

# Appendix G – Landscape and Visual Assessment Addendum prepared by Boffa Miskell



# Tamahere Country Club Extension

Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment - Addendum Report  
Prepared for Sanderson Group



11 August 2023





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Landscape Concept Plans (bound separately)



# 1.0 Introduction & Background

The Sanderson Group has commissioned the following Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LVEA) - Addendum Report as part of their resource consent application for the expansion of the Tamahere Country Club (TCC) in Tamahere. The proposed extension will encompass four sites along the existing TCC boundary: 82 and 92 Tamahere Road to the south, and 56 and 70 Tamahere Road to the east (refer Figure 1 below). In this report, these sites are individually referred to as the 'eastern extension' and 'southern extension,' while collectively they are referred to as the 'extension sites' or 'extensions'.



Figure 1: Masterplan – Existing TCC Site (black boundary) with proposed extension sites identified in red. (Source BML, 2023)



In 2018 an original resource consent was granted for the Tamahere Country Club (LUC0023/19), a luxury retirement village situated in Tamahere, halfway between Hamilton and Cambridge on the properties at 650, 618 and 608 Airport Road and 46 Tamahere Drive. The original consent approved the establishment of the Tamahere Country Club, including 108 standalone villas that range in size from 147m<sup>2</sup> to 288m<sup>2</sup>, as well as supporting facilities such a club house, care facility, bowls lawn, independent living apartments, health spa and swimming pool.

A change to the original consent was thereafter approved in June 2019 for minor changes to fencing, water storage tank location and building setbacks (LUC0023/19.01). Following the original consent approval in 2018, Sanderson commenced detailed design. Throughout detailed design and construction, changes to the site layout were proposed. The site extent also increased as a result of Sanderson purchasing adjoining properties to extend the retirement village to assist with meeting the high demand in sales experienced within the market. Subsequent resource consents were approved, including LUC0156/20, which replaced the original consent approval, and LUC0597/21 to extend the TCC on the adjoining property to the south (being 70 Tamahere Drive). Overall, the resource consent approvals provided for a retirement village development on the properties at 650, 618 and 608 Airport Road and 30, 32, 36, 46 and 70 Tamahere Drive. This provides for a total of 191 villas and supporting amenities (Clubhouse, etc). 108 with the original consent and a further 83 with the southern extension consented in 2021.

A full planning assessment and background of the various stages is provided in the Assessment of Environment Effects (AEE) report prepared by Bloxam Burnett & Olliver (BBO).

As part of the 2019 consent, Boffa Miskell Limited (BML) prepared a Landscape Urban Design Visual Amenity Assessment (LUVAA)<sup>1</sup>, with a subsequent LVEA addendum (2021) for the southern extension (consent LUC0597/21). This addendum does not replace the 2019 LUVAA or the 2021 LVEA but essentially builds on both documents, in relation to the proposed additional extension sites. The key matters discussed in this addendum report relate to the landscape character and values of the existing and receiving environment, the nature of the component elements of the proposed changes, and the nature of the landscape and visual effects generated by the proposed changes sought.

This addendum has considered the proposal in the context of the existing and consented environment, the zoning, the use of the land surrounding the site and the relevant planning framework. Within the Waikato District Plan (both the operative and proposed), the site is zoned Rural and retirement village development requires resource consent as a Non-Complying activity as set out in the AEE prepared by BBO.

## 1.1 Methodology – Guidance

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

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<sup>1</sup> Refer Landscape Urban Design Visual Amenity Assessment (LUVAA) dated 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019, by Jo Soanes, Landscape Architect Boffa Miskell.

In assessing the scale of landscape effects, a seven-point scale of effects has been applied, as recommended in Te Tangi a te Manu, comprising: very low, low, low moderate, moderate, moderate high, high, and very high. Effects have been assessed in terms of the values of the landscape having first understood its characteristics in terms of the physical, associative, and perceptual realms. Importantly, change in a landscape and the introduction of new elements or features into the landscape does not of itself necessarily generate adverse effects.

A site visit was undertaken on 10 May 2023 where the extension sites and potentially affected viewing audiences were identified.

BML's involvement in the TCC development extends back to the initial investigations on the site in 2018. BML's inputs consisted of masterplanning and landscape design of the development. BML have worked alongside Sanderson Group, Edwards White Architects, Stantec, BBO and Kotare Consultants (civil engineering) in developing and refining the proposal, including these extension sites. BML has also prepared the Landscape Concept Design package for these extensions which forms part of the application documentation.

## 2.0 Proposal Layout

The proposal involves two extensions to the existing TCC. The first is the southern extension, located at 82 and 92 Tamahere Drive to the south, encompassing an area of approximately 5.25 hectares. The second is the eastern extension, situated at 56 and 70 Tamahere Drive to the east, covering an area of approximately 1.9 hectares.

The proposed southern extension includes:

- 42 standalone villas.
- Internal road network.
- A new Health Spa facility to the northeast corner of the extension site.
- Approximately 32 carparks located within one parking area adjacent to the health spa.
- Extension of the shared walking / cycling path around the perimeter of the site.

The proposed eastern extension includes:

- 25 standalone villas.
- Internal road network.
- Small arts and crafts facility.

Overall, the building coverage on the extension sites is 19.5%. This is generally consistent with the condition on existing consents, which implements a maximum of 28% site coverage for the original site and 18.5% for the southern extension consented in 2021. The new extensions are consistent with the boundary setback requirements of the Operative Waikato District Plan and consistent with the existing TCC development<sup>2</sup>.

Access to the development is from the existing consented entrance points on Tamahere Drive.

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<sup>2</sup> It is noted that the proposed district plan reduces the setback from 25m to 12m. 25m is adopted for TCC.



## Landscape Design

As part of the proposal, BML has prepared a comprehensive landscape design that encompasses the extension sites and seamlessly connects them with the existing TCC village (refer to Landscape Package prepared by BML).

The proposed landscape design for the extension sites includes the following features:

- The incorporation of a landscape that enhances the onsite amenity and fosters a seamless connection with the previous stages of the TCC development.
- Extensive landscape treatment surrounding the external boundaries of the site, with particular emphasis on the southern and western boundaries adjoining the Rural zoned properties. This treatment entails implementing 25-metre building setbacks, hedging, tree plantings, a shared path encircling the entire site, the establishment of a native screening planted area and planted bund.
- Extension of the landscape treatment to Tamahere Drive, ensuring a consistent and high-quality aesthetic along this edge.
- Open rural-style post and rail fencing along all external site boundaries.
- Generously sized specimen tree and public amenity planting throughout.
- Retention and protection of scheduled tree at 92 Tamahere Drive.
- Extension and continuation of the shared walking / cycling path around the perimeter of the development site.
- Screening of the campervan parking area from adjacent villas.

## 3.0 Statutory Context

The AEE prepared by BBO presents a comprehensive overview of the planning context surrounding the resource consent being sought. It outlines both the statutory and non-statutory provisions that form the basis for evaluating the proposed extension. It is understood that these extensions, do not trigger additional provisions within the Waikato District Plan specifically pertaining to landscape and visual assessment matters. A Notable Tree is located on the eastern edge of 92 Tamahere Drive as demonstrated in the District Plan maps<sup>3</sup>. This tree will be retained and protected as part of the proposed works. It is worth noting that the various building setback requirements of the District Plan, including 12m from Tamahere Drive have been complied with as part of the new proposed layout. TCC adopts the 25m setback as identified in the operative District Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer Schedule 30.2: Notable Trees, Waikato District Plan - Horsetail (sheoak) tree

## 4.0 Existing Environment

A comprehensive description of the surrounding landscape context is provided in the LUVAA prepared for the original application and again in the LVEA for the southern extension, that is not repeated here. Of note to the resource consent being sought in relation to the extension sites and wider landscape context the following observations are made:

- The southern extension site directly adjoins the southern boundary of the existing TCC retirement village with Tamahere Drive to the eastern boundary.
- The eastern extension site directly adjoins the existing village. The immediate boundaries of the eastern extension are adjacent to the existing TCC retirement village, with Tamahere Drive to the east.
- The wider landscape surrounding the sites is characterised by rural lifestyle and large lot residential developments, despite the rural zoning of the area.
- The recently constructed Tamahere Village Centre approximately 400m west of TCC, has become a focus of community activities and events. The Village Centre includes a public 'piazza' or village square, commercial buildings providing for local retail demand, a playground, a skatepark and a recreational reserve.
- The Hamilton to Cambridge section of Te Awa River Ride is located along Tamahere Drive to the immediate east of the extension sites.
- There are no identified high value landscapes or features within the extension sites or within their immediate context. The only notable feature is the protected tree, located at 92 Tamahere Drive.
- The extension sites both have flat to gently undulating topography that is related to the wider alluvial plains of the Waikato and the terracing associated with the Waikato River (located approximately 600m south of TCC).
- Five rural residential properties adjoin the immediate boundary of the southern extension site. These include 98 and 104 Tamahere Drive and 25 and 47B Pencarrow Road to the south, and 21 Pencarrow Road to the west. There are also two properties to the east of the southern extension site, across Tamahere Drive, 85 and 101 Tamahere Drive.
- The existing TCC is contiguous with all immediate boundaries of the eastern extension site, except for the eastern boundary which is adjacent to Tamahere Drive. Across Tamahere Drive, there are two properties, namely 63 and 67 Tamahere Drive.
- It is understood that written approval has been obtained from 63, 67, 85, 98, 101 and 104 Tamahere Drive and 47B and 21 Pencarrow Road, effects on these properties are therefore disregarded from this assessment.
- The southern extension site is relatively flat in nature. 82 Tamahere Drive is currently used as the site yard for Sanderson's construction activities. 92 Tamahere Drive is a former Christmas tree business, with a single dwelling and associated sheds on site. There are a number of well-established exotic trees on the eastern edge of the site including a Horsetail (aforementioned notable tree in the District Plan).
- The eastern extension site also has flat topography. 56 Tamahere Drive has single storey dwelling located to the northern edge of the site, with a number of established

tree species surrounding it and a driveway connecting to Tamahere Drive. The remainder of the site is open pasture. 70 Tamahere Drive known as 'The Compound' is understood to be the 'Red Lid Garden Bins & Bags' company premises. The site features a gravel parking area to the Tamahere Drive eastern edge, two single storey residential dwelling to the south and paddock in the north western corner.

## 5.0 Visual Catchment and Viewing Audiences

To determine the visual catchment and viewing audience of the proposal, a study of aerial photography was undertaken in addition to site visits. Those private properties which are likely to be affected have been visually surveyed from nearby publicly accessible locations where possible, with further reference to aerial imagery to understand the nature of these potential viewing audiences.

Due to the flat topography of both extension sites, the visual catchment is generally restricted and contained. The sites are both located adjacent the existing TCC development. The only public views of the proposed development will be from the east for users of Tamahere Drive including those using the Te Awa River walking/cycling track. With views from other roads set back behind the existing TCC development and rural residential properties in the surrounding area.

There are nine private properties from where the proposed development will be visible. As identified in Section 4.0 written approval has been obtained from a number of these properties and therefore visual effects on those properties can be disregarded.

Based on this viewing catchment analysis, and noting the written approvals obtained for several properties, the primary viewing audience will therefore comprise these groups:

- Users of Tamahere Drive, including those using the Te Awa River walking/cycling track. This viewing audience will typically experience transient views of both extension sites from close proximity, to the north and south.
- For the southern extension site the residential property to the immediate south of the site, 25 Pencarrow Road.

## 6.0 Assessment of Effects

Landscape and visual impacts result from natural or induced change in the components, character or quality of the landscape. Usually these are the result of landform or vegetation modification or the introduction of new structures, facilities or activities. Landscape effects arise when such change affects the values of that landscape either in beneficial or adverse ways.

The landscape effects generated by any particular proposal can, therefore, be perceived as:

- positive (beneficial), contributing to the character and quality of the environment.
- negative (adverse), detracting from existing character and quality of environment; or

- neutral (benign), with essentially no effect on existing character or quality of environment.

The degree to which landscape effects are generated by a development depends on a number of factors, these include:

- The degree to which the proposal contrasts, or is consistent, with the qualities of the surrounding landscape.
- The proportion of the proposal that is visible, determined by the observer's position relative to the objects viewed.
- The distance and foreground context within which the proposal is viewed.
- The area or extent of the visual catchment from which the proposal is visible.
- The number of viewers, their location and situation (static, or moving) in relation to the view.
- The backdrop and context within which the proposal is viewed.
- The predictable and likely known future character of the locality.
- The quality of the resultant landscape, its aesthetic values and contribution to the wider landscape character of the area.

Change in a landscape and 'visibility' of a proposal does not of itself, constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect.

The following section assesses the proposal and its level of potential effects and appropriateness in this setting. Issues to be addressed relating to the landscape and visual amenity matters include the following: physical landscape effects (such as vegetation removal and earthworks), landscape character effects and visual amenity effects from residential properties and public views from Tamahere Drive.

## 6.1 Landscape Effects

### Physical Landscape Effects

For both extensions the proposed development will be constructed across the entire site, with the built development centralised on the site, setback sufficiently from the site boundaries and the soft landscaping and circulation features located to the perimeter to assist with the rural interface. The proposed development will require the removal of the existing amenity vegetation within the properties. This vegetation includes a number of established exotic tree species as well as low growing trees and shrubs typical of residential properties. The notable Horsetail or sheoak tree to the eastern edge of 92 Tamahere Drive will however be retained and incorporated into the proposed landscape design.

Extensive planting is proposed as part of the application, refer to Landscape Concept Plans by BML. This planting includes specimen tree planting and amenity planting throughout both extension sites as well as a 25m native screen planting area to the south and eastern edge of the southern extension that includes substantial screen planting and amenity planting. This planting will provide screening of the southern extension but will also provide a consistent, high amenity treatment, retain some rural characteristics at the site's interface with adjoining rural zoned properties, enhance the biodiversity of the site, and tie the proposed extension into the existing TCC development. Overall, it is considered that the proposed planting as part of the extensions will result in beneficial landscape effects.

The proposed extensions will require earthworks to form building platforms, and appropriate levels on site for stormwater runoff. This includes approximately 4,000m<sup>3</sup> of cut and 50,000m<sup>3</sup> of fill. Overall given the existing relatively flat topography, the earthworks are designed to achieve sufficient road grades and fall for overland flow on the site. The level and extent of the earthworks is in keeping with what can be expected in a development of this scale.

Due to the amount of earthworks required and the small amount of vegetation to be removed, as well as taking into account the proposed vegetation and landscaping across the sites, the physical effects of the extensions are assessed as **low** (adverse) with some positive effects occurring as part of the proposed planting and revegetation.

### **Landscape Character Effects**

The site's planning guidelines and setback requirements have influenced the location of the proposed roads, buildings, villas and landscape design for both of the proposed extensions.

The development of the sites, including the landscape elements, open space, roading, building locations and heights, has been undertaken in an integrated manner to ensure the planning rules and best practice urban design principles are achieved.

The proposed development has been carefully planned in response to the landscape context, taking into consideration the adjacent TCC development and the wider rural residential area. The architectural design of the buildings aims to create a residential look and feel, seamlessly blending with the existing retirement village and maintaining the overall character of the TCC and Tamahere area. The landscape design, an integral part of the proposal, serves both the residents' amenity and the preservation of a rural interface with the surrounding streets and residential neighbours. It includes a combination of native and exotic plant species that offer cover and seasonal interest.

Additionally, within the southern extension site, the proposed 25m offset of built structures, accompanied by a substantial planted native screen buffer along the southern and western boundaries, a bund at the western edge within the screen planting, and the preservation of the scheduled tree will help retain the site's character when observed from neighbouring properties. This treatment will also be consistent with the previous stages of the TCC design and create a coherent outcome.

Both proposed extensions are well connected to the wider TCC for vehicular and pedestrian access and the pedestrian access path around the perimeter of the site has been extended and incorporated into the extension design.

Large grade specimen trees are also proposed to the boundary, along the spine road and between the buildings to assist in visually breaking up the building mass and to define the street frontages.

The proposed extensions will, by their very nature, alter the existing function and character of the site, with more intensive housing, however, the development responds positively to the surrounding landscape context and existing TCC development. The external interface of the extensions will maintain a high degree of amenity and open space character, particularly along rural and road boundaries. With the above in mind, **low** (adverse) landscape character effects will arise as a result of the proposed extension.

## 6.2 Visual Effects

Visual effects relate to the degree of change that may occur to public views and amenity as a result of changes to the landscape and landscape character. In this instance, visual impacts may occur due to the introduction of additional built form in the landscape.

### Private Residential Properties

Both the southern and eastern extensions have their eastern boundary along Tamahere Drive, which effectively extends the presence of the TCC along Tamahere Drive.

#### 25 Pencarrow Road

The proposed southern extension adjoins the property at 25 Pencarrow Road along an approx. 45m length of its southern boundary. 25 Pencarrow Road is a large 4.6ha rural residential property that is roughly rectangle shape. There is a large single storey residential dwelling located within the centre of the property approximately 90m from the site boundary. There are several established exotic trees around the dwelling and the remainder of the site is largely in open paddocks.

The proposed development along this site boundary sets back the built form by 25m. There is also a minimum 20m landscape planting strip to the southern boundary that features substantial screen planting (refer Figure 2 below). This planting consists of native species, both shrub and specimen trees that reach a maximum height of 8-10m.



Figure 2: Typical Boundary Treatment to southern and western boundary. Features 25m built form setback and screen planting. Refer BML Landscape Concept Package.

To the western boundary the landscape interface continues the substantial screen planting, but also introduces a 3m high planted bund, planted with *Phormium tenax* and *Sophora microphylla* (refer Figure 3 below).



Figure 3: Typical Boundary Treatment to western boundary. Features 25m built form setback, open space and planting and 3m high planted bund. Refer BML Landscape Concept Package.

These boundary interface treatments will screen the southern extension with the adjacent rural landscape and provide an appropriate integration between the two land uses. Specimen trees have also been located within the masterplan, on the spine roads, boundary and between the buildings to provide specific screening of the proposal.

Due to the distance between the 25 Pencarrow Road dwelling on the site, the flat topography of the site together with the proposed planting and bunding to the boundary and offset of the built form there will be limited views of the southern extension.

Effects are considered to initially be **low** (adverse) for 25 Pencarrow Road due to the change in rural character, however, once the vegetation becomes established the modest single storey scale of development becomes well integrated, the visual effects will likely reduce to **very low**.

#### **Public viewing audiences – Tamahere Drive and Te Awa Cycleway**

Viewers travelling along the adjacent roads, or the Te Awa Cycleway are transient viewers and will only have the ability to view the proposed extension sites for a short amount of time. Views will be obtainable of the proposed Health spa, carpark, and some of the residential villas on the eastern edge of the site. Although the extension is of a greater density than what currently exists on site, the proposed design, architectural treatment and carefully considered landscape interface of trees, hedges and rural style fencing, the buildings will appear as a suitable residential scale. The extensions will create a natural continuation of the existing TCC retirement village. Visual effects for this public viewing audience will be up to **low** (adverse).

## 7.0 Conclusions

The proposal consists of two extensions to the existing TCC encompassing four sites along the existing TCC boundary: 82 and 92 Tamahere Road to the south, and 56 and 70 Tamahere Road to the east. This comprises a total area of approximately 7.15ha. The proposed retirement village extensions have been carefully designed in response to their context and provide internal amenity, an appropriate outlook for the surrounding rural interfaces, and a suitable design response fronting Tamahere Drive. Overall, there will be very low / low adverse effects resulting from the proposed extensions.

The proposed extensions will have low (adverse) effects on the physical aspects of the landscape. With some positive effects due to the proposed planting. In considering the change in landscape character, although the proposed extensions will represent a change from a more open rural context to a more intensive built form, the spatial layout of the development, together with the proposed high amenity landscape and design of the buildings ensure that both extensions will appear as a natural continuation of the TCC. The proposed extensions are well connected to the wider TCC development and tie into the existing pattern of development in the area.

In visual terms, from the public perspective of adjacent roads, the proposed extensions will have minimal impact. Any visual effects on identified private viewing audiences have been assessed as up to low (adverse), likely reducing to very low.

In summary, the proposed extensions will read as a logical addition to the TCC development at Tamahere and propose a similar landscape character to what is currently existing. The design has responded well to the aspects of the site that contribute to the amenity and character of the area, including architectural form and rural interfaces.





#### **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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