

Memorandum

28 October 2025

Memo to : Knight Investments Limited - Daniel Nakhle

Memo From : Nick Rae

Re: Fast-track Approvals 2024 Referral Application – Orawaahi Development – Landscape Considerations

This report has been prepared in relation to a fast-track referral application by Knight Investments for the proposed Orawaahi - A Complete Community Project ('the Project').

The Project

The Project Area is legally described as Lot 3 DP 337204 and Lot 1 DP 337204, known as 156 Clarks Beach Road and the adjacent lot which has no street address.

In addition, works are proposed on:

- 115 Clarks Beach Road (Lot 1020 DP 578599, Lot 1012 DP 573987, Lot 1018 DP 573987, Lot 1001 DP 560664, Lot 1003 DP 560664, Lot 801 DP 526153, Lot 200 DP 567326, 9/14 SH Lot 300 DP 526153, 4/23 SH Lot 100 DP 560664), for works associated with required infrastructure/roading upgrades.
- Lot 4 DP 116708 held as Local Purpose Reserve (Esplanade), located at the southern edge of the site, adjacent to the Coastal Marine Area ("CMA").
- A portion of land which is vested as legal road, as per GeoMaps (but unformed), which is located between the subject site and the CMA.
- Clarks Beach Road.

The Project is a masterplanned sustainable extension to the existing Clarks Beach coastal community that enables multigenerational living, local employment and community services. The Project will be integrated with the fast growing Clarks Beach community, and will provide a logical extension to it.

The Project seeks to establish:

- Residential lots to accommodate approximately 700-800 dwellings;
- A retirement village of approximately 220 units/villas;
- A neighbourhood centre (likely to include activities such as a supermarket, retail, a community hub, commercial offices, food and beverage premises, childcare and/or fitness/wellness facilities)
- A service / light industrial area (likely to include workshops, storage and warehouse facilities, and/or associated retail and business premises);

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email

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Victoria Square, 2/143 Wellesley St West,
PO Box 90921 Victoria St West, Auckland
www.transurban.co.nz

- A multi-functional green / blue network across the site's stream and wetland features, with enhancements of the coastal edge. This will include neighbourhood parks, recreational walkways, and pedestrian/cycle connections throughout the site.

This is depicted in the concept masterplan in Figure 1 below (and on page 1 of Attachment A to the Urban Design Memo).



Figure 1 – Orawaahi Concept Masterplan

Scope

Transurban has been engaged to provide input into the Project from a landscape perspective.

The scope of this report is to describe the anticipated and known landscape and visual effects of the Project.

Transurban has visited the site and understands its condition and landscape features, along with understanding the wider landscape as seen from the site and to the site from other locations. This has informed the masterplan design, which at this stage is preliminary. Further analysis and assessment will be required to finalise the masterplan and to assess the project for the substantive application.

Methodology

For this referral application, Transurban has been requested to describe the anticipated and known adverse landscape and visual effects of the Project on the environment, and the measures that can be proposed to manage those effects.

The assessment follows the concepts and principles outlined in 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines' 2022, particularly the need to identify existing landscape values, identify and describe any effect and determine the magnitude of effects, but is not a comprehensive landscape and visual assessment.

Landscape effects in this assessment are the consequences on landscape values as appreciated by people. To assess this the visual audience is required to be defined. Experiencing the landscape is multisensory, however the primary experience considered in this assessment is visual. Determining who will see the proposal, and from where, are important aspects of assessing the magnitude of any effect.

In preparing this report, Transurban has drawn on the following:

- Visited the site on two occasions to understand the current condition and identify and understand the existing features and qualities,
- Visited the development area north of Clarks Beach Road on many occasions,
- Visited the surrounding roads and locations in Kahawhai Point to assist with determining where the site is visible from, and who the visual audience would likely include,
- Considered the existing vegetation on site in terms of its generally condition and contribution to the landscape,
- Reviewed the ecological assessment and adopted the indicative streams and wetlands identified within that assessment as key features,
- Mapped the existing contours to understand topography and existing falls and drainage patterns,

- Determined likely landscape values,
- Identified anticipated or known landscape effects and provide an initial assessment as to the magnitude of effects, which has been used to inform the development of the Concept Masterplan.

The Site

The site is a large land holding (74.7ha) consisting of two titles between smaller neighbouring lifestyle type lot sizes, Clarks Beach Road and the northern edge of the Taihiki River, being a tributary to the upper reaches of the Manukau Harbour, via the Waiuku River.

The landform is mildly undulating and with a general fall to the south, except the north-western corner which falls to the north west to Clarks Beach Road. The views from the site to the wider landscape provide a pleasant outlook to elements in the foreground, middle ground and long-distance views.

Most of the site is cropped and therefore the vegetation cover changes throughout the year. The permanent vegetation consists mostly of exotic trees such as macrocarpa and Alder in the form of shelter belts, some pockets of cryptomeria and poplar. There is a shelter belt of thick bamboo at the southern end. The stream environment is typical of a degraded farm stream with limited native species and dominated with weed species such as gorse, and kikuyu grass. The size of the large macrocarpa trees adds to an appreciation of scale.

The site is currently zoned Rural – Rural Coastal zone, Manukau Harbour Coastal area (at the southern third of the site) with the remainder being Rural – Mixed Rural zone. The same zones continue either side of the site.

The site is located at the entry to Clarks Beach where the speed limit on the road changes from 80km/hr to 50km/hr. Refer Attachment A for details.

The site is depicted within the photos in the following context section.

Context

Please refer to the urban design report Attachment A page 4 for the discussion on context. As a high level summary, the site is currently a farm, with a small part currently as a rural lifestyle type lot. There is proposed residential development to the north, the existing Taihiki River and its esplanade edge to the south, and lots akin to those found in the Countryside living zone directly to the east and west.

The following photographs illustrate the views to the site from the surrounding context, the camera locations are illustrated on page 4 Attachment A to urban design statement.



Photo A - View from Clarks Beach Road opposite the site looking west. The land to the right is zoned for residential development and a resource consent application to subdivide this land (including an upgrade to the northern side of the road) has been lodged. The left hand side of the road shows an area of the Orawaahi development site around the existing dwelling where there is a large number of trees, mostly exotic. This has a large lot residential character.



Photo B - View from the site near the proposed western roundabout with Clarks Beach Road and Waiuku River in the middle ground, and Awhitu Peninsula beyond. This is where the

larger part of the site interfaces with the planned residential opposite and the existing vegetation along the western boundary with taller trees in background.



Photo C – View from the southern end of the site looking south-east along the Taihiki River to the rural area near Glenbrook in the distance. The foreground is the location of the proposed cultural centre. Excellent pohutukawa trees line the coastal edge above the dynamic tidal river environment.



Photo D - View from the site at the southern end looking south west over an inlet to the southern most part of the site, then Kahawai Point residential development, then Peninsula in the background. The tree and landform provide a layering outcome and frame this view.



Photo E – View from the southern end of the site looking south west over the Taihiki River.



Photo F – View from similar location to Photo E looking south with Kahawai Point development beyond the river. Views to suburban development from rural land is part of this context.

Views consist of multiple layers, and spaces within the landscape are somewhat compartmentalised by existing trees, but mostly by the undulating coastal edge where there is a distinction between water and land.

People experience the landscape from a variety of different places, including from public roads, residential lots, rural residential lots, open spaces, rural land and at the edge of the water. Some people will view this landscape from the water, typically on boats, but also when access is enabled at low tides.

The Clarks Beach / Waiau Beach peninsula can be seen from a much wider context than just the surrounding land itself, including at locations on the Glenbrook peninsula (mostly at the northern end at Kahawai Point), and many locations along the eastern side of the Awhitu Peninsula (mostly from rural land, however also from a number of small settlements). These views are distant over the estuarine environment and the elements within view differ from the different locations.



Photo G -example of a view from the residentially zoned land east of the development at Kahawai Point towards the site with the Taihiki River obscured by the landform in the foreground, but suggested through the dark green trees directly beyond this foreground. The suburban development north of the site (existing Clarks Beach settlement) is visible above the ridge in the distance, however this is somewhat visually integrated with the trees along the ridge. The view appears primarily of a rural character.

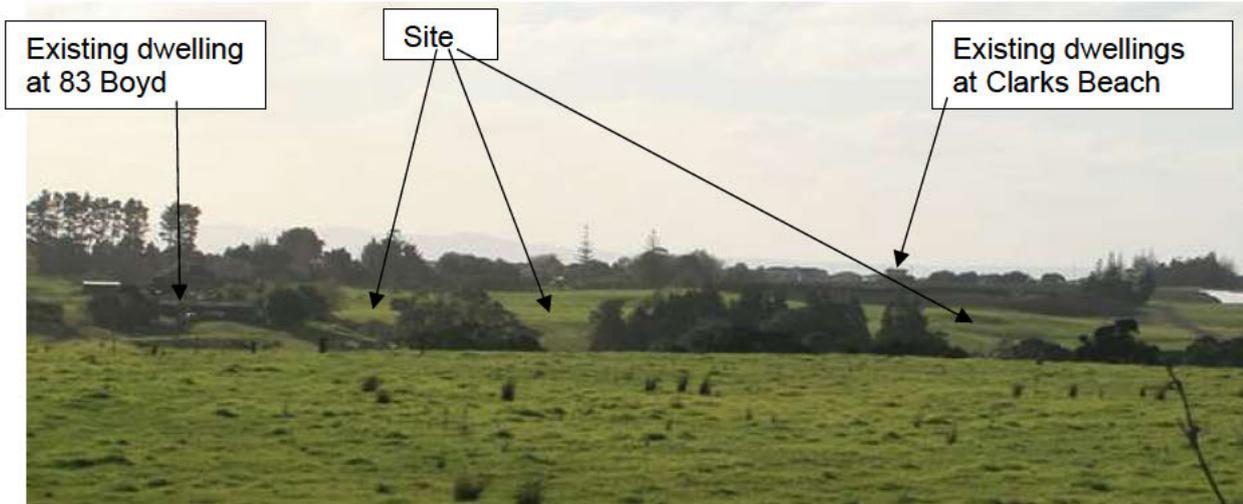


Photo G (zoom) – Enlargement of Photo G identifying the existing residential and the site beyond trees around the river in the middle ground.

The following three photos illustrate the landscape elements of the Orawaahi site:



Photo H – view from the north east corner of the site looking south, with the site boundary to left at hedge. The grass area to the right is the residentially zoned land at Kahawai Point with the structures and plumes of the industrial Glenbrook Steel Mill clearly visible in the background



Photo I – View from the north west corner of the site looking south east. Site boundary on the right at tree line (photo stitched)



Photo J – view from within the site near the confluence of the stream and Taihiki River looking north along the existing main stream alignment, heavily weed infested. Existing barn building and plastic ground covering (particularly) different elements in the otherwise pastoral view.

The subdivision pattern along with dwellings on these lots in the rural part of the Clarks Beach area are generally more akin to the Rural – Countryside Living character, than the likes of a rural production character, with many of the lots around 2 to 4ha (and some around 1.0ha). There are only two lots larger than 40ha on the peninsula of land from Waiiau Pa to Clarks Beach, being the large lot as part of the site 73ha, and 246 Clarks Beach Road at 87ha. 428 Clarks Beach Road is 35ha, and largest one of the three lots zoned Future Urban is 39.7ha. None of these comply with the site size for subdivision under the AUP zone standards. The point is that the existing environment, except for this

site and a small number of others, have a predominantly rural lifestyle character, with reasonably compartmentalised views restricted by trees.

Visual audience of the site

The visual audience of the proposed development will include:

- All people travelling on Clarks Beach Road past the site – this will include all of the residents of Clarks Beach and Waiiau (Hudson’s) Beach, those visiting the area to use boat ramps, the golf course and other recreational clubs and open space including the beaches or to service the area;
- People using the new development north of the site and the future owners of dwellings yet to be built on consented vacant lots;
- Visitors and staff of Camp Morely (a private group camp for up to 100 guests) as they access the property from Clarks Beach Road;
- Residents and visitors to properties east of the site fronting Clarks Beach Road who have views of the site;
- Residents and visitors to properties that lack a frontage to Clarks Beach Road, but which abut (or are in close proximity to) the east or west of the site, including properties accessed off Boyd Road;
- People in boats in the coastal marine area to the south (tide permitting);
- Some people within the Kahawai Point development within properties close to the coast and orientated to the north, but also other people using the public footpaths close to the coastal edge; and
- People in the wider landscape with distant views (where not obstructed by landform or vegetation).

The visual catchment is large, with an audience number relating to a coastal settlement and surrounding rural and countryside living. The majority of the viewing audience will be those reasonably close to the site. Many will be transient viewers, while a smaller number will have stationary views, and will be more sensitive to change.

Viewers from the wider catchment will likely see the site as a very small part of a wider landscape and will be less sensitive to change.

Landscape Values

The key landscape values for the site and wider context include:

- A coastal / rural character, mainly modified with limited native vegetation and few dwellings or buildings in the rural zones and very few near the coastline.
- Sense of open space and space between buildings in the rural areas

- Suburban settlements within the rural and coastal edges, where buildings are in much closer proximity to each other.
- High values associated with the Waiuku and Taihiki Rivers and Manukau Harbour and native coastal vegetation with low coastal cliffs at the edges.
- Undulating rolling landform within the overall broader large valleys and ridges typical of agricultural landuse.
- Appreciating views to the south of the industrial Glenbrook Steel Mill and wider rural landscape.
- A range of contained and expansive views, with wider views to the harbour / coastal environment, with “peaceful” amenity (however noting that the wider area is a working rural environment which can be noisy).
- Trees are typically exotic in the form of shelter belts, some have been allowed to grow tall and provide visual canopy.
- No native or exotic vegetation that is significant or worthy of protecting from a landscape and visual perspective.

It is confirmed that there are no significant landscape or natural character values (either mapped by the AUP through an outstanding natural landscape or feature, or an outstanding or high natural character overlay, and nor are there any unmapped features which would qualify as such features) associated with the site or its immediate surrounds.

The site itself also does not contain any views to the coast where the High Natural Character and Outstanding Natural Feature Overlays apply (this is north west of the end of the Clarks Beach peninsula, at Rangiriri Spit). There are no significant volcanic viewshafts or height sensitive area overlays applying to the whole Clarks Beach area.

Auckland Unitary Plan

The site is currently zoned Rural – Rural Coastal zone (Manukau Harbour coastal area at the southern third of the site) and the remainder being Rural – Mixed Rural zone in the Auckland Unitary Plan (“AUP”). The same zones continue either side of the site.

Anticipated and known landscape and visual effects

The project will change the character of the site from essentially rural to urban in land use terms. This in itself is not necessarily an adverse effect, as other parts of the landscape successfully contain urban activities with a suburban character as they have been determined an acceptable change to the landscape.

It is, however, similar to the existing outcome north of the site, whereby suburban development is occurring on land currently surrounded by a rural character. This is also a significant change from land that previously held a mostly rural character context (except

for the existing settlement further to the north west or the older part of Clarks Beach. Notwithstanding the degree of change involved from the previously rural environment, this has been considered to be an acceptable change in this environment.

When considering the Context plan on page 3 of Attachment A, with the anticipated outcome of additional suburban character development within the Future Urban zone, the project is not out of character with this.

The low broad ridge upon which Clarks Beach Road exists is not a significant landscape element that contributes to the containment of urban activities, however the northern aspect of this wider landscape has had priority.

The project is considered to result in positive landscape effects, particularly through better management of the natural waterways, and their restoration to improve water quality and the biodiversity and ecosystem, ultimately benefiting the receiving waters of the Taihiki River and Manukau Harbour. This will enhance the landscape values. Benefits also include weed management and native restoration of the coastal edge, both in term of the ecology, but also providing managed access for people to enjoy the amenity values that this coast has to offer. The reduction in the use of chemicals and sprays currently used with the current landuse will also likely have beneficial effects on the landscape.

The proposed shift from largely rural elements to urban elements will result in a significant change to the character of the existing area. The change will be more pronounced when experienced from Clarks Beach Road. However, this will not appear out of character with the proposed development on the opposite side of the road (which is zoned for urban development and is progressively being built out). It is actually very difficult to isolate out the existing landscape at this point in time for this assessment, given the landscape will continue to change in accordance with its zoning. What it demonstrates is that the surrounding areas are changing, and as that change embeds, the overall sensitivity to change from the proposed development will reduce. Given this, it is my opinion that the surrounding landscape is already less sensitive to change and has the ability to absorb a development of this nature, just as it has on the opposite side of Clarks Beach Road.

The immediate neighbours who currently have a view of the site will experience the proposed change. The proposed edge treatments are anticipated to maintain landscape values of neighbouring sites, however there could be temporary adverse effects initially or until the vegetation is established to screen the development. The masterplan provides for a vegetative buffer on the eastern and western sides between the proposed roads and/or buildings and neighbouring rural lots so that, while the outlook from adjacent properties will change, other uses from those sites will be effectively screened by an outcome that could as easily occur along these boundaries with the current or alternative rural land use. The existing environment already includes similar vegetation for portions of these boundaries. While the development maybe screened from these properties, the residents will perceive the different land use and will experience it from public roads. The amenity for these residents will change, however in a way that could reasonably be

expected (shelter belts on the boundaries) and will maintain their onsite amenity in that context.

The anticipated adverse effects on rural character and amenity values can be avoided or mitigated for direct neighbours with the design solutions proposed.

The exception is that the four existing dwellings on lots to the south-west of the site (61, 69, 83 and 85 Boyd Road) are located on land that extends further south than the site and is steeper than the subject site. The closest two dwellings are 95-100m from the site boundary and the other two are 215m and 261m at the closest points from the site. The above boundary treatment cannot be applied along this interface and views across the small inlet at the south-west of the site to the development on the site will be available (at a separation distance of approximately 140m to the closest dwelling across the inlet). These dwellings are in reasonably close proximity to one another (for a rural setting) of between 120m and 170m and have a rural lifestyle type character. Their ability to see the project is similar to the views these dwellings have of the Kahawai Point proposed development, only those future dwellings are further away across the Taihiki River at approximately 400m. The impact of the project on these neighbours cannot be mitigated, however it is not an unacceptable proposition that they experience suburban development on land separated by the inlet at the south west of the site, particularly given the acceptability for the land at Kahawai Point to be developed in this way and the land upon which they reside existing with a higher density outcome than the current zone anticipates.

Depending on the timing of the development, interim effects could occur such as when buffer planting is establishing and views to this development are not screened however this can be further investigated with potential mitigation applied at the substantive application stage (for example planting of front yards, street trees, building setbacks for landscaping especially along the Clarks Beach Road frontage).

Views from the south will also be impacted by the Project with a change in viewing experience from rural to "urban". This will mostly occur when viewed from land to the south as views from the water will generally be over a restored coastal edge with the esplanade area being planted. This will be similar to the impact that the development at Kahawai Point has had on the landscape values as experienced from the site and those properties to its west along the southern coast around the end of Boyd Road and Waiau Beach. Thus, it is not uncommon or out of character for this immediate and wider area to experience both urban and rural views across the landscape. The development of Kahawai Point and the adjacent land opposite is also demonstrative of the surrounding area's ability to absorb change.

Standard approaches of restoring the coastal edge and introducing public amenity along the coastal edge will provide appropriate positive outcomes.

Distant views may experience some change, but the change is unlikely to be discernible or out of character where the views already include rural settlements scattered across the

landscape (and it may be viewed as filling in a missing gap between Kahawai Point and Clarks Beach).

From a landscape perspective, the general topography of the site will be maintained such that the edges of the site are retained at existing levels, along with the existing streams. The land between these features will be adjusted only to the extent necessary to develop roads and lots where relatively flat building platforms can be created.

The proposed commercial centre will better relate to the suburban development opposite the site and can be an appropriate outcome from a landscape perspective – particularly given the extent to which it encourages massing of buildings closer to the frontage with Clarks Beach Road, and the existing development to the north, and away from more sensitive areas (such as the coastal fringe). The addition of a neighbourhood centre in this location will add visual interest and will contribute to the “gateway” experience achieved through the proposed development of this site, alongside the development to the north, which provides an introduction to the Clarks Beach area.

The improvements to the road network and proposed roads will enhance the tree canopy within these public places and with the right tree selection and growing environment could result in trees along the Clarks Beach ridge visible above buildings, accentuating the ridge form and adding to the backdrop of views from all directions, and further developing that “gateway” experience.

The green linkages designed to extend those in the wider landscape either through the stream environment or along the identified roads will provide ecological corridors for birds particularly and also assist with recreating some of the previous natural patterns. These are positive attributes of the proposed development.

The benefits to the landscape through this project, include:

- Restoration of the natural streams and wetlands with planting
- Enhancement of the Significant Ecological Area (terrestrial) and expansion of areas of native vegetation
- Enhancement of the coastal edge through the removal of weed species, establishing set backs for activities and replanting with native species
- A significant increase in trees and tree canopy across the site and creation of ecological corridors with roading connections
- Enabling appreciation of the landscape by providing public access (including physical walkways) to the land intended as coastal esplanade. This will form a connection to wider trails in the future as the Franklin Trails are developed
- Manage impacts on existing neighbours by internalising development
- Provision for public spaces to enable people to experience the wider landscape.

Specific site design and details will form part of the substantive application and will assist in integrating with the landscape. These are likely to include:

- Set backs and edge planting along directly adjoining neighbours with planting where possible occurring early in the development staging
- Sequencing of the development from the north to south including the implementation of open spaces and pedestrian connectivity where possible and coordinated with stream and stormwater management that might precede residential built form
- Extensive landscaping of the front yard adjoining Clarks Beach Road and within the road itself using tall trees for amenity and spatial definition supporting a pedestrian community environment rather than screening, thereby maintaining and/or enhancing visual interest)
- Avoiding the use of large retaining structures visible from neighbouring sites or Clarks Beach Road
- Developing the stormwater system that sensitively works with the restoration of the stream and coastal edge environments to assist with the maintenance of water flows and enhancing landscape values. This is likely to be implemented as development extends south
- Manage the removal of trees and where possible retain trees in open space to avoid a completely blank canvas, or enable a transition to new vegetation
- Treatments to the façade of buildings to reduce visual impacts including a restrictive colour palette.

Conclusion

The project undeniably represents a change for the site from rural to urban character. This change is pronounced and would be particularly noticeable for those using Clarks Beach Road. However, when viewed in context, those changes are potentially positive in nature.

The key effects identified include:

Positive effects: The project will have positive effects on the natural systems such as stream and wetland restoration, coastal edge enhancement, and increased vegetation across the whole site. While it is a change in land use, the resulting landscape will provide for greater use by society and enable other key urban benefits such as the commercial / community centre. Access to existing public open space at the coastal edge will become accessible by the public enabling people to enjoy the values of the Taihiki River. The development of the site will assist in contributing to achieving the planned coastal walkway and other recreational opportunities.

Adverse effects: Loss of rural character visible from Clarks Beach Road, direct impacts on four dwellings to the south west of the site, and the broader impact of the landscape

transformation from rural to suburban character changing the cohesive rural context of the physical land south of Clarks Beach Road, and the current work in progress on the urbanisation of land to the north. Interim adverse effects on amenity and landscape values while development is occurring, or mitigation is establishing. However, the adverse effects arising from this change are limited, as the landscape has the capacity to absorb change. This particularly given the Project is not viewed as out of step with the wider landscape around it.

Mitigation: Vegetation can be used to screen areas where required (e.g. buffer edges as shown on the concept plan). A mix of plant sizes, including larger trees and shrubs, will mitigate adverse effects. Landscape plantings can transition the change from rural to urban along the Clarks Beach Road frontage. The site design addresses issues considering setbacks the location of open space and avoiding long hard interface outcomes such as tall fences that neighbours would not normally expect.

Author:



Nick Rae

Nick Rae holds a Master of Urban Design from Sydney University and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Lincoln University. He is a Member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, but is not a Registered Landscape Architect.

Nick is a founding member of the Urban Designers Institute Aotearoa, a professional institute that accredits urban design professionals. His urban design skills draw on his landscape skillset along with knowledge gained through working with other design disciplines.

Nick's landscape architectural career has spanned the last 28 years in New Zealand, Sydney, Riyadh, and London. Since 2009 Nick has been the managing director of Transurban Limited.

Nick has had significant involvement in the masterplanning and detailed design of residential and retirement, industrial and centre developments including subdivision, and land form changes and enhancement of natural systems.

This includes designing and providing strategic advice in response to landscape features, through to detailed landscape design, plant selection and implementation, design of circulation networks and park strategies. He has particular interest in stormwater management and the relationship this has with the landscape. Stream and wetland restoration has led to the rehabilitation of natural systems, while creating great places for people to recreate in, and experience and appreciate the natural environment.

Nick has undertaken landscape and visual assessments for a wide range of projects.