

Assessment of Landscape Effects

WAIKATO THOROUGHBRED RACING

WAIKATO RACING HUB

CAMBRIDGE

Rev 05 - FOR REFERRAL

April 2026

Information and Quality Control

Prepared for	Design Group Stapleton Elliott Ltd (DGSE Ltd)
Document Name	Assessment of Landscape Effects - WTR Waikato Racing Hub
SLR File Path	OneDrive - SLR Consulting\Design\ 810.032146.00001 WT Racing Hub\4. Working Docs\IND
Report Author	**Nigel Parker** Technical Director, Registered Landscape Architect
Reviewer	**Melissa Davis** Technical Discipline Manager Registered Landscape Architect
Approved for Release	**Melissa Davis** Technical Discipline Manager Registered Landscape Architect

[redacted]

Document Version	Date	For	Author	Reviewer
Rev 01 DRAFT	31/03/2026	DGSE Ltd	Nigel Parker	
Rev 02 - Referral	07/04/2026	DGSE Ltd	Nigel Parker	
Rev 03 - Referral	16/04/2026	DGSE Ltd	Nigel Parker	
Rev 04 - Referral	17/04/2026	DGSE Ltd	Nigel Parker	
Rev 05 - Referral	17/04/2026	DGSE Ltd	Nigel Parker	

Prepared By:

SLR Consulting NZ

201 Victoria Street West

Auckland Central | Tāmaki Makaurau

+64 9 303 0311

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Assessment of Landscape Effects has been prepared by SLR Consulting Limited for Design Group Stapleton Elliot Ltd (DGSE Ltd) on behalf of Waikato Thoroughbred Racing.

Waikato Thoroughbred Racing propose to construct a greenfield Racing Hub designed for horse training, racing and other equine related activities. They also propose a senior living development and rural residential housing. The proposed location aims to bring together the expertise and services of the Waikato racing fraternity in a centralised and local place.

Specifically, the proposal is to construct three racecourses (one thoroughbred racecourse, one harness racetrack and one training track). The proposal also includes a training zone, bloodstock and stabling facilities, an events centre, commercial village centre, senior living development, rural residential housing (all with maxium two storey height) and landscape works that consider rural and future amenity and interface with the surrounding roads.

The development is proposed to a rural section located between Pencarrow, Hooker and Duncan Roads, Tamahere / Cambridge. The combined site has an approximate size of 1.25 x 1.5kms or 164ha. The site is located on flat rural land approximately 8km to the west of Cambridge.

This report forms part of the documentation prepared for a referral application to the Fast Track process.

1.1 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this report is to assess the actual and potential landscape and visual effects of the proposal on the character and values of the local landscape.

The scope of the assessment is underpinned by the methodology provided in Section 1.2 below, where it describes:

i) how the report is shaped by established professional guidance, and

ii) the key activities and processes that have been undertaken.

The relevant policy context described in Section 1.3 has also shaped the assessment of landscape effects and the conclusions provided focus on aspects of landscape, amenity and visual effect.

1.2 Methodology

The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA), Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines (July 2022) provide the technical backdrop to this landscape assessment. The guidelines are recognised within the landscape architectural profession as providing good practice guidance in the assessment of landscape effects under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

> *"The Guidelines adopt a principles-based approach to methodology that allows for assessment methods to be tailored to each situation. They emphasise transparency and reason, rather than adherence to prescriptive methods."* [1]

The principals-based approach presented in the Guideline, includes several key tenets to landscape assessment within New Zealand.

Firstly, the guideline emphasises the need for the scope and method of assessment be tailored to:

- The nature of the proposal and associated degree of change in the landscape,
- The relevant landscape setting, and
- Associated policy framework.

In this instance, the proposal is for a greenfield Racing Hub, Senior Living Development and rural residential housing (all with maxium two storey height) on a rural block 8km west of Cambridge. The site is currently privately owned and used for grazing and crops.

The site is visible from adjacent properties to the west, south and east. To the north it is visible from State Highway 1. The area is generally flat with some areas of minor elevation to the west and south. Consequently views of the site are contained to adjacent properties. The development will overall maintain open space. Built form will be set back from boundaries and extensive tree planting will enable the proposal to be contextualised into the surrounding landscape from all viewpoints. An existing stand of kahikatea trees will be retained and subject to rehabilitation on site as will some modified sites of archaeological interest.

The immediate surrounds include State Highway 1 to the north, countryside living lifestyle blocks and dwellings to lengths of the boundary to the west, south and east as well as rural farm land. Adjacent to the north east corner of the site is the Tamahere Hospital and Healing Centre.

The site is zoned General Rural Zone and has Waikato Regional Airport Limited and NZTA designations noted in the Waikato District Plan.

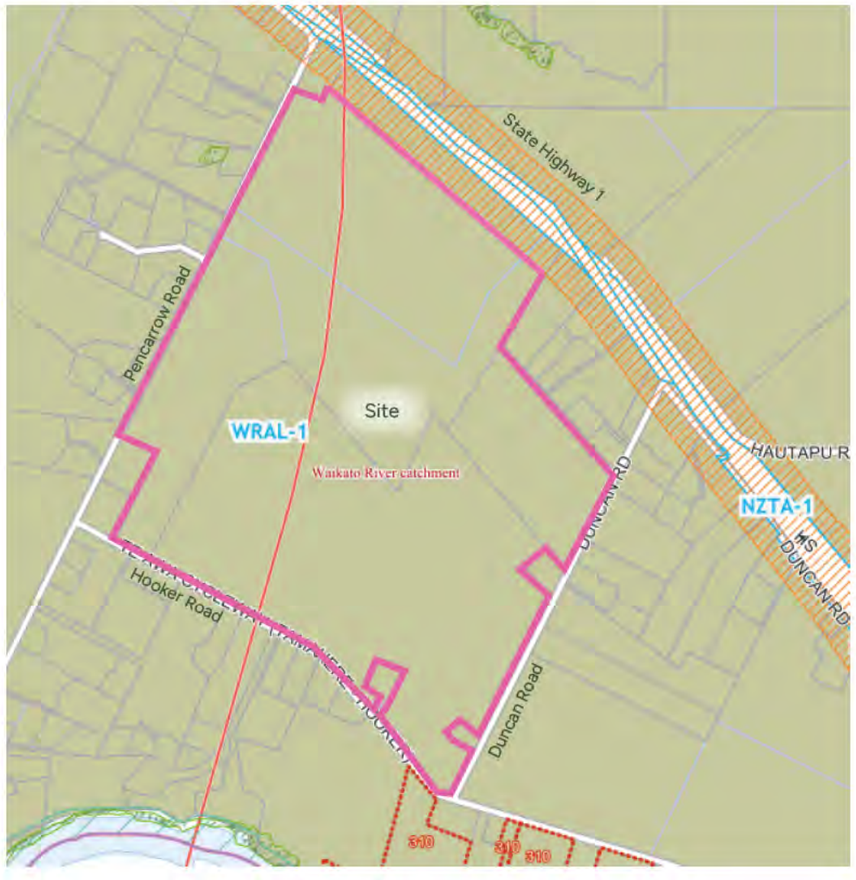


FIG 01: Waikato District Plan, Operative in Part, Waikato District Council

[1] Para 1.04, Page 22. The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA), Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines. July, 2022.

Secondly, the guideline presents three overlapping dimensions in the conceptualisation of the landscape, consisting of:

- **Physical:** the physical environment - its collective natural and built elements, patterns and processes;
- **Perceptual:** how we perceive and experience places, including views and visual qualities;
- **Associative:** the meanings and values we associate with places;

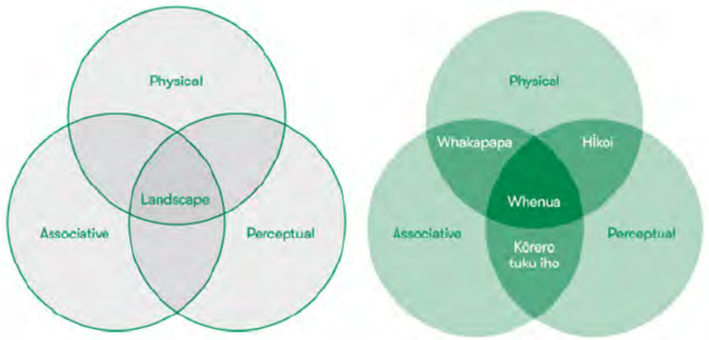


FIG 03: Landscape Conceptualised as the Intersection of Three Overlapping Dimensions. Source: NZILA Guidelines p72

'Landscape' is a term that describes an integrated whole. It is the combination of all attributes and phenomena that manifest in a particular place. In assessment terminology, 'landscape' encompasses or includes the likes of local and natural character, visual effects and public amenity.

Thirdly, and central to the overall process of landscape assessment (in general and specific to this assessment) is the notion that "to assess a landscape is to assess its character and values". In summary:

> *"While landscape assessment methods vary, they are all based on landscape character and values. Character is an expression of the landscape's collective attributes. Values are the reasons a landscape is valued. Values, though, are embodied in attributes. Effects are consequences for a landscape's values resulting from changes to attributes. The landscape's values are managed through managing such attributes."* [2]

In responding to the core tenets of the guideline described above, the following process / method has been applied.

1.2.1 Initial Desktop Analysis.

Following an initial project briefing by the project architect in March 2025 the following desktop analysis was undertaken:

- A desktop review of aerials, mapped overlays and site characteristics,
- Review of project technical drawings.
- Consideration of relevant planning provisions, including:
  - i) Waikato District Plan, Operative in Part

1.2.2 Initial Site Visit.

A site walkover was undertaken on 18th February 2026 to appraise the selected site. An inspection of the surrounding landscape was also conducted.

Landscape factors considered on these site visits included:

i) Character and value of the existing landscape including extent of vegetation, notable trees, built form, streetscape interface, public access and wider surrounds of the site including neighbouring properties.

ii) The extent to which and from where the proposal will be seen.

iii) The identification of potential viewing audiences, their type and locations.

iv) Identification that some viewpoints are from private properties and that typical representative viewpoints would be required for key audiences where landowner consent was not attained or where views would be substantially the same as surrounding properties or public viewpoints.

v) Preliminary consideration of the need for and type of planting to initially avoid and subsequently mitigate potential landscape effects.

1.2.3 Post Site Visit Design Process

Subsequent discussions with the architect and the wider design team included:

i) Technical and operational constraints, opportunities, and risks in the context of intended planning and project outcomes.

ii) Site design progression based on preliminary landscape and visual effect analysis and evolving operational constraints.

iii) Proposals for planting as an integral part of the development to initially enhance the site and provide good amenity but also to avoid, and subsequently mitigate landscape effects.

1.2.4 Description of the Existing Landscape

Following the site visit a description of the existing rural landscape was prepared (see Section 3). It responds to the key NZILA guideline tenets identified above, specifically:

i) **Physical Attributes** – human factors like, buildings (residential and working buildings), fence lines, power poles roads and pedestrian and cycle paths. Also included are natural attributes, which on this site and local landscape include individual trees - native and exotic, hedges, pasture and crops. In short, all of the 'things' that exist within the landscape. The physical attributes for this site are discussed in Section 3.1.

ii) **Perceptual Attributes** – both direct sensory experience and broader interpretation through the senses. Perhaps most simply described as the 'user experience' of being in and moving through the landscape. Views are the most identifiable aspect of the perceptual landscape and for this landscape in particular, but other sensory aspects include connection and ambient noise such as traffic and animal noise. The Perceptual attributes for this site are discussed in Section 3.2.

iii) **Associative Attributes** – intangible elements that influence and that manifest as meaning – such as history, identity, customs, laws, narratives and activities specifically associated with the qualities of the landscape. In terms of this particular site, the cultural significance to local iwi and hapu of the borrow archaeological sites and general ongoing associations with rural

[2] Para 5.01, Page 105. Ibid.

activity.

A summary statement, taking together all the existing attributes and identifying the overall landscape and natural character is provided, alongside the identification of those values that form the basis for the subsequent assessment of landscape effects.

Other technical assessments prepared to support the AEE were relied on, namely architectural and landscape architectural drawings as well as engineering information for lighting and civil design.

1.2.5 Assessment of Landscape Effects

A description of the nature and magnitude of change to existing landscape attributes and natural character is provided (see Section 4). This establishes a link between the proposal and the resulting changes that will likely occur in the landscape. It is worth noting that change in and of itself is not an effect, but rather the implications of that change on a particular landscape value that forms the basis for the assessment of effects.

An assessment of the effects on the identified landscape values of the site and relevant surrounding landscape has been undertaken. Chapter 6 of the NZILA guidelines describes the key considerations of an assessment of landscape effects and these have been incorporated in preparing this report.

Assessing effects on physical, associative and perceptual landscape dimensions is based on desktop research and on-site observations. The determination on the extent of visual audience was achieved by visiting surrounding areas and looking back at the site.

The assessment recognises the policy direction described in Section 1.3 below.

The short and mid term effects of construction are also considered and addressed.

Proposed landscape planting is integral to the project. Assessment and conclusions are based on the successful implementation of mitigation and amenity enhancement planting and their growth over time. A description of proposed landscape planting and design is provided in Section 2.

Consistent with the NZILA guidelines, a seven-point scale has been adopted in assessing landscape effects (including visual). This scale is included in **Appendix A** for reference. It is accompanied by an associated scale to assist decision makers determine whether effects are minor or otherwise.

1.3 Policy Context

The proposal is assessed as a Non-Complying activity under the Waikato District Plan, Operative in Part, with subdivision listed as a Prohibited activity.

The proposal is located within the General Rural Zone and has Waikato Regional Airport Limited and NZTA designations noted in the Waikato District Plan. The site is not an Outstanding Natural Landscape.

1.3.1 Statutory Context Summary

Landscape relevant objectives and policies of the General Rural zone seek to maintain the rural character, amenity and landscape values of an area. They seek to protect the productive values of high class soils and maintain or enhance valued landscape features. Policies state that subdivision and land use should not fragment productive land but recognises that amenity values, natural and physical resources vary across rural areas. Policies acknowledge that rural buildings are part of the amenity values of the rural landscape and are necessary components of rural industries. Rural industries are to be provided for as long as their scale and built form maintains rural character and amenity for neighbouring sites. It also allows for recreational activities providing these are in keeping with the rural character and amenity values of an area.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Proposal Overview

Waikato Thoroughbred Racing propose to construct a greenfield Racing Hub to provide a centralised activity and focal point for the Waikato racing industry. The Racing Hub is proposed to a rural section located between Pencarrow, Hooker and Duncan Roads, Tamahere / Cambridge. The combined site has an approximate size of 1.25 x 1.5kms or 164ha. The site is located on flat rural land approximately 8km to the west of Cambridge.

Specifically, the proposal is to construct three racecourses (one thoroughbred racecourse, one harness racetrack and one training track). In addition the proposal includes a training zone, bloodstock and stabling facilities, an events centre, commercial village centre, senior living development, rural residential housing and landscape works that consider rural and future amenity and interface with the surrounding properties and roads.

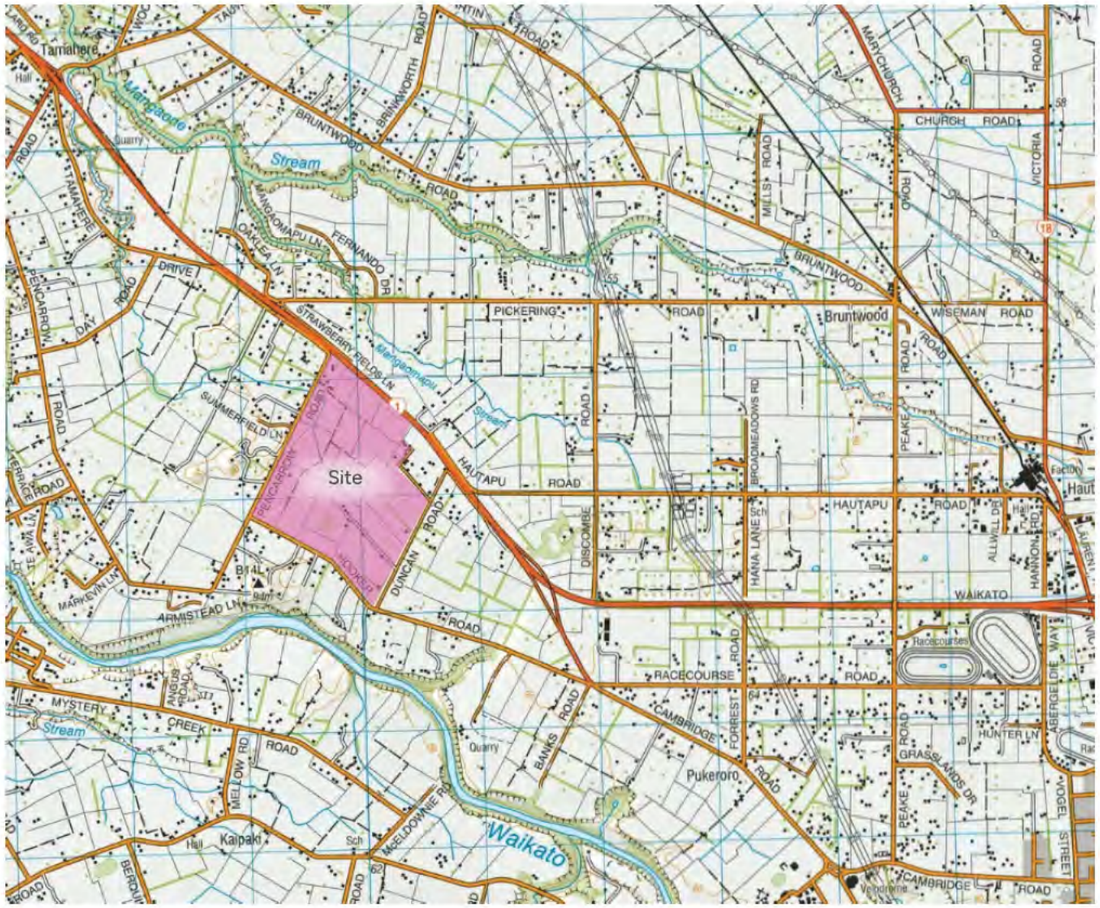


FIG 04: Site Location

2.2 Site Suitability

Following a due diligence process to determine suitability and technical feasibility the proposed site was selected. It was identified as an appropriate site due to its size, predominantly flat terrain and proximity to State Highway 1 and to existing racing / equine establishments and expertise around Cambridge.

2.3 Approach to Site Design

The development of the proposed layout has been designed to provide the desired function whilst avoiding or mitigating landscape effects. The design response has sought to achieve this by concentrating built form to the south east corner of the site in an area of the existing rural landscape where built form is already present.

The event centre has been located to enable views of the proposed racecourses but is also set back from all boundaries by at least 200m to minimise landscape effects. While smaller scale stables and bloodstock buildings are arranged around the periphery of the site.

Pedestrian and vehicular movements to and throughout the site have been considered for functionality and maintenance of good amenity.

Specific elements of the landscape design response include:

- Approximately min. 25m set back of built form from all boundaries;
- Location of built form to minimise landscape effect and maximise assimilation into the existing rural landscape;
- Providing landscape boundary treatments including timber post and rail fencing stained black, hedging and semi - mature large tree species;
- Retention and rehabilitation of a significant stand of *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*, kahikatea native trees near the centre of the site;
- Covenanting an area of modified archaeological borrow pits in line with the recommendations of the project archaeologist;
- Amenity planting throughout the proposed site including a ceremonial double avenue of semi-mature trees from the proposed main entrance to the event centre;
- Planting of swales and attenuation ponds with native species to improve biodiversity on site and water quality run off.

2.4 Proposed Elements and Works

Refer Figs. 05 & 06. The proposal consists of:

- **Racecourses**
  Three racecourses (one thoroughbred racecourse, one harness racetrack and one training track). are proposed across the site and a trainers track / zone. These are located toward the north and west of the site. It is proposed that there will be a main course - the thoroughbred racecourse, secondary course to the north - the training track and the harness racing track to the south. The infield of the courses and training zone will be grassed. The surfacing materials of the tracks has yet to be defined but may be grass or alternative soft medium such as an engineered sand

or soil. An ambulance track will be allowed for around the courses. White running rails will be installed. The surrounds of the finishing posts to the harness track and main course will likely have sponsorship billboards. The three racecourses will be lit with between 6 - 8 lighting masts with heights varying between 18 - 30m height.

- **Earthworks**
  Undertaken to level the site and enable the installation of racecourses, roads, foundations, attenuation ponds, drainage and swales.
- **Roading**
  Roads and carparking are proposed across the site. Sealed road sections will be kept to a minimum and will be approximately 7m wide. They will be drained by swales and lined with trees. A ceremonial driveway is proposed from Hooker Road in the south to the Event Centre building. Approximately 2000 car parks will be accommodated on the site. Some carparking areas will be sealed with asphalt others (anticipated to be used less frequently) will remain as grass. Areas to park and load horse floats will also be provided near the stables and racecourses.
- **Stables, Bloodstock Auction Buildings and Yards**
  Approximately 30 stable buildings and 10 bloodstock auction buildings are proposed to be constructed on site. The bloodstock auction buildings will be located in the south west. The stables will be located along the north eastern and eastern boundaries. The buildings will have a rural character and will likely be:
  i) single storey approximately 7m height;
  ii) of timber construction;
  iii) have recessive colours to all façades;
  iv) have hipped or gabled roofs.
- **Event Centre Building and Village Centre**
  The Event Centre building is located toward the west and centre of the site between the main racecourse and harness course. It will provide space for viewing horse races, conferences, evening gatherings and operational facilities.
  The building is in early development but is proposed to have extensive glazed façades. The materials pallet will include concrete and timber. The roof is proposed to have a low pitch, potentially mono plan, with deep eaves to provide shade. A localised crow's nest will be constructed on a second floor to provide uninterrupted views and enable the horse races to be called. The building is proposed to be approximately 100 x 25 x 9m (l x w x h).
  A Village Centre is proposed consisting of four (4) commercial buildings along the main entrance drive. These will provide space for activities such as office work, shops for equine equipment and for food and beverage outlets. The buildings will be single storey approximately 4 x 10m (l x w), be of recessive, neutral or natural colours and be built of similar materials to the Events Centre.
- **Senior Living Development**
  This will be located to the south east of the site and will consist of a central community building, approximately eighty (80) stand alone villas and two hundered (200) attached units. All buildings will be single storey and include hipped or gabled roofs. Buildings will be of recessive, neutral or natural colours. Units are proposed to be approximately 150sqm and arranged as stand alone or semi-detached dwellings, surrounded by approximately 300sqm of open space. The community building will be larger approximately 500sqm. The development is proposed to be accessed via a single access point on Hooker Road. The development will have an open character without internal fences. It will include amenity planting and trees to screen and contextualise built form.
- **Rural Residential Housing**
  Lifestyle blocks for residential dwellings are proposed to the south east of the site adjacent to the Duncan Road boundary. Approximately 40 sites are proposed with lots ranging from approximately 2,500 - 4,500sqm. It is intended that residential dwellings will be constructed on each of the lots with sizes ranging from approximately 150 - 450sqm. It is proposed design conditions will be enforced on future lot developments that indicatively include:
  i) minimum 30m off sets from boundaries external to the existing site;
  ii) maximum building heights of 9m;
  iii) maximum building size of 450sqm;
  iv) buildings will be of recessive, neutral or natural colours.

The lifestyle blocks are proposed to be accessed via a single access point on Duncan Road. Lots will be serviced by a tree lined loop road proposed to be vested with council. Detailed planting plans, including trees will be developed for front yards of each lot and included within the substantive submission.



FIG 05: Artistic Impression - Indicative Aerial Overview of Proposed Racing Hub Development. Prepared by Cox Architecture

2.5 Proposed Landscape Design

The proposed landscape design will provide a vegetative context for the proposal. As far as operationally practical, the design has introduced planting to address the balance between built and natural elements, screen and obscure views from outside the site, provide amenity for future use and reduce the perceived scale of the development in the local landscape context. It has also sought to retain and enhance the existing stand of kahikatea to the centre of the site.

The following have been proposed as part of the landscape response to the site:

- **Trees Retained**
  Dacrycarpus dacrydioides, kahikatea native trees occupying approximately 30,000sqm near the centre of the site are to be retained, with additional native tree species to be planted along side to increase this landscape feature.
- **Vegetation Removal**

Approximately fifty (50) existing mature exotic trees will be removed from site. Exotic hedgerows located mid site and to the boundaries are also proposed to be removed. As detailed design progresses opportunities to retain or transplant some of the recently planted semi-mature trees to the boundary will be explored.

- **Boundary and Amenity Tree Planting**
  The landscape design proposes the installation of approximately two thousand (2,000) semi-mature species across the site. The majority of these trees will be exotic but substantial numbers of native trees will be included. Trees are proposed to be planted to boundaries, to the main ceremonial entrance drive in a double avenue and to the surrounds of proposed built form.
- **Amenity Garden Bed, Hedging, Swale and Attenuation Pond Planting**
  The proposed trees will be supplemented by approximately eight thousand (8,000) plants installed for amenity, boundary hedging and to the swales and attenuation pond edges. Species will be predominantly native but may include exotic species.
- **Racing Hub Entrance**
  The main entrance to the racing hub will include feature walls and a central driveway between two water bodies. The entrance will include signage to the walls which will likely be lit. Gates will likely be installed. It is intended that the entrance will be an attractive landscape feature and will act as a threshold to the ceremonial driveway.
- **Boundary Treatment**
  A timber rail and post fence, stained black and approximately 1.2m high is proposed to the boundary of the site. This is considered an appropriate fence typology for the rural environment.

2.7 Construction Activities

The following section sets out an indicative construction methodology. The finalised construction methodology will be subject to confirmation by the appointed construction contractor and subject to a finalised Construction Management Plan.

Construction is currently proposed to start in 2032, subject to approval of regulatory consents and funding, with a phased construction period of eight (8) years for the full development. The core construction phase will be complete in three (3) years prior to opening. Completion of the project is proposed for the end of 2035. Parts of the site will likely become operational before all works are complete with practical completion staged. Works are proposed to be progressively completed north to south across the site. The Senior Living development and lifestyle blocks likely the last elements to be completed.

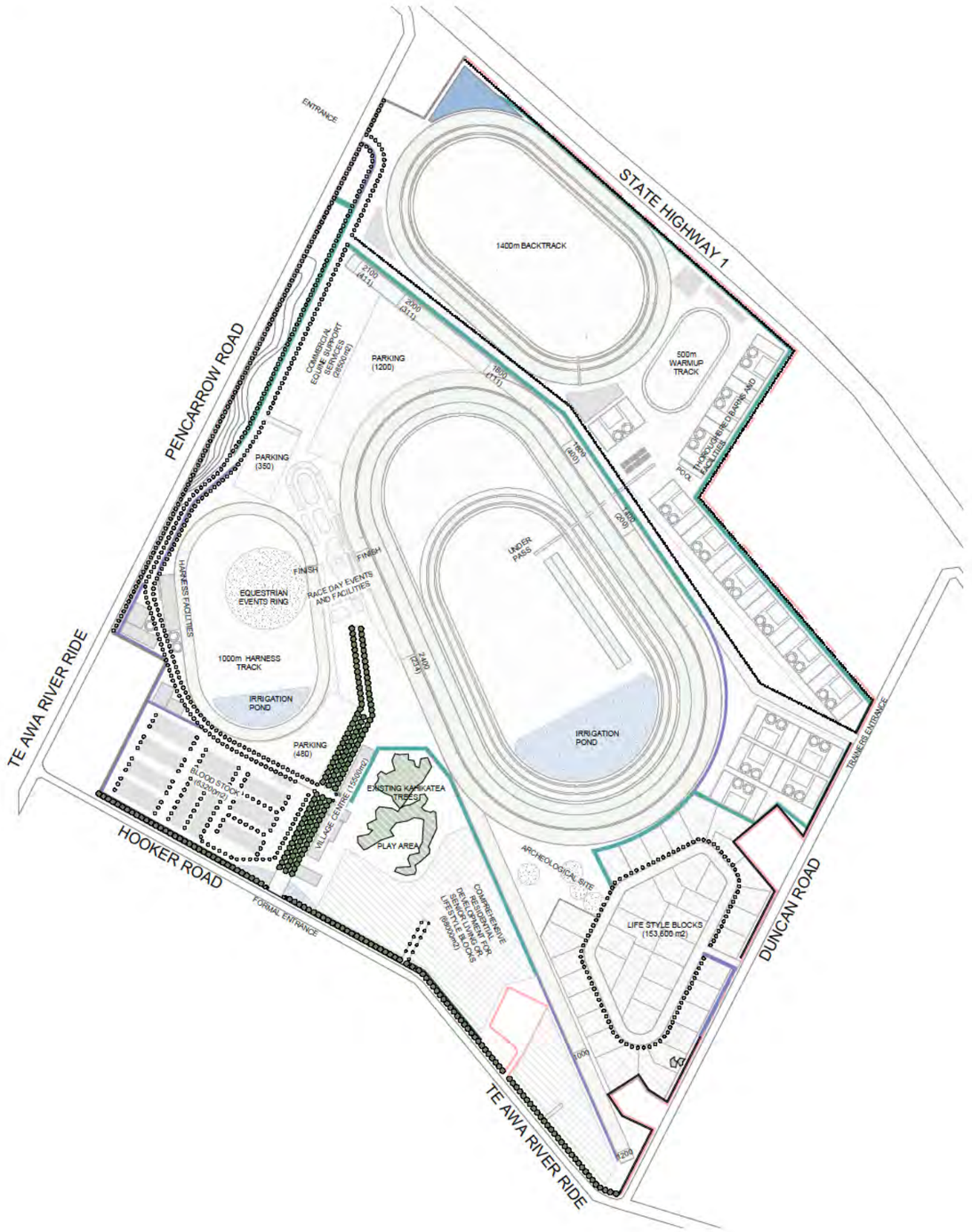
The works will generally follow the sequence set out below:

- Site establishment – Protection of trees for retention, demolition of any existing buildings, removal of vegetation, setting up environmental controls, construction of temporary site office, portable facilities and lay down yard;
- Site preparation – earthworks, excavation for detention ponds, ground improvement, and drainage;
- Boundary landscape treatments - fencing, hedging and trees;
- Site construction of race course related built form and ground finshes – foundations, structures, external cladding and installation of glazing concurrently with lighting, fencing and wearing courses of racetracks and equine facilities;
- Internal fit out of buildings, traffic works to internal roads and carparks including lighting, formal entrance to Hooker Road and amenity landscaping to the internal site;
- Progressive and staged practical completion and commissioning;
- Senior Living development and Lifestyle blocks being developed toward the end following a similar construction sequence.

2.7.1 Construction Compound and Laydown Area

A construction compound and lay down area is proposed within the development area toward the centre of the site. The compound and lay down area may be moved as construction of staged areas are completed but will never be closer than 30m from the site boundaries. The lay down area will include (but not be limited to) site offices, lunch rooms, ablution facilities, carparking, storage and workshops. The will be disestablished following construction completion.

LANDSCAPE - SITE PLAN



Landscape Site Plan

SCALE @ A3 -1 : 10000

- *Populus* 'Crows Nest' - upright poplar
- *Liriodendron tulipfera* - tulip tree
- *Platanus x acerifolia* - London plane tree
- *Prumnopitys taxifolia* - matai
- Hedge - Griselinia 'Ardmore Green'
- Existing Vegetation
- Rain Garden - 2.5m Wide
- Swale - 10m Wide
- Swale - 7m Wide
- Swale - 5m Wide

NOTE: Refer to Architectural Documentation for Racetrack and Facilities Locations.
Refer to Civil's Documentation for Swale Design.

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FIG 06: Proposed Site Layout and Landscape Plan

designgroup stapleton elliott

3.0 EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The following section describes the physical, perceptual and associative aspects of the site and local landscape. A summary of the landscape character and values of the site is provided.

3.1 Physical Aspects

3.1.1 The Site

The site is located on a rural section between Pencarrow, Hooker and Duncan Roads, Cambridge. The site share's its northern boundary with State Highway 1 (SH1). The combined site has an approximate size of 1.25 x 1.5kms or 164ha. The site is located on flat rural land approximately 8km to the west of Cambridge.

It is a working farm, and is used for both cropping and dairy. Landcare Research, Manaaki Whenua records the soils of the site as Land Use Category (LUC) 1, LUC 2 and LUC4. The site is predominantly LUC2 with the southern third of the site LUC1 and a smaller section to the west being recorded as LUC4.

The site is predominantly covered in pasture and is largely flat. Paddocks to the north east are currently cropped and are covered with maize. The site is divided by stock fences and in places hedgerows into a series of individual fields and paddocks. Gravel and mud farm tracks run down fence lines to service and provide access to paddocks. Artificial drains are located along some of the fence lines and to the north eastern boundary. A farm dam approximately 40 x 20m is located to the north west of the site. Miscellaneous small elements are scattered at distance across the fields of the site. These include small shelters for animals, water troughs and hay bales.

Larger built form is also present on the site. To the centre of the site can be found a stock yard with three associated barns and a large white shed / shelter. Another stock yard is located to the north western corner of the site. This includes two smaller barns, a large grey barn, a milking shed and silage store. Two further hay barns are located to the south west of the site near Pencarrow Road. Three residential dwellings (farm houses) are located on the site, two near the centre / east of the site and one in the north west corner. All dwellings are single storey, white with hipped or gabled roofs. Farm machinery, grain towers and farm vehicles such as utes and quad bikes are also on the site.

Trees and hedgerows are present on the site. A stand of mature *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*, kahikatea are present in the centre of the site and cover an area of approximately 30,000sqm. There are approximately fifty (50) individual mature exotic trees scattered across the site. Most of these are concentrated toward the south and east of the site. There are very few trees in the north western corner of the site. Additionally there are further mature and semi-mature exotic trees to the southern and eastern boundaries. Exotic hedgerows also line localised sections of the southern and eastern boundaries.

3.1.2 Immediate and Wider Surrounds

Like the site, the terrain in the immediate and wider area is predominantly flat with a relative level of approximately 40m above sea level. Localised low hills rise up to the west and south. To the west the terrain rises to a height of approximately 60m and to the south to a height of approximately 94m.

The Te Awa River Ride shared cycle path runs along the length of the western and southern boundaries. It is an approximate 3m wide separated concrete path set alongside the local roads. The roads are two lane sealed country roads.

Land use to the immediate surrounds is a combination of pastoral farming and low density countryside living. The landscape has a rural character.

A number of large lot residential properties surround the site. Curtilage planting to these properties includes established large parkland trees up to thirty (30)m high, ornamental gardens and ornamental small scale trees. Boundary treatments include open fencing and maintained hedging up to heights of approximately 2.5m. Dwellings on the properties are generally large stand alone houses of one to two storeys. The majority have hipped or gabled roofs and have a maximum overall height of 9m.

To the immediate north, the site is adjacent to SH1. While the rural landscape continues north for considerable distance the approximately 50m wide road reserve and constant traffic physically separate the site from this northern rural landscape. Established mature trees and shelter belts to the north of SH1 visually separate the site and further divide the site from the northern rural landscape.

The Waikato River is located approximately 250 - 450m to the south of the site's southern boundary depending on bends within the river. Whilst the site is within the Waikato River Overlay, the river has little to no evident physical influence over the site's landscape. No natural tributaries run directly from the site to the river and there is limited to no riparian planting present on site. It is separated from the river by multiple rural properties and intervening vegetation.

3.2 Perceptual Aspects

3.2.1 The Site, Immediate and Wider Surrounds

The site and surrounds are part of a coherent rural landscape that stretches across much of the Waikato region. The perception of this landscape is of an expansive and vegetated terrain - flat fields of pasture with low localised hills providing interest.

There are numerous mature trees spread across the landscape. Trees are planted in groupings and as individual specimens. They are a constant and dominant presence within the landscape and are in the background of all views in the area. In places hedgerows are planted to property boundaries and these provide localised enclosure and a 'country lane' type scale to the surrounding roads.

The site is located to the south of Hamilton and west of Cambridge, as such the landscape does not feel isolated. Within a five minute drive west of the site low density housing can be found at the Tamahere Country Club. Built form and infrastructural elements are present and noticeable to the immediate surrounds but their scale in the landscape does not dominate due to distance between built form and the presence of hedgerows, windbreaks and trees to visually separate elements. Built form and infrastructure elements add to the visual complexity of the landscape and provide subtle differences in rural character across the site.

The north is more influenced by the presence of SH1 and the constant traffic noise whereas the south and east have a more gentrified character felt through the presence of adjacent large dwellings, established trees and well-maintained gardens. The built form on the western half of the site is more run down and there are mounds of debris and silage stores that give a more utilitarian atmosphere to the site. The presence of agricultural elements such as hay bales, milking sheds and farm bikes across the site and wider surrounds unify the wider area and reveal it as a working landscape.

Overall the landscape is picturesque. An impression of a vegetated environment is obtained through the dominant elements of pastoral fields and trees into which built elements are scattered.

3.2.2 Visual Catchment

The site itself is privately owned and access is limited to the owners and farm workers. Experiences of the site for the general public are from the roadside boundaries. For the most part the public view of the site is transitory, experienced travelling along rural roads by vehicles at speed, on foot or by

bicycle along the shared path that runs adjacent to the western and southern boundaries. There are open views of the site from SH1 but these will be momentarily glimpsed as part of a longer journey. Views from farm properties north of SH1 are predominantly blocked by established trees.

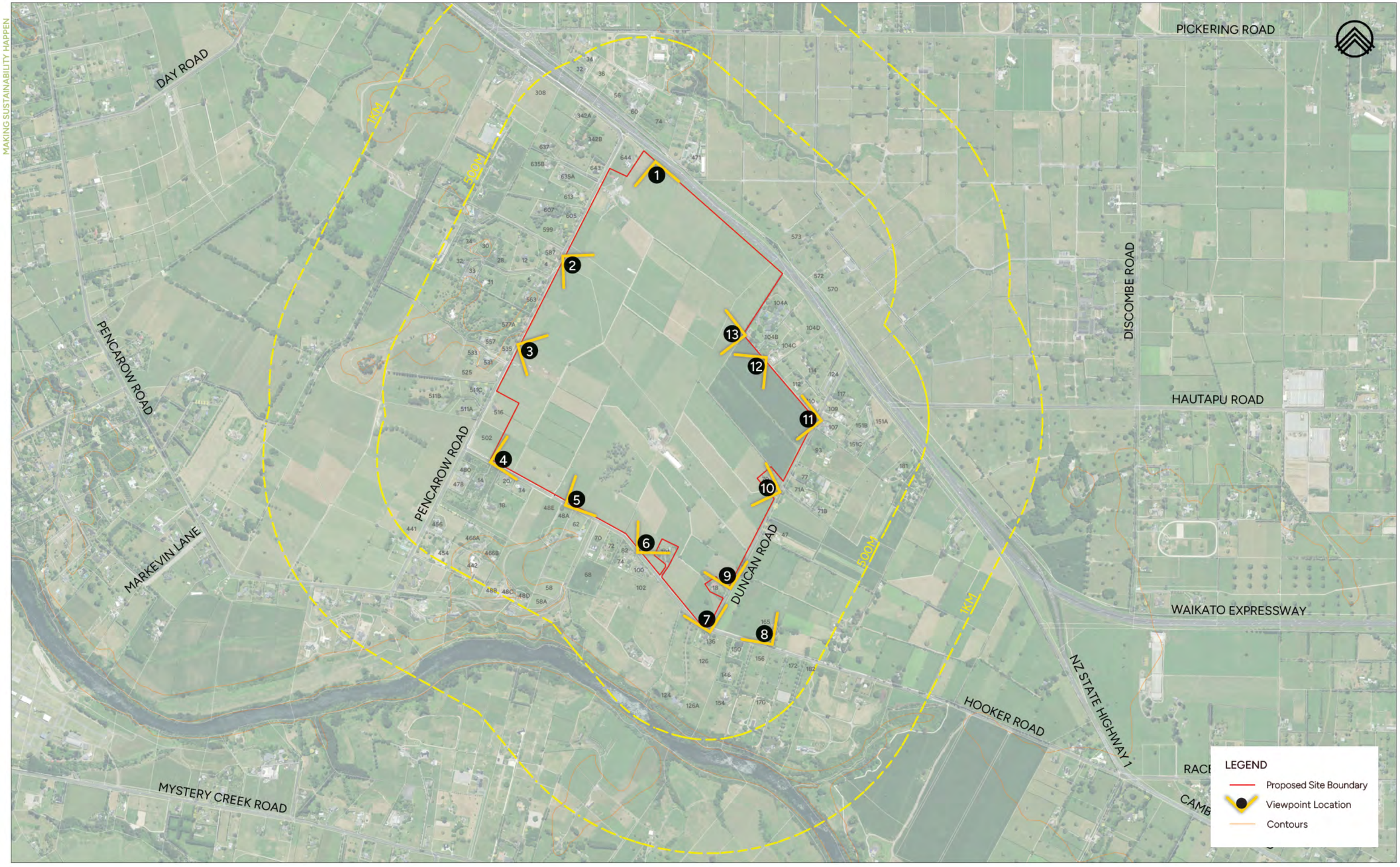
Residential dwellings to the west, south and east of the site will have varying views of the site and proposal. Limited properties at higher elevations will have views looking down and across the site.

The visual catchment, for any potentially meaningful view of the proposal, is contained within a maximum of a 500m radius of the site to the west, south and east. However, within that 500m radius views of the site are frequently obscured by built form, topography and existing vegetation.

The visual catchment has been determined using a combination of desktop analysis and testing through on-site observations.

Photographs used for the assessment were taken with a 50mm lens, on a digital Canon SLR camera at public viewpoints identified on site as being representative of viewing catchments and audiences. Photographs were taken throughout the day of the site visit. Photographs were stitched together using Adobe Lightroom software to represent the cylindrical field of view experienced by the human eye. Viewpoint locations and viewing audiences are listed in the table below and shown on the Site Context and Viewpoint Location Plan LA01. Detailed descriptions of views follow.

Viewing Audience	Viewpoint Location
Road users.	**Viewpoint 1** Roadside near State Highway (SH1)
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 587, 599 and 605 Pencarrow Road as well as 4 and 5 Summerfield Lane.	**Viewpoint 2** Roadside near 587 Pencarrow Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 535 and 531 Pencarrow Road.	**Viewpoint 3** Roadside near 535 Pencarrow Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 20 and 34 Hooker Road.	**Viewpoint 4** Roadside near 20 Hooker Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 48A and 62 Hooker Road	**Viewpoint 5** Roadside near 48A Hooker Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 70, 72, 82, 100, 101 Hooker Road	**Viewpoint 6** Roadside near 82 Hooker Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential property at 136 Hooker Road.	**Viewpoint 7** Roadside near 136 Hooker Road
Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential property at 165 Hooker Road.	**Viewpoint 8** Roadside near 165 Hooker Road
Road users. Representative of views from residential property at 18 Duncan Road	**Viewpoint 9** Roadside near 18 Duncan Road
Road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 70, 71A and 77 Duncan Road	**Viewpoint 10** Roadside near 70 Duncan Road
Road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 93, 107 and 109 Duncan Road	**Viewpoint 11** Roadside near 107 Duncan Road
Private road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 104C and 112 Duncan Road	**Viewpoint 12** Roadside near 104C Duncan Road
Road users. Representative of views from the Healing Centre at 104A Duncan Road	**Viewpoint 13** North eastern corner of the site



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SLR

WTR Greenfields Racecourse

SITE CONTEXT & VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

Project No: 810.032146.00001

Project Address: Pencarrow Road, Waikato

Client: Design Group Stapleton Elliot

Date: 17/02/2026

A3 Scale: 1:15,000

LA01

FIG 07: Site Context and Viewpoint Location Plan

3.2.3 Viewpoint Descriptions

Viewpoint 1

Roadside near SH1

Distance from proposal: Approximately 5m from northern boundary

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the northern boundary of the site and is at the same relative level. The photograph shows a pastoral landscape with paddock stretching across most of the view. State Highway 1 can be seen to the left hand side of the photograph with mature trees lining the northern side of the highway. A stock fence runs down the site boundary receding into the distance. A large herd of brown and tan cattle can be seen to the rear of the mid ground. Behind the cattle hedgerows and mature trees are scattered across the width of the photograph. Buildings and hay bales are visible amongst these trees and appear as small slithers of white or light grey colour. To the right hand side of the photograph a large grey shed frames the view. A distinctive cellular mast rises above the shed and interrupts the skyline. Behind the shed the rising terrain to the south of the site can be seen. Ranges can be seen to the left hand side of the photograph in the background.

The photograph illustrates a pastoral and rural landscape dominated by vegetation (pasture and trees). Built form elements and infrastructure are noticeable elements but distance between elements and their scale in the expansive landscape mean that they are recessive elements.



FIG 08: Viewpoint 1 Roadside near SH1

Viewpoint 2

Roadside near 587 Pencarrow Road.

Distance from proposal: Approximately 20m west of the western boundary.

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site. The photograph is taken from the roadside near neighbouring properties at the same relative level as the site. The photograph shows a street view perspective looking east toward the site. Pencarrow Road is visible across the foreground of the photograph. A grass verge separates the Te Awa River ride shared cycle path from the road. The cycle path is also visible across the full width of the photograph and runs parallel to a stock fence to the boundary of the site. The mid ground of the photograph is dominated by open space pasture. Hay bales, the occasional shrub and water troughs can be seen scattered in the fields. Hedgerows are visible to the east of the fields and these blend into a constant line of mature trees along the horizon line. To the centre and background of the photograph can be seen ranges in the distance. The sky is largely uninterrupted except for power lines in the right hand corner of the photograph.

The photograph illustrates an expansive and flat pastoral landscape with vegetation (pasture and trees) dominant attributes.



FIG 09: Viewpoint 2 Roadside near 587 Pencarrow Road.

Viewpoint 3

Roadside near 535 Pencarrow Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 20m west of the western boundary of the site

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site. The photograph is taken from the roadside near neighbouring properties at the same relative level as the site. The photograph shows a street view perspective looking east toward the site. Pencarrow Road is visible across the foreground of the photograph. A grass verge separates the Te Awa River ride shared cycle path from the road. The cycle path is also visible across the full width of the photograph and runs parallel to a stock fence to the boundary of the site. Power poles and lines can be seen to the right hand side of the photograph. The mid ground of the photograph is dominated by open space pasture with patches of long grass. The dwelling at 516 Pencarrow Road is visible to the left hand side of the photograph. A stand alone garage, aging barn and shelter can also be seen in the mid ground of the photograph. Hedgerows can be seen to the rear of the fields from the right hand side of the photograph. Behind these a variety of mature trees are visible including the on-site stand of Kahikatea to the centre of the photograph. On the right hand side of the photograph the terrain rises and glimpses of a grass hill with trees a top can be seen behind the residential dwelling at 516 Pencarrow Road.

The photograph illustrates an expansive and flat pastoral landscape with vegetation (pasture and trees) dominant attributes with built form elements clearly visible.



FIG 10: Viewpoint 3 Roadside near 535 Pencarrow Road

Viewpoint 4

Roadside near 20 Hooker Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 3m west of the southern boundary of the site

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The photograph is taken from the south western end of the site looking north. A stock fence to the southern boundary is visible to the lower right hand side of the photograph. The foreground of the photograph is dominated by green pasture with patches of longer grass. Hedgerows run across the full extent of the photograph in the mid ground. Trees and shelter belts can be seen in the background above the hedgerows. The right hand side of the photograph is framed by the stand of Kaihikatea to the centre of the site. Rising terrain can be seen to the left hand side of the photograph. This is vegetated with mature trees. Residential dwellings at 516 and 531 Pencarrow Road are visible in amongst the vegetation to the right hand side. Views of the sky are uninterrupted and ranges can be seen amongst rain cloud to the background of the view.

The photograph illustrates an expansive and largely flat pastoral landscape with vegetation (pasture and trees) dominant attributes with built form elements present but of small scale within the wider landscape.



FIG 11: Viewpoint 4 Roadside near 20 Hooker Road

Viewpoint 5

Roadside near 48A Hooker Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 3m south of the southern boundary of the site.

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The photograph is taken from the south of the site looking eastward across the site. A stock fence to the southern boundary is visible in the foreground lining the boundary. Behind the stock fence semi-mature oak trees have been planted in an avenue parallel to the boundary. To the right hand side of the photograph the Te Awa River Ride cycle path and Hooker Road lead the eye to the background. Power lines and mature trees line the southern edge of the road reserve. The mid ground of the view is occupied by pasture with stock fences dividing various paddocks. The left hand side of the photograph is framed by the existing Kaihikatea stand to the centre of the site. Beside this the white roof of an existing shed / shelter is visible. The existing white farm house can also be glimpsed between trees in the mid ground. Mature exotic trees and hedgerow at varying distances blend together to form a constant band across the background of the photograph.

The photograph illustrates an attractive rural landscape dominated by trees. Built form and infrastructure are present but are either recessive or minor elements within the wider view.



FIG 12: Viewpoint 5 Roadside near 48A Hooker Road

Viewpoint 6

Roadside near 82 Hooker Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 2m south of the southern boundary of the site.

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The photograph is taken from the south of the site looking north across the site. Stock fence wires and fence post can be seen in the foreground. Pasture occupies the mid ground for the full extent of the photograph. The left hand side of the photograph is framed by a semi-mature willow to the foreground and the stand of Kahikatea on the site behind. The right hand side of the photograph is framed by curtilage planting consisting of mature trees to the dwelling at 101 Hooker Road. To the far right hand side of the photograph the two storey house at 101 Hooker Road is visible. The existing farm house and white shed / shelter are clearly visible in the centre of the photograph to the rear of the mid ground. A series of dark green ancillary buildings can be discerned to the shed / shelter. These blend with a band of mature trees that runs across the background of the photograph. Power poles and lines run down the left hand side of the photograph providing power to the above mentioned buildings.

The photograph shows a rural landscape dominated by vegetation (pasture and trees). Farm and residential buildings are noticeable and add to the impression of a working rural landscape.



FIG 13: Viewpoint 6 Roadside near 82 Hooker Road

Viewpoint 7

Roadside near 136 Hooker Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 30m southeast of the proposed site.

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The foreground of the photograph is dominated by the road intersection of Hooker and Duncan Roads. Hooker Road can be seen turning a corner to the left hand side of the photograph, while Duncan Road recedes to the right hand side. Street and cycle signage are noticeable elements of the foreground as are power poles and lines. To the centre of the photograph a narrow extent of the site's pastoral fields are visible. These are framed by curtilage planting to adjoining properties to both the left and right. Curtilage planting includes mature exotic trees. These visually blend with mature trees on the site. Hedgerows and more exotic trees surround the site on neighbouring properties to the left and right. Toward the background of the photograph the white shed / shelter to the centre of the site is visible.

The photograph shows a rural landscape with roading a visible feature of this view. Mature trees are scattered throughout and are a noticeable attribute.



FIG 14: Viewpoint 7 Roadside near 136 Hooker Road

Viewpoint 8

Roadside near 165 Hooker Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 300m from the eastern boundary of the site.

The viewpoint is at moderate distance from the proposed site and is at the same relative level. Hooker Road and the Te Awa River Ride cycle path can be seen to the left hand side of the photograph receding into the background. Large exotic trees and hedgerow line the road. Power lines line the edge of the road but are approximately 10m shorter than adjacent trees. A stock fence bisects the photograph and follows the line of the cycle path. To the right of the stock fence pasture dominates the mid ground of the photograph. Large exotic parkland trees are visible to the rear of the mid ground. These blend into curtilage planting on properties adjacent to the site and trees and hedgerow on the site. The right hand side of the photograph is framed by a silhouetted power pole.

The photograph illustrates an attractive rural landscape notable for the extent of established large exotic trees.



FIG 15: Viewpoint 8 Roadside near 165 Hooker Road

Viewpoint 9

Roadside near 18 Duncan Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 2m from the eastern boundary of the site

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The photograph illustrates a lush rural idyll, dominated by trees and pasture. Long grass in the foreground extends across the full width of the photograph and into the background. Curtilage planting consisting of mature exotic trees frames the left hand side of the photograph while the right is framed by hedgerow and exotic tree planting to the boundary of the site. Timber fences run along under the trees. Duncan Road is glimpsed to the far right of the photograph. In the centre of the photograph groupings of mature exotic trees are scattered and blend into a band of trees across the background of the photograph.



FIG 16: Viewpoint 9 Roadside near 18 Duncan Road

Viewpoint 10

Roadside near 70 Duncan Rd

Distance from proposal: Approximately 10m from eastern boundary of the site

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The foreground and mid ground of the photograph are dominated by pasture. A painted timber fence can be seen in the lower left hand corner of the photograph. A gravel farm track snakes through the pasture into the background. The residential dwelling and curtilage planting at 70 Duncan Road can be seen on the right hand side of the photograph. The white farm / shed shelter are visible in the centre of the background of the photograph, while a white farm house if visible to the left. A band of established native and exotic trees runs across the background. Localised low lying hills rise within this band of trees.

The photograph illustrates an expansive and flat rural landscape with domestic building and built form present but of small scale and influence within the landscape.



FIG 17: Viewpoint 10 Roadside near 70 Duncan Rd

Viewpoint 11

Roadside near 107 Duncan Rd

Distance from proposal: Approximately 10m from the eastern boundary of the site.

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The foreground is occupied by Duncan Road which leads down the left hand side of the photograph to the background. An established tree frames the left hand side of the photograph. Power poles and lines are prominent within the view with one clearly visible in the centre of the photograph. A stock fence lines the boundary of the site and behind that a maize crop grows on the site. The maize crop obscured views of the wider site from this viewpoint at the time of the site visit. The crowns of established trees are just visible above the maize as are the skeletal remains of two dead trees.

The photograph illustrates a flat rural and productive landscape. The maize crop is a monotonous element within the view while power poles interrupt the skyline.



FIG 18: Viewpoint 11 Roadside near 107 Duncan Rd

Viewpoint 12

Private roadside near 104C Duncan Road

Distance from proposal: Approximately 10m

The viewpoint is in close proximity to the proposed site and is at the same relative level. The private road servicing properties to the north of the site runs from left to right across the foreground of the photograph. The road terminates at the Ngaa Ringa Awhina O Hauora Trust property and the entry sign can be seen at the end of the road. Behind the road's kerb a stock fence marks the northern boundary of the site. The photograph is dominated by a wall of maize crop that obscures all other features of the site. Above the maize crop the sky can be seen uninterrupted. The right hand side of the photograph is framed by curtilage planting to 104B Duncan Road.

The photograph illustrates a worked rural landscape with vegetation dominant. The landscape character at the time of the site visit was enclosed and monotonous.



FIG 19: Viewpoint 12 Private roadside near 104C Duncan Road

Viewpoint 13

North east corner of the site near 104A Duncan Road

Distance from proposal: Photograph taken on the property at the north eastern corner

The viewpoint is taken from on the site but is representative of limited views from the adjacent property at 104A Duncan Road. The photograph shows an expansive view across pasture and fields. These stretch from the foreground to the background of the photograph. The left hand side of the photograph is framed by a maize crop on the north eastern fields of the site. A scraggly hawthorn tree sits on the fence line adjacent to the maize crop. A stock fence and drain cut across the foreground of the photograph.

The kahikatea stand to the centre of the site is visible in the background to the left hand side. Mature exotic trees stretch across the horizon line and up gently rising terrain in a variety of green colours. They provide an attractive back drop. The sky is uninterrupted.

The photograph illustrates a rural and expansive view dominated by vegetation. The view is picturesque.



FIG 20: Viewpoint 13 North east corner of the site near 104A Duncan Road

3.3 Associative Aspects

The area around Pencarrow and Hooker Roads in Cambridge, near Tamahere, has a rich Māori history generally characterised by extensive occupation, intensive agriculture, and the subsequent loss of land following the 1860's Waikato Land Wars.

This region, largely under the stewardship of Ngāti Koroki Kahukura and Ngāti Hauā iwi, was historically a significant food-producing area and a route connecting the Waikato River to regional markets. The region contained extensive kumara gardens and, in particular, numerous storage pits (often found along the Waikato River and in the Pukekura/Tamahere area) for preserving food. This historical area is referred to as The Waikato Horticulture Complex and was in cultivation from the 16th Century onward [3]. Archaeological evidence of cultivation exists throughout the surrounding landscape.

On this site modified and filled-in borrow pits are located to the eastern side of the property near Duncan Road. Their precise location is annotated in the Archaeological report prepared for this referral application. Borrow pits were part of cultivation processes and are ground disturbances where Māori removed gravel or sand for mixing with soil elsewhere to create good growing medium for crops.

Otherwise, associative landscape aspects reinforce the farming activity and continuance of a pastoral landscape that has characterised the Waikato region since European settlement, the first known survey of the land in 1874 [4] and the peace that settled after the Waikato Land Wars.

[3], [4] Dr W. Gumbley, Appraisal of Archaeology at Pencarrow and Duncan Roads, Tamahere, October 2025

3.5 Summary of Existing Landscape Character and Values

The site is located on a rural section between Pencarrow, Hooker and Duncan Roads, Cambridge. The site share's its northern boundary with SH1. The combined site has an approximate size of 1.25 x 1.5kms or 164ha. The site is located on flat rural land approximately 8km to the west of Cambridge.

The site is predominantly LUC2 with the southern third of the site LUC1 and a smaller section to the west being recorded as LUC4.

The site is predominantly covered in pasture. Paddocks to the north east are currently cropped and are covered with maize. The site is divided by stock fences and in places hedgerows into a series of individual fields and paddocks.

Built form is present on the site at distance to each other and is typical of rural environments. It does not dominate the site. Built form includes farm houses, barns and milking sheds. Other elements within the site include cattle, hay bales, water troughs, drains, silage stores and farm bikes that reveal the area as a working landscape.

Trees and hedgerows are present on the site. A stand of mature *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*, kahikatea are present in the centre of the site and cover an area of approximately 30,000sqm. There are approximately fifty (50) individual mature exotic trees scattered across the site. Most of these are concentrated toward the south and east of the site.

Like the site, the terrain in the immediate and wider area is predominantly flat. Localised low hills rise up to the west and south. Land use to the immediate surrounds is a combination of pastoral farming and low density countryside living. The landscape has a rural character.

The Te Awa River Ride shared cycle path runs along the length of the western and southern boundaries.

A number of large lot residential properties surround the site. Curtilage planting to these properties includes established large parkland trees up to thirty (30)m high, ornamental gardens and ornamental small scale trees. Dwellings on the properties are generally large stand alone houses of one to two storeys.

To the immediate north, the site is adjacent to SH1. While the rural landscape continues north for considerable distance the approximately 50m wide road reserve and constant traffic physically separate the site from this northern rural landscape. Established mature trees and shelter belts to the north of SH1 visually separate the site.

The site and surrounds are part of a coherent rural landscape. The perception of this landscape is of an expansive and vegetated terrain - flat fields of pasture with low localised hills providing interest. There are numerous mature trees spread across the landscape. They are a constant and dominant presence within the landscape.

The landscape does not feel isolated. Built form and infrastructural elements are present and noticeable to the immediate surrounds but their scale in the landscape does not dominate due to distance between built form and the presence of hedgerows, windbreaks and trees. Built form and infrastructure elements add to the visual complexity of the landscape and provide subtle differences in rural character across the site.

The north is more influenced by the presence of SH1 and the constant traffic noise whereas the south and east have a more gentrified character felt through the presence of adjacent large dwellings, established trees and well-maintained gardens. The presence of agricultural elements such as hay bales, milking sheds and farm bikes across the site and wider surrounds unify the wider area and reveal it as a working landscape.

Overall the landscape is picturesque. An impression of a vegetated environment is obtained through the dominant elements of pastoral fields and trees into which built elements are scattered.

The area around Pencarrow and Hooker Roads in Cambridge, near Tamahere, has a rich Māori history generally characterised by extensive occupation, intensive agriculture, and the subsequent loss of land following the 1860's Waikato Land Wars.

On this site modified and filled-in borrow pits are located to the eastern side of the property near Duncan Road. Borrow pits were part of cultivation processes and are ground disturbances where Māori removed gravel or sand for mixing with soil elsewhere to create good growing medium for crops.

Otherwise, associative aspects reinforce farming activity and the continuance of a pastoral landscape.

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

4.0 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Potential effects of the proposal on the site and surrounding local landscape have been assessed using the three overlapping conceptual dimensions of landscape described in Section 1.2 - Methodology. Consistent with the NZILA guidelines the effect the proposal will have on the identified values of the existing landscape character have been assessed.

4.1 Physical Effects

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

The proposal introduces change to the physical character of the site through increased built form, structures, horizontal infrastructure, removal of quality topsoil and land use. The effect of these changes will be unevenly realised across the site.

Overall, it is noted that the site will remain predominantly as open space, be used for rural related activity or activity not unknown to rural environments and remain dominated by vegetation. It is assessed that areas of increased built form are appropriately located and mitigated within the site and landscape. The existing terrain and levels will largely remain. The existing stand of kahikatea is retained and a substantial net gain of tree canopy will be achieved across the site.

Racecourses
The majority of the site will remain free of built form. Pastoral fields will be replaced by the open and ordered spaces of the racecourse ovals and straights. In these areas stock fences will be replaced by white running rails. The resulting spaces will likely be more manicured and maintained than the existing paddocks but will include large areas of grass with only the track and ambulance lanes having a potential change in surfacing within the track areas. There will be an increase in infrastructure associated with the tracks such as track lights (18 - 30m high), connecting roads and advertising signage to the finishing straights and poles. However, fundamentally these spaces will remain open, predominantly grassed and used by domesticated animals albeit in a highly ordered manner. The introduction of the racetracks is considered to have limited physical adverse effect to the landscape.

Earthworks
These will be extensive across the site, however lasting land-form and level modification will be minimal. With the exception of the creation of attenuation ponds to the centre of the racecourses and the southern entrance the site will remain flat and the impression of expansive plains will remain legible.

It is noted that earthworks for the proposed Senior Living Development and Rural Residential Housing blocks will likely require extensive topsoil stripping and the permanent removal of LUC1 topsoil from the site. This has been assessed as increasing the otherwise limited landscape effect of earthworks to the site.

Roading
Various roads are proposed across the site to provide entrance and access. Carparking is also proposed. Roads and carpark areas are proposed to be designed with a network of street trees and planted swales to provide drainage. Whilst the introduction of sealed roads, parking and associated lighting to the site is considered to detract from the rural characteristics of the landscape the extent and scale of the roads is relatively small in the wider context of the site. Swales and street trees will help mitigate landscape effects. Ultimately though the roads will lesson the rural characteristics of vegetative dominance and introduce a limited but organised network more associated with an urban development. For these reasons proposed roading to the site is considered to contribute to adverse landscape effects.

Built Form
Stables, Bloodstock Auction Buildings and Yards
Stable buildings, bloodstock auction buildings and yards are to be located to the north east and south west. These will represent an increase in built form on the site with numerous single storey buildings proposed. The buildings are however in keeping with a rural and agricultural character. Their recessive colouring and gabled roofs will readily blend in with a rural aesthetic. Their function is associated with animal husbandry and rural use. Whilst not part of the immediate landscape surrounds (within 500m of the site), horse breeding and stabling have a long association with the wider Waikato landscape centred around Cambridge. In addition these buildings are set back from the boundaries between 10 - 30m. Large exotic tree species will be planted along adjacent boundaries and surrounding the buildings. These will aid with the assimilation of the buildings into this rural landscape. These buildings are considered to have limited adverse physical effect to the landscape.

Event Centre and Village Centre
The Event Centre is a large scale building. Its use is directly associated with the proposed new racecourses. It will be surrounded by trees, amenity planting and carparking. Ostensibly, both the Event Centre and Village Centre will have commercial uses and thus will be foreign buildings within this existing rural landscape. However, proposed materiality, colour, overall coordinated design and comparatively low heights will help limit landscape effect. The nearest boundary to the proposed Event Centre is approximately 200m to the west, while the nearest boudanry to the Village Centre will be a min. of 50m to the south. As such it is considered that the scale and use of the buildings will be contextualised into the proposed landscape.

Senior Living Development
The Senior Living development will introduce approximately eighty (80) stand alone villas, two hundered (200) attached units and a central community building into the south eastern corner of the site. The development will introduce a low density urban scale development into this rural landscape. For the immediate locality this feature of the development will remove the landscape value of open space and in the short term reduce the dominance of vegetation.

To mitigate these effects all buildings are proposed to be set back approximately 25m from the boundary. Buildings will generally be of a small and residential scale and will include hipped or gabled roofs to mimic surrounding residential dwellings. Large tree species will be planted to the boundaries and throughout the development to partially screen built form and re-establish vegetative dominance. Hedges will also be planted to the boundaries. Hedgerows are a part of the existing landscape treatment around the south east of the site.

It is noted that the immediate surrounding landscape includes lifestyle blocks with residential buildings. As such whilst the Senior Living proposal will increase built form it will be installed to a localised rural area with built form present.

Rural Residential Housing
The proposal includes the subdivision of a section of the south eastern corner of the site, adjacent to Duncan Road, into approximately forty (40) lifestyle blocks to enable residential dwellings. This will introduce further built form onto the site. Together with the Senior Living Development this will change the character of the rural landscape to this corner of the site. The effect will be that built form will no longer be scattered at distance but will be a constant feature in this quarter.

Landscape mitigation is proposed to soften the built form and this includes 30m set backs of built form from boundaries to maintain open space. Large tree species will be planted to the

boundaries and throughout the internal development roads to partially screen and re-establish vegetative dominance. Proposed tree species will provide a context similar to the established trees on immediately surrounding lifestyle properties. Hedges will also be planted to the boundaries. Hedgerows are also a part of the existing landscape treatment around the south east of the site. These mitigation measures are considered an appropriate response to the existing landscape.

Nonetheless it is noted that the inclusion of the Senior Living Development and Lifestyle Blocks are considered to have the most adverse landscape effect of this proposal on the physical aspects of this landscape and have increased the degree of effect assessed.

Landscape Design

The landscape design will have a positive physical effect on the site. It will introduce to the site around two thousand (2,000) semi-mature exotic and native trees. Some existing trees are proposed to be removed as detailed but the existing kahikatea stand is retained and extended with further native tree planting. Overall the extent of tree canopy on the site will be greatly enlarged.

Trees are proposed to boundaries, internal roads and surrounds of buildings. As detailed above these will soften and mitigate built form by providing screening and vegetative context. They will help assimilate the proposal so that it is more akin to the surrounding rural environment. They will also ensure the reduction of vegetative dominance is limited, a value of the existing landscape, in areas of proposed increased density.

On boundaries adjacent to the Te Awa Riverside Shared Path proposed boundary trees will provide shade and amenity for users.

Boundaries are indicatively proposed to be fenced with timber post and rail stained black. This is a fencing typology associated with horse paddocks and the rural environment. It is assessed as an attractive treatment and positive addition to the amenity of the existing landscape.

In localised areas to the boundary hedging will also be included, particularly around the Senior Living and Rural Residential Housing developments. This will assist with screening and considerably increase the number of plants on site.

The central entrance and road way is proposed to be a ceremonial drive lined with a double avenue of semi-mature trees. It will include entrance walls and signage (possibly gates) and will enter the site across a water body. This entrance and driveway will become an attractive feature of the landscape adding amenity and providing a design legacy. It is considered this will be a positive attribute of the proposed landscape.

Amenity planting is proposed around the various buildings on site including to the Events Centre. Riparian planting is also proposed to the various swales and attenuation ponds. Approximately 8,000 additional, predominately native species are proposed. These will add visual interest but also increase biodiversity on site. This is considered to be a positive landscape effect of the proposal.

Taking together these factors, both positive and adverse, the physical landscape effect is assessed as above.

4.2 Perceptual Effects

The introduction of this proposal into this rural setting, is considered to adversely affect perception of the landscape. However, as outlined above proposed mitigation measures are included in the design and these will successfully limit the degree of perceptual landscape effect. Limitation will occur progressively over time as planting establishes and the extent of construction activities reduce.

Once the proposal has been installed an expansive and flat landscape will remain legible. The site will generally maintain a rural character. The proposed racecourses will maintain open space and buildings such as the stables and bloodstock complex are not foreign elements within a rural environment. The Senior Living Development and Rural Residential Housing will increase built form to an extent that will give the south eastern quarter of the site a peri-urban area character. However, this is not too dissimilar to the existing lifestyle blocks in the area and is mitigated through the planting of semi-mature trees, hedging and amenity planting.

This extensive planting will have positive perceptual effect to the site. It is also noted that the proposed built elements are anticipated to be thoughtfully designed to provide a well-designed and well-functioning environment.

Overall the landscape will remain picturesque. An impression of a vegetated environment will be retained but will be locally diminished particularly in the south eastern corner where despite mitigation planting built form will reduce vegetative dominance and occupy the open space that characterises this landscape.

The racecourses and additional dwellings will bring an increased level of activity and traffic to the area and this will detract from the general level of tranquillity experienced in this rural environment. It is noted that this impression of increased traffic will be more pronounced to the south of the site where entrances are proposed. It will be less noticeable to the north where SH1 and its traffic noise are part of the existing landscape.

Whilst light spill from track lights will be within engineering standards, it will nonetheless contribute to an increased impression of activity. In the evenings, when racecourses are in use (40 nights per year), a glow from the property will be perceived. This will not have been previously experienced within this receiving landscape. That being said it is noted that this existing rural landscape does not feel remote and contains within it infrastructure including SH1.

Construction machinery, such as cranes, earth moving equipment, concrete and freight trucks will be visible during the construction period. Construction works will be visible to the same catchment as the proposal at various times during construction and likely more noticeable. For the period of time on site their presence, movement and noise will detract from the landscape values and level of tranquillity associated with this rural environment. The construction period has been aggregated into the determined overall perceptual and visual effect during the short term.

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

4.2.1 Visual Effect Assessment from Identified Representative Viewpoints

Visual effects that have informed the above rating have been assessed from representative public viewpoints in the surrounding landscape and are summarised in the table below.

Short term is defined by the anticipated duration mitigation planting will take to establish. Given installation size this is assumed to be 3-5 years.

Viewpoints and Viewing Audience	Visual Effect (Short Term)	Visual Effect (Mid - Long Term)
Viewpoint 1 Roadside near State Highway (SH1) Road Users	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 2 Roadside near 587 Pencarrow Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 587, 599 and 605 Pencarrow Road as well as 4 and 5 Summerfield Lane.	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 3 Roadside near 535 Pencarrow Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 535 and 531 Pencarrow Road.	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 4 Roadside near 20 Hooker Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 20 and 34 Hooker Road.	Low - Moderate	Low
Viewpoint 5 Roadside near 48A Hooker Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 48A and 62 Hooker Road	Moderate	Low - Moderate
Viewpoint 6 Roadside near 82 Hooker Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential properties at 70, 72, 82, 100, 101 Hooker Road	Moderate	Low - Moderate
Viewpoint 7 Roadside near 136 Hooker Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential property at 136 Hooker Road.	Low - Moderate	Low

Viewpoints and Viewing Audience	Visual Effect (Short Term)	Visual Effect (Mid - Long Term)
Viewpoint 8 Roadside near 165 Hooker Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential property at 165 Hooker Road.	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 9 Roadside near 18 Duncan Road Road and shared path users. Representative of views from residential property at 165 Hooker Road.	Moderate	Low - Moderate
Viewpoint 10 Roadside near 70 Duncan Road Road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 70, 71A and 77 Duncan Road	Moderate	Low - Moderate
Viewpoint 11 Roadside near 107 Duncan Road Road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 93, 107 and 109 Duncan Road	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 12 Roadside near 104C Duncan Road Private road users. Representative of views from residential properties at 104C and 112 Duncan Road	Low	Very Low
Viewpoint 13 North eastern corner of the site Road users. Representative of views from the Healing Centre at 104A Duncan Road	Low	Very Low

4.3 Associative Effects

The proposal will continue links to animal husbandry associated with the historic use of the site since the 1870's, noting that this will be in a modified form (thoroughbred horses rather than cattle or sheep).

The increase in built form to the south eastern areas of the site will partially remove links to the historic rural use of the landscape, permanently removing pastoral farming. It is noted however that this is to the south eastern corner only.

The modified borrow pits identified by the archaeological survey will be partially retained and covenanted, around half will be removed after examination. This is considered an appropriate response by the project archaeologist.

It is therefore assessed that there will be a **Low** degree of adverse effect on the associative values of this landscape, predominantly arising from the resultant loss of rural character to the south east corner of the site.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

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

The key findings of this assessment are:

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

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

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

iv) The visual catchment, for any potentially meaningful view of the proposal, is contained within a maximum 500m radius of the site to the west, south and east. However, within that 500m radius views of the site are frequently obscured by built form, topography and existing vegetation.

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

vi) Detailed findings (Refer section 4.2.1) that contributed to the above assessment of perceptual effect were taken from representative viewpoints to the surrounds of the site. They found that visual effects ranged between **Moderate** for four viewpoints to the south east corner to **Low** for the majority of other viewpoints in the short term to **Low - Moderate** to **Very Low** for all viewpoints in the mid and long term.

vii) It is assessed that there will be a **Low** degree of adverse effect on the associative values of this landscape, predominantly arising from the resultant loss of rural character to the south east corner of the site.

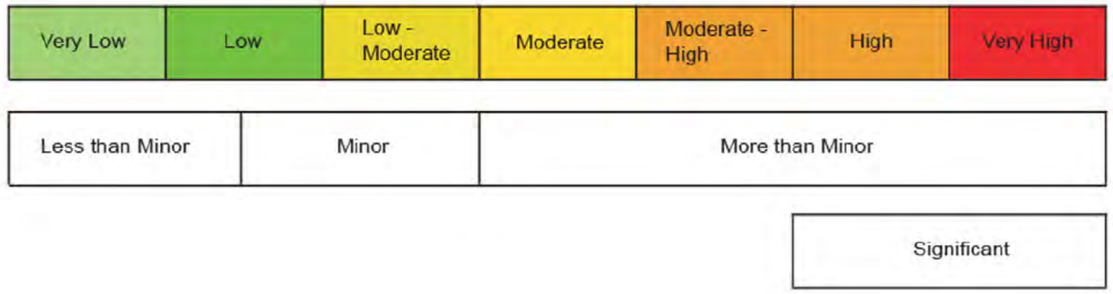
Taking these ratings together, the proposal is assessed as having a **Low - Moderate** degree of adverse effect to the landscape in the short term and **Low** degree in the medium and long terms.

Appendix A

Degree of Effect

Degree of Effect

The seven-point assessment scale below combines the guidance provided in the NZILA Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines 2022, p151 and has been applied in assessing the degree of landscape effects that have been identified. The scale is used to determine adverse effects of the proposal. Positive effects of the proposal, where they occur, are simply described as positive effects.



Associative Table for 'Minor' Test

For the purposes of notification determination, an adverse effects rating of Low - Moderate corresponds to a 'minor' adverse effects rating.

An adverse effects rating of 'Low' can correspond to a 'less than minor' adverse effects rating.

For further information with particular regard to rationalising these effects rankings in the context of RMA based decision making, please refer to pages 150 and 151 of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA), Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines July, 2022.

Definitions

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary provides the below definitions

"Low: adjective - 1. Below average in amount, extent, or intensity."

"Moderate: adjective - average in amount, intensity, quality or degree"

"High: adjective - Great in amount, value, size, or intensity."