



Napier Care Home, Apartment & Retirement
Village

25 Ulyatt Road

Landscape & Visual Assessment

20 October 2017 - RC Issue

Prepared for
Bupa Care Services



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1.0 SECTION ONE

1.1 Background

The subject site is located at 25 Ulyatt Road, Napier. The site is identified as Lots 1, DP 423183, 4.9970ha more or less.

The site is currently used for the production of instant lawn. The site is zoned Main Rural and is bordered to the north by a stormwater reserve with residential further north. To the east is rural zoned land with a small number of neighbours on the eastern side of Ulyatt Road. To the south is rural zoned land and to the west is the Napier Hastings expressway with residential development further west.

The intention is to develop a 2 storey Care Home and 3 storey Apartment building, along with 99 single level villas comprising a range of duplex and triplex arrangements with associated roading, accessory buildings, including 19 resident garages, and site landscaping. The development will require lifting of the existing ground level to address site stability issues and results in the central Apartment and Care Wing exceeding the 9.0m maximum height.

This assessment considers the whole proposal.

1.2 Scope

Shafer Design has been engaged by Bupa Care Services to provide a landscape and visual assessment of the whole proposed development.

The assessment includes the following components:

- Descriptions of the site context and site attributes;
- A description of the landscape attributes and an analysis of the landscape character and landscape values;
- A description of the development proposal;
- Landscape mitigation strategy;
- An outline of the planning provisions relevant to the visual and landscape assessment of the proposal;
- An assessment of the visual and landscape effects of the proposal and their significance;
- Indicative Landscape Mitigation Plan.

1.3 Methodology

This assessment uses an 'expert' approach to landscape assessment - surveys of landscape users and the local community were not feasible within the scope of the study. Description of landscape attributes and assessment of landscape character and landscape values has been based on guidelines in the NZILA Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management Best Practice Note 10.1.

The visual and landscape assessment has been carried out after a desktop study of the landscape context and visits to the site and surrounding area. A photographic study of the area was undertaken and representative viewpoints and viewing audiences identified. Potential mitigation measures were also identified at this stage. Visual effects were evaluated using a combination of these methods and examination of the architectural elevations, plans and 3D models.

Photographs in this report were taken with a Panasonic lumix DMC FZ70 digital camera with a full frame 35mm equivalent focal length. All images taken at 50mm focal length unless noted otherwise.

2.0 SECTION TWO

2.1 Site location and context

The application site is located at 25 Ulyatt Road, Napier. The site is located at the edge of the Main Residential zone to the north, with residential dwellings on Harold Holt Avenue and Clarence Cox Crescent. Further residential development is found to the west on Atherfold Crescent, west of SH50. Residential development is predominantly single level on flat contour, with little appreciable level variation. Land to the east and south is rural with intermittent housing on large land blocks which are used for a variety of rural and production activities. The contour is flat all round the site for a considerable distance. Hills are located some distance to the south and west.

A review of historic aerials on the Napier City web site reveals the site has been largely in pasture or grass production since 1999. Immediately surrounding properties also appear to have been largely in pasture over the same period with only small areas of production use evident. The site opposite the north east corner of the site has a shelter belt enclosure around the site boundary which is a common feature of the landscape character. There is production use evident to the south of the site and the Midland Horticulture Nursey to the south east. These sites are typically enclosed by shelter planting with no views in.

There is a notable absence of street tree planting on the main roads of the area, with wide berms and swales contributing to this. Ulyatt Road currently has a speed limit of 100km/h heading north past the site, which changes to 50km/h outside the site toward the north east corner.

SH50 is located to the west of the site and is one of the gateway entry/exits to Napier. The area marks a change from urban to rural environments.

Refer to Sheet 01 of the Landscape Context set at Appendix C.

Refer to Context Photographs 1-12, Sheets 2-4 at Appendix C.

North

The general character to the immediate north is stormwater reserve. There is a new cycleway/ walkway located immediately on the site boundary. Across the reserve the residential development begins with a well-established character of largely single level dwellings. The southern boundaries of the residential properties tend to have 1.8m boundary fences, with little visual connection to the subject site. The contour is generally flat. Refer to Photo 7 and 8, Appendix C, for general character.

East

The immediate east is zoned rural and includes a small number of residential dwellings and accessory buildings set on large land parcels. There is variation between sites created by the use of screen planting in some instances, with other properties being more open to the road corridor. Dwellings are generally setback from the road. Beyond the dwellings the land use is in a variety of rural and production activities. Midland Horticulture, a plant nursery, is located to the south east. The contour is generally flat.

Ulyatt Road is a straight rural road with wide berms and roadside swales. Overhead power supplies are evident in the landscape with poles and pylons located within the berm, in close proximity to the subject site boundary. Boundary treatments vary from post and wire fences, to screen planting and individual tree placements. Enclosure of sites is not unusual, although this is usually achieved through planting rather than fencing.

Refer to Context Photos at Appendix C.

South

Immediately south of the subject site is rural zoned and the lawn production business is located across the width of the subject site boundary. Further south the land is divided into a mosaic of rural and production uses. This is characterised by varying degrees of enclosure and openness. Enclosure tends to be created through planting rather than solid fencing. The contour is largely flat with no higher points of any note.

Buildings tend to generally be residential in scale with accessory buildings. Large built forms are not typically found. The tallest elements are the hedging and screening planting, with enclosures in excess of 6.0m in height.

Refer to Context Photos at Appendix C.

West

The area to the immediate west is zoned reserve and is used for a stormwater flow path. The presence of water is intermittent, with no permanent water visible. The land is open with grass and limited vegetation. A new public cycleway/ walkway is located immediately adjoining the western boundary of the subject site. Further to the west is SH50, a 2 lane highway providing a major entry/ exit point to Napier. There is vegetation lining both sides of the road, although this is generally low growing species.

Beyond the highway to the west is reserve land adjoining Atherfold Cres, which includes some large specimen trees, generally deciduous, and a

continuation of the water course, with water more commonly present. There is no residential development on the eastern side of Atherfold Cres, established residential development is found west of the road and is characterised by typically single level dwellings on landscaped lots.

The contour is generally flat for a considerable distance west of the subject site.

Refer to Context Photos at Appendix C.

Public Transport

There is no bus service on Ulyatt Road or in the nearby streets.

Services

There is no retail or service centre within the 400.0m radius, 5 minute walking distance. The closest services are located on Bill Hercock Street, approximately 450.0m north of the northern boundary of the subject site, which is only slightly further than the 5 minute walk. There are footpaths on both sides of the street from the intersection with Harold Holt Drive to the north.

Refer to Landscape Analysis at Appendix B.

Accessibility

There is currently no footpath outside the site on either side of Ulyatt Road. The footpath begins from the cycleway and heads north to Bill Hercock Street. The flat contour provides easy gradients for pedestrians and motorised scooters to the immediate environment were a path to be implemented on Ulyatt Road outside the subject site.

The Bupa village will provide a resident bus service.

Refer to the Landscape Analysis plans at Appendix A.

2.2 Site description

The current site is 4.9997ha (49,997.0m² more or less) and is flat over the whole site. The site is currently used for the production of ready lawn and largely devoid of any significant features. There is a large advertising sign located on the western boundary, with the only other notable features being 2 plane trees, located in the north east and north west corners of the site. There is a planting of palm trees along the northern boundary, although these are available for purchase and not considered a permanent feature. The site is enclosed by a post and wire boundary fence.

There are no existing structures on the site.

The site has long road frontages to Ulyatt Road and SH50. There is currently no formed access to the subject site, with access available from the lawn business to the south.

Refer to Content Photographs 13-15 at Appendix D.

3.0 SECTION THREE

3.1 Proposal

The proposal is described in full in the Assessment of Environmental Effects prepared by Wasley Knell Consultants Ltd. Briefly:

- The subject site will be developed to include a multi-level building Care Home and Apartment building. The care facility is built around dual central courtyards and located to the east of the 'L' shaped apartment block. 19 single garages are split into three blocks to be located around the apartment building to the west and north – Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron (JTB) drawings dated 19/10/2017 P01 – P31 Rev RC1.

Sheet P02 - Proposed Site Plan.

- The Apartment building will be three levels, located centrally within the site, closer to the western boundary; building exceeds 9.0m height up to 4.9m; Refer to Sheets P07-P10 for infringements, also Sheet P17
- The Care wing is two levels and located centrally on the site, closer to the eastern boundary. The building has two internal courtyards. The outdoor space will have a 2.0m high boarded timber fence enclosing the eastern and northern sides of the building; building exceeds 9.0m height up to 1.415m, refer to Sheets P07-P10 for infringements;
- 99 Single level villas will be located around the perimeter of the site and located around the Care wing and Apartment block. Pedestrian access to communal facilities on the ground floor of the apartment wing is via internal footpaths and shared road spaces;
- Villas will be stepped up from the boundary toward the centre of the site on a series of terraces; the degree of lift varies from 0.35m in the north east corner to 1.25m in the south east corner, 1.75m mid point of the western boundary, 0.25m in the north west corner;
- The existing boundary level will remain unchanged at 11.25. Villa finished floor levels vary from 11.50 to 13.00. Refer to JTB Sheet P02.

- Carpark and access roads built around the site to provide visitor and staff parking; road levels will be set to enter varying villa levels, all villas are set above the road level;
- Internal landscape space will be battered between levels which is required to address the raised villa levels;
- The entire site will be enclosed by a 1.8m open pool fence at the boundary with planting in landscape zones around the site;
- The Apartment building exceeds the maximum height of 9.0m for the rural zone – Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron drawings Dated 19/10/2017 Rev RC1;

Sheets P07 - P10 – Elevations

Sheets P12 – P15 – Sections

Sheets P17 – 3D Building envelope

- The Care Home wing is located approximately 43.0m from the eastern boundary, Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron (JTB) drawings dated 19/10/2017;

Sheet P02 - Proposed Site Plan.

- The Apartment wing is located approximately 44.0m from the western boundary, Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron (JTB) drawings dated 19/10/2017;
- The Apartment/Care Home wing is located approximately 83.0m from the southern boundary, Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron (JTB) drawings dated 19/10/2017 P02;
- The Care Home wing is located from approximately 126.0m from the northern boundary, Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron (JTB) drawings dated 19/10/2017 P02;
- The Apartment building and Care wing building architecture will use forms and materials common with residential architecture. Low pitch hip and gable roof forms are typical of residential architecture. Cladding includes a variety of materials including weatherboard, ACC rendered panelling and selected fibre cement sheet cladding. Refer to Jerram Tocker Barron drawings dated 19/10/2017;

Sheets P07 – P10 – Elevations

- Elevations of the two and three storey buildings are broken up through the use of different materials, varying colour palette, the use of balconies and variation in roof forms. Each elevation is

broken into a series of blocks, to create less bulk to the building, unlike a typical rural building;

- Colour palette to be kept low reflectance and neutral, with recessive colour for the roof;
- Villas will be single level and include hip roof forms and residential type wall claddings, refer to indicative images for villa finishes; refer to JTB drawings Sheets P18 – P31.
- Landscaping and Mitigation planting will be located around the site perimeter and throughout the site to assist in reducing the bulk of the centrally located larger buildings. Large growing trees will assist in providing a scale to the development and benefit residents through the provision of shade and visual amenity. Refer to Shafer Design Landscape Concept at Appendix F. Planting completed as part of the villa development of the site will also contribute to the overall site landscape aesthetic;
- Amenity planting will be implemented in the internal courtyard and around the perimeter of the Care wing site. Refer to Shafer Design Landscape Concept at Appendix F.

3.2 Visual Mitigation and Amenity Strategy

The general objective is that this development will appear integrated into the existing landscape character. The Apartment and Care Home building infringes on the following:

- Exceeds the maximum permissible height of 9.0m (R 12.4.2a) – refer to Jerram Tocker Barron drawings dated 19/10/2017 for infringements;

Sheets P07 – P10 – Elevations and

Sheets P12 – P15 - Sections

All building facades of the Apartment and Care wing have been treated to break up the scale of the building through the use of a variety of materials and balconies, various roof forms. The Care wing is 2 storey and exceeds the maximum height. The southern elevation includes a significant break in the building, with the apartment wing forming an 'L' shaped wing with a narrow form offset from the care wing. The Apartment wing is 3 storey and the roof infringes the 9.0m maximum height.

- Infringements range from 3.6-4.9m on the Apartment building. 3.58m on the linking wing. Refer to Sheet P12 – P15;
- The infringement is the upper floor and roof of the 3 storey link building and the 3 storey Apartment wing.

- Infringements range from 0.53-1.415m on the Care wing building. Refer to Sheet P12 – P15;

In this regard the following are the key design components:

- Variety of building materials and building form to give the building a more residential appearance;
- Roof pitches (12°) and materials in keeping with residential architecture.

Key visual aspects of the project include:

- Main views of the proposal will be from the Ulyatt Road to the east and SH50 to the west. These will be from vehicles travelling north and south, at speeds up to 100km/h;
- SH50 southband lane is approximately 50.0m from the site boundary at a slightly higher level than the subject site;
- Ulyatt Road is approximately 8.0m east of the site boundary. There are also a small number of residential dwellings on the eastern side of the road (4) which will have varying degrees of view, the closest approximately 30.0m from the eastern subject site boundary;
- Lesser views of the proposal will be available from the north of the site, looking south from the residential neighbourhood, approximately 53.0m of separation distance from boundary to boundary;
- More interrupted views will be available from residences on Atherfold Crescent to the west, approximately 115.0m of separation distance from boundary to boundary, seen over the highway and through large trees;
- The stepped arrangement of the villas may introduce a view of more roof elements which is different in character to the existing surrounds, giving more apparent bulk. The angle of view from below the site level is likely to reduce this potential effect and only the exterior row of villas will be visible.
- The 4.9m infringement over the 9.0m maximum height introduces an element larger than exists in the current catchment. The maximum infringement is the roof apex and represents a small part of the view of the building. The 4.9 infringement is over the lift shaft and represents a very small element. The highest ridge is 4.2m over the 9.0m maximum. There is variety in ridge heights.
- Landscaping will include the perimeter of the site and the internal landscape spaces within the site, including around the villa

development. Large growing specimens centrally located will offset the scale of the apartment building;

- Refer to Viewing Catchment Map at Appendix E for the extent of visual catchment.

The proposed landscaping will contribute to minimising potential effects of the building bulk. This is further offset by the distance of view, the angle of view and the foreground of the single level dwellings and the two storey care wing. The location of the overheight portion in the centre of the site allows for numerous layers of landscaping between the potential viewing audience and the overheight wing of the building. The landscaping will soften the lower floors of the building and provide visual amenity for occupants of the building as well as villa occupants. The effectiveness of the mitigation will improve as the planting establishes.

- The impact of the development diminishes with distance, there are limited clear views of the site from the wider catchment. Any views will only be of the upper level of the apartment building and the roof of the Care wing which are small components in the view. The flat contour and density of development serve to limit views. The angle of view and the setback of the apartment wing will reduce the potential effects of the overheight roof;
- Proposed specimen trees within the Bupa site will be planted at semi mature grades to provide immediate visual mitigation. The large sized trees are suggested to be planted at grades 45l to 160l, which generally provides trees of 2.5m to 3.5m in height at time of planting, dependent on the species. Small to medium sized trees and trees which have faster growth rates will be planted at 25l – 45l grades, dependent on species, and will generally be 1.8m to 2.5m in height at time of planting. Where timing allows, bare root stock or field grown specimens may be used. The trees will be carefully managed and watered to ensure maximum health and fast establishment;
- Hedge species will be selected to reflect the existing rural character. Hedging can be a combination of clipped and unclipped planting, dependent on the location within the development;
- There is sufficient site area to include landscaping to all four elevations of the Apartment building and Care Home;
- There is space to plant large trees around much of the site perimeter;
- Fast growing exotic species should be considered to provide height as quickly as possible around the site perimeter and closer to the apartment wing. Placement should be considerate of potential shading;

- Refer to the attached Landscape Plan at Appendix F.

3.3 Statutory context

As detailed in the Assessment of Environmental Effects (Wasley Knell Consultants), there are a number of statutory documents that contain relevant objective and policy provisions against which the proposal should be assessed, including: Resource Management Act 1991 and the City of Napier District Plan.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

The RMA states in the Fourth Schedule that when preparing an assessment of environmental effects on the environment in relation to an application the following matters relevant to landscape considerations must be considered:

The resource Management Act 1991 . Part 2 contains matters relevant to landscape including Section 5, 6(a), 6(b), and 7(f).

SECTION 5 sets out the purpose of the RMA which is to promote the sustainable management, and defines sustainable management to mean *“managing the use and development of natural and physical resources in a way which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and safeguarding the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.”*

SECTION 6 sets out matters of national importance. Those most relevant to the landscape and visual assessment include s6(a) which requires the *“preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including coastal marine area), wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development”* and s6(b) which requires the *“protection of outstanding natural features and landscape from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.”*

SECTION 7 sets out other matters to which particular regard should be made. Those relevant to landscape matters are s7(c) *“the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values”*, and s7(f) *“ the maintenance and enhancemnt of the quality of the environment.”*

I consider that the development does not infringe on any of the RMA matters. There are no Outstanding Landscapes on the site or the nearby context.

City of Napier District Plan

Applicable sections of the plan include Chapter 33 Rural Environments, Chapter 34 Main Rural Zone, Chapter 39 Assessment Criteria (Rural Environments)

Chapter 33 Resource Management Issues

Objective 33.2 Inappropriate Subdivision, Use and Development.

To protect the city's outstanding natural features, significant landscapes, and its rural land from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development of land.

Policies

33.2.2 Ensure that rural character of rural land is maintained for future generations.

33.3.3 Manage land uses and subdivision to ensure any adverse effects on outstanding natural features and significant landscapes are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

33.3.4 Avoid location and siting of structures on skylines, ridges, hills and prominent places and natural features.

33.3.6 Avoid, remedy and mitigate the adverse effects of residential and rural land uses on each other.

Objective 33.3 Rural Character and Amenity

To maintain and enhance the character and amenity values of the rural environment.

Policies

33.3.1 Control the scale and intensity of land use and development (including subdivision) in the rural areas to maintain rural character and amenity, and a sense of openness and privacy.

Objective

33.6. Cumulative Effects

To ensure that the cumulative adverse effects of subdivision, use and development of land on rural resources are recognised, and avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Policies

33.6.2 Manage the cumulative adverse effects of subdivision, residential development and commercial and industrial activities on the character and amenity of the city's rural areas, so that these effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Chapter 34 Main Rural Zone Rules

34.14 Discretionary activities – Assessment criteria in Chapter 39

- g) Retirement complexes.*

Chapter 39 – Assessment Criteria (Rural Environments)

39.3 Assessment criteria for particular Land uses

- a) Whether the land use will contribute to the efficient use and/or development of natural and physical resources within the city and wheter alternate sites, locations or zones have been considered;*
- b) whether the land use provides any positive effects to the surrounding environment and wider community, including the extent to which the land use may enhance amenity values of the area;*
- c) Whether the impact of the scale and intensity of the use is compatible with surrounding land uses;*
- d) Whether the land use will have any adverse effects on outstanding natural features, significant landscapes, rural character and amenity of the surrounding area.*

Design and external appearance

- m) Whether the design of buildings, structures and carparking areas maintains streetscape qualities, including whether paved areas associated with manoeuvring or parking dominate the streetscape;*
- n) Whether parking and storage areas are adequately screened from adjacent sites, public places and roads by fencing and/or landscaping.*

Site layout

- o) Whether buildings and structures including outdoor entertainment, recreation and play areas are site in a way that minimises any adverse effects on the visual and aural privacy of adjacent land uses, public places and roads.*

Cumulative effect

- y) Whether the proposed land use will have an adverse cumulative effect on the surrounding area.*

Napier Landscape Assessment (July 2009)

The subject site does not fall within one of the identified landscape character zones identified in the 2009 study. The study notes the SH50 entry from the south is the “weaker” of all the entry points to Napier. The site is not part of, or adjoining to, any identified significant landscape character areas.

Conclusion

I consider the proposal is not contrary to the objectives and policies of the District Plan. There are no significant or outstanding landscapes which will be affected. The proposal is not located on a significant hill or ridge line. The current land use of lawn production is not a significant production activity and there is little other production activity in close proximity to the subject site.

The proposal has been developed to internalise all parking and vehicle circulation activities, these will not be visible from outside the site. The provision of separate garaging for apartment residents will be broken down into smaller blocks to minimise internal effects.

The site has two residential boundaries, although these are well separated from the site. The inclusion of single level villas around the site perimeter will fit with the existing character to the north and west. The larger scale buildings are centrally located and would be considered to be similar in scale to many rural buildings or plantings which could be found in the area. There will be no effects on privacy or shading on neighbouring properties, despite the height infringement, given the separation distance and location within the site.

The boundary treatment provides a soft landscaped edge to the site while maintaining good visual connections to the external environment. The existing ground level will be maintained at the boundary and rising internally to the centre of the site. This is particularly beneficial to the north and west boundaries where the Council cycleway/ walkway has been implemented, with the visual connection addressing CPTED expectations. The raised level provides good visual connection with the walkway while also maintaining some privacy for residents.

The ground elevation required to make the site functional may result in more visual effect given the stepping of the site, meaning each row of villa roofs may be visible above the outer, reaching an apex in the centre of the site. The lifting of the Apartment and Care wing will result in greater effects given the increased overheight infringement. Refer to JTB Sheet P11 East and West Elevations.

The proposal avoids enclosure of the site through permitted planted shelter belts, which are an element commonly found in the surrounding area, although it will remove views across the site. The proposed

landscape planting will provide a degree of this character through short lengths of low hedge planting, although this will be maintained at heights which avoid overbearing on external viewers or properties. The high degree of landscape planting is a positive contribution to the existing landscape.

The quality of the architectural finishes combined with the proposed landscaping assists in fitting the proposal into the existing environment addressing the design and external appearance of the proposal. The proposal contributes positively to the gateway entry to the city from SH50.

4.0 SECTION FOUR

4.1 Visual Assessment of the Existing and Proposed Landscape

Photographs from representative viewpoints have been taken with a Panasonic DMC FZ50 camera with the lens set at 50mm focal length; 50mm represents a 45 degree view. Views captured with a focal length of 50mm are considered to be comparative to views seen with the naked eye. The photography follows the NZILA Best Practice Guidelines – Visual Simulations BPG 10.2.

Throughout the assessment the following issues have been considered:

- The extent to which the proposal may be visible within the landscape and the extent to which the proposal may be integrated into its environment;
- The characteristics of the proposals foreground and background from the viewpoints;
- The size and makeup of the viewing audience;
- The proximity of the viewing audience to the site, and the prominence of the development within the view; and
- The suitability of the proposed development to the surrounding landscape character;
- The assessment has been made on the existing conditions, including vegetation which is currently found in the area. The vegetation is largely located within private properties and whilst it may be removed or reduced in future, the assessment is considered with the vegetation to remain.

The assessment identifies the viewing catchment and potential viewing audience and assesses the potential impacts. Appendix D provides a glossary of the terms used in the assessment.

Permitted activities in the District Plan include:

- Agricultural, horticultural and viticultural activities;
- Commercial forestry.

Site coverage of 10% or 2500.0m² is allowed which could result in large rural type buildings. Shelterbelts can be planted up to 9.0m tall within 5.0m of the site boundary, or unlimited height further back than 5.0m.

These permitted activities could bring about significant change, particularly in close proximity to the residential neighbours. Such activities would remove the openness of the site in a manner similar or greater than the proposal. The proposal is a considered design response which addresses the objectives and policies of the district plan.

4.2 Location of View points

Weight is principally given to views from public places, as it is not possible to fully assess and access private properties.

A series of representative viewpoints has been identified and photographed and the effects considered. The identified viewpoints are mapped on VP-01 (Appendix B) The principal public viewing locations are identified as follows:

- Viewpoint 1 – indicative view from Harold Holt Ave/ Ulyatt Road/ Bill Hercock Street;
- Viewpoint 2 – indicative view from Ulyatt Road, south of site;
- Viewpoint 3 – indicative view from SH50, south of subject site;
- Viewpoint 4 – indicative view from Atherfold Crescent;
- Viewpoint 5 – indicative view from SH50, north of subject site.

4.3 Visual Catchment

The subject site has a limited visual catchment, due to the flat nature of the surrounding topography and the density of built form. The area is largely flat with no views over the site available. Refer to Viewing Catchment Plan Sheet 07, Appendix B.

- Views will be available for motorists travelling north and south on SH50, perpendicular to the line of travel. The view will be of short duration, in close proximity to the site at open road speed;
- Views for motorists on other local roads, notably Ulyatt Road. Roads are generally flat and enclosed by built form and vegetation;

- Views from other local roads are likely to be glimpse views only over established development;
- There will be fixed views from a small number of residences directly opposite the site on Ulyatt Road, limited by existing vegetation within the sites;
- Views from public places are generally limited to the walkway around the site, along the north and west boundary. There are limited views from the reserve alongside Atherfold Crescent to the west;
- Views are generally limited between 0 and 500m from the subject site. There may be some more distant views but these are likely to be isolated.

The viewing catchment and viewpoints are illustrated at Appendix B. It should be noted that the map indicates an area of potential views towards the subject site, but views are not available from all areas within the catchment.

4.4 Viewing audience

Potential viewers can be defined as the following:

- Transient views from the road network, generally limited to Ulyatt Road and SH50;
- Occupants of residential properties in the local area, stationary views, small number;
- Motorists on local roads, peripheral views, short duration, transient views, limited views.

Potential viewing audiences will be identified for each of the viewpoints.

4.5 View Points

Viewpoints are categorised into the following location types:-

- Foreground – within 500m;
- Mid ground – between 500 – 1000m;
- Distant – over 1000m.

Viewpoints are categorised into the following types:

- Expansive – over 180 degrees;
- Panoramic – 90 – 180 degrees;
- Enclosed – less than 90 degrees.

Viewpoint location map is located at Appendix B.

4.5.1 Viewpoint 1 – cnr Harold Holt Ave/ Ulyatt Road and Bill Hercock Street

Location of Viewpoint

The view point is located at the intersection of Ulyatt Road, Harold Holt Ave and Bill Hercock Street to the north east of the subject site. The viewpoint is approximately 65.0m from the north east corner of the subject site and approximately 235.0m to the centre of the site, looking south-west. The elevation of the viewpoint is approximately level with the subject site. The subject site is within the foreground from this viewpoint.

Photo is located at Appendix E.

Viewing Audience

The view is indicative of that which may be experienced by motorists and pedestrians travelling south on Ulyatt Road. Pedestrian activity is likely to be minimal given there are currently no footpaths. It is also indicative of the fixed view which may be available from residences in the vicinity.

Existing View Characteristics

Foreground

The foreground includes the road intersection and looks across a small reserve and a stormwater designation to the northern site boundary. The boundary is marked by a post and wire fence with a row of small palms inside the site boundary, the council walkway/ cycleway is partially visible running across the boundary. A plane trees marks the corner of the north and east boundaries.

The east boundary is marked by a post and wire fence with a row of overhead power services and poles which are a noticeable vertical element. Ulyatt Road changes from 50-100km/h outside the site. The view is terminated just past the southern boundary of the site by the yard of the lawn business, a large accessory shed and a two storey dwelling, just visible over landscaping. The site opposite the north east corner is enclosed by shelter belt planting on the northern side of the road. Other features along the road include road signage and wide grass berms with swales.

The western extent of the foreground is marked by the embankment of SH50 and planting on Atherfold Crescent. Dwellings along Atherfold Crescent are barely visible. Large trees provide a vertical element in the view.

Midground

The midground is largely unseen due to the level contour.

Background

The background is marked by views to distant hills beyond Taradale in the south west.

The view is considered to be enclosed, largely due to the flat contour.

The existing character is rural with some urban elements in the foreground.

Potential Effects

The proposal will be visible from this viewpoint. The immediate foreground will include the Blokes Shed and the existing plane tree which is intended to be retained. Other elements will include the outermost single level villas seen above a wide landscape strip along Ulyatt Road which includes large growing trees. The roof of the subsequent rows of internal villas may be partially visible above the outermost villa, presenting a continuous roof element. The angle of view from lower than the site level will reduce this potential effect. The overhead power services will remain visible. The large central Care wing and Apartment wing will be visible above the roof line of the villas, these will appear lower than the plane tree and the power pylons. The visible overheight element is likely to be the upper extent of the third floor and the sloping roof, given the angle and distance of view.

The proposal is considered to have an effect from this viewpoint given the change in use, although the residential buildings will be very similar in scale to the existing residential character of Bill Hercock Street. The difference from the existing character being the stepped roof forms on the raised ground which lifts the development higher than the existing level contour. The overheight element of the proposal will be visible, and potentially greater in scale than a typical rural type building. The third floor of the northern elevation and the roof will be visible on the 'L' shaped building, this an insignificant amount of structure in the wider view.

There is an effect on the existing characteristics of the landscape, the stepped landform may result in a cumulative effect of roof visibility and the magnitude of the whole development will be evident. The raised building platform differs from the existing flat contour contributing to the existing character. As the entire elevation of the Apartment building is not seen, it is difficult to perceive the actual height and the overheight part of the building as the stepped villa roof forms will lead the eye more gently than an abrupt change in height.

Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

The view of the proposed development within the landscape is considered to have a Low VAC rating from this viewpoint. The outer row of single level villas will be visible, the roofs of subsequent villas may be visible above these and the roof of the Apartment and Care wing will be visible over this. There is extensive landscape planting proposed, including large grade trees along the eastern boundary and to a lesser extent along the northern boundary. The built form of the proposed villas is similar in scale to the adjoining residential character on Bill Hercock Street, Harold Holt Drive and Atherfold Crescent, which is predominantly single level buildings with landscaped grounds and intermittent large trees, as illustrated in Photos 5-8. The difference is in the raised level of the buildings which is not a common feature of the surrounding residential character. There are no significant changes to the surrounding landscape. There is some loss of distant view beyond the site to the south.

The height of the centrally located Apartment wing is sufficiently distant at 230.0m to have minimal effect. It will be noticeably higher than any built element which currently exists in the surrounding area. There is a small effect on the background with a loss of distant view to the south west. The proposal will bring about a change in the existing landscape character, although it is considered that the proposal will largely be similar in scale and nature to the existing residential character north and west of the subject site, albeit at a slightly higher level which is a point of difference. The 1.8m boundary pool fence will be a new element in the view, although of considerably less scale than shelter belt planting or forestry could present, and its open nature will allow views of the internal landscape planting, softening the fence. The overheight roof element of the apartment wing is considered to be a small element in the overall view.

Landscape Proposal

Landscaping will be implemented along the eastern and northern boundaries and include large grade trees above low level shrub planting. Intermittent hedging will reflect some of the existing rural character. The retention of the plane trees in the corners of the site will provide an immediate effect. The majority of the Care wing will not be clearly visible from this viewpoint, with only the roof potentially partially visible. Planting around the villas will be similar in character to the existing residential character.

Planting will be carried throughout the site, providing a number of layers of planting between the viewer and the overheight central area.

Trees to be planted at minimum 45l grade, with a minimum height of 2.5m. As the planting establishes the magnitude of the proposal will diminish.

Refer to Landscape Plan @ Appendix F.

Conclusion

The view is limited to a small viewing audience, being to the south from residential dwellings. There will be transient views from motorists approaching and passing the site. There are unlikely to be any clear views of the entire proposed Apartment building and Care wing, with the exception of a small length of roof which is considered to be insignificant as it is sloping away from the view and will only be seen over villa roofs and trees. As the trees establish the effects will diminish further given the angle of view and separation distance.

The Visual effect type from this viewpoint is considered to be neutral, with limited effect on the landscape character, brought about by the raised building platforms which differs from the existing state and the nearby character. The development could be considered positive in introducing planting and a footpath along the eastern site boundary. I do not consider the proposal to have a negative effect on the landscape character.

The Visual effect level from this viewpoint is considered to be low, no more than minor, there is a low level of effects on the existing landscape character and the vista is largely confined. The raised building platforms introduces a new character and the overheight infringement lifts the building markedly higher than any other nearby structures, although this is only a small scale in the overall view. The cumulative effect of stepped roofs is different to the existing character, brought about by the raised, stepped building platforms, although the angle of view will reduce this potential effect. There is a limited viewing audience, fixed views are limited, transient views are short duration. The extent of landscaping proposed will soften the built forms and will diminish effects over time. The visual connection from the site to the walkway around the site is a positive attribute of the proposal.

4.5.2 Viewpoint 2 – Ulyatt Road, outside number 30

Location of Viewpoint

The view point is located on Ulyatt Road, outside number 30, opposite the south east corner of the subject site. The viewpoint is approximately 25.0m from the eastern site boundary looking north-west. The viewpoint is approximately 165.0m from the centre of the site. The elevation of the viewpoint is approximately level with the subject site. The subject site is within the foreground from this viewpoint. Photo is located at Appendix E.

Viewing Audience

The view is indicative of that which may be experienced by motorists travelling north on Ulyatt Road, transitory view. It is also indicative of

that which may be experienced by a small number of residences on Ulyatt Road, 2 or 3 only, fixed view. The viewpoint is unlikely to have a clear view of the whole site or the proposed apartment and carehome building.

Existing View Characteristics

Foreground

The foreground comprises Ulyatt Road which terminates just past Bill Hercock Street. Significant elements in the view include the overhead power services and large poles. There is a post and wire fence marking the eastern site boundary, there is a grassed berm and swale from the edge of the road. The site is open and flat beyond the boundary and the view largely terminates with the raised level of SH50 beyond the western boundary and the large trees in the reserve on Atherfold Crescent. North of the site the view is terminated by the existing residential dwellings off Clarence Cox Crescent which includes a boundary fence and planting.

Midground

The midground is largely unseen due to the flat contour and the termination of the view by the existing planting and residential dwellings.

Background

The background is views over existing residential development to the distant hills toward Poraiti and beyond which wraps around to the west. The sky above the hills is the other significant element.

The view is considered to be enclosed due to the short view distance enclosing the site.

The existing character is rural with some urban elements to the north and west.

Potential Effects

The proposal will be visible from this viewpoint with the outermost line of villas visible along the eastern boundary with the overheight roof of the apartment wing visible above the two storey Care home. The entire site and development will not be visible despite changes to the contour stepping up to the centre of the site. The boundary landscaping, including shrubs and large grade trees will be the closest element to the viewer along with the 1.8m high pool fence on the boundary. The southern site entry will be visible and offer a narrow glimpse view into the site. The existing power poles and services remain visible in front of and above the villas. The view of the eastern edge is not dissimilar to the present character of the residential neighbourhood on Bill Hercock Street north of the site, although higher on the raised building platform.

Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

The view of the proposed building within the landscape is considered to have a Low VAC rating from this viewpoint. The proposed development will be visible with the outermost row of villas the most obvious element set behind a wide landscaped strip including large trees and shrubs. Views beyond the first row will be largely screened, with the exception of the overheight roof over the apartment wing, which is a small element in the view. The angle of view will limit views of the upper level of the apartment wing which will diminish the potential effects of the overheight infringement. The proposal will bring about a change in the existing landscape character, although it is considered that the built form of the proposal will be similar in scale and nature to the existing residential character north and west of the subject site. The raised building platform introduces a different character, although this will be partially screened through planting. The overheight roof element of the apartment wing is considered to be a small element in the overall view, despite the level of infringement.

Landscape Proposal

Landscaping will be implemented along the eastern boundary and include extensive shrub planting and hedging with intermittent large trees, similar in nature to the character of the nearby residential streets and rural character.

Planting will be implemented throughout the site, providing a number of layers of planting between the viewer and the overheight central area.

The quality of the 2 and 3 storey building and its articulation of the facades will also contribute to mitigating any potential effects. The single level villas will be similar in scale and character to the adjoining residential character.

Trees to be planted at minimum 45l grade with a minimum height of 2.5m.

Refer to Landscape Plan @ Appendix F.

Conclusion

The view is limited to a small viewing audience, with only a small number of residential dwellings on large lots to the east of Ulyatt Road potentially having views. These views are tempered by planting within the sites and includes large trees and shelter plantings. There will be transient views from motorists approaching and passing the site. There are unlikely to be any clear views of the entire proposed Apartment/ Care home building, with the exception of a small length of roof which is considered to be insignificant as it is sloping away from the view and will only be seen over villa roofs and trees. The wide eaves and low roof

pitch also contribute to diminishing effects. As the trees establish the effects will diminish further given the angle of view and separation distance.

The Visual effect type from this viewpoint is considered to be neutral, with no effect on the landscape character. The introduction of boundary planting could be considered to contribute positively to the existing environment. The proposal is not considered to be negative.

The Visual effect level from this viewpoint is considered to be low, no more than minor, there is a low level of effects on the existing landscape character and the vista in which it is seen. This is despite the change in level created by the raised building platforms, enclosed nature, the direction of view, small viewing audience and the extent of mitigation and amenity landscaping. Effects will diminish over time as planting establishes.

4.5.3 Viewpoint 3 – SH50, northbound, opposite Spriggs Crescent

Location of Viewpoint

The view point is located on the hard shoulder of the north bound lane of SH50, opposite Spriggs Crescent. The viewpoint is approximately 335.0m from the southwest corner of the subject site and approximately 510.0m from the centre of the subject site, looking north. The elevation of the viewpoint is approximately level with the subject site. The majority of the subject site is within the foreground from this viewpoint, with the northern end of the site in the midground. Photo is located at Appendix E.

Viewing Audience

The view is indicative of that which may be experienced by motorists travelling north toward Napier.

Existing View Characteristics

Foreground

The foreground comprises SH50 with the instant lawn business to the east of the highway, joining into the subject site further north. The Council cycleway/ walkway is located east of the highway, along the site western boundary. To the west of the highway is a densely planted strip of planting removing any view beyond the road corridor. There are a small number of buildings visible to the south of the subject site which are associated with the instant lawn business. Further buildings are visible at 24 Ulyatt Road, east of the subject site. There are a number of large trees visible to the south of the site around the lawn business yard and further trees beyond the site boundary to the east. The large power

pylons are visible as vertical elements along the eastern site boundary. The subject site is an open expanse of flat contour due to the current activity.

Midground

The midground continues from the foreground and is the open expanse of the subject site, terminated by the southern boundary of the residential properties on Clarence Cox Crescent. Beyond this point the midground is not visible due to the flat contour.

Background

The background is the sky above the embankment.

The view is considered to be enclosed.

The existing character is rural with urban elements.

Potential Effects

The proposal will be visible from this viewpoint, although to a transient viewing audience, travelling at open road speed. The view will be of the south western extent of the site with single level villas and the south and west elevation of the apartment wing. Extensive planting along the western boundary will include shrub planting with intermittent large trees. Further large trees will be located between the apartment wing and the viewer giving a depth of planting. The overheight portion of the apartment wing roof will be visible over the villas. The upper extent of the third floor will also be visible as it does not have the 2 storey Care wing step in front of it. The raised building platforms will increase the sense of the development and the degree of overheight is greater than anything existing in the nearby landscape.

Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

The view of the proposed development within the landscape is considered to have a Low VAC rating from this viewpoint. The proposed development will be visible although only the southern and western elevations. The proposal will bring about a change in the existing landscape character, although it is considered that the proposal will be similar in scale and nature to the existing residential character north and west of the subject site, albeit at a higher level due to the raised building platforms. The overheight roof element of the Apartment wing and Care Home is considered to be a small element in the overall view. The height infringement varies and does not provide a continuous element at a single level which assists in diminishing the potential effect. The proposal is not considered to have a negative effect on the existing character.

Landscape Proposal

Landscaping will be implemented along the southern and western boundaries and through the site. Planting will include shrub planting along the western boundary with intermittent large trees. Large grade trees will assist with softening of the apartment wing. Planting around the villas will bring a character not dissimilar to the existing residential character adjoining the subject site.

The articulation of the building façades of the 2 and 3 storey buildings, variety of colour and material will contribute to minimising effects of the built forms. The form of the villas is similar in scale and character to the adjoining residential developments.

Trees to be planted at minimum 45l grade, with a minimum height of 2.5m.

Refer to Landscape Plan @ Appendix F.

Conclusion

The impact of the proposal from this viewpoint is not considered to be of a noticeable magnitude. The duration of view is limited and peripheral to the direction of travel. Only the outer row of villas will be clearly visible and the development in its entirety will not be visible. The overheight roof of the apartment wing and the upper floor will be visible above the villas and planting, although this is only a small part of the view. The extent of this view will decrease over time as the planting establishes.

The Visual effect type from this viewpoint is considered to be neutral, with no adverse effect on the landscape character. Despite the VAC bringing a change of use, the quality of the building and landscaping could also be considered to bring a positive element to the environment.

The Visual effect level from this viewpoint is considered to be low, no more than minor, there are low level effects on the existing landscape character. There is no significant loss of view or vista, the existing view is shortened by existing features outside the site, there is no loss of view beyond the site. A complying rural activity has the potential to affect the openness to a greater extent through the introduction of shelter planting, forestry activity or large scale buildings. The high level of site landscaping will provide a pleasant well integrated appearance.

4.5.4 Viewpoint 4 – Atherfold Crescent , opposite number 64

Location of Viewpoint

The view point is located in the reserve area on the eastern side of Atherfold Crescent, looking east. The viewpoint is approximately 95.0m from the western boundary of the subject site and 225.0m from the centre of the subject site. The elevation of the viewpoint is

approximately level with the subject site. The subject site is within the foreground from this viewpoint. Photo is located at Appendix E.

Viewing Audience

The view is indicative of that which may be experienced by users of the reserve and is indicative of the view which may be experienced by occupants of residential dwellings on Atherfold Crescent. Motorists and pedestrians travelling north on Atherfold Crescent would experience similar views, although of limited duration and clarity and peripheral to the line of travel. The viewing audience is considered to be quite small.

Existing View Characteristics

Foreground.

The foreground comprises the reserve and SH50. SH50 is raised above the surrounding land and forms a visual barrier to the subject site. Features include the bridge and culvert, dense roadside vegetation and large trees. Armco barriers alongside the road also feature in the view and interrupt views toward the subject site. Despite being in the foreground, the ground plane of the subject site is not visible. Larger trees to the east of the subject site on Ulyatt Road are visible. The site retains an openness due to the current activity.

Midground

The midground is not visible due to the flat contour.

Background

The background is the sky above the embankment and buildings. There are no significant features in the background.

The view is considered to be enclosed.

The existing character is semi-urban.

Potential Effects

The proposal will be visible from this viewpoint, particularly the upper extent of roof of the western line of villas and the upper floors of the 3 storey Apartment building. The entire site will not be visible from this or similar viewpoints on Atherfold Crescent. The landscape strip along the western boundary with its shrubs and tree planting will not be visible between the viewer and the subject site and the buildings until the trees become established. The 2 storey Care wing is unlikely to be visible.

Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

The view of the proposed building within the landscape is considered to have a Moderate VAC rating from this viewpoint. The proposed

development will be partially visible, although only the western roof elevations of the outermost villas and the upper floors of the apartment wing. Given the angle of view and separation distance, the overheight area of roof over the apartment wing will be difficult to perceive. The low pitched roof (12°) also contributes to minimising any potential adverse effects. The height infringement varies and does not provide a continuous element at a single level which assists in diminishing the potential effect. There is minimal loss of view beyond the subject site.

Landscape Proposal

Landscaping will be implemented along the western boundary and include low level shrub planting with intermittent large trees, similar in nature to the planting in the reserve alongside Atherfold Crescent. The planting will provide considerable softening and screening of the single level villas along the western boundary. The location of the apartment wing centrally on the site will allow for the introduction of several layers of planting between the viewpoint and the building, assisting in softening the appearance of the building.

Trees to be planted at minimum 45l grade, with a minimum height of 2.5m.

Refer to Landscape Plan @ Appendix F.

Conclusion

The impact of the proposal from this viewpoint is not considered to be of a noticeable magnitude. There is a clear view of the upper levels of the western apartment wing, but this is seen over the foreground of villas and planting which contribute to diminishing the apparent scale. The nature of the reserve planting and raised highway all contribute to reducing views toward the subject site and development. Complying rural activities including planting or forestry could be of a similar or larger scale and buildings would likely not be as well articulated architecturally as the proposed apartment wing.

There is significant separation distance to avoid any effects of dominance, loss of privacy or shading from the proposal. The extensive boundary and site planting will soften the appearance of the proposal, although given the raised highway level the planting will not be seen for some time. The raised highway corridor removes views of the lower extent of the site and this assists in diminishing the overheight effect of the apartment wing as the entire elevation will not be seen and the perception of overheight will be lessened. The villa roof levels will only be partially visible over the highway and the activity of the highway will distract from the potential effects.

The proposal does introduce a new character to the site, but it is not much different to the adjoining residential character in the Pirimai area.

Views will be retained over the site, similar to the existing view. The infringing length of the apartment wing is a small element.

The Visual effect type from this viewpoint is considered to be neutral, with no effect on the landscape character. The proposal could be considered to be positive and improve the quality of the environment through the introduction of new planting and well designed built forms.

The Visual effect level from this viewpoint is considered to be low, no more than minor, there are low level effects on the existing landscape character. There is no loss of view or vista or effects on any key attributes. The view is a glimpse view over the highway and through existing large trees.

4.5.5 Viewpoint 5 – SH50, southbound, by Kennedy Road onramp

Location of Viewpoint

The view point is located on SH50, adjacent to the Kennedy Road southbound onramp. The viewpoint is approximately 260.0m from the northern boundary of the subject site and 430.0m to the centre of the site looking south. The elevation of the viewpoint is slightly higher than the subject site. The subject site is in the foreground. Photo is located at Appendix E.

Viewing Audience

The view is indicative of that which may be experienced by motorists travelling south on SH50. Views will alter as the viewers are not stationary. Views will be of limited duration at open road speed limits.

Existing View Characteristics

Foreground

The foreground comprises SH50 and the onramp. The onramp is enclosed by a close boarded fence with planting behind. Only roofs of residential houses are visible over the fence. Street light poles are a strong vertical element alongside the onramp. To the west the character is also enclosed with dense planting alongside the highway and tree planting within the reserve on Atherfold Crescent. Houses on Atherfold Crsecent are largely screened.

Midground

The midground is largely unseen due to the flat contour and angle of view.

Background

The background is formed by distant hills to the south with the sky above.

The view is considered to be enclosed.

The existing character is urban.

Potential Effects

The proposal will be partially visible from this viewpoint, primarily to motorists heading south on SH50. The view will be of the western extent of the site, including the outermost villas and the 3 storey Apartment block. The view will change as the viewer continues south as this is a transitory view of limited duration. No view of the entire site is likely. The view will change to peripheral as the viewer moves past the site. Views of the carewing will be removed as viewers move past the site. The view will be over the single level villas between the viewer and the apartment building, which includes landscaping of the road side boundary.

Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

The view of the proposed building within the landscape is considered to have a Neutral VAC rating from this viewpoint. The proposed building will be visible although only the western elevations. The overheight area includes the low pitched roof and the majority of the third floor of the apartment building. The height infringement varies and does not provide a continuous element at a single level which assists in diminishing the potential effect. Views over the villa roofs will include stepped roofs, effectively presenting a singular roof element, although the villas are within the maximum height.

Views to the distant hills are likely to remain over and around the apartment wing roof, which is only a small part of the view. The western boundary planting with tall trees will contribute to reducing views of the proposal.

Landscape Proposal

Landscaping will be implemented along the western boundary and through the site. Planting will include shrub planting along the western boundary with intermittent large trees. Large growing trees will be located throughout the site to further contribute to diminishing effects. The large trees also contribute to residents through the provision of shade in open spaces. Large grade trees will assist with softening of the apartment wing.

Trees to be planted at minimum 45l grade, with a minimum height of 2.5m.

Refer to Landscape Plan @ Appendix F.

Conclusion

The impact of the proposal from this angle is considered to be of a noticeable magnitude. There is a view of the upper levels of the western apartment wing with views of the upper floor and roof, this will be for a limited duration and constantly change as the viewer is not stationary. The extent of infringement is obvious given the lifting of the building platform by 2.25m. The mitigating factors include the relatively confined extent of infringement in the overall view and transitory nature of the viewing catchment. A complying rural activity including shelter belt or forestry could have a similar impact from this viewpoint. Views over the site will be retained.

The Visual effect type from this viewpoint is considered to be neutral, with no effect on the landscape character. The proposal is not negative and could be viewed as positive given the extent of landscaping proposed.

The Visual effect level from this viewpoint is considered to be low, no more than minor, there are low level effects on the existing landscape character but only minor effects on the background features. There is no loss of view or vista over the site, which may not be the case were a permitted rural activity to be implemented.

5.0 SECTION FIVE

5.1 Visual assessment summary

The proposal will introduce new elements into the landscape, the site is currently vacant and zoned rural with an open character due to the current activity. The site adjoins existing residential development on two sides although there is a separation distance to the north and west, but it is considered that the location is the most logical fit with existing character. The proposal will form a contiguous extension of the existing residential character.

The majority of the proposal complies with the maximum 9.0m height limit. The overheight area of roof over the Care Home and Apartment wing is a small area with a maximum infringement of between 0.9 and 4.9m. The wide eaves, flat contour, angle of view and limited viewing audience along with the positioning of the building centrally on the site all contribute to diminishing any potential adverse effects of the infringement.

There are identifiable changes to the existing landscape character within the site. The level of the site will be raised in a series of terraces from the original ground level at the boundary (11.25) to a highpoint in the centre of the site (13.25), 2.0m above the existing ground level. There will be significant works to alter heights, including removal and import of materials. There may be a low 1.0m high bund introduced to the western and eastern boundaries, this will only effect the planting height, which would be beneficial from the outset in lifting the planting higher in relation to buildings. The height of the bund and planting would maintain visual connections from the site to the surrounding environment. Articulation of the bund height and shape would add visual interest to the proposed boundary treatment.

The extensive internal site landscaping will contribute to softening the building forms. Large trees located in close proximity to the centrally located apartment building will assist in reducing the scale of the building and provide softening of the built form. The open space throughout the site allows for layering of tree planting to further contribute to reducing the impact of the buildings. The trees serve a secondary purpose through the provision of shade for residents and the maintenance of a pleasant site amenity.

The well-articulated building form, utilising a variety of materials, colours and forms further contribute to minimising effects and locating the buildings in the receiving environment. The low pitch, wide eaves and neutral colour palette all contribute residential type characteristics to the building which assist with the building fitting into the receiving

environment. Complying rural buildings, forestry or shelter belt planting could be of a similar height and a larger footprint without the considered articulation of the proposal. A permitted rural activity could enclose the site with shelter planting, be a forestry planting or cover up to 10% of the site with buildings which could have similar or greater effects as the proposal and result in a similar loss of view over the site. There are no significant viewshafts across the site, largely due to the flat contour. It is considered that there are no adverse effects on loss of view.

There is a limited viewing audience, largely due to the flat contour of the wider area, there are no high points from which to view the proposal. Where views are available they are tempered by existing features which are located between the viewer and the site. Fixed views are very limited, again mostly due to contour and separation distance. The most obvious views are from Ulyatt Road and SH50, both of which are currently open road speed environments and therefore offer short duration views of the proposal, which are largely peripheral to the direction of travel.

The raising of the site may increase the viewing catchment to a small degree, although effects are not considered to be significant. The most notable effect of the raising of the ground level in a series of steps over the site is the potential for more roof elements to be seen in a view, which is a change in character from that experienced in existing nearby residential development. The angle of view from outside the site minimises this potential effect.

A secondary effect of the ground alterations is the height infringement of the central 2 and 3 storey building, being 4.9m overheight at the most extreme case. This is significantly higher than existing buildings but of a similar scale to trees and shelter belts. The permitted activities of forestry and shelter planting could present similar effects of enclosure. The buildings are set well back from the road and will not contribute to the same sense of enclosure possible.

There is significant separation from existing residential neighbours to the north and west to avoid any effects of dominance, loss of privacy or shading. The interface with the existing residential boundaries will be treated with extensive landscaping and single level villa buildings of a similar scale to the existing neighbourhoods. The proposal will fit well into the receiving environment.

Views beyond the site are largely unaffected with the proposed building height infringement forming only a small part of the overall development and resulting in only a small loss of view over the site. In most cases there are no midground views due to the flat contour.

Views from public viewpoints are limited by the very nature of the topography and existing built development and landscape features, including shelter belts and screening and large tree planting. Where

views are available they are likely to be of short duration and reasonably distant.

Of the five viewpoints the VAC rating was follows

Low – 3 (VP 1-3), clearly visible, not a primary focal point, alter existing character

Neutral – 1 (VP 5), neither screened or a focal attraction, no effect on existing character, a visual element which may be viewed in similar landscape types

Moderate – 1 (VP4), partially screened, still identifiable, secondary focal point, no effect on existing character

The Low rating is from Viewpoints 1-3 from where the proposal will be visible and there is a change in landscape character, brought about by the requirement to raise the site level which differs from the surrounding area.

The Neutral rating is from Viewpoint 5 where the proposal is not considered to be the focal point and it is an element which may be viewed in a similar landscape type. There is no significant loss of outlook, no effect on existing character.

The Moderate rating is from Viewpoint 4 from where the proposal is mostly screened and distant. There is no effect from this viewpoint.

The Visual effect type is considered to be neutral from all viewpoints. It is acknowledged that there will be a change in landscape character but it is not considered to be negative and could be considered positive. The effect could be considered positive, given the highly articulated architectural finish of the proposal, the extensive landscaping and fit with the existing residential surroundings. Were a complying rural building to be erected, the size and scale could be a detractor in the landscape given it is unlikely to be so well architecturally considered or landscaped. Were the site to be enclosed by shelter planting there could be detrimental effects to the Council walkway around the site boundary in relation to CPTED expectations. The proposal provides an active frontage with passive surveillance over the walkway, benefiting both village residents and path users.

The site is largely enclosed and confined by its context, largely due to the flat contour. There are no significant views across the site to any notable landscapes beyond the site and those views which do exist will not be greatly affected due to the predominantly single level development. Where there is a height infringement over the Care Home and Apartment wing, it is considered to be of insufficient scale to greatly affect any views.

The visual effect from the all viewpoints is considered to be low, no more than minor. There is a change to the existing character but it is not considered to be detrimental or adverse and the level of building articulation and landscape planting will assist in mitigating any effects to an acceptable level, with effects diminishing over time as the planting establishes and develops.

5.2 Conclusion

The proposal introduces new built forms at a scale which is generally similar to that currently experienced in the immediate context of the site. The apartment wing brings about a height infringement but the central location of the building locates it well away from viewing audiences and will not create any adverse effects on dominance, privacy or shading outside the site. The extensive perimeter and internal landscape will also contribute to minimising any adverse effects.

I consider the existing landscape to be of ordinary quality with its largely open rural nature, fringed by residential development and rural land, it is a largely functional landscape with limited aesthetic attributes. (abstracted from Landscape Institute, see Appendix D) The large power poles and overhead wires also contribute to diminishing the quality of the character, along with the raised level of SH50.

Most significantly, the proposal is located so as to have little impact on the broader outlooks and will have little impact on the existing landscape character of the area. While there is a change in character for the site, it is not dissimilar to the character of the neighbouring residential areas.

I do not believe there are any adverse effects on the amenity of the nearby residential properties. The building is of a high design standard and there is unlikely to be any effects caused by shading or overlooking, given the separation distance and the landscape treatments.

Having considered the visual effects of the proposal I consider that the proposal addresses the assessment criteria of the District Plan.

I consider the proposal to be well designed and believe it will not detract from the existing character of the area. The quality of the design and building articulation along with the proposed landscaping will contribute positively to the area.

Paul Murphy
Senior Landscape Architect
NZILA Registered



6.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Definitions

APPENDIX B

Landscape Analysis – Refer A3 document.

APPENDIX C

Landscape Context Plan – Refer to A3 document.

APPENDIX D

Landscape Content Plan – Refer to A3 document.

APPENDIX E

Landscape Catchment Plan/ Viewpoint Photos – Refer to A3 document.

APPENDIX F

Landscape Concept Plan – Refer to A3 document.

APPENDIX A - Definitions

Visual Absorption capability □

The capability of the surrounding landscape to absorb a development. The ability of a landscape to integrate a development into the existing visual character without significant change.

Factors which determine the VAC include

- a) the degree to which the development is visible
- b) visual and physical links with other similar elements in the landscape
- c) the level of modification to the surrounding landscape
- d) appropriateness of scale
- e) distance
- f) backdrop

This rating determines the extent of visibility of a proposed development and is rated under the following

Very low – highly visible, potential focal point, different in appearance or scale to existing

Low – clearly visible, not a primary focal point, alter existing character

Neutral – neither screened or a focal attraction, no effect on existing character, a visual element which may viewed in similar landscape types

Moderate – partially screened or visually absorbed, still readily identifiable, secondary focal point, no effect on existing character

High – mostly screened or visually absorbed, still identifiable, tertiary focal point, no effect on existing character

Very High – completely or nearly completely screened, unidentifiable at a distance, no effect on existing character

Visual effect type □

Visual effect type is classified as one of the following

Positive – beneficial, contributing to the quality of the environment

Negative – adverse, detracting from the existing quality of the environment

Neutral – no effect on the existing character

Visual effect level □

Describes the degree of effect of the proposal as one of the following

Extreme – Use- the development/ activity would:

- result in an extreme change on the characteristics or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have an extreme effect on the perceived amenity derived from it
- unacceptably high visual effects, dominant feature, character of landscape is significantly affected

Very High – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a very high level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a very high level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it

High – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a high level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a high level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it
- high visual effect, significant and apparent change affecting overall landscape character

Moderate – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a moderate level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a moderate level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it

□

□ Visual Assessment Best Practice Methodologies – Lisa Rimmer

□ Ibid

- visual effects of some significance, visible and recognisable new element, may have a noticeable impact on viewers

“Minor” threshold under the RMA

Low – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a low level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a low level effect on the perceived amenity derived from it
- no more than minor visual effects under RMA, no more than minor effects on view, minor component of a wider view

Very low – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a very low level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a very low level effect on the perceived amenity derived from it
- less than minor effect

Negligible – Use – the development/ activity would:

- have a negligible level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/ or the vista within which it is seen; and/ or
- have a negligible level effect on the perceived amenity derived from it
- less than minor effect

Definitions

Landscape character – a distinct pattern or combination of elements that occurs consistently in parts of the landscape, determined by the relationship of land form, land cover and land use

Character area – a geographic area with a distinct character

Landscape units – areas of terrain which have fairly constant characteristics

Landscape types – Landscapes can be subdivided into different types on the basis of their characteristics.

Landscape features – an element which is a small part of the landscape is predominantly natural, it has features which distinguish it from the wider landscape

Natural character – not defined by legislation, expression of natural processes

Landscape Assessment criteria ²

Highest Quality landscape – includes the most aesthetically attractive landscapes. Areas of particular natural beauty perceived as special in a regional or national context.

Very Attractive landscape – areas include historic and designated landscape. Diverse, semi natural or farmed landscape with natural features. Normally abundant woodland cover together with a high distribution of trees, hedgerows and shrubs, streams, brooks and other naturalised unpolluted water corridors may be present. Several local landscape designations may apply

Good Quality landscape – countryside with some variety in farmland cover. Settlements and villages with pockets of open space and public recreation areas. There is a reasonable distribution of semi natural vegetation, trees and shrub cover and the overall view of the area is pleasant.

Ordinary Quality landscape – typical open agricultural land where attractive features are offset by detractors. Some strategic planning is evident but development is primarily functional including housing estates, business parks or urban fringe land uses. Not particularly aesthetically attractive, but with more value than a poor quality landscape

Poor Quality landscape – includes detractors such as powerlines, industrial derelict or inappropriate bulk forms with no aesthetic value or evidence of strategic planning. There is lack of mature vegetation cover and no landscape designations apply. Intensively farmed landscape, which has lost most of its features