

**Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 – Substantive Application**

Specialist Response – LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

1.0 Application description	
<b>Application and property details</b>	
Fast-track project name:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">           Te Ara Hauāuru North West Rapid Transit (NWRT)            New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi         </div>
Fast-track application number:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">           FTAA-2511-1146         </div>
Resource consent numbers:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">           BUN60461580 (application reference) and specific resource consents:            LUC60461581 / DIS60461582 / CST60461583 / CST60461584 /            CST60461585 / WAT60461586 / LUS60461587 / LUS60461588         </div>
Notice of requirement numbers:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">           N.013232.02 (overall reference) and specific NoRs:   <b>NoR 1</b> Busway between Brigham Creek Rarawaru station and north of Westgate Te Waiarohia station (including stations, Park and Ride and all local road connections).   <b>NoR 2</b> Busway between north of Westgate Te Waiarohia station and north of Royal Road Mānutewhau station (including stations, Park and Ride and all local road connections).   <b>NoR 3</b> Busway between Royal Road Mānutewhau Station and Te Whau River (including all stations and local road connections).   <b>NoR 4</b> Brigham Creek Rarawaru station, including Park and Ride.   <b>NoR 5</b> Westgate Te Waiarohia station.   <b>NoR 6</b> Royal Road Mānutewhau station.   <b>NoR 7</b> Lincoln Road Wai o Pareira station.   <b>NoR 8</b> Te Atatū Ōrangihina station.   <b>NoR 9</b> Busway between Waterview interchange and west of Ivanhoe Road (including all stations and local road connections).   <b>NoR 10</b> Busway between Ivanhoe Road and Ian McKinnon Drive (including all stations and local road connections).   <b>NoR 11</b> Point Chevalier station.   <b>NoR 12</b> Western Springs station.         </div>
Site addresses:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">           Generally alongside State Highway 16 between Brigham Creek and Auckland City Centre – as detailed in NWRT application documents:            - Part 6.5 Property Schedule: Land within designation boundary; and            - Part 6.6 Property Schedule: Land adjacent to the designation boundary.         </div>

## 2.0 Technical specialist memo – Landscape Architecture

To:	Warwick Pascoe – Principal Project Lead Louise Barclay and Jo Hart – Senior Planners, Notices of Requirement Celia Wong – Senior Planner, Resource Consents
From:	Peter Kensington, Consultant Specialist – Landscape Architect (KPLC Limited)
Qualifications and relevant experience:	I hold the qualifications of: Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Honours) and Bachelor of Regional Planning (Honours) and I have 30-years' experience in landscape architecture and planning. I am a Registered Member of Tuia Pito Ora, the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects and a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for various applications for resource consent, requests for plan changes, notices of requirement for designations and fast-track applications. I have appeared as an expert witness before consent authorities and the Environment Court.
Preparation in accordance with the Code of Conduct:	I confirm that I have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses ( <b>Code</b> ), and I have complied with it in the preparation of this memorandum. I also agree to follow the Code when participating in any subsequent application processes, such as expert conferencing, which is directed by the Panel. I confirm that the opinions I have expressed in this memo are within my area of expertise and are my own, except where I have stated that I am relying on the work or evidence of others, which I have specified.
Date:	2 June 2026

## 3.0 Documents reviewed

In preparing this memorandum and to inform my specialist review advice for the council, I have reviewed all of the application material that is available for viewing on the Environmental Protection Authority's Fast-track website<sup>1</sup>, noting that the following technical report is of most relevance to my area of expertise:

- Landscape and Visual Assessment, prepared by landscape architect Matthew Jones, dated 15 December 2025 (Te Ara Hauāuru Northwest Rapid Transit – NWRT application Document 17 at Part 6).

I have liaised closely with Frank Pierard, the council's specialist urban design reviewer in preparing this memo.

During the pre-application engagement process between the applicant and the council's planning and resource consents department, I attended one briefing meeting with the applicant in October 2025. I also reviewed a draft version of the above document and provided preliminary advice to the council in November 2025.

I have only reviewed the components of the application that relate to approvals under the Resource Management Act 1991, noting that my focus has been on the various NoRs, rather than on the regional consenting matters. I am aware that, if confirmed, designations will be added to the Auckland Unitary Plan (**AUP**) and there is an opportunity to include conditions within these designations that will inform future Outline Plan processes.

I have visited the site and surrounding area to inform my review of this application. I am a regular bus commuter between Waimauku and the City Centre and I have experienced the current WX-1 service from and to Westgate.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/north-west-rapid-transit/substantive-application>

## 4.0 Specialist assessment

### Summary of review findings

My specialist review generally concurs with that of the applicant's landscape architect (Matthew Jones) in relation to his assessment of landscape, natural character and visual effects of the proposal; however, I suggest that his recommendations could have been stronger in relation to the management of future potential adverse effects.

While I appreciate that, in principle, the proposal is likely to represent an appropriate addition to the urban landscape along the proposed transport corridor; I remain concerned over the level of design flexibility being sought by the application proposal. In my opinion, greater certainty must be provided around how such related future adverse effects can be effectively avoided, remedied and/or mitigated.

I have concerns with the application's approach to seeking to secure an 'envelope of environmental effects' based on the current high-level design of the proposal, noting that there is a lack of detail provided to confirm the exact parameters or metrics against which future compliance can be measured (for example, in relation to the likely location, scale, height and overall bulk of proposed structures – particularly raised bridge / ramp structures).

### Areas of agreement – no issues arising

I concur with Mr Jones that the proposal will not impact on the two AUP Maunga [Volcanic] Viewshafts which cross parts of the proposed designation extents. These being: Viewshaft A13 to Ōwairaka Mount Albert from an origin point located near Te Atatū Road; and Viewshaft E20 to Maungawhau Mount Eden from Newton Road.

I also agree with Mr Jones that construction related landscape and visual effects are likely to be localised, temporary and expected for construction activity within the context of an existing infrastructural (motorway) corridor. I also agree that the busway will be complementary to the character and values of the existing transport infrastructure and that proposed structures will likely be generally in keeping with the existing highly modified urban setting. I agree that retention of existing mature trees alongside Great North Road is important and essential for the maintenance of landscape character and amenity values in this location.

The 'Sensitivity testing of Indicative Design' undertaken by Mr Jones (at section 4.4.2 of his assessment) is also an analysis with which I concur. I agree with his commentary around potential changes to the vertical alignment of grade separation. I support the approach for underpass options rather than flyovers, noting that the current proposal does not achieve this outcome in places – as I have set out in my further discussion below.

The strong iwi partnership (with Te Kawerau ā Maki; Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei; Te Ākitai Waiohau; and Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara) is also a positive component of the project. Ongoing engagement with iwi through the process of design refinement will be important in mitigating adverse landscape and visual effects, ensuring that localised sense of place considerations can inform design decisions and contribute positively to detailed elements of the project.

### Areas of concern – for further consideration

The completed 'Designation Review Matrix' (refer my **Appendix B**) outlines specific areas where I have identified that more certainty is required to assist with a better understanding of landscape and visual effects. In summary:

1. Bridge crossings (Huruhuru Creek / Henderson Creek) within the Coastal Marine Area
  - suggest that the detailed design of abutments / supports for these structures will need to be checked.
2. Integration of proposed station facilities at Te Atatū Ōrangihina Station with McCormick Green
  - lack of certainty as to how proposed station facilities will integrate with adjacent residential properties.

3. Ramp over motorway at Te Atatū Ōrangihina Station (including provision for shared pathway)
  - suggest that this structure may appear to be somewhat of a dominant element in the local context.
4. Landform modification and loss of public open space at Ōrangihina (Harbourview Park)
  - suggest that the proposed location and scale of this intervention could impact open space amenity.
5. Flyover structure above existing Waima Street / Haslett Street footbridge a visually prominent structure, for example when viewed from the grounds of Te Kura a-Rito o Newton (Newton Central School)
  - suggest alternative design response should be investigated to achieve a more appropriate outcome.

I therefore support the application overall from a landscape and visual effects perspective, subject to confirming conditions that will be appropriate within the designations in order to inform future Outline Plan processes and to address the above areas of preliminary concern with the current high-level design of the proposal.

#### 5.0 Further information required to understand landscape effects

I note that the Panel has requested (via Minute 5 dated 7 May 2026) further information that relates to assisting with an understanding of the actual and potential landscape and visual effects of various aspects of the proposal.

I agree that this further information and assessment will be helpful to inform my review advice and, if possible, it would be preferable to provide comment on this additional information when it is available – noting that this may not be until after the council’s formal comments under section 53 of the FTAA have been provided.

There are no other information gaps that I have identified in the application relevant to my area of expertise.

#### 6.0 Proposed conditions

I have concentrated on reviewing the proposed designation conditions that have been suggested by the applicant (as set out at Appendix A of the Part 4 – Resource Management Act 1991 Approvals document).

##### Currently proposed condition

The condition that has been proposed which has relevance to an assessment of landscape and visual effects and is proposed to help ensure that the various aspects of the proposal (across the whole busway corridor) become well-integrated, is proposed **Condition 26** under the heading “Landscape Planting”.

In my experience, such a condition is not fit for purpose for a project of this type and does not provide enough certainty that actual and potential adverse landscape and visual effects will be avoided, remedied and/or mitigated to an appropriate degree, given the level of design flexibility being sought.

##### Recommended alternative proposed condition

From my involvement with other similar designations, a commonly accepted resource management approach is to prepare an “Urban and Landscape Design Management Plan” (ULDMP) which is then certified by the council at an appropriate time, once a greater level of design detail is understood. As does Mr Pierard, I recommend that the current proposed wording of designation Condition 26 be deleted and replaced with an ULDMP condition.

We have prepared suggested wording for such a condition (refer my **Appendix A**), noting that the “Acronyms and defined terms” table under the “Definitions” section of the conditions should also reference the ULDMP.

Remaining issue not addressed by way of proposed / recommended conditions

Having said this, our proposed replacement Condition 26 does not directly address the question of how best to frame the “effects envelope” which is being sought in terms of having certainty around the location, scale, height and overall bulk of proposed structures – particularly raised bridge / ramp structures. I note that Minute 5 of the Panel (dated 7 May 2026) at paragraph 14(f) also signals concern with this matter – noting:

*“Section 4.4.2 of the LVA advises that there is a lack of design certainty and that the potential for more vertical changes would be ‘moderate/moderate-high’ in regard to Westgate, Royal Road, Lincoln Road, Te Atatu and Point Chevalier. Please advise as to how a change in effects of this scale is to be managed.”*

One potential solution that could be available in this instance, is to confirm the currently proposed infrastructure as per the preliminary design drawings, but require the eventual outcome for constructed elements to be no greater in scale (including height) to the preliminary design. Such an approach could also signal that design refinement is expected and encouraged in order to seek improved outcomes (i.e. achieving a lesser degree of adverse effects).

Ultimately, from an assessment of landscape, natural character and visual effects perspective, successful outcomes would be achieved if the design of all constructed aspects of the proposal result in an implementation of the new infrastructure in a manner whereby it is well-integrated into the localised urban environment along the corridor.

**Peter Kensington**

Consultant Specialist – Landscape Architect

Registered NZILA and MNZPI



**Registered**

## Appendix A – Recommended changes to proposed NoR (ALL) Condition 26

### **Landscape Planting**

- (a) ~~The Requiring Authority shall, where practicable:~~
- ~~(i) Retain existing mature, native vegetation~~
  - ~~(ii) Plant at stations and batter slopes~~
  - ~~(iii) Use eco-sourced native vegetation~~
  - ~~(iv) Integrate planting with any planting required by conditions of resource consents for the Project.~~
- (b) ~~For planting under (a), the Requiring Authority shall:~~
- (c) ~~Undertake planting within the first planting season following Completion of Construction;~~
- ~~(i) undertake pest plant control for a five year period; and~~
  - ~~(ii) monitor planted areas and undertake replacement planting as necessary for a five year period or until 80% canopy cover is achieved (whichever is less).~~
- (d) ~~The measures described in (a) shall be shown in the Outline Plan.~~

### **Urban and Landscape Design Management Plan**

- (a) An ULDMP must be prepared for each Stage of Work and submitted with the relevant Outline Plan.
- The objectives of the ULDMP(s) are to:
- (i) Enable holistic and place-based integration of the Project's permanent works into the surrounding urban, landscape, open space and public realm context; and
  - (ii) Ensure that the Project manages potential adverse urban design, landscape and visual effects as far as practicable and contributes to a quality, legible, safe, accessible and well-integrated public transport corridor and public realm environment.
- (b) Mana Whenua must be invited to participate in the development of the ULDMP(s) to provide input into relevant cultural landscape and design matters including how desired outcomes for management of potential effects on cultural sites, landscapes and values identified and discussed in accordance with Condition(s) [reference – tbc] may be reflected in the ULDMP.
- (c) Stakeholders identified through the Condition(s) [reference – tbc] must be invited to participate in the development of the ULDMP at least six (6) months prior to the start of detailed design for a Stage of Work.
- (d) The ULDMP must be prepared in general accordance with:
- (i) Waka Kotahi Urban Design Guidelines: Bridging the Gap (2013) or any subsequent updated version;
  - (ii) Waka Kotahi Landscape Guidelines (2013) or any subsequent updated version; and
  - (iii) Waka Kotahi P39 Standard Specification for Highway Landscape Treatments (2013) or any subsequent updated version.
- (e) To achieve the objectives, the ULDMP(s) must provide details of how the project:
- (i) Is designed to integrate with the adjacent urban (or proposed urban), landscape, open space and public realm context, including the surrounding existing or proposed topography, urban environment (i.e. centres and density of built form), natural environment, landscape character, open space zones and active mode networks;

- (ii) Provides appropriate walking and cycling connectivity to, along and across the corridor, and interfaces with, existing or proposed adjacent land uses, public transport infrastructure, station environments and walking and cycling connections;
  - (iii) Promotes inclusive access (where appropriate);
  - (iv) Promotes a sense of personal safety by aligning with best practice guidelines, such as:
    - a. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles;
    - b. Safety in Design (SID) requirements; and
    - c. Maintenance in Design (MID) requirements and anti-vandalism / anti-graffiti measures.
  - (v) Interfaces with the operational areas of commercial premises within business zoned land, including loading areas, internal circulation and car parking, where practicable;
  - (vi) Provides clear, safe and legible station access, forecourt design, platform access, interchange environments, Park and Ride areas, pick-up / drop-off areas and connections to surrounding streets, centres, open spaces and public transport networks, where relevant;
  - (vii) Provides appropriate public realm quality, including shelter, materials, furniture, lighting, wayfinding, planting, pedestrian amenity and micro-mobility / cycle parking, where relevant;
  - (viii) Addresses interfaces with schools, residential properties, open spaces, town centres, heritage / character buildings, commercial / servicing areas, community facilities and visitor destinations where relevant.
- (f) The ULDMP(s) must include:
- (i) A masterplan document – which depicts the overall landscape and urban design concept, and explains the rationale for the landscape and urban design proposals;
  - (ii) Developed design concepts, including principles for walking and cycling facilities, public transport, station environments, corridor interfaces and public realm; and
  - (iii) Landscape and urban design details that cover the following, where relevant to the Stage of Work and applicable Designation extent:
    - a. Road design – elements such as intersection form, carriageway gradient and associated earthworks contouring including cut and fill batters and the interface with adjacent land uses and existing roads (including slip lanes), benching, spoil disposal sites, median width and treatment, roadside width and treatment;
    - b. Roadside elements – such as lighting, fencing, wayfinding, signage, barriers and maintenance access;
    - c. Station access, forecourts, interchange areas, platform access, Park and Ride areas, pick-up / drop-off areas, local bus connections and associated public realm;
    - d. Architectural and landscape treatment of all major structures, including bridges, underpasses, abutments and retaining walls, including consideration of appropriate materials and design of support structures and soffits and underpass roof surfaces;
    - e. Architectural and landscape treatment of noise barriers;
    - f. Landscape treatment of permanent stormwater control wetlands and swales;
    - g. Integration of passenger transport;
    - h. Pedestrian and cycle facilities, including paths, road crossings, shared paths and dedicated pedestrian / cycle bridges or underpasses;
    - i. Public realm elements, including shelter, seating, lighting, wayfinding, signage, materials, furniture, planting, cycle parking and micro-mobility facilities;

- j. Historic heritage places with reference to the [reference – tbc];
  - k. Interface treatment with schools, residential properties, open spaces, town centres, commercial properties, heritage / character buildings, community facilities and visitor destinations;
  - l. Treatment of interim, residual or severed spaces, including their access, safety, landscape treatment, maintenance and future use;
  - m. Reinstatement of construction and site compound areas;
  - n. Reinstatement of features to be retained, such as:
    - a. boundary features;
    - b. landscaping;
    - c. driveways;
    - d. accessways;
    - e. fences; and
    - f. site utilities.
- (g) The ULDMP must also include the following planting details and maintenance requirements:
- (i) planting design details including:
    - a. identification of existing trees and vegetation that will be retained with reference to the [reference – tbc]. Where practicable, mature trees and native vegetation should be retained;
    - b. street trees, shrubs and ground cover suitable for the location;
    - c. treatment of fill slopes to integrate with adjacent land use, streams, riparian margins and open space zones;
    - d. planting of stormwater wetlands;
    - e. identification of vegetation to be retained and any planting requirements under Condition(s) [reference – tbc];
    - f. integration of any planting requirements required by conditions of any resource consents for the project; and
    - g. re-instatement planting of construction and site compound areas as appropriate.
  - (ii) A planting programme including the staging of planting in relation to the construction programme which must, as far as practicable, include provision for planting within each planting season following completion of works in each Stage of Work; and
  - (iii) Detailed specifications relating to the following:
    - a. weed control and clearance;
    - b. pest animal management (to support plant establishment);
    - c. ground preparation (top soiling and decompaction);
    - d. mulching;
    - e. plant sourcing and planting, including hydroseeding and grassing, and use of eco-sourced species;
    - f. irrigation; and
    - g. plant replacement (due to theft or plants dying).

**Appendix B – Designation Review Matrix (Peter Kensington – Landscape Architecture)**

NoR	Location / description	Information adequacy	Key issues identified	Comments / recommendations
NoR 1	Busway between Brigham Creek Rarawaru station and north of Westgate Te Waiarohia station (including stations, Park and Ride and all local road connections) 0.3km length	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed alignment and structures appear to be appropriately located.
NoR 2	Busway between north of Westgate Te Waiarohia station and north of Royal Road Mānutewhau station (including stations, Park and Ride and all local road connections) 3.3km length	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed alignment and structures appear to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for alignment of busway to be located beneath Fred Taylor Drive.</li> </ul>
NoR 3	Busway between Royal Road Mānutewhau Station and Te Whau River (including all stations and local road connections) 5.0km length	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low	Key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of detail for bridge designs over coastal marine area at Huruhuru Creek and Henderson Creek – potential for large structures in coastal environment.</li> <li>Substantial scale / impacts of bridge over SH16 at Te Ātatu interchange.</li> </ul>	While location of proposed bridge structures appear to be appropriate, the design of the structural supports for these elements will require check to ensure success. The proposed bridge over SH16 at the Te Atatū Ōrangihina Station and associated earthworks within Ōrangihina / Harbourview Park will be relatively prominent and involve substantial landform modification which will impact open space amenity.
NoR 4	Brigham Creek Rarawaru station including Park and Ride Located within NoR 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to ensure large areas of car parking and impervious surfaces include appropriate stormwater management and specimen tree planting.</li> </ul>
NoR 5	Westgate Te Waiarohia station Located within NoR 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional station facilities will complement existing station in this location.</li> </ul>
NoR 6	Royal Road Mānutewhau station Located within NoR 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Royal Road Mānutewhau station will represent a reasonable change, but an appropriate outcome reinforcing location as a transit destination point.</li> </ul>
NoR 7	Lincoln Road Wai o Pareira station Located within NoR 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed alignment and structures appear to be appropriately located.
NoR 8	Te Atatū Ōrangihina station Located within NoR 3	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	Key issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design integration of proposed station facilities into existing context which includes adjacent residential properties with outlook over open space.</li> </ul>	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to ensure wider station facilities integrate successfully with existing land use to the immediate west and south of the station.</li> </ul>
NoR 9	Busway between Waterview interchange and west of Ivanhoe Road (including all stations and local road connections) 2.7km length	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed alignment and structures appear to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for retention of existing mature trees fronting Great North Road.</li> </ul>
NoR 10	Busway between Ivanhoe Road and Ian McKinnon Drive (including all stations and local road connections) 2.7km length	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low	Key issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed bridge / ramp to cross motorway above existing pedestrian bridge between Waima Street (in the north) and Haslett Street (in the south) will be a visually prominent structure that may appear anomalous to local context.</li> </ul>	Proposed alignment and structures mostly appear to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggest design refinement to investigate alternative alignment / height to lower proposed bridge / ramp structure as it crosses motorway corridor.</li> </ul>
NoR 11	Point Chevalier station Located within NoR 9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noting urban design related issues (as raised by Mr Pierard).</li> </ul>
NoR 12	Western Springs station Located within NoR 10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Mod <input type="checkbox"/> Low	No key issues identified.	Proposed preliminary station design appears to be appropriately located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noting urban design related issues (as raised by Mr Pierard).</li> </ul>