can be achieved both internally and to the wider surrounds through a comprehensively designed masterplan. Development enabled by the project would result in a quality compact urban form with increased residential densities.
- v) Development enabled by the project would provide for a range of quality housing choices to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community and enable a variety of housing types at higher densities.
- vi) The Site is not located within or in close proximity to any landscape overlays or significant ecological features. There are no Outstanding Natural Landscapes or Features within the immediate vicinity of the Site.
- vii) Although the Site is currently zoned Plains Production, the outcomes sought through the project support compact, integrated urban growth in a location in close proximity to the Arataki residential settlement.
- viii) While integrated residential development and subdivision are not anticipated in the zone, the land is not actively used for intensive productive purposes and does not contain highly productive soils.

- ix) The subdivision pattern and residential activities proposed are considered appropriate given the urban form delivered through this project, despite not being provided for in the Plains Production Zone.
 - x) Reverse sensitivity effects on adjacent rural land are avoided or mitigated through the extensive 40m wide landscape buffer along the northern and northeastern boundary, and the 40m and 15m wide landscape buffer with the Te Mata Estate Winery land to the northeast. The 5m wide densely planted landscape buffer along the southern boundary with Shaggy Range (104 Arataki Road) comprising a mix of large evergreen trees and shrubs will assist to visually soften and mitigate the project from this property. These measures will ensure that the ongoing operation of established rural activities is protected, and that a clear and appropriate transition is maintained between rural and residential uses.
- 5.10 The residential area to the west on Arataki Road (including the CDL development) is zoned Havelock North General Residential with a number of objectives and policies in relation to good urban design and landscape outcomes including:
- Objective HNRO1** – *New developments will be of a design, scale, layout and intensity that is consistent and compatible with the planned urban built form environment of the relevant Havelock North zone.*
- Policy HNRP1** – *Use zones to protect and recognise the different form of residential development as a result of changes in topography and landscape character.*
- Policy HNRP2** – *Avoid the adverse effects of developments created by excessive building scale, overshadowing, building bulk, excessive site coverage, or invasion of neighbourhood privacy, on the character of the planned urban built form environment of the relevant zone.*
- Objective HNRO6** – *To ensure that intensification of housing in Havelock North is consistent in its design and location with the planned urban built form environment sought for the zone.*
- Policy HNRP10** – *Provide for medium density residential development within new urban development areas where structure plans provide accessibility to amenities including commercial areas, public parks and active and public transport networks.*
- 5.11 In lieu of residential zoning, the project intention is to apply the General Residential Zone planning framework to the majority of the Site and the overall character of the Site would be consistent with that of the adjoining existing and consented development.
- 5.12 The Medium Density Zone provisions will be applied to the smaller lots in the development fronting the open space corridor to the north. While these more intensive lots will initially be visible to the north and east, they will be buffered by the riparian and terrestrial planting within the stream corridor. The buffer will provide an appropriate transition and visual softening to the rural area beyond.
- Statutory Conclusions**
- 5.13 Although the Site is zoned Plains Production, the project has been developed to deliver residential outcomes that align with the intent and structure of the HDP supporting a well-functioning urban environment and managing interface effects with the surrounding land uses. In my opinion, potential adverse landscape character and visual amenity effects of urban activities on the environment would be avoided, remedied or mitigated in accordance with the operative HDP provisions for the Havelock North General Residential Area.

6. Evaluation of the Project

- 6.1 The key to assessing the landscape character and visual amenity effects of development enabled by the project is first to establish the existing characteristics and values of the landscape and then to assess the effects of the project on them. In accordance with the RMA this includes an assessment of the cumulative effects of the project combined with existing development within Havelock North.
- 6.2 The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of the nature and degree of potential landscape effects and the appropriateness of the project. The assessment responds to matters related to landscape character and visual amenity.
- 6.3 An assessment of landscape effects takes into consideration physical changes to the landscape as a resource which may give rise to changes to its character and quality and perceived landscape values. Visual effects are a consequence of landscape effects as this is how we mainly perceive effects on landscape values. Landscape and visual effects are therefore inextricably linked and are influenced by the sensitivity of the receiving environment combined with the type and magnitude of change associated with the project.
- 6.4 Matters to be addressed in this landscape assessment in relation to the landscape character and visual amenity include the following:
- i) Landscape effects
 - ii) Visual amenity effects
 - iii) Construction effects
 - iv) Cumulative effects

Landscape Effects

- 6.5 A landscape effect is a consequence of change in a landscape's physical attributes on that landscape's values. Change is not an effect – landscapes change constantly. It is the implications of change for a landscape's values that is the effect¹. Landscape effects take into consideration physical effects to the land resource. Assessments of landscape effects therefore investigate the likely nature and scale of change to landscape elements and characteristics. Landscape effects are primarily dependent on the landscape sensitivity of a site and its surrounds to accommodate change. Landscape sensitivity is influenced by landscape quality and vulnerability, or the extent to which landscape character, elements/features and values are at risk to change.
- 6.6 Landscape assessments are based on the links between landscape character and values. Character is an expression of the landscape's collective attributes. Values are the reasons a landscape is valued but are embodied in attributes. Effects are consequences for a landscape's values of changes to the attributes on which the values depend. Landscape character results from a combination of physical elements together with aesthetic and perceptual aspects that combine to make an area distinct. Landscape values relate to people's aesthetic perception of the biophysical environment, including considerations such as naturalness, vividness, coherence, memorability and rarity.
- 6.7 Effects on landscape values are assessed against the existing environment, and the outcomes sought in the relevant statutory provisions. Whether effects on landscape values are appropriate will therefore depend both on the nature and magnitude of effect on the existing landscape values and what is anticipated by the provisions.

¹ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [p. 135]

Landscape Effects Analysis

- 6.8 The existing attributes that contribute to the existing rural character of the area will become progressively less pervasive as the Site is developed with the future urbanisation of the area. Development enabled by the project will inevitably transform the local rural character to that of more intensive and mixed urban development which will have an influence on the surrounding area.
- 6.9 Although the Site and local area to the south, north and east currently exhibit rural characteristics, the highly urbanised area of the Arataki residential area to the west and the recently consented adjacent CDL development, exert a dominant influence on the area. Consequently, distinctly urban influences are highly evident in the surrounding area, which further reduce the sensitivity of the Site and surrounding environment to change as anticipated by the project.
- 6.10 Based on an analysis of the Site and surrounds it is clear that there are very low landscape values and sensitivity associated with the Site due to past and present land use. The Site is a relatively degraded, highly modified landscape lacking significant landscape values, in close proximity to Havelock North's existing residential area on the southern side of the Site. There are a number of industrial-type buildings on the Site including areas of yard space, storage, vehicle manoeuvring, loading and parking. Other activities within the Site include a commercial nursery supplying bare-rooted horticultural stock, a directional drilling contractors yard, bulk cartage yard, excavating contractor, pool company, bed manufacturer and joinery factory. The Site is therefore a highly modified environment. Development enabled by the project will result in a change in landscape character, but will ensure a suitable level of amenity, albeit an urban, rather than a rural character is achieved.
- 6.11 In my opinion development enabled by the project will have low adverse landscape effects, particularly in relation to the character and quality of the Site and surrounding area given that:
- i) The Site does not contain, and development enabled by the project will not adversely affect, any significant landscapes or features. The Site and surrounding area are a distinctly modified environment.
 - ii) The landscape values associated with the Site itself are not high due to the modified nature of the Site and the activities and land uses within the Site and surrounding area. The landscape character of the Site is not high due to these characteristics. As such the landscape sensitivity of the Site to change as enabled by the project is low.
 - iii) The landscape character, amenity values and biodiversity values of the Site and surrounding area will not be adversely affected by development enabled by the project. The form, scale and nature of the project will be similar to the pattern of residential development occurring within the surrounding environment further to the south and will therefore not appear out of character. The character, intensity and scale of the project will be in keeping with the local characteristics.
 - iv) Development enabled by the project will not introduce new elements or features that will adversely affect the landscape values and character of the Site and surrounding area. The project will be viewed as an interface between the established residential settlement area in Arataki, the adjacent consented CDL development and the rural land to the north and east.
 - v) A number of the natural features within the Site including the streams, are to be protected and enhanced as part of the project. The landscape character values of the Site and surrounding area will be significantly enhanced through the noxious weed clearance and ecological and riparian planting of the streambanks in excess of 4 hectares.

- vi) The project will result in enhanced landscape and ecological outcomes with indigenous planting and enhanced habitat opportunities within the streams and stormwater infrastructure.
 - vii) The removal of the mature eucalyptus trees, construction of the retaining walls and battering the slope within the Council Reserve Strip will initially result in low-moderate adverse effects on landscape values. The revegetation planting with indigenous tree and shrub species within this area will enhance the landscape values within a short time period.
 - viii) The 40m wide vegetated open space corridor along the northern stream and 15m wide riparian buffer along the eastern boundary will provide a natural edge to the Site and a strong defensible boundary to the adjoining rural area. The 5m wide planted buffer to the Shaggy Range Dog Daycare and Village Christmas Trees property is considered appropriate and similar in composition to their buffer with the CDL development.
 - ix) Any potential landscape effects will be localised due to the type and scale of change and the existing settlement, landform, and vegetation patterns.
- 6.12 The project would have low adverse effects on the landscape values of the Site and surrounding area and would ensure a suitable level of amenity is achieved. The landscape values of the Site and surrounding area will be significantly enhanced through the ecological enhancement and riparian planting of the streambanks throughout the Site.

Visual Amenity Effects

- 6.13 The assessment of visual effects analyses the perceptual (visual) response that any of the identified changes to the landscape may evoke, including effects relating to views and visual amenity. Visual sensitivity is influenced by a number of factors including the visibility of a proposal, the nature and extent of the viewing audience, the visual qualities of the proposal, and the ability to integrate subsequent changes within the landscape setting, where applicable. As with landscape effects, visual effects relate to landscape values. Visibility and change are not effects in and of themselves².

Visual Catchment and Viewing Audience

- 6.14 The visual catchment is the area from which noticeable visual effects of development enabled by the project are likely to be evident to any significant degree. Brookvale Road extending along the northern boundary of the Site results in close views being gained (albeit partly screened by vegetation within the stream corridor). Views towards the Site are gained from the rural lifestyle properties on the northern side of Brookvale Road and rural landholdings to the north and east. Views are gained from the Te Mata Estate Winery to the southeast of the Site.
- 6.15 The adjoining properties to the south, including Shaggy Range and future residents within the CDL Arataki Extension land, gain close views into the Site. Views from the lower parts of Shaggy Range are largely filtered by the existing she-oak shelterbelt along the northern boundary of the property.
- 6.16 The viewing audience would therefore encompass the following groups:
- i) Residents within the rural lifestyle properties on the northern side of Brookvale Road
 - ii) Residents in the adjoining property to the south (Shaggy Range)
 - iii) Future residents in the CDL Arataki land to the west
 - iv) Residents and workers in the rural properties to the north and northeast
 - v) Workers and visitors to Te Mata Estate Winery to the southeast

² Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [p. 245]

- vi) Motorists and pedestrians travelling along Brookvale Road in the vicinity of the Site;
and
- vii) Distant viewers within parts of the wider surrounding area.

Visual Amenity Effects Analysis

- 6.17 The visual effects of the project have been assessed from locations within the visual catchment area which have potential for visual effects. This is achieved by using both descriptive and analytical means. The analysis from the surrounding area is representative of the potential views from the most affected surrounding properties and public areas.
- 6.18 A detailed assessment and analysis of potential visual effects has been undertaken. The following seven-point scale has been used to rate effects, based on the guidelines contained within the TTatM guidelines. The scale is a rating of magnitude, whereas an assessment of whether effects are minor (or less than or more than) is a reasoned consideration of the magnitude and importance (significance) of such effects in context³.

Very Low | Low | Low-Moderate | Moderate | Moderate-High | High | Very High



Figure 3: TTatM rating scale

- 6.19 In assessing the significance of effects, the assessment also considers the nature of effects in terms of whether this would be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in the context within which it occurs. Neutral effects can also result where the visual change is considered to be benign in the context of where it occurs.
- 6.20 The assessment has been undertaken in terms of the following criteria:
- i) Sensitivity and quality of the view – the relative quality and sensitivity of views into the Site, including landscape character and visual amenity values.
 - ii) Viewpoint | perceptual factors – the type and size of population exposed to views into the Site, the viewing distance to the Site, and other factors which indicate its sensitivity in terms of both viewing audience and the inherent exposure of the view towards the Site due to its physical character.
 - iii) Landscape amenity – the impact of future development on the wider surrounding landscape amenity.
 - iv) Landscape context – the degree to which future development would fit into the existing landscape context of the surrounding environs.
 - v) Visual intrusion | contrast – the intrusion into, or obstruction of views to landscape features in the locality and beyond and the impact upon key landscape elements and patterns.
 - vi) Mitigation potential – the extent to which any potential adverse effects of the development could be mitigated through integration into its surrounds by specific measures.

³ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, [6.40]

- 6.21 The visual effects of development enabled by the project have been assessed by reference to the following:

- Adjoining properties
- Surrounding road network
- Wider surrounding area

Refer to: **Annexure 2** – Viewpoint Location Map and Viewpoint Photographs

Adjoining properties

- 6.22 The adjoining properties to the Site will be most affected by future urban development enabled by the project. This will include the adjoining rural lifestyle properties to the southwest, the rural production properties to the north, Te Mata Estate Winery to the southeast, and the rural lifestyle and Arataki extension land to the west. Views towards parts of the Site however will be moderated, filtered or partially screened by the proposed riparian plantings along the northern stream, existing vegetation patterns within the surrounding properties, buildings and structures, and orientation of the view. Views towards the Site will initially be highly visible until the buffer planting and street tree plantings establish.
- 6.23 **Viewpoint 1** is taken from Brookvale Road looking in a south-easterly direction towards the Site. **Viewpoint 2** is taken from the northern side of the road looking in a south-easterly direction into the Site and **Viewpoint 3** from the vicinity of the northeastern boundary of the Site. The views are also indicative of potential views gained from the rural lifestyle properties on the northern side of Brookvale Road in the vicinity of the Site.
- 6.24 For the immediately adjoining properties, the existing outlook will change considerably from a relatively open rural scene characterised by horticultural and mixed use light-industrial activities, into a comprehensive urban view. Although this will constitute a distinctive change to the existing character and a loss of spaciousness, the quality nature of the future urban development and the proposed ecological enhancements and landscape initiatives will ensure that a suitable level of amenity is achieved.
- 6.25 From these close viewing locations, the full effects of change brought about by the project will be gradual as the land is retired from current its use and activities, modified, and staged built development extends across the landform. It is anticipated that the full progression from 'rural' to urban will logically take a number of years, in line with similar urban development occurring locally. This will reduce the impact of the change to some degree, due to the incremental nature of the changes and a general conditioning of the audience over time as urban development progresses.
- 6.26 The protection and enhancement of the main natural features within the Site, including the extensive riparian plantings along the streams, will provide a dense vegetated framework over time within which the future residential development will be viewed.
- 6.27 The lower elevation of the Site and the larger lots along the southern boundary of the Site will be similar in character and scale and provide an appropriate buffer to the consented Arataki residential settlement to the west. The vegetated open space corridor and proposed riparian plantings along the northern stream will provide a natural edge to the Site and a vegetated buffer (up to 40m in width) to the adjoining rural production properties to the north.
- 6.28 The 5m wide planted buffer along the boundary with Shaggy Range will provide a good level of screening, in addition to the existing shelterbelt extending along their northern boundary. The 15m wide planted buffer along the eastern boundary will provide a dense screen for the adjoining Te Mata Estate winery.

- 6.29 Development enabled by the project will inevitably change the visual amenity currently experienced for the surrounding properties. Overall, the adverse visual effects from the adjoining properties will be moderate initially reducing to low-moderate following the establishment of the landscape initiatives.

Surrounding road network

- 6.30 The Site's location adjoining Brookvale Road, results in a high level of exposure towards the Site. For road users, in particular those who live locally, the future development of the Site is likely to result in noticeable visual effects. **Viewpoint 4** is taken from Brookvale Road looking in an easterly direction towards the Site and **Viewpoints 5-7** are a series of views taken from the road looking in south-westerly directions.
- 6.31 For general road users, the effects are likely to be of much less significance as development enabled by the project will be seen as part of the wider pattern of land use change that has occurred in the past in Arataki. The proposed riparian and terrestrial buffer planting along the stream corridor on the northern side of the Site will provide a good visual break and densely vegetated buffer over time when viewed from northerly directions.
- 6.32 Although a large audience, the road users are unlikely to be particularly sensitive to future development, as they will have fleeting views of only portions of the Site whilst moving through a landscape, which already exhibits diverse characteristics in close proximity to Havelock North's residential environs and the mixed horticultural and light industrial activities within the Site itself. The sensitivity and the effects of development enabled by the project will also be reduced further by the fact that development will be gradual and staged over a number of years and will be buffered by the riparian and terrestrial planting of the streams throughout the Site and proposed street tree plantings.
- 6.33 Overall, the adverse visual effects from the surrounding road network will be low.

Wider surrounding area

- 6.34 Distant views towards parts of the Site will potentially be gained from parts of the wider surrounding area. **Viewpoint 8** is taken from the entrance to Te Mata Estate Winery at 337 Te Mata Road looking in a north-westerly direction towards the Site.
- 6.35 Where visible from the surrounding area, views of development enabled by the project will be highly variable due to distance, orientation of the view, diversity of elements within the view and screening elements (buildings, landform, shelterbelts, and prevailing vegetation patterns). While a noticeable level of built form will be introduced into the landscape, it will be viewed in the context of the surrounding residential settlement pattern to the south within the Arataki residential area.
- 6.36 Development enabled by the project will integrate sensitively into the rural landscape due to the scale of the project relative to the Site context, appearance and visual compatibility with existing built development within the Arataki Road environs and the proposed mitigation planting. Any potential adverse visual effects of the project will be localised and will have minor implications on the quality, character, and aesthetic values of the surrounding area.
- 6.37 While development enabled by the project will be visible from parts of the wider surrounding area, I consider that the adverse visual effects will be low to very low and entirely acceptable within the context of the existing Havelock North environment.

Council Reserve Strip

- 6.38 The works to be undertaken in the adjacent 10m wide Council Reserve Strip along the western boundary, including removal of the mature eucalyptus trees, construction of some retaining walls, and battering the slope will initially result in low-moderate adverse visual amenity

effects. The proposed revegetation planting with indigenous tree and shrub species will enhance the visual amenity values of the site and adjoining properties to the west.

Construction effects

- 6.39 Construction effects are temporary in duration with the most noticeable changes and resultant effects on visual amenity arising from earthworks associated with the stream diversion; construction of the wetlands, stormwater devices and detention basin; roading and associated infrastructure. The construction stage includes impacts on the physical landscape, including vegetation removal and landform modification, and visual amenity from public and private locations. Due to the nature and scale of the works and the level of change it will bring to the existing landscape, the visual effects will generally be high during and immediately following construction. Earthworks within a rural environment are not out of context with ploughed land, open fields and disturbed earth being characteristic of the environs.
- 6.40 Overall, there will be low adverse construction effects given:
- i) The temporary nature of the construction works; and
 - ii) The context of, and the proximity to the existing Havelock North urban landscape.

Cumulative effects

- 6.41 Cumulative effects come into play in circumstances where an additional effect takes a landscape beyond a 'tipping point' which would normally require a benchmark against which the effects are to be measured. Such benchmarks might include the character envisaged in the district plan or the 'capacity' of a landscape to accommodate development before compromising its landscape values (its valued attributes).⁴
- 6.42 The cumulative effects of the project, in combination with the existing Havelock North settlement pattern, will not detract from the landscape values of the surrounding area. The development will be viewed as a logical extension to the existing Arataki urban area. Overall, I consider that in the context of the established rural and urban environment, development enabled by the project could be implemented without adversely affecting the landscape values, visual amenity, and character of the surrounding area.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposed urbanisation of the Site resulting from development enabled by the project will significantly change its current open and rural landscape character. The development will however be suitable due to its proximity to the existing and consented Arataki Road urban area, will provide a choice of living opportunities, and represents an efficient, compact and comprehensive urban outcome.
- 7.2 Although parts of the subject Site are in pasture and horticulture interspersed and demarcated with shelterbelts and specimen tree plantings, its semi-rural character is lessened to a degree by the existing land uses including the original Te Mata Mushrooms facility, construction storage yards, office space, staff amenities, light industrial activities, warehousing, accessways and drives, in close proximity to the Arataki Road urban area to the west. The Site has limited productive land and is a highly modified Site with relatively low landscape values. In light of these considerations, the Site is well suited to the type of urban development proposed.
- 7.3 The proposed urbanisation of the land will inevitably result in the transformation of the Site from a fringe rural area to one with urban residential characteristics. This will have implications on the surrounding rural land, with the urban development impacting on the 'rural' quality of this area. Nevertheless, this is a landscape in transition and the project will result in a

⁴ Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, 6.46 [p. 155]

comprehensively planned urban development adjacent to the existing and consented urban area.

- 7.4 While there will be a loss of existing rural landscape character, the key methods of mitigating for this loss are to retain and enhance where possible existing landscape features and create a quality urban development. Although development enabled by the project will result in the loss of existing rural characteristics there are number of positive landscape outcomes associated with the development including:
- i) enhancement of the streams including noxious weed removal, stream protection, riparian planting and ecological and walkway connections
 - ii) the vegetated open space corridor along the northern stream providing a natural edge to the Site, a strong defensible boundary to the adjoining rural area, and recreational opportunities for the community
 - iii) buffer planting to the adjoining rural production area to the north, east and southeast between 15m and 45m in width
 - iv) buffer planting to the adjacent rural lifestyle property to the southwest (Shaggy Range); and
 - v) lower density development along the consented Arataki Extension interface.
- 7.5 Because the project will urbanise the Site, the design response has focused on accepting that change and creating a quality residential environment, supported by well-designed and accepted urban design principles. The project does not seek to screen the development or rely on significant buffers to avoid the anticipated change in character or respond to the rural interface. Instead, it provides for a quality residential development with a high level of amenity, albeit an urban amenity, together with landscaped buffers at the rural interface to assist in mitigating potential reverse sensitivity effects.
- 7.6 Development enabled by the project will initially generate landscape and visual effects of some significance. These however are inevitable with urban development at the start of a process of urbanisation. In addition, the landscape character and visual effects of the development of the Site apparent from the early stages will decrease over time as the riparian plantings, street tree plantings and landscape plantings typically associated with the urbanisation of an area become established.
- 7.7 The 40m wide vegetated corridor along the northern stream and the 15m wide buffer along the eastern boundary will provide natural edges and strong boundaries to the adjoining rural areas. The 5m wide planted buffer along the southern boundary with Shaggy Range will help screen and soften the transition to the adjoining property.
- 7.8 In my opinion, development enabled by the project represents a positive and efficient transformation of environmental management and enhancement, landscape character, and physical/visual amenity of the existing environment, including the Site and its contextual setting.
- 7.9 In my opinion the Site represents an appropriate and logical extension to the future development of the Havelock North community and should, from a landscape character and visual amenity perspective, deliver a form of residential growth sensitive to the location.
- 7.10 The Brookvale Green project will fulfil the need for residential and urban intensification and provide an opportunity for an innovative and environmentally sustainable urban development. I consider that in the context of the established environment the project can be accommodated with low adverse effects on the landscape values, landscape character and visual amenity values of the Site and surrounding Havelock North environment in the medium to long term.

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Annexure 1: Site photographs







Annexure 2: Viewpoint Location Map and Viewpoint Photographs





Viewpoint 1: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 2: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 3: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 4: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 5: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 6: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 7: Brookvale Road



Viewpoint 8: 337 Te Mata Road – Te Mata Estate Winery

Annexure 3: Landscape Development Plans