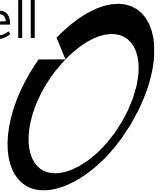


Boffa Miskell



Avenue Business Park Plan Change

Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment
Prepared for Warwick and Marion Steffert



20 October 2022





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<p>Bibliographic reference for citation: Boffa Miskell Limited 2022. <i>Avenue Business Park Plan Change: Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment</i>. Report prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited for Warwick and Marion Steffert.</p>		
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Status: FINAL	Revision / version: 2	Issue date: 20 October 2022
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Template revision: 20220720 0000

File ref: BM210907_ARN_Plan_Change_Rev2_20221020.docx

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment Methodology

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scope of the report

Boffa Miskell Limited (“BML”) has been engaged by Warwick and Marion Steffert (the Applicant) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (“LVA”) for a proposed Private Plan Change request to Matamata Piako District Council (“MPDC”). The Plan Change relates to approximately 14.2ha of rural land (total area of Lot 2 DPS 78100 and Lot 1 DPS 78100), 13.4ha of which is proposed to be rezoned from Rural to General Industrial Zone.

The following Landscape and Visual Assessment assesses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed zoning change on the immediate and surrounding environment character. This assessment will also recognise good urban practice guidelines, when assessing the proposed plan change.

The site does not have any significant overlays identified as part of the Matamata-Piako District Plan.

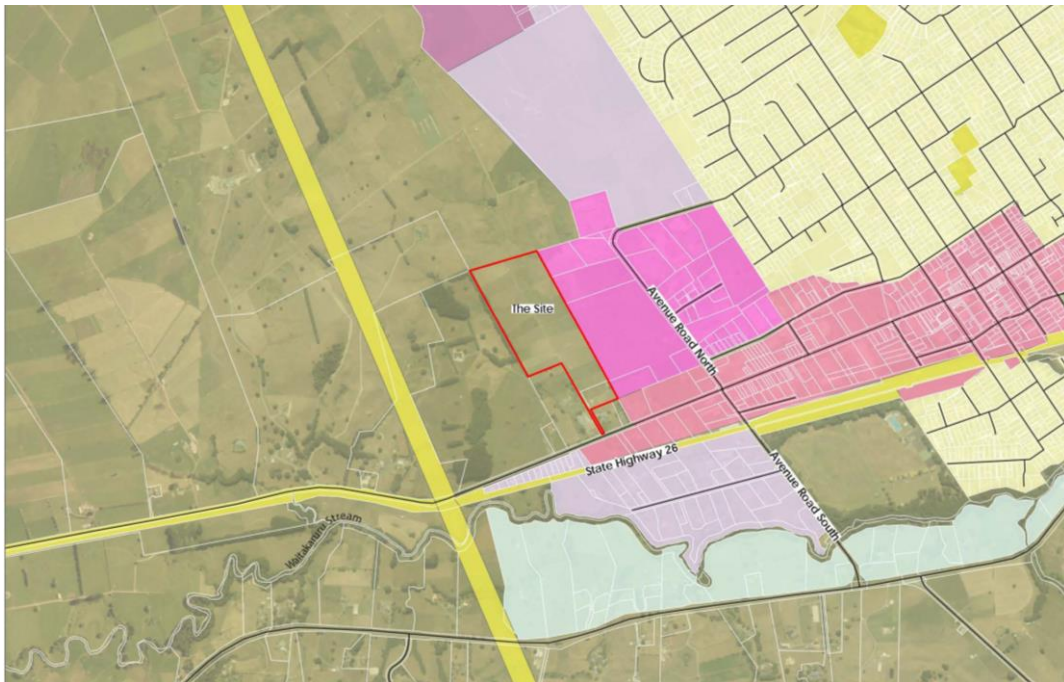


Figure 1: Plan Change Site (Base Map from Matamata-Piako District Plan)

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Methodology – Effects Assessment

The LVA provides ratings, based upon the professional judgement of the author(s), in relation to the level of landscape and visual effects that will result from the proposed development.

A full description of the methodology used in this assessment is included at Appendix 1. In summary, the assessment of the level of effects identified is based on a seven-point scale which includes very low; low; moderate-low; moderate; moderate-high; high; and very high ratings.

The effects addressed in this assessment include:

- Landscape character derived from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape; and
- Visual effects relating to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

Landscape Assessment

To assess the level and nature of physical effects associated with the proposal, the assessment has considered the sensitivity of the physical landscape features undergoing change together with the magnitude of change proposed.

A landscape's character can be recognised through the distinct or consistent use of patterns or elements that contribute to the landscape's appearance, including cultural modifications. It creates the unique sense of place defining different areas of the landscape.

Assessing landscape character effects provides judgement of the level and nature of changes to the existing landscape character. This includes consideration of the specific rural character, associated with the location of the development proposed and the extent to which this will undergo change. To inform an assessment of the magnitude of landscape change, it is also important that the size or scale and the geographical extent of the area influenced is defined where possible together with the duration of the effect and whether potential effects are reversible.

Visual Assessment

Visual amenity describes the pleasantness and aesthetic coherence of a place and comprises the visual and aesthetic aspects of amenity. Visual amenity is one component of amenity values which are defined in the RMA as 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.

The visual assessment considers the visual change that would result from the proposal, (the nature and scale of the change, what change would be visible to whom, and how views may differ from the existing situation). Visual amenity effects are also dependent on distance between the viewer and the proposal and the complexity of the intervening landscape.

Representative photographic viewpoints have been selected to understand effects from public vantage points.

For the purpose of this assessment, access to private property has not been obtained.

2.2 Methodology - Guidance

Tuia Pito Ora / The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects has recently endorsed new guidelines for the assessment of landscape under the RMA context in Aotearoa / New Zealand. The guidelines, Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines [Published by Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022], has been used to guide the methods adopted in this assessment. This guideline replaces earlier guidance and landscape architects' reliance on other international best practice / guidance.

2.3 Assessment Approach

The assessment involved the following tasks:

- Familiarisation with the Site to be the subject of the Plan Change rezoning under the District Plan.
- Review of relevant understandings concerning the Plan Change, including access points, earthworks, setbacks, and height limits.
- Desktop analysis of the existing environment and landscape values. This includes a review of relevant information relating to landscape and visual aspects of the Site and surrounding landscape.
- A Site visit was undertaken by Jo Soanes (Principal Landscape Architect at BML) on Friday 22nd July 2022. The weather was overcast with light winds. The Site along with the immediate surrounding industrial, rural/residential areas were visited to determine the likely viewing catchment and viewing audiences.
- Review of relevant statutory provisions.
- Assessment of landscape and visual effects.
- Recommendations.

3.0 The Proposal

The Applicant seeks to rezone the Site from Rural Zone to General Industrial Zone to enable industrial development. A Concept Plan has been prepared as part of this application (refer to **Figure 2** below) and illustrates what the development of the Site may typically look like, and what the proposal may afford. Key elements of the Concept Plan are proposed to be included in a Development Area Plan as an Appendix to the District Plan. The Concept Plan has therefore been assessed as part of this report.

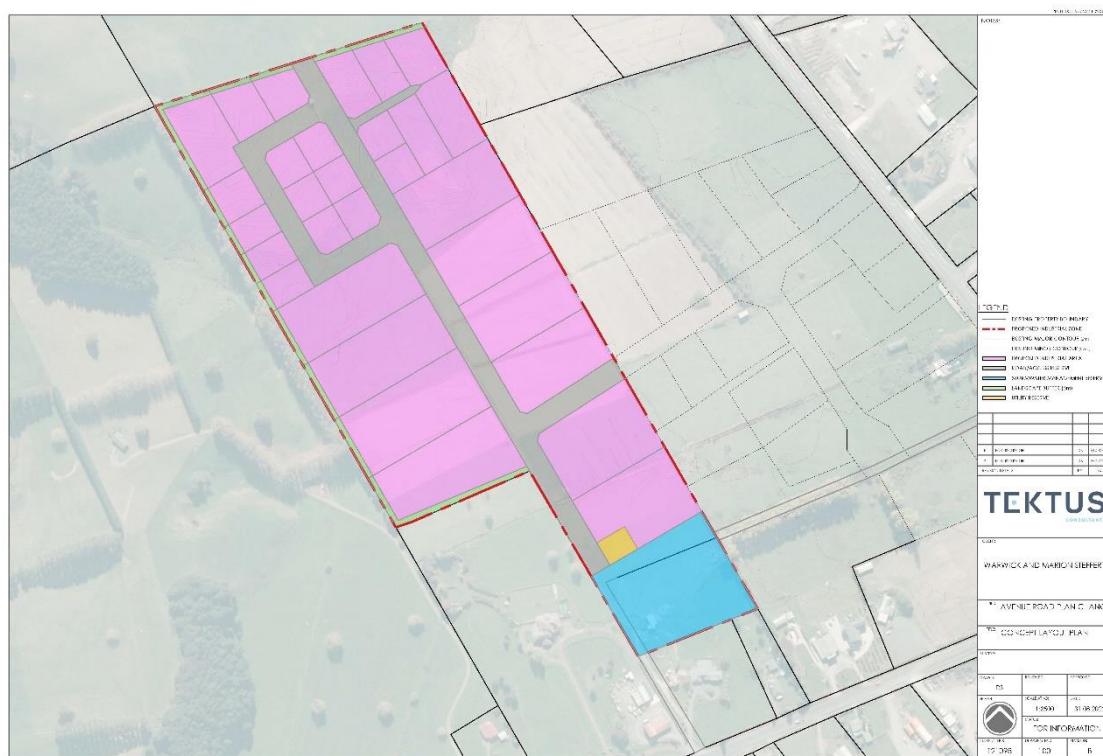


Figure 2: Concept plan illustrating proposed Industrial Development.

The purpose of the Plan Change is to facilitate a functional extension to the Avenue Business Park Stage 1 to the east which would expand the existing industrial boundary to the west through the rezoning of the Site. The proposed provisions that would apply to the Site will allow the subsequent buildings (afforded by this plan change) to be up to 12 m in height and 10 m set back from the rural boundaries.

Access into the Site will be provided from Avenue Road North (Stage 1 development). Within the Site, the roading network is expected to consist of a single access road for the tenant sites and a loop road at the northern end of this. The southern end of the proposed access road leads to a proposed stormwater management reserve. A 5m deep landscaped buffer is proposed along all rural boundaries of the Site. Note the 5m Landscape buffer would extend within the road reserve along the western boundary adjacent to the stormwater management reserve.

The density assumptions for future industrial land use are based on the proposed General Industrial Zone provisions which provide for activities such as ‘industrial activities’, ‘light industrial activities’, ‘building improvement centres’, ‘yard based retail’, ‘wholesale retail and

trade suppliers', 'service stations', 'veterinary clinics' and 'cafes and takeaway food outlets' as permitted activities (i.e., no resource consent to establish and operate subject to compliance with standards). Key parameters which are proposed for the General Industrial Zone that act as land / use / density assumptions are outlined in Section 5.3 of this LVA and include:

- Building height – maximum 12 m.
- Building setbacks from boundaries – minimum 5m front yards and minimum 10m yards adjoining any Rural Zone.
- Height in relation to boundary – 3m plus 45 degrees.
- Fencing and retaining walls – maximum boundary fence height of 1.8m, maximum retaining wall heights of 0.6m along front boundaries and 1.5m along other boundaries and maximum combined heights of fences and retaining walls.
- Service and outdoor storage areas – controls over location and screening, including avoidance of service and outdoor storage areas within any required front yard.

Further details relating to the Plan Change are provided in the Planning document prepared by Monocle, 'Plan Change 58 – Avenue Business Park, Request for Plan Change'.

4.0 Existing Environment

This section describes the existing landscape context and the available viewing audiences, which provides the baseline for the assessment of effects.

The degree to which the landscape is modified or developed in its current state is an important factor to consider when assessing how the proposed type of development will influence and affect existing landscape character and amenity.

4.1 Site Location and Character

Morrinsville is part of the Matamata-Piako district, located on State Highway (SH) 26, between Hamilton and Te Aroha. The Site is located within the Central Hill Country as classified in the Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment¹ which describes the area as follows:

The Central Hill Country comprises the southern section of the Hunua Range, the Hapuakohe Range, Mangakawa and Hangawera, and the hills around Te Miro and Maungatautari. These hills and ranges vary in elevation from around 400m to nearly 800m and are comprised of sedimentary and volcanic rock. The hill country comprises rolling and steep landforms, with a mix of pasture, some mature bush in the gullies and along the higher tops, with pine plantations in places. There are also other exotic tree groups on the lower slopes.

There are a number of quarries on the lower hill slopes which are quite visible. Morrinsville is located in the centre of this area; the railway lines from Hamilton, Paeroa and Rotorua meet at Morrinsville, and the Hamilton-Paeroa main highway passes through the town. The main primary industries of the area, which is one of the most intensively farmed areas in New Zealand, are dairy farming and fat-lamb production.

¹ Waikato Regional Landscape Assessment, February 2010. Technical Report # 1636162, page 25

Significant population growth has been experienced in many of the small rural towns in this area such as Morrinsville, Waihi and Matamata for example. This puts pressure on the amount of residential land available. The demand for more residential development not only poses a threat to the rural landscape through rural residential development but also potentially compromises the future use of good quality lands and soils.

The wider landscape surrounding Morrinsville, is rural in character. Land use patterns across the landscape are influenced by agricultural activities, predominantly comprising wide-open pastoral paddocks compartmentalised by deciduous exotic hedgerow species with infrequent bands of mature trees along post and wire fence lines. Shelter belts become more frequent towards Morrinsville and surround rural residential lots and farmsteads, which interrupt wide-open views over the landscape. Clustering's of mature native vegetation can be found along the riparian edge along stream corridors. Isolated farmsteads, agricultural storage and ancillary farm buildings are distributed widely across the rural landscape and feature regularly in views.

The settlement of Morrinsville generally sits between the Piako River (to the east) and the Morrinsville Stream (to the west) on relatively flat land. The topography within the wider landscape is relatively flat to undulating in nature with steep knolls located throughout. Pakarua Range to the south and Hangawera hills to the north, provide a distant backdrop that can be viewed from Morrinsville.

Morrinsville is predominantly defined by low density housing within the northern and eastern areas of the township, while Industrial, commercial, and business land uses are located to the south-west of the town, sitting either side of the main street (Thames Street) and SH26. The East Coast Main Trunk and Waitoa Branch rail lines pass through the southern part of the town.

The town's residential areas comprise of predominately single and two storey dwellings. Boundary treatments along the rural urban boundary range from close boarded timber fencing to post and wire fences which reflect adjacent rural boundaries and field divisions. The northern interface with the rural landscape is currently under a period of flux, as the Lockerbie Estate residential subdivision is currently under construction. This development has substantially altered the character of the rural landscape in this area and pushed the northern edge of the settlement further to the north.

Land immediately east of the Site is in the progress of being developed for industrial use. The construction works include civil construction for the Avenue Business Park – Stage 1 site and a yard and industrial buildings which are being constructed on the Bowers Concrete site. Future access to the proposed General Industrial zone will be from Avenue Road North through Stage 1 of the consented Avenue Business Park. Land to the north and west of the Site is zoned Rural and is rural in character.

4.2 The Site

The Site is approximately 13.4 ha in area, zoned Rural (**refer to Figure 2**), and is located beyond the existing house site at 2581 State Highway 26, Morrinsville 3372 (which is located within Lot 1 DPS 78100).

The Site in its current state, is typical of a rural farm site, currently in pasture used as a small dry-stock beef farm. A central race, a network of farm drains, in combination with the post and wire fencing compartmentalises the site into multiple paddocks.

The topography of the Site is relatively flat to gently undulating in nature. The southern part of the Site is generally flat with a gentle slope from west to east. The sloping area in the northern

part of the Site also slopes in a west to east direction with an average grade of approximately 10% and ground levels ranging between RL29m to RL51m near the Site's northern boundary.

The Site does not contain any mature vegetation, scattered trees or hedgerows and is devoid of any natural features, although it should be noted that a large mature shelterbelt and hedgerow are located within neighbouring properties, along the western and northern boundaries, respectfully.

An existing farm ancillary building is located at the end of the central farm race within the northern area of the Site. Existing stockyards are located at the southern end of the Site. The existing dwelling which is located within Lot 1 DPS 78100 (which is accessed from SH26) does not form part of the area of the Site which is proposed to be rezoned.

4.3 Landscape Values

The Site has not been identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF), Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL), or as a Significant Amenity Landscape within the MPDP, however, due to its rural character and location on the fringe of Morrinsville, the Site is subject to rural amenity values. These values specifically relate to the following:

- A sense of openness and spaciousness due to lack of development and structures on the Site.
- Landform.
- Network of farm drains (typically modified waterways).
- Open to partial views of the Kaimai Ranges in the distance.

4.4 Visual Catchment & Viewing Audience

To assist in determining the visual catchment and potential viewing audiences of the development, desktop analysis was undertaken and then verified through a site visit to the site itself and the surrounding public locations. Overtime the makeup of these viewing audiences is expected to change, as further growth and development is anticipated within Morrinsville and its surrounds.

The visual catchment of the Site is generally quite limited to the immediate surrounding area. Due to the undulating nature of the terrain west of the Site and intervening vegetation, particularly the shelterbelt along the western boundary, views into the Site will be difficult to obtain.

Distant views (at a distance of approximately 1km-2.5km) may be available from elevated rural-residential properties to the north around Sunridge Park, however, intervening topography and vegetation does serve to limit visibility of the Site in many areas.

The primary viewing audiences of the proposed development have been identified as the following:

Public locations:

- Users of existing surrounding roads, including SH26 and Avenue Road North
- Users of new roads within the Avenue North Business Park – Stage 1

Private locations:

- Static viewers from private properties surrounding the site.
- Rural farm workers.
- Tenants located within Avenue North Business Park – Stage 1.

A range of viewpoints representing the key viewing audiences have been selected (refer to Appendix 2: Graphic Supplement) and are referred to in the visual effect's assessment, section 6.2).

5.0 Relevant Statutory Provisions

As part of this assessment, there are a number of planning provisions that are relevant to this project. Specifically, they include the Resource Management Plan ("RMA"), The Waikato Regional Policy Statement ("RPS"), and the Matamata Piako District Plan ("MPDP").

The relevant provisions in terms of landscape, urban design and visual matters relate to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and the quality of the environment. The assessment of the Plan Change needs to consider if the proposed changes to the methods (zone change) and rules are appropriate to achieve the objectives of the District Plan for the General Industrial zone.

5.1 Resource Management Act (RMA)

The RMA provisions relevant to landscape and visual effects addressed in this report are in respect of:

- Section 7(c) – the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.
- Section 7(f) – the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.

5.2 Waikato Regional Policy Statement

The RPS identifies the significant resource management issues of the region and sets out the objectives, policies and methods to address these issues. The RPS aims to ensure the way that resources are used does not unbalance and compromise the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs. The RPS provides the overall framework to ensure the people who choose to live, work, learn and play in the Waikato prosper – socially, culturally and economically.

With regards to landscape, the RPS seeks to provide a consistent approach to landscape management across the region. The statement identifies 13 regionally Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes (ONFLs) and necessitates those areas of amenity value are identified and the values of these areas are maintained and enhanced.

5.3 Matamata-Piako District Plan

The site is proposed to be zoned General Industrial, therefore subsequent development will be assessed under the General Industrial Zone Provisions which are proposed to be included within the MPDP. The proposed General Industrial Zone provisions which are of particular relevance to this LVA include:

18 General Industrial Zone

18.2 General Industrial Zone Objectives

GIZ-O3 The adverse amenity values and adverse effects of industrial activities on surrounding non-industrial activities and open space areas are to be avoided or mitigated.

18.3 General Industrial Zone Policies

GIZ-P5 Amenity levels within the General Industrial Zone are improved with the use of landscaping and screening, restrictions on site layout, ensuring orientation of buildings towards the site frontage, and enhanced urban design where appropriate for example along key transport corridors or adjoining reserves or adjoining non-industrial zones.

GIZ-P6 Development which is visible from key entranceways of towns, key transport corridors and open spaces shall meet appropriate landscaping, screening and building design standards and be in general accordance with Development Area Plans where applicable.

18.5 Standards for the General Industrial Zone

(2) Building Envelope

Unless otherwise stated, the following performance standards apply to all buildings:

Maximum height

The maximum height is 12m

Yards

Front 5m

Front - Key Transport Corridors

or as shown on a Development Area Plan 10m

River Protection 20m

Adjoining any non GIZ (except for residential) 10m

Adjoining any residential zone 40m

Adjoining any reserve (excluding utility reserves)

with a width of less than 20m

(3) Height in relation to boundary

(a) No part of any building shall penetrate a recession plane at right angles to the boundary inclined inwards at 45 degrees from 3m above ground level of any boundary with an adjoining Residential Zone, Rural Zone or reserve areas (excluding utility reserves) with a width of less than 20m.

(5) Fencing and retaining walls

(a) Fencing design and fencing/retaining wall heights:

For front boundaries of sites	Maximum height of a fence is 1.8m and 50% visually permeable.
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	<p>Maximum height of a retaining wall is 0.6m.</p> <p>Provided that no combination of fence and retaining wall shall exceed 1.8m.</p>
<p>For boundaries of sites adjoining a reserve (excluding utility reserves) or any non-industrial zone</p>	<p>Maximum height of a fence is 1.8m and 50% visually permeable.</p> <p>Maximum height of a retaining wall is 1.5m, whereby retaining walls over 1.2m in height shall be stepped by at least 500mm to visually break up the expanse of the wall and allow for planting.</p> <p>Provided that no combination of fence and retaining wall shall exceed 2.5m.</p> <p>The fence shall be set back from the face of the retaining wall by at least 500mm to allow for planting in front of the fence.</p>
<p>All other boundary fences or walls</p>	<p>Maximum height of a fence is 1.8m.</p> <p>Maximum height of a retaining wall is 1.5m.</p> <p>Provided that no combination of fence and retaining wall shall exceed 3m.</p>

(6) Landscaping

- (a) Front and corner sites adjoining a key transport corridor or as shown on a Development Area Plan shall be landscaped to a depth of 2m along the entire road boundary, except for access and egress points.
- (b) Sites adjoining a Rural Zone in the Avenue Business Park Development Area Plan shall be landscaped to a minimum depth of 5m along the entire Rural Zone boundary.
- (c) The landscaping must consist of a combination of grass and trees or groundcovers, shrubs and trees. There must also be one planted tree for every 10m of road frontage or Rural Zone boundary length.

(7) Maximum Coverage

- (a) Maximum coverage on any site shall be determined by the need to comply with the building envelope, landscaping, access and loading requirements.

There are several existing objectives and policies within the MDPD which relate to the proposed development. Those objectives which are of particular relevance to this LVA are set out below:

Part A Section 3: Environment

3.1.2 Natural Environment and Heritage

- **3.1.2.1 – Landscape Objective 1:** To retain and enhance the varied landscape qualities of the District.

3.5.2 Amenity

- **3.5.2.1 Development Standards Objective 1:** To maintain and enhance a high standard of amenity in the built environment without constraining development innovation and building variety.
- **3.5.2.1 Development Standards Objective 2:** To minimise the adverse effects created by building scale or dominance, shading, building location and site layout.

- **3.5.2.2 Design Appearance and Character Objective 1:** *To ensure that the design and appearance of buildings and sites is in keeping with the character of the surrounding townscape and landscape.*
- **3.5.2.4 Signage Objective 1:** *To minimise the adverse effects of signage on the character of rural, residential, industrial and business areas.*
- **3.5.2.4 Signage Objective 2:** *To ensure that signs and business advertising do not compromise visual amenity and traffic safety.*

6.0 Assessment of Effects

A landscape effect is a consequence of changes in the in a landscape's physical attributes on that landscape's values. It should be noted that changes in a landscape does not, of itself, necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect. Landscape is dynamic and is constantly changing over time in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways, these changes are both natural and human induced.

Particular effects considered relate to the following:

- Rural Character effects; and
- Visual amenity effects from public and private locations.

The principal elements of the proposal that will give rise to landscape and visual effects are:

- A change in landscape character from a rural landscape to an industrial development; and
- Potential loss in visual amenity from surrounding dwellings that overlook the Site.

6.1 Landscape Effects

Landscape character can be understood through a landscape's distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape. It reflects combinations of landform, vegetation, land use and features of hum settlement. It creates the unique sense of place defining different areas of the landscape.

Development of the Site, in line with the proposed provisions, cannot occur without a change to its existing (immediate) landscape character. This will always be the case where development is proposed within a site that has been utilised (historically) for a different use to that of the proposed future activity.

6.1.1 Physical Landscape Effects

Industrial development afforded by the proposed plan change, will result in modification of the Site's existing topography.

Earthworks across the entirety of the Site will be required to establish the road network, future building platforms, and associated retaining walls. Preliminary earthworks modelling by Tektus indicates retaining walls are typically expected to be between 2-3m in height within the northern

end of the Site, with a maximum height of 3.5m (refer to the Infrastructure Report by Tektus). Because the lots will accommodate industrial development, it is likely that many of the retaining walls will be visually obscured once development of buildings on the lots occurs. The proposed standards for the General Industrial Zone also require stepping of boundary retaining walls which are above 1.5m to visually break up the expanse of the walls and to allow for planting. The management of elevation differences could also potentially be addressed using landscaping batters in some places.

Removal of large volumes of soil from the Site will not likely be necessary, because the cut material will be able to be used for contouring the flatter lower lying parts of the Site.

As stated in the above section 4 – Existing Environment, there is no existing vegetation on site, therefore no vegetation is required for removal as part of the subsequent development afforded by the plan change.

It is anticipated that earthworks required to achieve suitable gradients for roads and building platforms will result in a **low – moderate** direct adverse effect on the landscape particularly the existing topography and 'natural' contours of the landscape. To mitigate land disturbances and any adverse effects associated, it is recommended that planted buffers along the industrial / rural interfaces are provided.

6.1.2 Landscape Character Effects

The conversion of 13.4ha of rural land use to industrial development will lead to an inevitable change in the Site's landscape character.

Potential landscape effects of subsequent development afforded by the proposal are:

- A greater sense of enclosure and the replacement and reduction of the open character of the rural landscape in the area.
- Reduced rural outlook for surrounding properties.
- Buildings of a particular size and scale not common throughout the rural landscape, have the potential to visually dominate views.
- The appearance of industrial facilities and structures, with materiality not seen within the existing environment.

It should be noted that, due to the site's location, being that on the fringe of Morrinsville adjacent to an existing industrial zone, the landscape character of the site and immediate surroundings, perceived by viewers, has already changed while built development has already been introduced. That will be increasingly the case as surrounding sites continue to be developed, including lots within the Avenue Business Park – Stage 1 which is under construction immediately east of the subject Site. In considering the above there will be a potential **low-moderate** adverse effect on the existing landscape rural character and the Site is considered an appropriate location for development.

Recommendations (Section 7) have been made to ensure that the built development outcome of the Plan Change does not detract from the character of the landscape and surrounding rural residential development. These include:

- Site responsive design – design reflects the wider context
- 5m buffer located along rural interface boundaries

- Minimise the use and height of retaining walls

Overall, it is considered that the above recommendations will lead to the creation of an industrial area that provides appropriate mitigation for the potential loss of rural landscape, which is inevitable where rural land is converted to an industrial land-use zoning.

6.2 Visual Effects

Visual amenity effects are influenced by a number of factors including the nature of the proposal, and the existing character of the site and the surrounding area. Visual amenity effects are also dependent on distance between the viewer and the proposal, the complexity of the intervening landscape and the nature of the view.

An assessment of the potential visual effect of the proposed plan change, and subsequent development afforded by this proposal, from a number of public locations, north, west and south of the site was undertaken. This assessment assigned a degree of effects, based on the following: visibility and proximity to the Site, the apparent orientation of the surrounding houses and the nature of the view, including any existing or proposed vegetation that might provide full or partial screening of views. The assessment is based on observations from the Site itself, and the use of aerial photos.

As part of this assessment, representative photographic viewpoints have been selected to understand effects from public vantage points. Refer to **Appendix 2: Graphic Supplement**. It should be noted that private properties were not visited as part of this assessment.

6.2.1 Visual Effects from public locations

Public Roads - State Highway 26, Avenue Road North

Public locations investigated along public roads including State Highway 26 and Avenue Road North are both representative of transient viewers (users travelling in vehicles and pedestrians).

Existing views of the Site from SH26 are intermittently screened by existing dwellings, ancillary buildings and mature vegetation. From Avenue Road North, clear views can currently be obtained into the Site, although the extent of these views will change (reduce) as development of lots within Avenue Business Park – Stage 1 occurs.

Although industrial development within the Site afforded by the proposed Plan Change will be discernible from SH26, it will not be notable due to the zone boundary being setback between 100-300m from SH26, due to dwellings and vegetation being within the foreground of views and due to the proposal for a stormwater management reserve (which will include planting) to be located within the part of the Site nearest SH26. Development of the sloping higher area of the site is expected to be more notable from SH26 but it will be viewed at a greater distance with the highest part of the Site near the northern boundary being over 700m from the road frontage.

From Avenue Road North existing wider Industrial and Business development to the north (Bowers Brothers) and east provides a utilitarian context. From Avenue Road North, the subsequent development (afforded by the proposed plan change) will be viewed to the west beyond existing pastoral land. Much of the lower lying part of the Site is likely to be substantially screened from view from Avenue Road North once the Avenue Business Park – Stage 1 land is fully developed. Where it is not screened from view it will be viewed in context with other future industrial buildings (once constructed) when looking directly west towards the site. Like views from SH26, the development of the sloping higher area of the site is expected to be more

notable from Avenue Road North but it will be viewed at a greater distance with the highest part of the Site near the northern boundary being approximately 250m from the road frontage at the nearest point.

Temporary effects associated with the subsequent development will be limited to the construction of buildings and accessways, which will include the frequent movement of earth moving machinery and an overall increase in traffic movement around access points.

There will be an inevitable change in character of the site itself from rural to industrial development. Due to the limited visibility of the site, the existing (and potential future) industrial context the adjacent sites provide, and the distant views of the more visible higher parts of the Site from SH26 and Avenue Road North, the subsequent development (afforded by the proposed plan change) in combination with mitigation and design recommendations, is considered to have the ability to integrate into the existing environment from these public surrounding locations.

6.2.2 Visual Effects from private locations

The following analysis is based on observations from the Site visit as well as from extensive desktop research. The principal private locations from where the Site may be visible from residences that boarder the Site.

It should be reiterated that no private properties including house sites were visited.

Table1: Visibility Analysis from Private Locations				
<i>Refer to Appendix 2 in the Graphic Supplement for locations</i>				
House ID	Address	Distance from Site*	Nature of Existing View	Description and assessment of potential visual effects
1.	2587 SH26, 26 Morrisville	Dwelling is located 70m from the site.	The site will be directly visible from this dwelling with the proposed stormwater management reserve located on the northern boundary that will provide visual screening. The existing industrial development to the east will be partially visible, which provides context to the proposed plan change and subsequent development.	Currently viewers from this property have a rural outlook, and the proposed up-zoning of the area will inevitably read a significant visual change. Visual Effects will be Moderate from this private property and then reducing to Moderate-Low once vegetation

				has established.
2.	2581 State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 30m from the site.	<p>The site will be directly visible from this dwelling. The dwelling forms part of the Site (and is occupied by the Applicants) but will be outside of the General Industrial zoned land and is proposed to remain.</p> <p>The proposed stormwater management reserve which adjoins the property will provide visual screening through planting. The existing industrial development to the east will be partially visible, which provides context to the proposed plan change and subsequent development.</p>	<p>Currently viewers from this property have a rural outlook, and the proposed up-zoning of the area will inevitably read a significant visual change.</p> <p>Visual Effects will be Moderate from this private property and then reducing to Moderate-Low once vegetation has established.</p>
3.	2579 State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 50m from the site.	<p>The site will be directly visible from this dwelling.</p> <p>Clustering of trees within the foreground will help to break up the bulk of the subsequent development afforded by the proposed plan change.</p> <p>The existing industrial development to the east will be partially visible, with the proposed stormwater management reserve located directly east to the property. The existing industrial development provides context to the</p>	<p>Currently viewers from this property have a rural outlook, and the proposed up-zoning of the area will inevitably read a significant visual change.</p> <p>Visual Effects will be Low-Moderate from this private property.</p>

			proposed plan change and subsequent development.	
4.	2561 State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 160m from the site.	<p>The site will be partially visible from this dwelling. The area of the site nearest this dwelling (east of it) is proposed to be a stormwater management reserve.</p> <p>Intervening vegetation and the dwelling at 2579 SH26, will provide some development context, however the subsequent development afforded by the plan change will be visible above.</p>	Visual Effects will be Low from this private property.
5.	2559 State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 170m from the site.	<p>The site is expected to be visible from this dwelling and within the property. There is existing vegetation that provides screening to the site from the dwelling.</p> <p>Intervening vegetation along the boundary and surrounding the dwelling will provide visual screening. It should be noted that vegetation in private properties will not be relied upon, however it can be reasonably anticipated that vegetation outside the site will be retained.</p>	Visual Effects will be Low from this private property.
6.	2469D State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 230m from the site.	The site will be visible from this dwelling beyond pastoral land and above and partially through an existing hedgerow along the	Visual Effects will be Low from this private property.

			<p>northern boundary of the site.</p> <p>The dwelling is elevated and orientated north away from the site.</p> <p>The existing industrial development to the east will be partially visible, which provides context to the proposed plan change and subsequent development.</p>	
7.	2469 A, B & C, 2491 A & B State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwellings are located 600m-950m from the site.	Undulating topography and intervening vegetation along the boundaries and surrounding the dwellings will provide visual screening. It should be noted that vegetation in private properties will not be relied upon, however it can be reasonably anticipated that vegetation outside the site will be retained.	Due to distance separate and the limited ability to view the site the visual effects will be Very Low from this private property.
8.	2597A State Hwy 26, Morrinsville	Dwelling is located 130m from the site. The site nearest the dwelling is zoned Business and the rear part of the site (furthest from the dwelling) is zoned Industrial.	Intervening vegetation along the boundary and surrounding the dwelling will provide visual screening. It should be noted that vegetation in private properties will not be relied upon, however it can be reasonably anticipated that vegetation outside the site will be retained.	Visual Effects will be Very Low from this private property.

The visual effects assessment demonstrates that the Site is located within a reasonably discrete part of western Morrinsville.

While there are no identified landscape features (for examples ONL or ONF), it is a rural outlook, and the proposed rezoning of the Site will inevitably read a significant visual change, particularly from properties south of the site. The recommendations around incorporating 5 m

buffer planting within the Site along the Rural zone boundaries, will assist in visually integrating the future development into the surrounding wider landscape.

6.3 Effects in relation to Statutory Provisions

An assessment against the relevant landscape and visual amenity provisions which are relevant to the Site, is detailed below. The Site is proposed to be zoned General Industrial, therefore subsequent development will be assessed under the General Industrial Zone provisions within the MPDP.

The proposal will have the ability to align with the RPS, where high visual amenity areas and significant landscapes are maintained and enhanced. The subsequent development afforded by the proposed plan change will not directly or indirectly affect these areas or types of landscapes. The closest ONFL to the proposed development Site is ONFL8 – the Kaimai Range, located approximately 21km east of the Site. The ONFL would not be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development.

In terms of regional form, design and function, the Plan Change will result in essentially an extension of existing (future or under construction) industrial development to the east. Further Site Responsive Design recommendations have been identified in Section 7 below.

It should be noted that the overall design needs to be considered at the time when more advanced plans are developed, this is to ensure the rural interface and outlook, particularly from surrounding private properties is considered.

The overall type of activity and bulk is considered appropriate from a landscape perspective under the industrial provisions. The visual amenity of the Site will change but it will be visually consistent with the existing development to the east of the Site and appropriate to what would be expected of an Industrial Zone.

7.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations aim to avoid, remedy or mitigate the identified and anticipated potential landscape effects of the plan change.

Site Responsive Design

- That the landscape design reflects rural context, interface and adjacent industrial development

Infrastructure

- Earthworks – All earthworks associated with the plan change area should be integrated within the landform and site topography of the surrounding landscape. Limiting the use of and heights of retaining walls and limited earthworks with interface with rural zone.
- Internal circulation should be legible and integrated with linkages that connect beyond the Site. The road should be visually articulated with clear building entry points.

Landscape Design

It is recommended that a Landscape Plan should be provided at the time of the resource consent application for subdivision of the Site and for subsequent development of lots which adjoin the Rural Zone. The Landscape Plan should include the following:

The objective of the Landscape Plan is to ensure that the future industrial development within the Site occurs in such a way that landscape and visual effects are managed, and the development is integrated into the surrounding landscape, particular the interface with the Rural Zone.

- Public roads.
- Stormwater management areas.
- Landscape buffers.
- Roading frontages.
- Fencing and retaining walls.
- Service areas and outdoor storage areas which are visible from reserve areas.
- Wayfinding and Signage.
- Implementation, Maintenance and Monitoring.

8.0 Conclusions

The proposed Plan Change for Avenue Business Park, Morrinsville, will significantly change the current open rural landscape character within the Site and from the immediate surroundings.

Although the subject Site is largely open pasture and rural in character, the overall landscape character is also contributed to by the existing land use to the south and east of the site,

including the existing industrial and business development, SH26 and the general urban development of Morrinsville. Furthermore, the plan change is not within itself nor is it part of an identified (regional or district level or assessment) outstanding natural feature of landscape.

With the recommended mitigation, the rural characteristics of the surrounding area and the rural interface with the Rural Zone to the west and north of the site can be maintained, and the subsequent development can be integrated successfully so that the development is not a dominant feature within views from surrounding locations. The subsequent development afforded by the proposed plan change will have the ability to meet the statutory provisions of the Matamata-Piako District Plan.

Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment Methodology

11 February 2019

Introduction

The Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LVEA) process provides a framework for assessing and identifying the nature and level of likely effects that may result from a proposed development. Such effects can occur in relation to changes to physical elements, changes in the existing character or condition of the landscape and the associated experiences of such change. In addition, the landscape assessment method includes an iterative design development processes, which seeks to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects (see Figure 1).

This outline of the landscape and visual effects assessment methodology has been undertaken with reference to the **Te Tangi A Te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines** and its signposts to examples of best practice, which include the Quality Planning Landscape Guidance Note² and the UK guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment³.

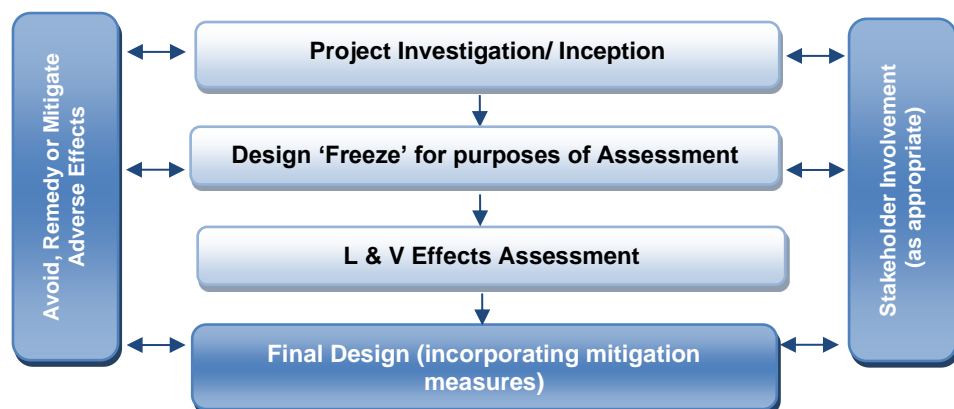


Figure 1: Design feedback loop

When undertaking a LVA, it is important that a **structured and consistent approach** is used to ensure that **findings are clear and objective**. Judgement should be based on skills and experience and be supported by explicit evidence and reasoned argument.

While landscape and visual effects assessments are closely related, they form separate procedures. The assessment of the potential effect on the landscape forms the first step in this process and is carried out as an effect on landscape elements, features and on landscape character. The assessment of visual effects considers how changes to the physical landscape affect the viewing audience. The types of effects can be summarised as follows:

Landscape effects: *Change in the physical landscape, which may affect its characteristics or qualities.*

Visual effects: *Change to views which may affect the visual amenity experienced by people.*

² <http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/index.php/planning-tools/land/landscape>

³ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)

The policy context, existing landscape resource and locations from which a development or change is visible, all inform the 'baseline' for landscape and visual effects assessments. To assess effects, the landscape must first be **described**, including an understanding of the **key landscape characteristics and qualities**. This process, known as landscape characterisation, is the basic tool for understanding landscape character and may involve subdividing the landscape into character areas or types. The condition of the landscape (i.e. the state of an individual area of landscape or landscape feature) should also be described together with, a judgement made on the value or importance of the potentially affected landscape.

Landscape Effects

Assessing landscape effects requires an understanding of the landscape resource and the magnitude of change which results from a proposed activity to determine the overall level of landscape effects.

Landscape Resource

Assessing the sensitivity of the landscape resource considers the key characteristics and qualities. This involves an understanding of both the ability of an area of landscape to absorb change and the value of the landscape.

Ability of an area to absorb change

This will vary upon the following factors:

- Physical elements such as topography / hydrology / soils / vegetation;
- Existing land use;
- The pattern and scale of the landscape;
- Visual enclosure / openness of views and distribution of the viewing audience;
- The zoning of the land and its associated anticipated level of development;
- The scope for mitigation, appropriate to the existing landscape.

The ability of an area of landscape to absorb change takes account of both the attributes of the receiving environment and the characteristics of the proposed development. It considers the ability of a specific type of change occurring without generating adverse effects and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

The value of the Landscape

Landscape value derives from the importance that people and communities, including tangata whenua, attach to particular landscapes and landscape attributes. This may include the classification of Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape (ONFL) (RMA s.6(b)) based on important biophysical, sensory/ aesthetic and associative landscape attributes, which have potential to be affected by a proposed development. A landscape can have value even if it is not recognised as being an ONFL.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change judges the amount of change that is likely to occur to areas of landscape, landscape features, or key landscape attributes. In undertaking this assessment, it is important that the size or scale of the change is considered within the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration of change, including whether the change is reversible. In some situations, the loss /change or enhancement to existing landscape elements such as vegetation or earthworks should also be quantified.

When assessing the level of landscape effects, it is important to be clear about what factors have been considered when making professional judgements. This can include consideration of any

benefits which result from a proposed development. **Table 1** below helps to explain this process. The tabulating of effects is only intended to inform overall judgements.

Contributing Factors		Higher	Lower
Landscape (sensitivity)	Ability to absorb change	The landscape context has limited existing landscape detractors which make it highly vulnerable to the type of change resulting from the proposed development.	The landscape context has many detractors and can easily accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences to landscape character.
	The value of the landscape	The landscape includes important biophysical, sensory and shared and recognised attributes. The landscape requires protection as a matter of national importance (ONF/L).	The landscape lacks any important biophysical, sensory or shared and recognised attributes. The landscape is of low or local importance.
Magnitude of Change	Size or scale	Total loss or addition of key features or elements. Major changes in the key characteristics of the landscape, including significant aesthetic or perceptual elements.	The majority of key features or elements are retained. Key characteristics of the landscape remain intact with limited aesthetic or perceptual change apparent.
	Geographical extent	Wider landscape scale.	Site scale, immediate setting.
	Duration and reversibility	Permanent. Long term (over 10 years).	Reversible. Short Term (0-5 years).

Table 1: Determining the level of landscape effects

Visual Effects

To assess the visual effects of a proposed development on a landscape, a visual baseline must first be defined. The visual 'baseline' forms a technical exercise which identifies the area where the development may be visible, the potential viewing audience, and the key representative public viewpoints from which visual effects are assessed.

The viewing audience comprises the individuals or groups of people occupying or using the properties, roads, footpaths and public open spaces that lie within the visual envelope or 'zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)' of the site and proposal. Where possible, computer modelling can assist to determine the theoretical extent of visibility together with field work to confirm this. Where appropriate, key representative viewpoints should be agreed with the relevant local authority.

The Sensitivity of the viewing audience

The sensitivity of the viewing audience is assessed in terms of assessing the likely response of the viewing audience to change and understanding the value attached to views.

Likely response of the viewing audience to change

Appraising the likely response of the viewing audience to change is determined by assessing the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and the extent to which their interest or activity may be focussed on views of the surrounding landscape. This relies on a landscape architect's judgement in respect of visual amenity and the reaction of people who may be affected by a proposal. This should also recognise that people more susceptible to change generally include: residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views; visitors to heritage assets or other important visitor attractions; and communities where views contribute to the wider landscape setting.

Value attached to views

The value or importance attached to particular views may be determined with respect to its popularity or numbers of people affected or reference to planning instruments such as viewshafts or view corridors. Important viewpoints are also likely to appear in guide books or tourist maps and may include facilities provided for its enjoyment. There may also be references to this in literature or art, which also acknowledge a level of recognition and importance.

Magnitude of Visual Change

The assessment of visual effects also considers the potential magnitude of change which will result from views of a proposed development. This takes account of the size or scale of the effect, the geographical extent of views and the duration of visual change, which may distinguish between temporary (often associated with construction) and permanent effects where relevant. Preparation of any simulations of visual change to assist this process should be guided by best practice as identified by the NZILA⁴.

When determining the overall level of visual effect, the nature of the viewing audience is considered together with the magnitude of change resulting from the proposed development. **Table 2** has been prepared to help guide this process:

Contributing Factors		Higher	Lower	Examples
The Viewing Audience (sensitivity)	Ability to absorb change	Views from dwellings and recreation areas where attention is typically focussed on the landscape.	Views from places of employment and other places where the focus is typically incidental to its landscape context. Views from transport corridors.	Dwellings, places of work, transport corridors, public tracks
	Value attached to views	Viewpoint is recognised by the community such as an important view shaft, identification on tourist maps or in art and literature. High visitor numbers.	Viewpoint is not typically recognised or valued by the community. Infrequent visitor numbers.	Acknowledged viewshafts, Lookouts
Magnitude of Change	Size or scale	Loss or addition of key features in the view. High degree of contrast with existing landscape elements (i.e. in terms of form scale, mass, line, height, colour and texture). Full view of the proposed development.	Most key features of views retained. Low degree of contrast with existing landscape elements (i.e. in terms of form scale, mass, line, height, colour and texture). Glimpse / no view of the proposed development.	- Higher contrast/ Lower contrast. - Open views, Partial views, Glimpse views (or filtered); No views (or obscured)
	Geographical extent	Front on views. Near distance views; Change visible across a wide area.	Oblique views. Long distance views. Small portion of change visible.	- Front or Oblique views. - Near distant, Middle distant and Long distant views
	Duration and reversibility	Permanent. Long term (over 15 years).	Transient / temporary. Short Term (0-5 years).	- Permanent (fixed), Transitory (moving)

Table 2: Determining the level of visual effects

Nature of Effects

In combination with assessing the level of effects, the landscape and visual effects assessment also considers the nature of effects in terms of whether this will be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in the context within which it occurs. Neutral effects can also occur where landscape or visual change is benign.

⁴ Best Practice Guide: Visual Simulations BPG 10.2, NZILA

It should also be noted that a change in a landscape does not, of itself, necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect. Landscape is dynamic and is constantly changing over time in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways; these changes are both natural and human induced. What is important in managing landscape change is that adverse effects are avoided or sufficiently mitigated to ameliorate the effects of the change in land use. The aim is to provide a high amenity environment through appropriate design outcomes.

This assessment of the nature effects can be further guided by **Table 3** set out below:

Nature of effect	Use and Definition
Adverse (negative):	The activity would be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform which results in a reduction in landscape and / or visual amenity values
Neutral (benign):	The activity would be consistent with (or blend in with) the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape maintaining existing landscape and / or visual amenity values
Beneficial (positive):	The activity would enhance the landscape and / or visual amenity through removal or restoration of existing degraded landscape activities and / or addition of positive elements or features

Table 3: Determining the Nature of Effects

Determining the Overall Level of Effects

The landscape and visual effects assessment concludes with an overall assessment of the likely level of landscape and visual effects. This step also takes account of the nature of effects and the effectiveness of any proposed mitigation. The process can be illustrated in Figure 2:

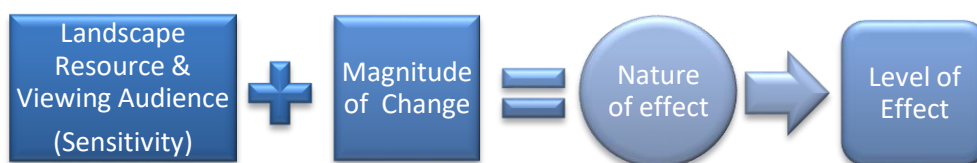


Figure 2: Assessment process

This step informs an overall judgement identifying what level of effects are likely to be generated as indicated in **Table 4** below. This table which can be used to guide the level of landscape and visual effects uses an adapted seven-point scale derived from NZILA's Best Practice Note.

Effect Rating	Use and Definition
Very High:	Total loss of key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. amounts to a complete change of landscape character and in views.
High:	Major modification or loss of most key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. little of the pre-development landscape character remains and a major change in views. <u>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</u> <i>High: adjective- Great in amount, value, size, or intensity.</i>
Moderate- High:	Modifications of several key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. the pre-development landscape character remains evident but materially changed and prominent in views.
Moderate:	Partial loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. new elements may be prominent in views but not necessarily uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape. <u>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</u> <i>Moderate: adjective- average in amount, intensity, quality or degree</i>
Moderate - Low:	Minor loss of or modification to one or more key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. new elements are not prominent within views or uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape.

Low:	Little material loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics. i.e. modification or change is not uncharacteristic or prominent in views and absorbed within the receiving landscape. <i>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</i> <i>Low: adjective- 1. Below average in amount, extent, or intensity.</i>
Very Low:	Negligible loss of or modification to key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, i.e. approximating a 'no change' situation and a negligible change in views.

Table 4: Determining the overall level of landscape and visual effects

Determination of “minor”

Decision makers determining whether a resource consent application should be notified must also assess whether the effect on a person is less than minor⁵ or an adverse effect on the environment is no more than minor⁶. Likewise, when assessing a non-complying activity, consent can only be granted if the s104D 'gateway test' is satisfied. This test requires the decision maker to be assured that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be 'minor' or not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the relevant planning documents.

These assessments will generally involve a broader consideration of the effects of the activity, beyond the landscape and visual effects. Through this broader consideration, guidance may be sought on whether the likely effects on the landscape or effects on a person are considered in relation to 'minor'. It must also be stressed that more than minor effects on individual elements or viewpoints does not necessarily equate to more than minor effects on the wider landscape. In relation to this assessment, moderate-low level effects would generally equate to 'minor'.

The third row highlights the word 'significant' which has particular reference to the NZCPS and Policy 13 and Policy 15 and where on the effects-spectrum 'a significant' effect would be placed.

Less than Minor		Minor		More than Minor		
					Significant ⁷	
Very Low	Low	Low-Mod	Moderate	Mod-High	High	Very High

Table 5: Te Tangi a te Manu: Recommended 7-point scale to rate qualitative assessments. Determining minor effects for notification determination and non-complying activities.

⁵ RMA, Section 95E

⁶ RMA Section 95D

⁷ the term “significant adverse effect” applies to certain specific RMA situations, such as a threshold for the requirement to consider alternative sites, routes, and methods for Notices of Requirement under RMA s171(1)(b), and the requirements to consider alternatives in AEEs under s6(1)(a) of the Schedule 4. It may also be relevant to tests under other statutory instruments such as considering effects on natural character of the coastal environment or on outstanding natural features and landscapes in the coastal environment, under the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) Policies 13 (1)(b) and 15(b).



About Boffa Miskell

Boffa Miskell is a leading New Zealand professional services consultancy with offices in Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Queenstown. We work with a wide range of local and international private and public sector clients in the areas of planning, urban design, landscape architecture, landscape planning, ecology, biosecurity, cultural heritage, graphics and mapping. Over the past four decades we have built a reputation for professionalism, innovation and excellence. During this time we have been associated with a significant number of projects that have shaped New Zealand's environment.

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DRAFT



AVENUE ROAD NORTH PLAN CHANGE

GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT

OCTOBER 2022



Avenue Road North Plan Change



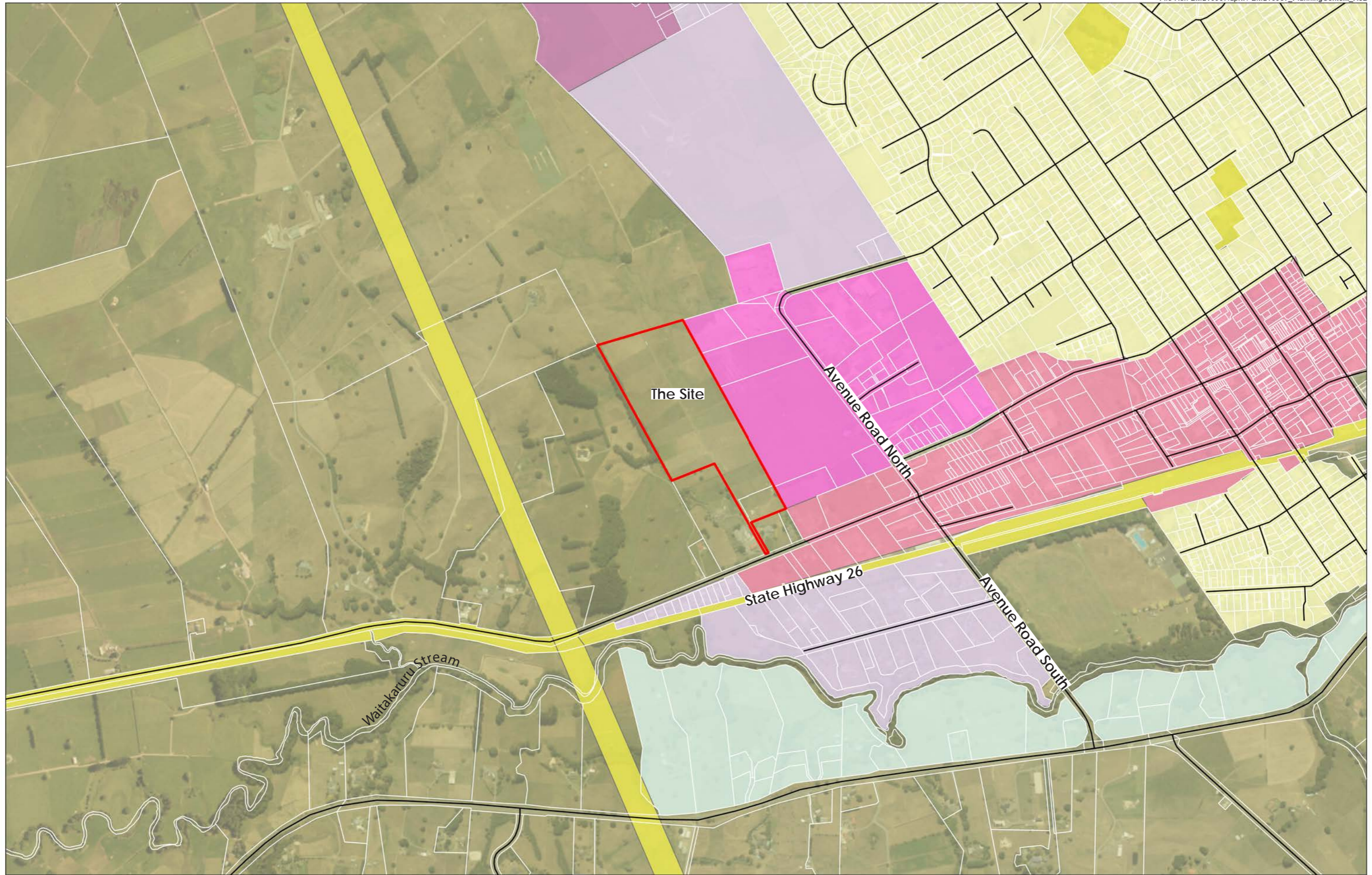
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- FIGURE 5: Viewpoint Map and Site Photographs















2581 SH26



2587 SH26





