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Landscape Assessment Report

61 Hampton Downs Road
Hampton Downs
Te Kauwhata
3782

Document Quality Assurance

61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs Road, Te Kauwhata – Landscape Assessment Greenwood Associates Landscape Architecture Ltd Report prepared by Greenwood Associates Landscape Architecture Ltd for National Steel Limited		
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1. Introduction

The proposal

1.1. National Steel Limited (**the Applicant**) is seeking to erect a steel manufacturing plant on 61 Hampton Downs Road.

1.2. The total approximate area of the proposed steel plant is 21.2ha, with the extent of earthworks being 32.7ha, with the full extent of the development (comprising the main platform and perimeter platforms) being 48.7ha.

1.3. To facilitate the placement of the proposal within the landscape modification to the rolling landscape will be required through a series of earthworks.

The subject site and planning context

1.4. The subject site is located at 61 Hampton Downs Road, the site is approximately 53.7ha in area.

1.5. The site is bounded to the north by the Hampton Downs Loop Road at its northern boundary and by 23 and 61B Hampton Downs Road at its eastern boundaries. The Spring Hill Correctional Facility sits to the south of the site.

1.6. The site sits within the 'Rural' zone as per the Waikato District Operative Plan (WDOP). In the proposed Waikato District Plan 'Decisions Version' and the Waikato District Plan 'Operative In Part' the site sits within the 'GRUZ- General Zone.'

Scope of assessment

1.7. Provisions in the WDP relevant to this assessment relate to visual impacts in terms of layout, character of the zone, and wider amenity values. Alignment with these provisions is covered through an assessment of the proposed development in context with relevant 'issues' and 'policies'.

1.8. Greenwood Associates Landscape Architects have been engaged by the applicant to assess the potential landscape effects introduced from the proposed future built form.

1.9. This report should be read in conjunction with the project engineering drawings, survey drawings, Geotechnical assessment report and arborists report/planting plans.

2. Methodology

2.1. This assessment of landscape and visual amenity effects has been undertaken with reference to the Te Tangi A Te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines[1] ('The Guidelines').

2.2. The significance of effects identified within this assessment are based upon a seven-point scale ranging from very low; low; low-moderate; moderate; moderate-high; high; very high; ratings.

[1] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

2.3. As per section 6.21 of the Guidelines the following ranking scale will be used for the assessment of landscape effects (both physical and visual).

Table 1: Seven-Point Rating Scale

VERY LOW	LOW	LOW-MOD	MODERATE	MOD-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
LOW			MODERATE		HIGH	

2.4. As per section 6.22 of the Guidelines no descriptor of these ratings (i.e. of what low means) is given in this report based on the summation of the following Environment Court's "Matakana Island" decision (*Western Bay of Plenty District Council v Bay of Plenty Regional Council* [2019] NZEnvC 110) at [25] (note ***emphasis*** added):

> *"We think that [people] are likely to be able to understand qualitative assessment of low, medium and high, and combinations or qualifications of those terms without the need for explanation. We do not consider ratings of that kind to constitute a fully systematic evaluation system in a field as complex as landscape: in this context, the system* ***depends far more on the substantive content of the assessment****, especially the identification of attributes and* ***values****, than on the fairly basic relativities of low-medium-high…"*

2.5. However, to provide some context, Table 2 below, and the subsequent paragraph (sourced from section 6.37 of the Guidelines) aligns the seven-point rating scale in Table 1 above against the 'less than minor' to 'significant' ratings scale typically used when assessing effects under the Resource Management Act 1991 ("RMA").

Table 2: Seven-Point Guideline Rating Scale Measured Against the RMA Rating Scale

						SIGNIFICANT
LESS THAN MINOR		MINOR		MORE THAN MINOR		
VERY LOW	LOW	LOW-MOD	MODERATE	MOD-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH

> *"Effects are identified by establishing and describing the prevailing landscape character by identifying the landscape values of the site and the perception of the site within the wider landscape, (reference may be made in this regard to existing statutory documents and previous landscape assessments undertaken by others) and assessing the effects of the proposal in either enhancing or degenerating from these values. These effects will be measured using the seven-point rating scale given above in Table 1 and Table 2"*[2]

[2] Section 6.7 - Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

2.6. This landscape assessment follows section 10 of the Guidelines.

2.7. In this case, prior to conducting the assessment, a desktop study was completed which included a review of the relevant information relating to the landscape and visual amenity aspects of the proposal. This information included:

- Architectural and engineering plans
- AUP including relevant planning maps
- Aerial photography
- Ground contours

2.8. A site visit was undertaken on the 31st of October 2024 in order to further understand the site and the surrounding context. The site visit focused on the potential physical impact the proposal would have on the landscape, what changes there would be to the landscape character of the site and surrounding area and the identification of viewing audiences to inform potential visual (landscape and amenity) effects.

2.9. Five (5) viewpoints, comprising five (5) individual photographs were selected from twenty (20) photographs taken during the site visit. These views were selected from locations within the wider landscape where it was considered conceivable, based on site observations, that the proposal would be visible (refer appendix 3 for viewpoints map).

3. Existing Environment

3.1. The purpose of this section is to provide a description of the site as it currently sits, both in a local and wider context. This analysis allows for a definition of the existing landscape character and serves as the basis for the analysis of potential effects of the proposal upon the prevailing landscape values.

Site Location and Wider Context

3.2. In a wider context, the site sits in close proximity to the Waikato Expressway (SH1) (the expressway is partially visible from the site) and the Hampton Downs Motorsport Park (portions of the race track are visible from within the site and the noises from racing vehicles can be heard at the site). The Springhill Corrections Facility sits to the south of the site (although cannot be seen from within the boundaries of the site). Slightly farther afield to the west a private landfill sits within the landscape (like the corrections facility this landfill is not visible from within the boundaries of the site).

3.3. In addition to the named facilities in the preceding paragraph an industrial park is located to the north-west of the site (neighbouring the Hampton Downs Motorsport Park), this park is currently vacant but has the infrastructure (roads, building platforms etc) set up to receive industrial style built-form and I consider it a reasonable assumption that this industrial park will contain built-form within two (2) to five (5) years.

3.4. Outside of the aforementioned facilities, the surrounding landscape consists of a typical New Zealand rural landscape with rolling hills and flat plains broken up by groups of native planting, fence lines and water channels. Sporadic elements of residential and ancillary built-form and denser pockets of residential built form (lifestyle properties) sit within the landscape.

Figure 1 – Location of site relative to surrounding landscape (source: google earth – image obtained 14/11/20204)

Existing Site and Immediate Surrounds Description (Local Context)

3.5. This sub-section addresses the visual appearance and subsequent landscape character of local context – both the site itself and its immediate surrounds – as it exists in its current state and will contain some references to the proposal (to be discussed in greater detail in section 5). This analysis forms the basis for the evaluation of the proposal against the contemporary receiving environment, and prevailing landscape character.

3.6. The site is currently vacant and contains a limited amount of cattle, other wildlife (namely Paradise Ducks) was also observed during my site visit.

3.7. The northern portions of the site sit within a flat plain that is bordered by a water race at its western extents with a series of watercourses criss-crossing over the landscape. This portion of land sits at a lower elevation than the adjoining Hampton Downs Loop Road. The mid portions of the site rise up from this plain and then slope back down to form another flat portion that is ringed by a series of mounds / knolls that collectively form the southern edge of the site. Figure 2 below provides a panoramic image taken from the portion of Harness Road to the north of the site

with the aforementioned plain at the foreground of the view (note: an enlarged image of the below figure is provided in Appendix 2.

Figure 2 – Panoramic image of site taken from Hampton Downs Loop Road (view is southwards) [3]

3.8. Figure 3 below provides a panoramic image from the midpoint of the site showing the aforementioned mounds/knolls that collectively sit near the southern boundary of the site (note: an enlarged image of the below figure is provided in Appendix 2. As per the proposed cut and fill plans the aforementioned knolls / mounds will be cut down and battered to accommodate the proposal (refer section 5 for outline of the proposal and Figure 10 for a 3d representation).

Figure 3 – Panoramic image towards southern boundary of the site taken from approximate mid-point of site (view is southwards) [4]

3.9. The site is accessed from Harness Road, which, in turn leads to a sealed access lane that allows access to the site at its western boundary and also provides access to 61B Hampton Downs Roads which contains a dwelling and associated ancillary building.

3.10. Harness Road is accessed from Hampton Downs Road, which in turn is accessed from SH1.

3.11. The aforementioned facilities outlined in sections 3.2-3.4 create a level of traffic flow that is over and above what would be typically expected within a traditional rural environment, based on my site observations a large amount of this traffic involved vehicle movements to/from Springhill Corrections Facility, that is accessed off Hampton Downs Road via a private road (Harness Road). The nearby landfill also contributes to the traffic volume with larger trucks conveying back and forth from this landfill. At the time of my site visit Hampton Downs Motorsport Park had a small number of vehicles present (as there was no scheduled event occurring) however a large car park is located near the site, thus indicating that this facility may contribute to a high number of traffic movements in the area.

[3] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024

[4] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024

3.12. Due to the location of the site near SH1 and two race tracks the amount of noise that can be heard from within the site, on the day of the site visit I was able to hear noises from vehicles at the race track and there was constant (albeit muffled) din of noise emanating from the adjacent SH1.

Landscape Elements

3.13. This section discusses the significant landscape elements both within the subject site and local context, and for the purposes of this document these have been divided into two subcategories, natural elements and cultural elements. Natural landscape elements broadly consist of vegetation, landforms and coastlines. Cultural landscape elements consist of manmade structures that could be considered to be potentially character defining such as walls, residential and commercial built form and pieces of infrastructure (bridges, pathways).

Natural elements

3.14. The dominant natural element within the site is the rolling landscape and the interface between both flat plains and the various mounds / knolls across the landscape as that is reflective of the wider landscape patterning. (Refer Figure 2 and Figure 3).

3.15. The vegetation patterns across site are typical for that of a rural environment with remnant patches of native forest remaining at higher elevations where livestock has not been recently grazed. On the plains sporadic vegetation is located in an around both natural and artificial riparian corridors. Outside of these two areas of vegetation there are a series of established standalone trees that are located at both the higher and lower points of the site.

3.16. Figure 4 below provides an image of the aforementioned vegetation located across the plains of the site, I do not consider any of this vegetation to be notable with an amount of this vegetation consisting of weed species.

Figure 4 – Image across plains of site showing typical vegetation arrangement across plains [5]

3.17. Figure 5 below provides an image of the aforementioned vegetation located at or near the southern knolls/mounds of the site, the majority of shrubs are associated with both natural and engineered riparian corridors. As a frame of reference, the proposal (in terms of extent of earthworks and batter slopes) will extend to the approximate location of the higher group of standalone trees with the lower group sitting outside the building platform but within the area of proposed earthworks / batter slopes.

Figure 5 – Image across plains of site showing typical vegetation arrangement across plains [6]

[5] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024

[6] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024

3.18. The site investigation and mapping plan prepared by the project geotechnical engineers (refer Figure 6 below) shows the existing flow paths across the site (blue lines) both natural riparian corridors and manufactured drainage channels.

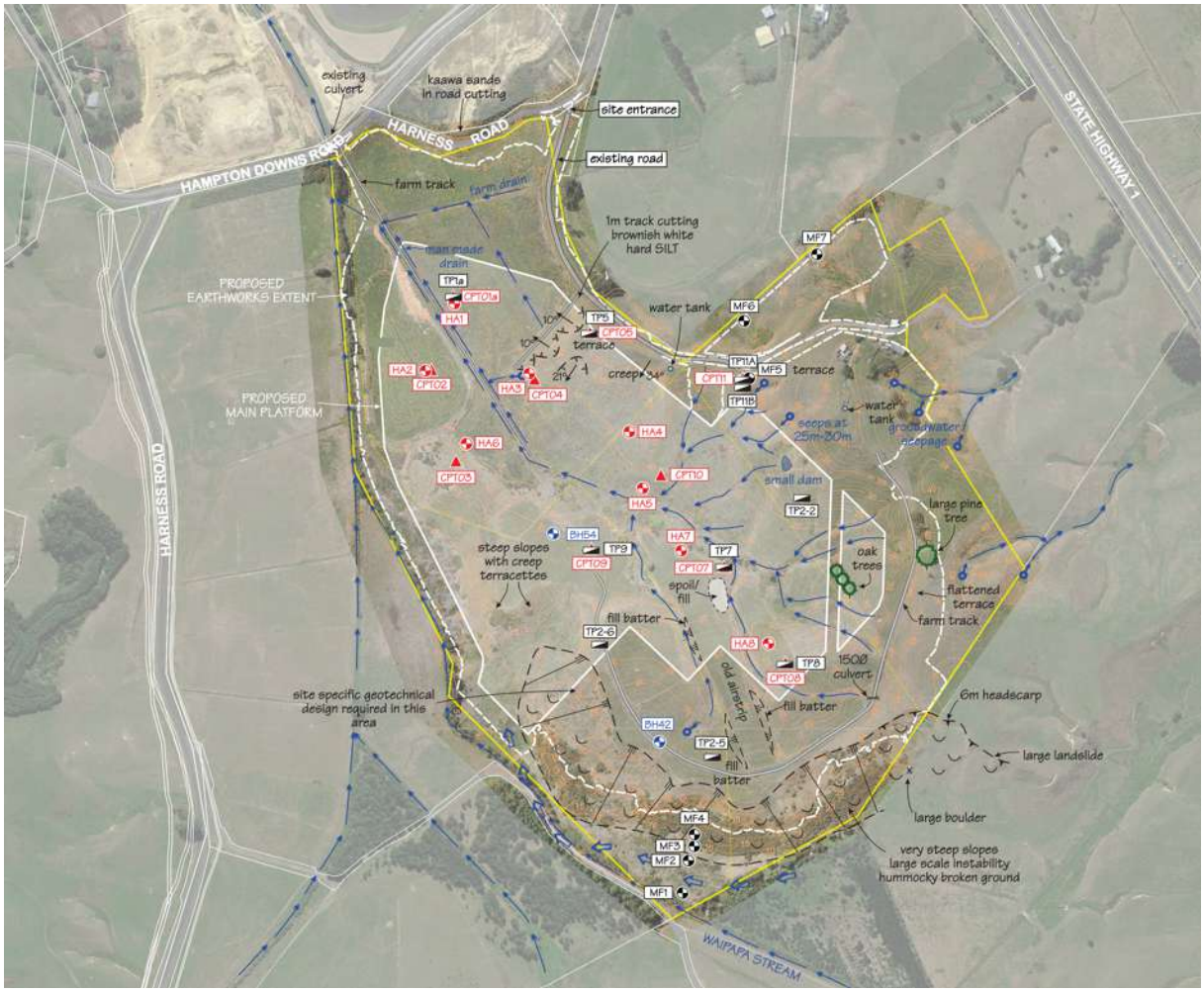


Figure 6 – Site investigation plan [7]

Cultural elements

3.19. The cultural elements located across the site can be considered to be those typical within a rural environment.

- Post, wire and batten fences
- Farm gates
- Water troughs for livestock
- Manufactured drainage channels cut through the landscape

3.20. Whilst not a part of the site itself, the aforementioned (within sections 3.2-3.4) large facilities/infrastructure (namely the Hampton Downs Motorsport Park, Springhill Corrections facility, Landfill and SH1) can also be considered to have an influence over the site as the functions that they provide and the subsequent environmental effects that they generate (namely noise and traffic) that are not congruent with those normally associated with a rural environment.

[7] Source: Figure 2.1 – 'Preliminary Geotechnical Assessment Report' – 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs – Prepared by Earthtech Consulting – Date 20.05.25

Landscape Character

3.21. Landscape character describes peoples visual or cogitative perception of both natural and developed landscapes. It is also synonymous to a “sense of place” and represents an attitude concerning one’s environs.

3.22. Landscape character is also informed by the amenity of the area; amenity[8] describes peoples visual or cogitative perceptions of activities that occur in an area. For example, a large open pastured area punctuated with ancillary buildings would lead to the perception that the area is used for farming activities and thus having a rural amenity. Therefore, in terms of landscape character this example area would be perceived as having a rural character.

3.23. It should be noted that landscape character and amenity are not mutually exclusive and certain physical landscape elements may be both considered defining elements of both landscape character and amenity.

3.24. Defining the landscape character of the site forms the basis of analysing the landscape’s sensitivity to absorb change and hence the effect of the proposal upon the landscape. Defining landscape character also has an impact on the determination of the level of potential adverse visual effects upon the site, as an outcome that can deemed as being in keeping with the prevailing landscape character can be considered more acceptable than one that does not correlate with the prevailing landscape character.

3.25. As outlined in the preceding paragraphs, the site itself exhibits strong visible characteristics of a rural landscape (refer section 3.19).

3.26. If viewing a series of images of the site in isolation, I consider that the majority of people would immediately associate the site as having strong rural characteristics.

3.27. However, whilst the site itself may have associations with a traditional rural character when viewed in isolation, when being present within the site, the noise and traffic levels and views to significant pieces of infrastructure (as outlined within sections 3.2-3.4) provide a sensory experience that is not readily associated with a traditional rural environment.

3.28. Thus, in terms of defining a landscape character of both the site and the surrounding landscape present a dichotomy as a number of natural and cultural landscape elements that can be readily associated with a traditional rural landscape character such as a rolling landscape, remnant patches of native forest, shrub planting associated with both natural and manufactured riparian corridors, presence of livestock and shelter belts. The wider landscape also contains

[8] As per RMA **amenity values** means those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes.

elements that are not considered part of a traditional rural setting including a corrections facility, a landfill, a race track and a multi-lane highway. These elements are of such a scale that they generate sensory experiences, namely noise generated from traffic movements and motorsport activity and, in the case of the Motorsport Park being a visually dominant element within the landscape due to its contrasting appearance within the landscape.

3.29. Therefore in terms of defining the landscape character of the site, taking into account the physical and sensory qualities of the wider landscape, I am of the opinion that the landscape character can be broadly defined as being of a rural character with a strong sense of place derived from the sensory experiences created by the presence of the nearby facilities and infrastructure.

Landscape Sensitivity to Absorb Change

3.30. This section outlines actions that would potentially adversely affect the landscape character described above. In broad terms, if a landscape is highly sensitive to change then relatively minor actions could have a high level of effect on the prevailing landscape character, whereas if a landscape has a lower sensitivity to change then any actions that potentially adversely affect the prevailing landscape character would need to be greater and more deliberate in nature.

A landscapes sensitivity to absorb change reflects the ability of the landscape to accept change to its original state. This level of sensitivity is influenced by the following, previously discussed factors:

- position within the wider landscape (including degree of visibility);
- landscape elements; and
- landscape character.

3.31. As outlined the preceding analyses, the surrounding environment consists of a dichotomy of landscape character elements with a number of elements that can be considered to be associated with a rural character sitting alongside a series of elements including a motorsport venue, corrections facility, state highway and landfill that create a sensory experience that is in contrast to one that would be expected in a traditional rural environment.

3.32. In addition to the existing facilities / infrastructure that have been previously outlined and discussed, an industrial park is also located within view from the site, that whilst vacant at present can reasonably be expected to be operational within the next five (5) years and will add to the contrasting sensory experience outlined above by adding elements of built-form associated with an industrial setting and generating additional traffic movements and noise through the landscape.

3.33. In a traditional rural environment it can be expected that the landscape can absorb change through modification in land use when establishing rural-residential communities as these elements often allow the majority of identifiable rural characteristics to remain within the site boundaries and provide scope for additional

landscape elements to be added to the site to enhance the rural character elements.

3.34. The unique nature of the site (relative to the wider landscape) and its surrounds (generated by the presence of significant nearby facilities / infrastructure that provide a sensory experience that is contrary to that expected in a traditional rural environment) the site can absorb a higher degree of change before the potential for adverse effects on the prevailing landscape character arises as the presence of the nearby facilities / infrastructure have created a unique environment where traditional rural character elements can sit alongside a varied mix of facilities / infrastructure elements. This also aided by the relative close proximity of these facilities / infrastructure to one another that has created a precinct of sorts within a traditional rural setting, thus allowing for a greater level of absorption into the landscape (without adversely affecting the landscape character values) than if these elements were spread farther apart.

4. Relevant Statutory Context

4.1. This section will outline relevant clauses from national, regional and local policy and/or statutory regulations that impact the analysis of landscape effects generated by the proposal (refer section 5).

Resource Management Act 1991

4.2. Part 2 of the RMA sets out its purpose and principles. Part 2, section 5 states that the purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Section 6 sets out the matters of importance that must be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the RMA. Section 7 contains other matters that must be given particular regard to, and section 8 states that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi must be taken into account in achieving the purpose of the RMA.

4.3. The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is identified as a matter of national importance in section 6(b).

4.4. Section 7 identifies a range of matters that shall be given particular regard to in achieving the purpose of the RMA. Of relevance to this proposal is section 7(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values. This is considered in this report in relation to potential effects on landscape elements, character, and visual amenity.

Waikato District Plan (Operative)

4.5. As per section 1.6 the site sits within the ‘Rural Zone’ of the Waikato District Plan (Operative), (WDP-O). In terms of this landscape assessment the site is also subject to policy 3.4.2 (Landscape and Visual Amenity Values).

Natural features and landscapes: Issue – Landscape and Visual Amenity Values

4.6. The following text is an excerpt from section '3.4 Issue – Landscape and Visual Amenity Values' [9] I have ***emphasised*** the portion of policy 3.4.2 that I deem pertinent to this landscape assessment as they cover elements of the site as it currently stands and the proposal to erect three (3) sheds on site;

'3.4.2
Natural features and landscapes, including locally distinctive landforms and prominent ridgelines, and general visual amenity values should be protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development, in particular by:

(b) ensuring that the ***visual effects of buildings can be absorbed without significant adverse effects on the landscape***

*(c****) locating buildings and development so as to integrate them with the surrounding landscape and backdrops, to avoid dominating the landscape***

(d) designing subdivision so that potential development, including ***building platforms****, fences and vehicle accesses, are* ***located sympathetically in the landscape***

3.4.3

Rural land uses, including productive rural activities*, should predominate in the* ***Rural*** *and Coastal* ***Zones.***

3.4.4

Rural landscapes and amenity values should be maintained by avoiding cumulative adverse effects of subdivision use, and development.'

4.7. The project AEE outlines all rules in the rural zone that are applicable to the proposal.

Waikato District Plan (Proposed – Appeals Version / Operative in Part)

4.8. The site sits within the GRUZ – General Rural Zone within the Waikato District Plan (Proposed – Appeals Version / Operative in part) (WDP-P/OIP), the project AEE outlines all rules within the GRUZ that are applicable to the proposal.

5. Proposal

5.1. This overview of the proposal should be read in conjunction with the project architectural drawings.

[9] WDP-O – Part 1: Issues, Objectives, Policies – Section 3: Natural features and landscapes – Sub-section 3.4 Issue – Landscape and Visual Amenity Values

Layout

5.2. The proposal involves the installation of a steel manufacturing plant that will be located, in the majority across the northern plain of the site and will have two access points, the first from the Hampton Downs Road and the second from the existing access road.

5.3. The proposed diagrammatic layout of the steel manufacturing plant is shown below in Figure 7;

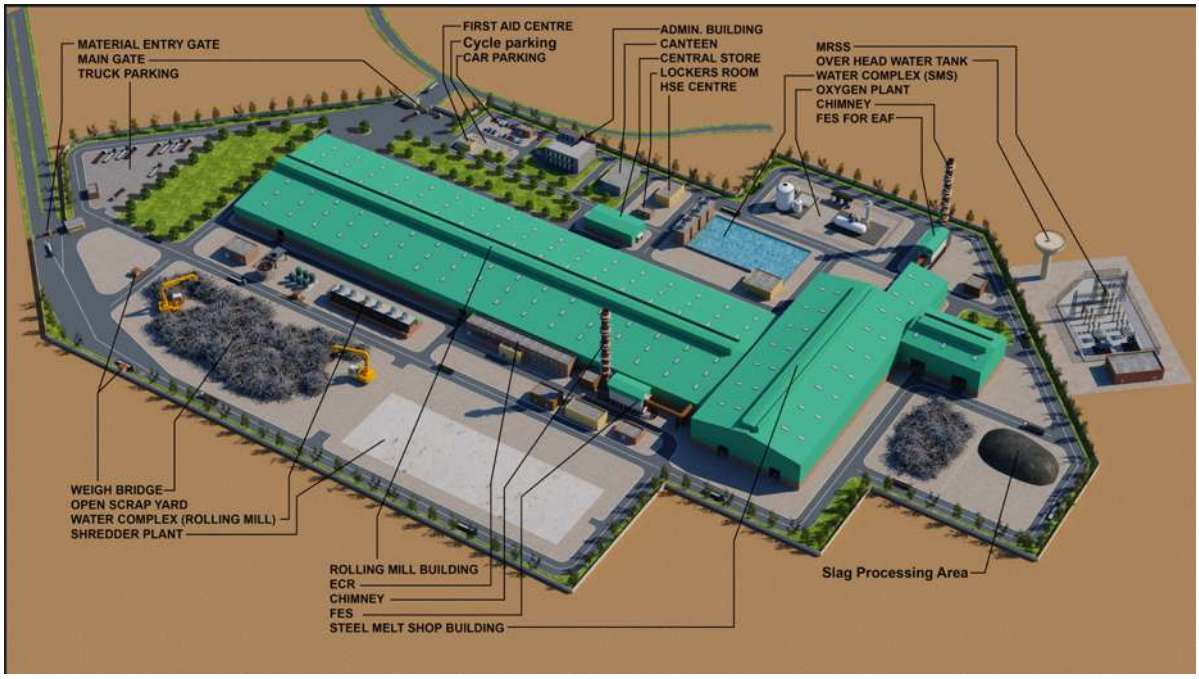


Figure 7 – Proposed steel manufacturing plant showing various elements

5.4. The various elements within the proposed steel manufacturing plant are outlined in the above the image with the heights of the various elements outlined below in Table 3.

Table 3: Heights of built form relative to proposed GL

Proposed Steel manufacturing plant	
Description	Height
Steel Melt Shop Building	35m
Rolling Mill	20m
Admin Building	7m
Canteen	7m
HSE Centre	4m
Central Store	6m
Stack (Chimney – two numbers)	55m (Steel melt shop) / 56m (Reheating furnace)
Over Head Water Tank	30m

5.5. If the proposed steel manufacturing plant as shown in Figure 7 then it would measure approximately 405m x 713m, this not inclusive of all associated earthworks / batter slopes required to accommodate the proposed steel plant within the landscape. Figure 8 below provides an image of the proposed steel manufacturing plant in plan view showing the aforementioned '405m x 713m box'.

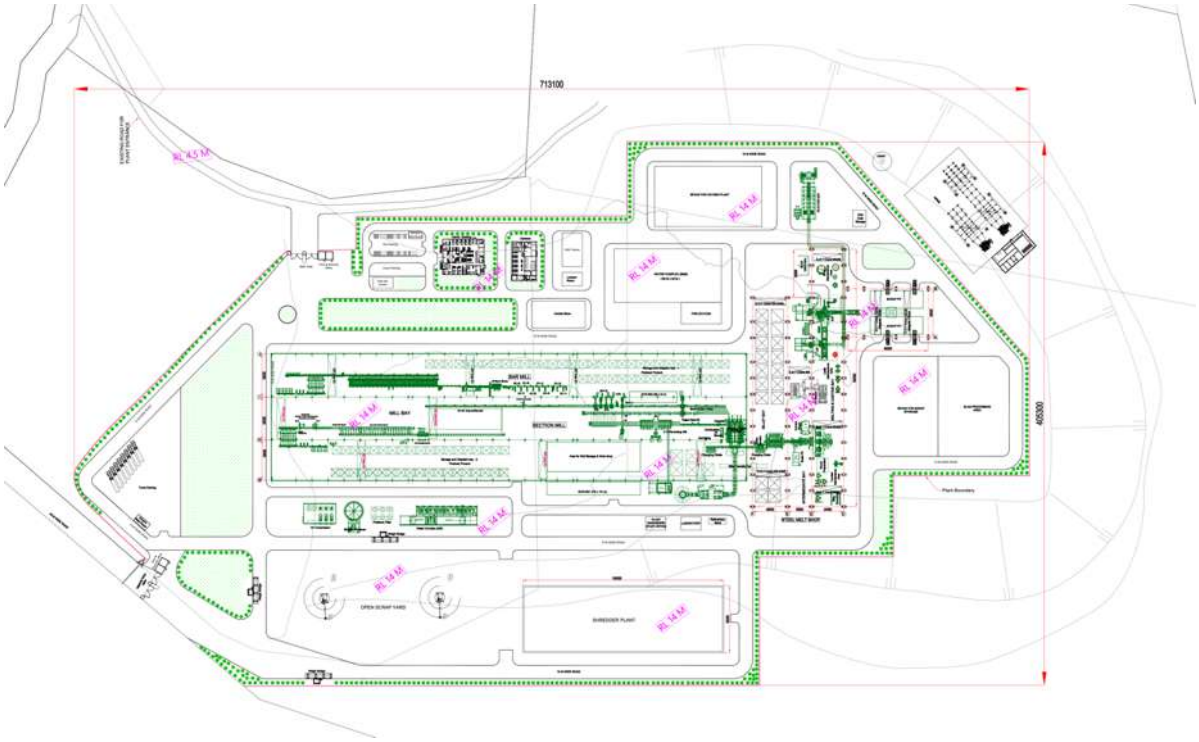


Figure 8 – Proposed steel manufacturing plant in plan view ('within box') [10]

5.6. The total approximate area of the facility as outlined above is approximately 21.2ha.

5.7. The total approximate GFA of individual buildings is listed below in Table 4.

Table 4: Heights of built form relative to proposed GL

Proposed Steel manufacturing plant	
Description	Approximate GFA
Steel Melt Shop Building	1.75ha / 10750 sq.m
Rolling Mill	3.4ha / 34000 sq.m
Admin Building	835 sq.m
Canteen	600 sq.m
HSE Centre	380 sq.m
Central Store	800 sq.m
Stack (Chimney – two numbers)	N/A
Over Head Water Tank	N/A

Earthworks / Retaining

[10] Source: 'Concept Plan Layout' (Drawing: 2320-002) – RSA (Date: 02.02.24)

5.8. The below plan provides an image of the proposed contours with the layout provided in Figure 8.

Figure 9 – Proposed steel manufacturing plant layout with proposed contours [11]

5.9. In order to accommodate the proposed steel plant a flat platform at an RL of +14m is required. As a frame of reference the portion of Harness Road near the northern boundary of the site has an approximate RL of +10m. In order to provide this platform a batter slope of 9m vertical height from the existing plain will be required to achieve the required +14m height. At the southern boundary of the site, the knolls / mounds shown in Figure 3 will need to be altered to provide for a batter slope sloping down from an RL of +21m (labelled as 'mono fill' on the above plan) to the aforementioned RL of +14m. An additional batter slope is also required farther to the south above an approximate +35m RL (which is a flat bench) that ranges up to +45m to meet the prevailing topography.

5.10. The various platforms at the southern edge will integrate with the existing rolling landscape in terms of levels, this is illustrated Figure 10 below in which provides a diagrammatic 3d view of the proposed contouring in conjunction with the existing landform (note that there is a variation in the below from the above plan, with the variation occurring at the 'mono fill' area, however, for the purpose of the 3d view is

[11] Source: '61 Hampton Downs Site – Earthworks Platform – Option 8 V3' (Drawing: DRSL560) – RAVSURVEY LTD – (Date: 20/05/2025)

appropriate to provide a ‘look and feel’ of how the proposal will sit within the landscape from a 3D perspective.’

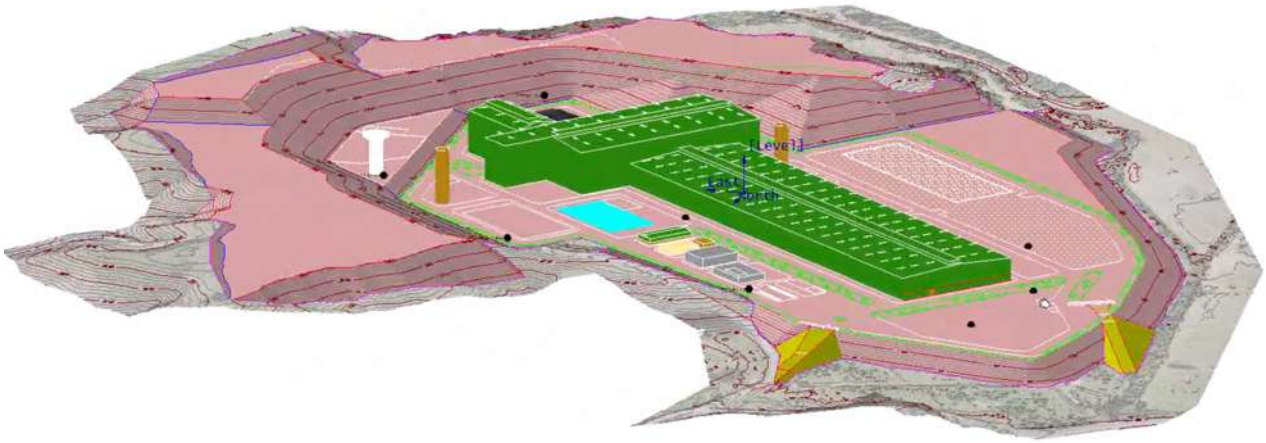


Figure 10 – Proposed steel manufacturing plant layout with proposed land modification against existing landform (diagrammatic view only) [12]

5.11. The extent of the earthworks for the main platform is approximately 32.7ha, when considering the outer platforms the extent of earthworks is approximately 48.7ha.

5.12. Figure 11 below outlines the proposed cut and fill across the site.

[12] Source: Earthtech

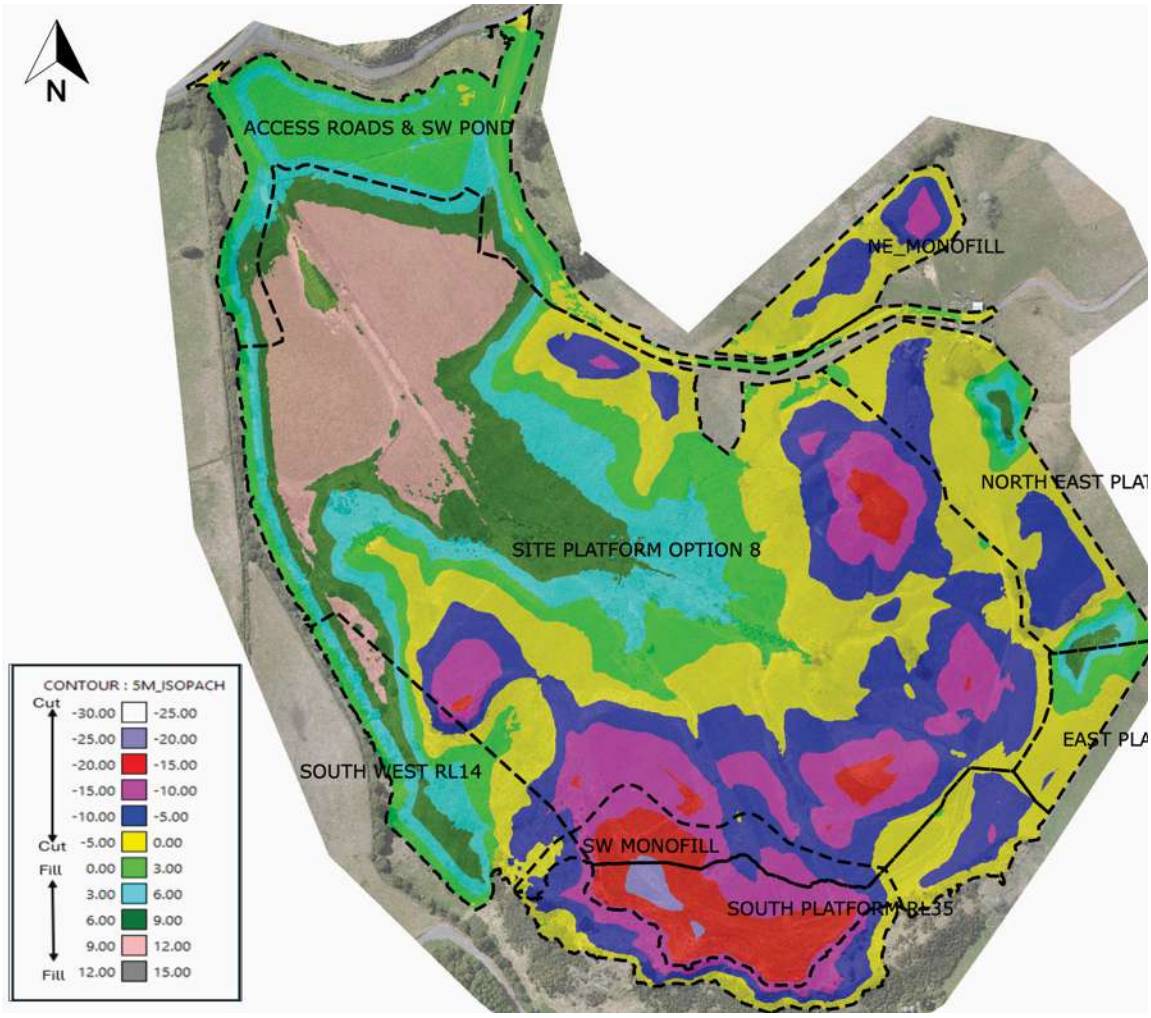


Figure 11 – Proposed cut and fill plan [13]

Heights of various elements within the landscape

5.13. The heights provided in Table 3 represent those of the built elements from the proposed ground level, below provides the relative heights of these elements within the landscape, taking into account the proposed building platform at RL + 14m. As a frame of reference the high point of the southern boundary of the site (as shown in Figure 2) have a surveyed level of approximately +40m.

Table 5: Heights of built form with the landscape (approximate RL levels)

Proposed Steel manufacturing plant		
Description	Height	RL height
Steel Melt Shop Building	35m	+49m
Rolling Mill	20m	+34m
Admin Building	7m	+21m
Canteen	7m	+21m
HSE Centre	4m	+18m

[13] Source: '61 Hampton Downs Site – Option 8 V2 – Proposed Cut & Fill Plan (Drawing: DRSL558) – RAVSURVEY LTD – (Date: 19/05/2025)

Central Store	6m	+20m
Stack (Chimney – two numbers)	55m (Steel melt shop) / 56m (Reheating furnace)	+69m / +70m
Over Head Water Tank	30m	+44m

5.14. Therefore, taking the above into account it can be assumed that the chimney stacks will be visible across the landscape, with the remainder of the proposed steel plant being nestled within the existing landscape.

External Finishes Palette

5.15. No formal external finishes has been proposed as of the date of authoring of this report, however the colours shown in Figure 7 can be considered to be those that will be utilised for the proposed built-form at site.

Building Coverages

5.16. As outlined in section 5.6 the total approximate area of the proposed steel manufacturing plant is approximately 21.2ha (excluding outer platforms) which accounts for approximately 39.5% of the total site area.

Planting Response

5.17. The applicant is proposing to plant native planting across the engineered slopes, this planting will serve to soften the ‘engineered’ edges of these landforms.

5.18. Planting is proposed within the proposed steel manufacturing plant itself at the fence line boundaries.

5.19. The purpose of the proposed planting is not to provide screening to the proposed steel manufacturing plant (as this is not possible due to the height of some elements), but rather to provide additional vegetation across the landscape.

6. Assessment of landscape effects

Physical landscape effects

6.1. This section considers the physical effects of the proposal outlined in section 5 upon the natural landscape elements of the site and its immediate surrounds (as identified in section 2.1). The effect of the proposal upon the landscape elements of the site is linked to the landscape’s sensitivity to change.

6.2. Physical landscape effects are not necessarily limited to the site itself, but also to immediately surrounding areas. For example, if a site was sitting on a slope that formed part of a greater landform, flattening that portion of the slope could be

considered to be an adverse effect not only the site itself but also the surrounding landscape.

Effects on the immediate site - Physical landscape effects

6.3. In order to accommodate the proposal land modification is required, this modification is outlined through sections 5.8-5.12 (and associated figures).

6.4. Figure 12 below provides a cross section through the approximate mid-point of the proposal indicating the existing landform and the proposed platforms showing the required cut and fill. Within the cross section the black line represent the proposed land profile and the brown line represents the existing land profile – note that a larger version of the below figure is provided in Appendix 2.

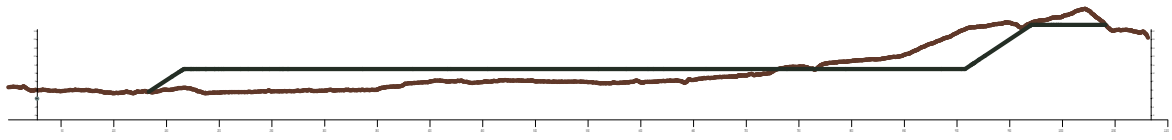


Figure 12 – Long section through centre of proposal showing modification to land profile [14]

6.5. As shown in Figure 12 above in order to accommodate the proposed steel manufacturing plant the land surrounding the plant will take on more an 'engineered' arrangement rather than the natural rolling contours currently present. Whilst some land modification exists across the landscape this is considerably smaller in scale and is largely limited to the creation of building platforms for rural-residential properties and their associated entrance ways. Whereas the land modification proposed within the site will result in a large scale, discernible alteration to the rolling landscape.

6.6. In terms of natural processes the existing overland water flow as shown in Figure 6, will require modification to move around the outside of the proposed steel plant, this is outlined in the engineering reports.

6.7. All vegetation within the earthworks area will be required to be removed to accommodate the proposal (inclusive of those areas outside of the platforms as the slope modification will require vegetation removal to grade the batter slopes).

6.8. The applicant has proposed to plant the embankments surrounding the proposed steel manufacturing plant, this would, in my opinion (based on site observations) at a minimum allow for replacement (in terms of overall bio-mass) of the plants that will be required to be removed and most likely provide plant coverage over and above what is currently present across the site. I recommend that this planting is installed as soon as is practically possible in order to allow the plants to be close and/or near maturity when the proposed steel manufacturing plant is completed.

[14] Source: Adapted from Figure 4.1 – 'Preliminary Geotechnical Assessment Report' – 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs – Prepared by Earthtech Consulting – 3 May 2024 – Ref: R4392-2

6.9. The altering of the rolling landscape profile will have an effect on landscape character as it will provide an interruption to the rhythm of the rolling landscape and will also introduce an engineered landform within a natural landscape.

6.10. The presence of the steel plant in itself will assist in providing a degree of mitigation to potential effects of the modified landform on landscape character by providing an element that can be readily associated with a more industrial character that complements the existing infrastructure and facilities located within the surrounding landscape. This closer association with a more industrial landscape character softens the impact of the engineered landscape as this in itself can be closely associated with a more industrial character.

6.11. Whilst the modified landform will cause an interruption to the rhythm of the rolling landscape, such a break within the prevailing landscape patterning is not unprecedented within rural landscapes, as outlined in the aerial view shown below two such 'interruptions' occur within the surrounding landscape, one with the aforementioned landfill and the other with the Maramarua Quarry.

Figure 13 – Altered overland water flow [15]

6.12. Whist the aforementioned landfill and quarry do modify the landscape by introducing an engineered topography to the landscape rather than a naturalistic rolling topography, I do not consider that these elements degenerate from the prevailing landscape character to the point where they cause a change in

[15] Note: Yellow block represents site, red bocks represent modified, engineered land forms (landfill and quarry respectively)

perceptions as the landscape is so vast that in reality the visual rhythm created through the rolling landscape (that is an important constituent landscape character element) will only receive a very minor 'break' when considering the size of the land modification relative to the wider landscape necessarily impact the landscape character, if these breaks were larger than the prevailing landscape character values would be impacted to a greater degree to the point that the perception of the prevailing character could be changed.

6.13. Therefore, it is the structure itself and the associated activities that will have the potential to cause adverse effects on landscape character.

6.14. A steel manufacturing plant is not a piece of infrastructure that would be typically associated with a rural character, in terms of appearance and activity that occurs at such a facility. However, as outlined in the preceding analyses the landscape surrounding the site is not a-typical of a rural environment with the motorsport facility and corrections facility in particular not constituting activities that would be typically associated with a rural character. Also, the industrial park (refer section 3.3) will add an additional character element to the landscape that can be considered to be contrary to a traditional rural landscape character element.

6.15. Therefore, these surrounding non-traditional rural activities do provide a sense of absorption to the proposal in terms of effects on the prevailing landscape character values than if it was present in a more traditionally rural area and surrounded by traditional agricultural and horticultural activities as well as rural lifestyle properties.

6.16. Also, in contradiction to a traditional rural environment, the surrounding landscape experiences a number of traffic movements that is more akin to an urban environment. The main generators of these traffic movements are the landfill (which generates a number of heavy vehicle movements) and the corrections facility (which generates movements through staff vehicles and visitors to the facility). These traffic movements are predominantly fed by the adjacent SH1, which serves as the main transport corridor between Auckland and Hamilton

6.17. As per the project traffic assessment it is estimated that an average of 550 vehicle movements will occur per day, with 400 of these attributed to the 200 staff who will employed at the plant and an additional 150 generated by Trucks. Whilst these traffic movements would be degenerative to the local landscape character values in a traditional rural environment, within the contemporary setting such traffic movements can be considered consistent with those within a landscape that sits adjacent to a major transport corridor and sits within an environment that contains a number of large-scale facilities that generate traffic movements.

Effects on the surrounding areas - Physical landscape effects

6.18. No physical modifications are required outside of the site to accommodate the proposal. As outlined in section 6.6 (and associated figure) the overland flow is able to be contained within the site by modifying the drainage corridors to skirt around the edges of the proposed earthworks.

6.19. The physical effects within the site have the potential to effect the prevailing landscape character values, as has been outlined in the preceding sections 6.3-6.17.

Summary - Physical landscape effects

6.20. In terms of pure physical effects on the landscape (i.e.: earthworks, land modification, vegetation removal), taking into account the receiving environment already containing larger infrastructure elements not typical of a traditional rural setting I consider that the level of physical effects on the site required to accommodate the proposal to be **Moderate**[16] when equated with the NZILA seven point rating scale outlined in section 2.3.

6.21. In terms of the effects on landscape character caused by the physical changes (including the actual establishment of the proposed steel plant) to the landscape (and if this change does constitute an effect) I will provide an assessment of these in section 7 following the subsequent assessment of effects upon visual amenity.

Effects upon visual amenity

6.22. Visual amenity is another key component to people's identification and perception of landscape character. Visual amenity effects result from changes to specific views and the visual amenity experienced by people. The magnitude (or level) of change must be considered in relation to the sensitivity of the viewing audience when evaluating the significance of an effect. The sensitivity may be influenced by a number of factors, which include but are not limited to the number of people who may see it, the reason for being at the viewpoint or looking at the view, the existing character of the view, the duration for which the proposal may be seen and the viewing distance.

6.23. Landscape character is derived primarily from sensory experience, hence the viewing audience has a large bearing on determining if the development is detrimental to the prevailing landscape character. For example, a larger viewing audience viewing a perceived loss of character would have a higher adverse rating (refer section 2.1) than if a small viewing audience were to view the same perceived character loss.

Visual catchment and Viewing audiences

6.24. Viewpoints for analysis of effects on the localised landscape character were determined by analysing key public locations (reserves, public parks), nearby static viewpoints (bus stops, car parks) and, where possible, public areas near potential private viewing audiences.

[16] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

6.25. As the proposal contains multiple buildings / elements of various size and scale (refer sections 5.2- 5.7 and 5.13 - 5.16) only certain elements will be visible within the wider landscape due to obscuration by the surrounding landscape.

6.26. Utilising the contour information provided on the online Waikato regional planning maps[17] the following approximate maximum heights can be applied to the surrounding landscape;

- Mound between Hampton Downs Road and Harness Road +22m
- Harness Road (to North-East of site) + 22m
- Hampton Downs Car Park (at Hampton Downs Road) + 21m
- Maximum height oof site at south boundary + 40m

6.27. Taking the above into account and the RL heights of the various elements of the proposal as outlined in Table 5, and based upon my site observations, I am of the opinion that the following elements will be visible within the wider landscape.

- Steel melt shop building (RL + 49m) – The upper portions of the roof profile will likely be visible through the wider landscape, although its position at the southern edge of the proposal will afford it more obscuration from the surrounding landforms (both natural and modified) than if it was located at the northern extents of the building platform.

- Rolling mill (RL +34m) – Like the steel melt shop the upper portions of the roof profile will be visible through the wider landscape, albeit to a lesser degree and will sit lower than the high points of the site.

- Chimney Stacks (RL + 69m / +70m) – These upper portions of these structures will be visible across the wider landscape.

- Overhead Water Tank (+44m), the tank portion of this structure will be visible through the landscape, although it is a less bulker structure than those listed above.

The other structures outlined in Table 5 will be largely obscured from view within the wider landscape due to all having maximum RLs below +21m.

6.28. In terms of full visibility to the proposal will be visible in its full extent from Harness Road (i.e.: directly to the north), from Hampton Downs Road to the north-west of the site, from the high point of Harness Road (looking down towards the site) and from the private road section of Harness road (that leads to the correction facility and does not permit stopping on the road).

6.29. Based upon my site visit and analysis I consider that the primary public and private viewing audiences comprise the following:

6.30. *Public viewing audiences*

[17] https://waikatomaps.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Viewer/?map=8d6d6fda779b4e59951953ae97d0ec4a

- Hampton Downs Road (Viewpoint 2): Views are available to the site from the portion of Hampton Downs Road that sits to the north—west of the site and to the chimney stacks and potentially the upper portions of the melt shop when approaching the site travelling westwards.
- Harness Road (Viewpoints 1 and 3): Views are available to the site from the portions of the road that sit directly to the north of the site and at the hight point of Harness Road adjacent to the entry to 23 Harness Road.
- Springhill Road (Viewpoint 4): This road sits to the north of SH1 and runs at elevations that are congruent to the hight point of the site and thus views are available to the site from this corridor when travelling eastwards on this road.
- SH1 (Viewpoint 5): Views will be available towards the upper portions of the proposal (i.e.: the chimney stacks) when travelling southwards towards the site.

6.31. *Private viewing audiences*

Based upon site observations, there are three clusters of residential areas that have the potential to have views to the site, in terms of the neighbouring property (61B Hampton Downs Road) views would be available to the upper portions of the chimney stacks with the remainder of the proposal obscured by the prevailing topography. The aforementioned three clusters can all be equated to areas of the public realm and thus the assessment of effects on visual amenity from the public realm can be utilised to provide an assessment of effects on the below 'residential clusters'.

- Hampton Downs Road (SH1B): A cluster of housing is present on an extension of Hampton Downs Road (Chris Amon Drive). The southernmost dwelling (136 Hampton Downs Road) of this cluster will have the greatest exposure to the site (the remainder will likely have the view towards the proposal obscured or limited to the chimney stacks), therefore the assessment of effects from viewpoint 2 can be applied to 136 Hampton Downs Road.
- Springhill Road: Two clusters of residential dwellings are present on Springhill Road that have potential to have views towards the site, these are located to the north-east (refer analysis of effects for viewpoint 4).

Due to the size of proposal and the heights of some of the elements it is possible that the upper portions (specifically the chimney stacks) will be visible from other locations than those listed above, however I consider that those listed above the greatest exposure to the site and thus my analysis of effects on visual amenity experienced on the private realm will be limited to the aforementioned private lots.

Assessment Viewpoints

6.32. Having visited the site I can conclude that the proposal will have limited exposure to the public realm due to the presence of the larger 'existing strong storage shed 1', the

existing *Pittosporum* hedge row and the neighbouring Japanese cedar shelter belt which combine to provide a high level of obscuration to the location of the proposal.

6.33. The assessment viewpoints are described in more detail in Table 3 below with a map indicating the location of these viewpoints located in Appendix 3. The photographs, which represent these viewpoints, are shown in appendices 4.1-4.5.

6.34. Note that 'degree of visibility' within the below table refers to the visibility of the proposal in its final developed form (refer section 5) and 'distance to site' refers to the distance to the closest point of the boundary of the subject site.

Table 6: Assessment viewpoints

VP No.	Direction of View	Distance to site	Degree of visibility (Full / Partial / Obscured)	Reason for Selection
V01	South	Approx. 185m	Full	Approximate initial view towards the proposed steel manufacturing plant (excluding views from afar of the chimney stacks) when entering Harness Road (turning right after having bypassed the round between site and motorsport park.
V02	South-East	Approx. 390m	Full	Approximate initial view towards the proposed steel manufacturing plant (excluding views from afar of the chimney stacks) when approaching from the cluster of residential properties to the north-west of the site (located at Hampton Downs Road and Chris Amon Drive)
V03	South-West	Approx. 460m	Partial	Approximate initial view towards the proposed steel manufacturing plant (excluding views from afar of the chimney stacks) when entering Harness Road (turning right at the Gull Station near the intersection with SH1)
V04	South	Approx. 1870m	Partial	Represents the view from Springhill Road at a position that is at the approximate level of the high point of site. Based on my site observations this portion of roadway (when travelling eastwards) is where the site (and proposal) are / will be most visible from within Springhill Road.
V05	South	Approx. 2970m	Partial	Represents the view from SH1 towards the site when travelling southwards (i.e.: travelling from Auckland towards Hamilton).

Assessment of Visual Amenity Effects

6.35. The visual effects likely to result from this proposal are described below in relation to the respective viewpoints. ‘Existing View’ refers to the contemporary view as it is presented in the supplied viewpoint images that append this report (i.e.: without the proposal present), ‘Proposed View’ refers to the view that is anticipated when the proposal is installed.

Viewpoint V01: Harness Road

6.36. This viewpoint is obtained when entering Harness Road having passed by the motorsport park and turning right from Hampton Down Roads. At present the site is obscured by a mound that sits between the motorsport park and the site, in terms of the proposal it is highly likely that prior to reaching this point within the landscape any viewing audience will have viewed the upper portions of chimney stacks and potentially the upper portions of the roof profile of the steel melt shop building.

Existing View:

The view currently encapsulates the majority of the site, which presents as a ‘typical rural landscape’. Prior to reaching this point any potential viewing audience will have passed by the motorsport park, the (currently under development) industrial park and may have passed by large trucks taking waste to and/or leaving the landfill that sits to the north-west of the site. Additionally any viewing audience will most likely have accessed this viewpoint location from State Highway 1.

Proposed View:

The presence of the steel manufacturing plant will result in a change in outlook from that of a traditional rural scene to one more resembling an industrial scene.

As outlined in the opening paragraph of this sub-section prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have seen the upper portions of the 2 x chimney stacks and potentially the upper portions of the steel melt shop building, thus these would have provided some visual cues a larger industrial feature sitting within the landscape. In essence, meaning that the appearance of the steel manufacturing plant would not be a ‘surprise’ and instantly appear within the landscape.

As outlined in the preceding paragraphs the proposed steel manufacturing plant will sit within a ‘precinct’ of larger facilities / infrastructure within the landscape and prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have passed by the motorsport park and the (currently under development) industrial park prior. These would both give visual cues (along with sightings of the aforementioned chimney stacks) that an element not associated with a traditional rural character will be present.

Collectively, both of these aforementioned points contribute to a sense of expectation that a built-form element that is not associated with a traditional rural character will be present at the site.

The landscape modifications at the upper portions of the site will be visible at higher elevations than the main body of the steel plant (i.e.: where they are not obscured). These will sit in contrast to the rolling landscape (as does the proposed steel manufacturing plant), as the planting on these modified portions of the landscape matures this sense of contrast will reduce as the sharp/engineered edges of the land modification will be softened by the proposed planting.

Combing this 'softening measure' with the sense of expectation outlined above both contribute to providing a degree of mitigation to the presence of a steel manufacturing plant with a traditionally (from a visual perspective) rural landscape setting.

In ascribing a rating of effects, the size of the potential viewing audience must also be taken into account and I consider that the viewing audience at this juncture will be relatively low in number as this portion of road will be predominantly used by vehicles accessing the site and not the general public.

Therefore, taking the above factors into account I am of the opinion that that the effects upon visual amenity of the proposal from this viewpoint (represented by three images) can be considered to be **low-moderate**[18].

Viewpoint V02: Hampton Downs Road (near residential cluster – close to intersection with Harness Road)

6.37. This viewpoint is obtained from Hampton Down Roads and will be encountered by residents of the properties that are accessed off Chris Amon Place as this portion of Hampton Downs Road links back to SH1.

Existing View:

The view currently encapsulates the majority of the site, which presents as a 'typical rural landscape'. Prior to reaching this point any potential viewing audience will have passed through similar landscapes although would have had views towards the motorsport park and the (currently under development) industrial park. In terms of the proposal, as per the assessment of viewpoint 1 (refer section 6.36) the 2 x chimney stacks will likely have been visible prior to reaching this point in the landscape.

Proposed View:

The presence of the steel manufacturing plant will result in a change in outlook from that of a traditional rural scene to one more resembling an industrial scene.

[18] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

As outlined in the opening paragraph of this sub-section prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have seen the upper portions of the 2 x chimney stacks and potentially the upper portions of the steel melt shop building, thus these would have provided some visual cues a larger industrial feature sitting within the landscape. In essence, meaning that the appearance of the steel manufacturing plant would not be a 'surprise' and instantly appear within the landscape.

As outlined in the preceding paragraphs the proposed steel manufacturing plant will sit within a 'precinct' of larger facilities / infrastructure within the landscape and prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have had views towards the motorsport park and the (currently under development) industrial park prior. These would both give visual cues (along with sightings of the aforementioned chimney stacks) that an element not associated with a traditional rural character will be present.

Collectively, both of these aforementioned points contribute to a sense of expectation that a built-form element that is not associated with a traditional rural character will be present at the site.

It should also be noted that access to the aforementioned residential cluster of dwellings at Chris Amon Place is through the road that this viewpoint is obtained from (i.e.: one way in way out). Therefore this would not represent an 'initial view' as such in that in travelling back and forth the 2 x chimney stacks would have been seen through the wider landscape.

The landscape modifications at the upper portions of the site will be visible at higher elevations than the main body of the steel plant (i.e.: where they are not obscured). These will sit in contrast to the rolling landscape (as does the proposed steel manufacturing plant), as the planting on these modified portions of the landscape matures this sense of contrast will reduce as the sharp/engineered edges of the land modification will be softened by the proposed planting.

Combing this 'softening measure' with the sense of expectation outlined above both contribute to providing a degree of mitigation to the presence of a steel manufacturing plant with a traditionally (from a visual perspective) rural landscape setting.

In ascribing a rating of effects, the size of the potential viewing audience must also be taken into account and I consider that the viewing audience at this juncture will be relatively low in number as it is part of a 'one way in way out' access rather than a loop road and will consist largely of local residents as opposed to unique visitors.

Therefore, taking the above factors into account I am of the opinion that that the effects upon visual amenity of the proposal from this viewpoint (represented by three images) can be considered to be **moderate**[19].

[19] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

Viewpoint V03: Harness Road (adjacent to entrance to 23 Hampton Downs Road)

6.38. This viewpoint is obtained from the high point of Harness Road and looks down over the site, this view would be obtained by entering harness Road at the intersection with the Gull fuel station and travelling southwards towards the site. This view is taken near the entrance to 23 Hampton Downs Road, which is not a residential property, but rather a commercial operation.

Existing View:

The flatter portions of the site are largely obscured by an existing shelter belt (that does not form part of the site) although large amounts of the upper reaches are visible The supplied image in appendix 4.3 does not encapsulate the full view of the site, this shown below in Figure 14, with a larger image provided in Appendix 4.3a.

Figure 14 – Panoramic image towards site from near entrance to 23 Hampton Downs Road [20]

Prior to reaching this point any potential viewing audience will have passed by the motorsport park, the (currently under development) industrial park and may have passed by large trucks taking waste to and/or leaving the landfill that sits to the north-west of the site. Additionally any viewing audience will most likely have accessed this viewpoint location from State Highway 1.

Proposed View:

The presence of the steel manufacturing plant will result in a change in outlook from that of a traditional rural scene to one more resembling an industrial scene.

As outlined in the opening paragraph of this sub-section prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have seen the upper portions of the 2 x chimney stacks, thus this would have provided a visual cue to a larger industrial feature sitting within the landscape. In essence, meaning that the appearance of the steel manufacturing plant would not be a ‘surprise’ and instantly appear within the landscape.

As outlined in the preceding paragraphs the proposed steel manufacturing plant will sit within a ‘precinct’ of larger facilities / infrastructure within the landscape and prior to reaching this viewpoint any viewing audience will most likely have had views towards the motorsport park. This would also provide visual cues (along with

[20] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024

sightings of the aforementioned chimney stacks) that an element not associated with a traditional rural character will be present.

Collectively, both of these aforementioned points contribute to a sense of expectation that a built-form element that is not associated with a traditional rural character will be present at the site.

It should also be noted that the proposed steel manufacturing plant will not be fully visible within the landscape and large portion on the flat will be obscured by the existing shelter belt that is located off site, although it is noted that the applicant has no control over whether this shelter belt remains in place and is maintained at the existing height and that removal of this shelter belt would open full views to the proposed steel manufacturing plant.

The landscape modifications at the upper portions of the site will be visible at higher elevations than the main body of the steel plant (i.e.: where they are not obscured). These will sit in contrast to the rolling landscape (as does the proposed steel manufacturing plant), as the planting on these modified portions of the landscape matures this sense of contrast will reduce as the sharp/engineered edges of the land modification will be softened by the proposed planting.

Combing this 'softening measure' with the sense of expectation outlined above both contribute to providing a degree of mitigation to the presence of a steel manufacturing plant with a traditionally (from a visual perspective) rural landscape setting.

In ascribing a rating of effects, the size of the potential viewing audience must also be taken into account and I consider that the viewing audience at this juncture will be relatively low in number as it is located on a road that services a small number of properties.

Therefore, taking the above factors into account I am of the opinion that that the effects upon visual amenity of the proposal from this viewpoint (represented by three images) can be considered to be **low-moderate**[21].

Viewpoint V04: Springhill Road (adj to 337 Springhill Road)

6.39. This viewpoint represents the view from Springhill Road at a position that is at the approximate level of the high point of site. Based on my site observations this portion of roadway (when travelling eastwards) is where the site (and proposal) are / will be most visible from within Springhill Road.

Existing View:

The lower portions of the site are obscured from view by both the motorsport park and the prevailing topography with only the upper portions visible. The upper

[21] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

portions of the security wall at the corrections facility are also visible behind the motorsport park.

The majority of the view contains a traditional rural landscape consisting of a rolling landscape with large blocks of shelter belt and forestry planting interspersed with fragments of native vegetation.

The below panoramic image (larger image provided in Appendix 4.4a) provides a wider range of the view provided in appendix 4.4 showing the extent of the 'traditional rural landscape' across the landscape.

Figure 15 – Panoramic Image of view from Springhill Road [22]

Proposed View:

Visibility to the proposed steel manufacturing plant will be to the upper portions only (the 2 x chimney stacks and the upper reaches of the roof profile of the steel melt shop).

The aforementioned portions of the proposed steel manufacturing plant will be viewed in conjunction with the motorsport park and will appear to sit behind it when observed from this viewpoint.

When referencing the viewpoint imagery I am of the opinion, that the presence of the motorsport park does not unduly effect the visual amenity from this viewpoint by way of not compromising the views to the traditional rural landscape by not obscuring the profile of the rolling landscape.

Whilst the proposed steel manufacturing plant will contain more vertical elements than the motorsport park (namely the chimney stacks) it will not take up the same amount of 'space' within the landscape as the motorsport park, therefore I do not believe that it will adversely affect the visual amenity as it will not interrupt the rhythm of the rolling landscape.

Therefore, taking the above factors into account I am of the opinion that that the effects upon visual amenity of the proposal from this viewpoint (represented by three images) can be considered to be **low**[23].

Viewpoint V05: SH1 (at intersection with Dragway Road)

[22] Source: My image taken 08/11/2024
[23] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

6.40. This viewpoint is intended to represent the view from SH1 towards the site when travelling southwards (i.e.: travelling from Auckland towards Hamilton).

Existing View:

The site is largely indiscernible from the remainder of the rolling rural landscape, although the motorsport park is visible.

In my opinion the most dominant landscape element from this viewpoint is the pine forest that sits atop the ridgeline as this presents a large block of dark green contrasting against the sky, but also allows for an accentuation of the ridgeline profile.

Proposed View:

Visibility to the proposed steel manufacturing plant will be to the upper portions only with only the chimney stacks conceivably visible at the distance of this viewpoint (approx. 2970m).

The two chimneys whilst visible will not be the dominant landscape element within the view from this viewpoint and, in my opinion, will have a negligible impact upon the visual rhythm of the rolling landscape.

When getting closer to the site the chimney stacks will become more prominent, however I am of the opinion that any impact on visual amenity will still remain negligible due to limited interruption of visual rhythm to the rolling landscape.

Therefore, taking the above factors into account I am of the opinion that that the effects upon visual amenity of the proposal from this viewpoint can be considered to be **very low**[24].

Summary of Effects on Visual Amenity - Public Realm

6.41. A summary of visual effects anticipated from each scheduled viewpoint is provided in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Assessment of Effects Viewpoints

VP No.	Level of effect on visual amenity
V01	Low-Moderate
V02	Moderate
V03	Low-Moderate
V04	Low
V05	Very Low

[24] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

6.42. The subject site is currently well nestled within the landscape due to the prevailing topography and is indiscernible from the wider rolling landscape and has limited exposure to the wider landscape.

6.43. When considered in isolation placing a steel manufacturing plant within a landscape that has the appearance of a traditional rural landscape is a change that would result in a significant effect to visual amenity.

6.44. However, when viewed in the context of the wider landscape whilst the change will cause an effect this will not be at a level if considered in isolation.

6.45. This mitigation of effects is derived from the current environment in that the site sits within a 'precinct' that contains a motorsport park, corrections facility, land fill and a (under development) industrial park. Thus, the environment in which the proposed steel manufacturing plant will be established is modified from a traditional rural environment to one that contains a 'precinct' of activities that are not traditionally associated with rural amenity. This creates a sense of expectation that a non-traditional rural-activity will be potentially present on the site.

6.46. Also, as outlined in section 6.42, the site is well nestled within the landscape and thus, as outlined through sections 6.36-6.40 prior to viewing the proposed steel manufacturing plant in its entirety, the majority of viewing audiences will have had a view towards the upper reaches of the two chimney stacks, thus these provide a visual cue that an activity not traditionally associated with rural amenity will be present on the site. This creates a sense of expectation that a non-traditional rural-activity will be potentially present on the site.

6.47. Overall, taking these factors, and the preceding individual viewpoint analyses into consideration the cumulative effects of the proposal on visual amenity with regards to potential adverse effects on the prevailing landscape character from within the public realm are considered to be **Low-Moderate.**[25]

Analysis of Visual Effects - Private Realm

6.48. As outlined in section 6.31, there are dwellings on Springhill Road (namely 335, 336, 347, 376, 377, 389 and 400 Springhill Road) that will have views to the upper portions of the proposal – as outlined in section 6.31 the viewpoint analysis undertaken for viewpoint 4 (refer section 6.39) as this image was taken at the same approximate elevation as these dwellings (and their associated outdoor living spaces) and thus the level of effect on visual amenity generated by the proposal can be considered to be **Low.**[26]

6.49. As outlined in section 6.31, views will be available (to the south) of the proposal from within 136 Hampton Downs Road, specifically at the southern yard as outlined in section 6.31 the viewpoint analysis undertaken for viewpoint 2 (refer section 6.37) as this image was taken at the same approximate elevation as this aforementioned property and with a view at the same approximate angle, thus the

[25] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022
[26] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

level of effect on visual amenity generated by the proposal can be considered to be **Moderate.**[27]

7. Assessment of effect on landscape character

7.1. In the 'Physical landscape effects' section of this report (refer sections 6.1-6.21) I have made an analysis of both the physical effects generated by the proposal and how these will potentially impact the prevailing landscape character values as defined through sections 3.21- 3.29.

7.2. As outlined through sections 6.9-6.21the site is located within an area that whilst having natural elements that can be considered atypical of a 'natural rural character' (rolling landscape, fragments of native vegetation, blocks of exotic vegetation in rectilinear form across the landscape, both natural and engineered waterways) contains elements not typically associated with rural character, including the Hampton Downs Motorsport Park, Springhill Corrections Facility, Landfill, Hampton Downs Industrial Park and SH1.

7.3. These aforementioned infrastructure / facility elements combine to create a 'precinct' of facilities, all of which contribute to activities not typical of a rural environment. Thus this creates a 'sense of place' for the local area by having portions of the landscape, that from a visual perspective, form what is traditionally a rural character but contain large infrastructure elements that from a visual perspective but also from an aural perspective create an atmosphere that is not traditionally rural.

7.4. Therefore, the presence of a steel manufacturing plant sitting amongst a modified landscape (using straight edges as opposed to a rolling form) and the actives subsequently generated by this proposal (i.e.: increased traffic movements and emissions from chimney stacks and noise from the factory plants) in the current environment fits within the informal 'precinct' of traditional non-rural activities and thus does not unduly degenerate from the prevailing rural character values identified through sections 3.21- 3.29.

7.5. Therefore, taking into account the physical effects upon the landscape, the presence of the proposed steel manufacturing plant upon visual amenity and the activities generated by the proposed steel manufacturing plant, I consider the effects on the prevailing landscape character values to be **Moderate.**[28]

8. Conclusion

The proposal will see the establishment of a steel manufacturing plant within a landscape that whilst containing natural features and elements of activity that can

[27] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022
[28] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022

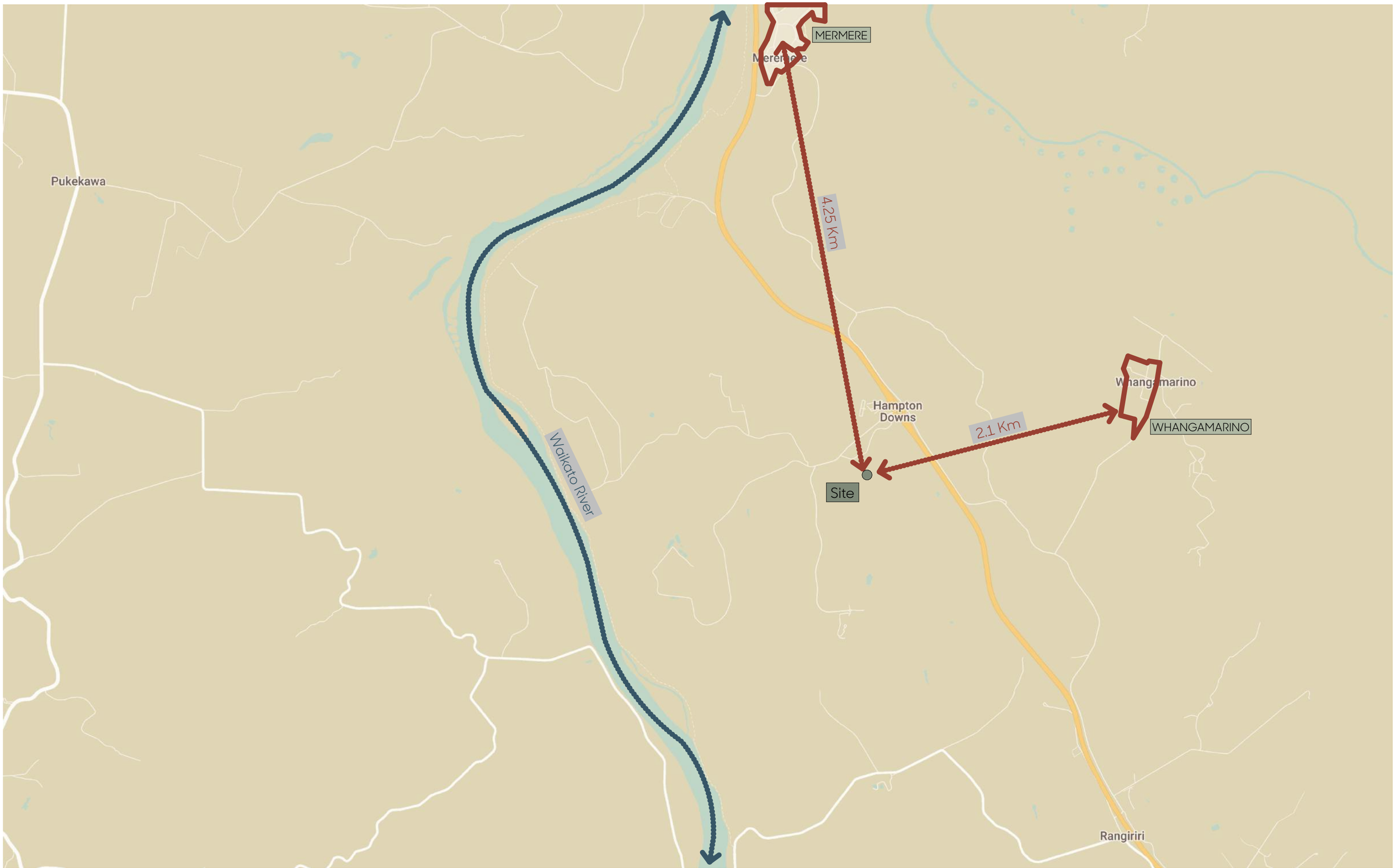
be associated with a traditional rural character contains a number of large pieces of infrastructure that facilitate activities not typically associated with a traditional rural character.

This, therefore, creates a ‘sense of place’ that provides a degree of mitigation that reduces the potential level of effect on both visual amenity and the local landscape character values brought about the change to the landscape of the presence of the steel manufacturing plant on both visual amenity and the local landscape character values.

In order to accommodate the proposed steel manufacturing plant the landscape within the site must be modified in such a manner that the overland water flow is diverted around the edges of the site towards the on-site engineered water channels. The landform surrounding the site will change, in terms of visual appearance, from a naturalistic rolling landscape to an engineered landscape. The applicant will be planting these ‘engineered’ portions of the landscape which will assist in mitigating effects on visual amenity by softening the harder ‘engineered’ edges within the landscape.

Overall, for the reasons outlined in detail in this report, I consider that the level of cumulative adverse landscape effects generated by the proposal will be **Moderate.**[29]

[29] Te Tangi A Te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines – Published July 2022



Client
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Project
Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 1.1 - Regional Context

Issue Date
25/05/25

Issue
FINAL - R00

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Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 1.2 - Local Context

Issue Date
25/05/25

Issue
FINAL - R00

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Fig 2 - Larger Image

Fig 3 - Larger Image

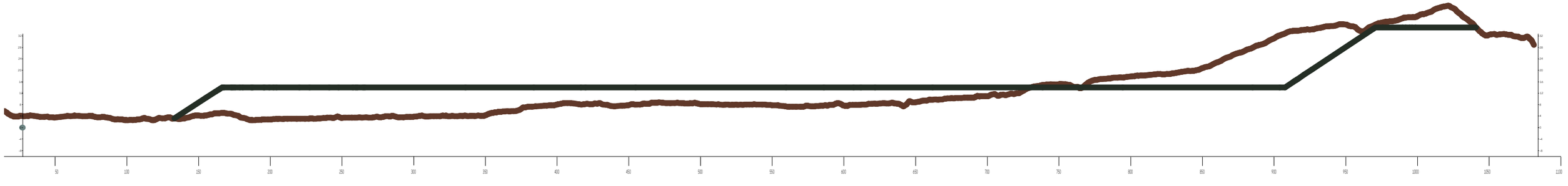

Fig 12 - Larger Image (Long Section)

Client National Steel Limited	Project Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland	Drawing Appendix 2 - Larger Image of Fig 2, Fig 3 and Fig 14 (Panorama)	Issue Date 25/05/25 Issue FINAL - R00	greenwood associates

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Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 3 - Viewpoint Location Map

Issue Date
25/05/25

Issue
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Project
Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 4.1 - Viewpoint 1

Camera: Nikon D5100
Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS
Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length
Image date: 8th November 2024

Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3
Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance.
Distance to site: Approx.185m

Issue Date
25/05/25
Issue
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Drawing
Appendix 4.2 - Viewpoint 2

Camera: Nikon D5100
Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS
Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length
Image date: 8th November 2024

Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3
Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance.
Distance to site: Approx. 390m

Issue Date
25/05/25
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Drawing
Appendix 4.3 - Viewpoint 3

Camera: Nikon D5100
Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS
Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length
Image date: 8th November 2024

Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3
Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance.
Distance to site: Approx. 470m

Issue Date
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Fig 14 - Larger Image

Client National Steel Limited	Project Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland	Drawing Appendix 4.3a - Viewpoint 3a - Panoramic Image - (Enlargement of Fig 14)	Camera: Nikon D5100 Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length Image date: 8th November 2024	Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3 Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance. Distance to site: Approx. 470m	Issue Date 25/05/25 Issue FINAL - R00	greenwood associates

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Project
Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 4.4 - Viewpoint 4

Camera: Nikon D5100
Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS
Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length
Image date: 8th November 2024

Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3
Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance.
Distance to site: Approx.1870m

Issue Date
25/05/25
Issue
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Fig 15 - Larger Image

Client National Steel Limited	Project Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland	Drawing Appendix 4.4a - Viewpoint 4a - Panoramic Image - (Enlargement of Fig 15)	Camera: Nikon D5100 Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length Image date: 8th November 2024	Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3 Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance. Distance to site: Approx. 35m	Issue Date 25/05/25 Issue FINAL - R00	greenwood associates

Client
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Project
Landscape Assessment, 61 Hampton Downs Road, Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata, Auckland

Drawing
Appendix 4.5 - Viewpoint 5

Camera: Nikon D5100
Sensor: 23.6 x 15.6mm CMOS
Lens: AF-S NIKKON 18-55mm 1:3.5-5.6G Locked at 55mm Length
Image date: 8th November 2024

Image dimension: 400x267mm @ A3
Image to be viewed at: 500mm distance.
Distance to site: Approx.2970m

Issue Date
25/05/25
Issue
FINAL - R00

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