

Appendix C – Architectural Design Statement





Matakana Country Club – Design Memo

120 Tounge Farm Rd, Matakana

9.10.2025

Vision and Context

The vision for the Matakana Country Club retirement village is to reimagine retirement living within a rural setting. The design celebrates the natural environment and sustains the overarching qualities of the site and its landscape setting, expressed through the masterplan, urban strategy, and built form.

This proposal is not an imposition of suburban living into farmland but a sensitive integration of housing and landscape, where residents engage directly with the richness of the Matakana countryside and community. The project prioritises landscape quality over traditional retirement village models, creating an environment where the built form supports, rather than dominates, the rural setting. At less than 3 dwellings per hectare, and with consolidation of the development into the northern portion of the site, the development retains a farm-scale character, ensuring the site remains rural in context, outlook, and feel - particularly as it interfaces with the harbour environs.

Site Response

The scale and context of the 72-hectare site offers a unique opportunity to rethink the relationship between dwellings, streets, and the wider landscape. A robust collaboration between landscape (Boffa Miskell) and the built environment (First Light Studio) has resulted in a carefully considered proposal that accommodates 208 homes while respecting the rural amenity and sense of openness.

Rather than dispersing homes across the land, the masterplan proposes a series of tight clusters of up to 13 homes ranging from 120 – 240sqm, arranged around central, driveable courtyards. This clustering approach:

- Internalises garages and servicing, keeping external views uncluttered and landscape-focused.
- Encourages intimate social encounters, strengthening community life.
- Preserves openness between clusters, offering expansive views across parkland, pastoral land, wetlands, and native planting.

The pattern is cohesive, connected, and small in grain, echoing rural homesteads and farmyards while preserving the landscape as the unifying element.

The following diagrams illustrate, at two different scales, the contrast between a traditional village housing model (left) and a clustered housing approach (right). The diagrams highlight the benefits of clustering, including more concentrated green areas, reduced roading, and a more efficient pattern of housing density.

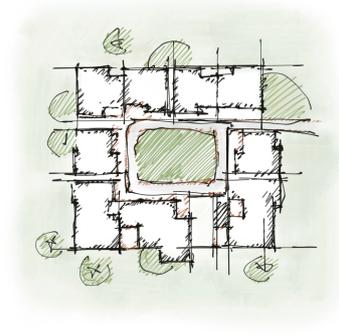
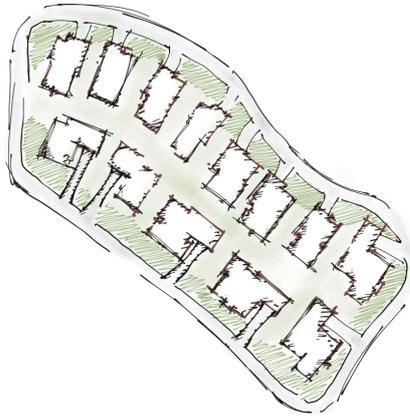


Image: Traditional Village approach (left) v. cluster of dwellings (Right). Both diagrams represent the same land area.



Image: Traditional Village approach (left) v. clusters of dwellings (Right). Both diagrams represent the same land area and similar number of dwellings,

Landscape Integration

The design is landscape-first, ensuring the project enhances both ecological function and rural character. Key elements include:

- Restoration of wetlands and waterways, improving ecological health and biodiversity.
- Integration of pastoral character with new layers of coastal forest and parkland planting.
- Establishment of large areas of open space around clusters, reinforcing rural amenity.
- Transition from intensive farming to hobby-scale use, improving surrounding water quality and long-term environmental health.

Roading will be designed as rural lanes without kerbs, with grass swales and planted edges. Pull-over bays will replace wide double-lane roads, maintaining rural scale while prioritising ecological function.

This landscape-led approach delivers measurable ecological gain, aligning with national and local planning priorities for sustainable development. *For further detail refer associated Landscape Statement provided by Boffa Miskell.*

Architecture and Built Form

The architectural expression remains rural in nature - low scale, simple forms, and modest, muted materials that allow buildings to recede into the rural landscape. Density is carefully managed through clustering and the location of the built form, ensuring the development sits lightly on the land.

Communal buildings, varied in scale and form, will be distributed around the site, providing shared facilities in walking proximity, buildings will include a central clubhouse, care facility, café, art centre, workshop, garden pavilion, swimming pool, and health spa, sports hub, and sea lodgings. This reduces reliance on vehicles, making the village pedestrian-focused, with cars used primarily for travel beyond the site.

Materials and detailing will draw from the local rural vernacular, including timber, natural tones, and simple rooflines, to reinforce the development's farm-scale identity.



Image: Artist Impression of Housing Cluster in Landscape

Summary

The Matakana Country Club demonstrates how rural land can support retirement living in a way that enhances, rather than diminishes, rural character. By clustering homes, restoring ecological systems, and prioritising pedestrian life, the proposal offers an innovative and sensitive blueprint for rural retirement living in New Zealand.

This is a landscape-led, community-focused, and environmentally restorative development that embodies the values of rural Matakana, while setting a benchmark for sustainable retirement village design.