

Before an Independent Hearings Panel

The Proposed Waikato District Plan (Stage 1)

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

IN THE MATTER OF hearing submissions and further submissions on the Proposed
Waikato District Plan (Stage 1):

Topic 25 – Zone Extents

**PRIMARY EVIDENCE OF IAN COLIN MUNRO
ON BEHALF OF HAVELOCK VILLAGE LIMITED
(URBAN DESIGN)**

17 February 2021

BUDDLE FINDLAY

Barristers and Solicitors
Auckland

Solicitor Acting: **Vanessa Evitt / Mathew Gribben**

Email: vanessa.evitt@buddlefindlay.com / mathew.gribben@buddlefindlay.com

Tel 64-9-358 2555 PO Box 1433 DX CP24024 Auckland 1140

1. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 1.1 My full name is Ian Colin Munro. I am an urban designer and planner.
- 1.2 I am providing urban design evidence in relation to the proposed rezoning sought by Havelock Village Ltd (“**HVL**”)¹ of the land at 5 Yashili Road, 88 Bluff Road, 242 (in part) and 278 Bluff Road, Pokeno (“**Site**”).
- 1.3 I have visited the Site on numerous occasions since my engagement in 2019. I was not involved in the preparation of the submission or further submission, and have had no other involvement in the Proposed District Plan (“**PDP**”) process generally.
- 1.4 I have reviewed the urban design merits of the submission on the basis of relevant District and Regional planning directives (objectives and policies) identified with the assistance of Mr. Mark Tollemache². I have assessed the submission in terms of the logic and merit of re-zoning the Site at the Pokeno-wide scale, as well as in terms of the Site and its immediate neighbours at the detailed level. This includes the matters identified by Dr. Davey in his s.42A report as a “third lens”³.
- 1.5 I did not support the full extent of urban development signalled by the concept plan produced by Construkt Architects Ltd that accompanied the original submission. Following an approximately 9-month period of further assessment in 2020, and with specific technical traffic, ecology, landscape, acoustic, civil engineering, and geotechnical input, a refined re-zoning proposal (“**refined proposal**”) has been arrived at that is in my opinion appropriate and which will contribute effectively to accommodating growth in Pokeno.
- 1.6 The essence of the refined proposal is that it would enable well-connected residential development on the upper ‘hill’ part of the Site close to Pokeno and where there would be an ability to create a neighbourhood that looked and functioned as a part of Pokeno. On the Site’s lower ‘tail’ area, a bespoke rural lifestyle cluster area, and substantial bush protection and enhancement, reflects that this cannot be as conveniently connected with Pokeno as the ‘hill’ area, and does sit in a more characteristically rural visual catchment.
- 1.7 My evidence will focus on the refined proposal that is before the Commissioners, and which is explained in full detail in the evidence of Mr. Mark Tollemache.

¹ Submitter 862 and further submitter 1291.

² These are contained in Section 6 and in particular 6A of the RPS, and Chapter 4 of the PDP (Council rebuttal version, Hearing Topic 10 was used).

³ S.42A report of Dr. Mark Davey, Hearing 25 Zone Extents, 19 January 2021.

- 1.8 Having considered Chapter 4 of the PDP and the Section 6 of the Regional Policy Statement, and also the outcomes sought by the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (“**NPS: UD**”), I consider that in urban design terms the refined proposal is the most appropriate solution for the land because:
- (a) Pokeno has expanded in a predictable manner to date across the flat land that was contiguous with the settlement. That land has been or is almost at the point of exhaustion, and development is also now established on the eastern side of State Highway 1 in a manner that I regard as quite fragmented from Pokeno.
 - (b) The Site will offer a relatively convenient and close connection with the Pokeno main street (as an indicator of the ‘heart’ of the town), and is in my opinion a suitable growth option when considered in the context of other identified 1-10-year residential growth areas for Pokeno (within the Waikato 2070 Growth Strategy). This is on the basis of its proximity and (potential) connectivity with Pokeno, the land’s capability to accommodate urban residential development as described within the objectives and policies of the PDP, and my own work preparing a concept plan testing how a future neighbourhood would likely ‘look and feel’.
 - (c) The Site can accommodate development that retains the existing green hill backdrop to the settlement, provide for its own open spaces and reserves, and accommodate a logically-positioned, small neighbourhood centre to help residents meet daily needs.
 - (d) The refined proposal is based on a site-specific response that works with, and is subordinate to, natural landform features, and will provide housing choice to Pokeno including in terms of the lifestyle of being elevated rather than within the basin. A specific environmental enhancement framework has been proposed in the Site’s lower ‘tail’ area based on rural lifestyle clustering that will also help secure a local-road means of connecting Pokeno to the Waikato River. I regard this as being positive in urban design terms.
 - (e) Potential reverse sensitivity effects with the existing industrial activities and zone immediately north of the Site can be properly managed and in a way that will be more compatible than many residential / industrial zone interfaces I am familiar with. Adverse urban design effects generally will be consistent with, or less than, what is typical across the country as small settlements grow in ways that at times lead to creation of new development areas including at times

development extending into hill country surrounding an original basin (such as can be seen across Queenstown, Wanaka, and Mangawhai).

- (f) For all of the above reasons, I consider the refined proposal will contribute to a well-functioning urban environment as envisaged by the NPS: UD, particularly in terms of policy clauses 1(a), 1(c), and 1(e); 6(b) and 6(c). I consider the refined proposal will help to 'round out' the town to the south and help retain as much spatial centrality as possible to the town centre, by way of a counter-balance to ongoing expansion north, west and east.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 My full name is Ian Colin Munro. I have the qualifications and experience set out in my curriculum vitae which is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 I hold a Bachelor of Planning; a Master of Planning; a Master of Architecture [Urban Design]; a Master of Environmental Legal Studies; and a Master of Engineering Studies [Transport], all from the University of Auckland. I am a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. For the past 10-years I have delivered or co-delivered the NZPI® urban design training Continuing Professional Development courses available across the country. I annually lecture at the University of Auckland and for the past 5-years have given a specific annual urban design lecture on the matter of green-field structure and master planning.
- 2.3 I have 20-years' industry experience and in that time I have been involved in approximately 2,000 development proposals and Plan Changes. I am very familiar with the issue of planning for urban growth including by way of intensification ('brown field') and expansion ('green field'). This includes the typical approaches now taken across the country towards matters of urban form and structure / layout; integrating with natural landforms and patterns; housing choice and density; potential reverse sensitivity and other compatibility issues between new and existing development; and how to manage development at the level of individual allotments to manage site or location-specific effects.
- 2.4 I was engaged by HVL⁴ in 2019, after its submission and further submission to the District Plan had been made. I was not involved in preparing those. I have visited the Site on 3 occasions, including all of Pokeno, development at Dean Road and McIntosh Drive east of SH1, and the land between Pokeno and Waikato River. I have also driven

⁴ Submitter 862 and further submitter 1291.

around south Pokeno via Pokeno Road, Ewing Road, Potter Road, Cole Road and Bluff Road back to Pioneer Road. My last visit was in December 2020.

- 2.5 I record that upon review I identified that I did not support the original relief sought by HVL either in terms of the full extent of urban development proposed; the concept plan produced by Construkt Architects Ltd; or the land use zones that were identified. I participated in a 9-month review process undertaken across 2020 and this identified a refined proposal which I do support. The refined proposal is what is now before the Commissioners and it is for less development on the Site than was sought in the original submission (approximately 600 units vs. 1,025 units).
- 2.6 I prepared an urban design report (“**UDR**”) evaluating the submission and refined proposal dated January 2020. This is attached to this evidence as **Appendix 2**. For clarity, my evidence refers to Appendices, and my UDR refers to Attachments.

Scope of evidence

- 2.7 My evidence assesses the urban design effects and merit of the refined proposal sought by HVL.
- 2.8 In preparing my evidence I have worked alongside and in-part relied on the evidence of:
- (a) Mr. Mark Tollemache (planning);
 - (b) Mr. Leo Hills (traffic);
 - (c) Mr. Ryan Pitkethley (civil engineering);
 - (d) Mr. Graham Ussher (ecology);
 - (e) Mr. Rob Pryor (landscape);
 - (f) Mr. Jon Styles (acoustics);
 - (g) Mr. Shane Lander (geotechnical); and
 - (h) Mr. Andrew Curtis (air quality).
- 2.9 In this evidence I will:
- (a) Confirm my adherence to the Environment Court Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses 2014;

- (b) Summarise the key findings of my analysis of the Site, the original submission and the refined proposal;
- (c) Specifically comment on a summary of the urban design effects that the proposed re-zoning would have on the environment;
- (d) Specifically comment on the planning provisions relevant to the refined proposal;
- (e) Comment on the Council s.42A report prepared by Dr. Mark Davey dated 19 January 2021; and
- (f) Outline my conclusions.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 3.1 I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014. I have complied with the Code of Conduct in preparing this statement of evidence and confirm that I will do so in presenting my evidence to the Commissioners. Unless I state otherwise, this evidence is within my sphere of expertise and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

4. SUMMARY OF URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS OF THE SITE, ORIGINAL SUBMISSION AND REFINED PROPOSAL

- 4.1 In Section 4 of my UDR I provided a summary of my site analysis. Key excerpts from that are reproduced here for convenience:

- (a) *The Site is 148ha in area, has an irregular shape, and includes a substantial range of elevations, from approximately 10m up to approximately 123m. The twin caps of Transmission Hill and Potters Hill, and an east-west ridge connecting them, are visually obvious. The slope of Transmission Hill in particular forms a green backdrop to Pokeno.*
- (b) *The Site has two principal sectors or areas, and a third minor one. These are:*
 - i. *A “hill” area, forming the bulk of the Site adjacent to the existing zoned area of Pokeno.*

- ii. *A “tail” area, stretching down from the two hills towards the Waikato River, and containing a bulb at the southern end.*
 - iii. *A historic “village” area, apparently part of what was envisaged as the original Havelock Village but on relatively steep land. This also includes a number of stand-alone areas of land resembling some of what would have been original allotments within the village.*
- (c) *The Site also contains numerous areas of bush, streams, infrastructure, and paper roads linking Bluff Road to Potter and Hitchen Roads. A key area of bush and Significant Natural Area sits at the Site’s ‘choke point’ between the “hill” and “tail” areas, and the topography here is quite steep.*

...
- (g) *The Site sits south of Pokeno with industrial and residential zones now adjoining parts of its north-eastern and north-western boundaries. Much of the principal “hill” area is theoretically (subject to a road linkage via Yashili Drive in particular) very close to the Pokeno commercial centre, although would be towards the limit of a convenient walking distance (900m or less).*

...
- (i) *Pokeno has grown at a rapid pace in the last 10 years, with residential expansion to the north and east across the State Highway, and then more recently in a west-wards direction occurring. This reflects the obvious ease of expanding over generally flat land although in consequence development is now occurring, especially east of the Highway, that has little if any functional connection with the Pokeno centre. It would appear optimistic to assume that land developed within the last 10-years might become available for intensification in the short-term. This suggests that additional greenfield expansion will be necessary to accommodate most foreseeable growth, and this is in line with the work undertaken by the Council’s growth management work.*
- (j) *Various Council-based concept plans and Structure Plans have been prepared over time but only in the most recent 2020 “Waikato 2070” work has the Site been identified as part of Pokeno’s future urban environment. I consider that this is a rational outcome of conventional planning approaches. The challenges of developing and integrating sloped land on a sensitive site have had to reach a tipping point whereby the Site’s proximity to Pokeno centre, in the context of*

the scale of growth projected and in comparison to alternative development areas available, makes it “the next-best cab on the rank”.

- (k) *In this respect, my assessment is that the Site is less desirable to accommodate future growth in Pokeno than existing zoned land (intensification) or new greenfield land immediately west of the settlement at Munro Road⁵. But it then sits as comparably meritorious with flatter land further away from Pokeno northwards or further westwards. It is superior to further development on the eastern side of State Highway 1 given how far from Pokeno, and how poorly connected with it, that land is.*

4.2 In Section 5 of my UDR I provided a summary of my analysis of the relief sought in the original submission. That included a master plan developed by Construkt Ltd and included in the original HVL submission⁶. I found that a number of aspects of the Construkt Ltd plan to be successful (5.3 of my UDR). But overall I did not support that concept. At 5.4 of my UDR I recorded the following concerns, reproduced here for convenience:

- (a) *Many of the roads are on gradients that do not seem at all achievable (i.e., steeper than 1:10), and appear to rely on significant earthworks being undertaken including a lowering of the hills and/or substantial filling of the valleys (or significant and frequent retaining walls in excess of 4-5m in height).*
- (b) *The distribution of densities is difficult to follow based either on the Site’s topography or proximity to Pokeno.*
- (c) *Although the location for the small commercial centre is agreed with, its configuration is self-defeating and would disperse potential commercial use along too much street frontage (on all sides of a small ‘island’ block). It should be effectively cut in half in a north-west to south-east direction and have no road along its north-eastern side; this would force a single, focussed commercial development facing a single road edge.*
- (d) *Most of the open space areas shown are implied to be publicly owned or at least available for use by the public. This is not made clear and, in my opinion, it is inherently inferior to rely on private ownership for public pedestrian / cycle facilities. Most of these quasi-public spaces are shown as being ‘backed’ on to*

⁵ This refers to the easternmost 1/3rd of the land referred to as “Munro Block” in Waikato 2070.

⁶ This is included as **Attachment 8** in my UDR, itself included as Appendix 2 to this evidence.

by development rather than being 'fronted' as is preferable in general urban design practice or public open space.

- (e) *I do not see how the fragmented part of the Site within the historic Havelock "village" area could be functionally developed and serviced separate from the intervening and adjoining fragments.*
- (f) *I am particularly unsupportive of the extent of development indicated on the "tail" of the Site. The concept master plan shows pockets of poorly connected and relatively high-density housing on, in places, steeply sloping land. This part of the proposed development would not functionally form part of Pokeno of the neighbourhood within the Site itself. This aspect of the master plan is simply out of place."*

4.3 In Section 6 of my UDR I provided a summary of my description of the refined proposal that is now before the Commissioners⁷. At 6.2 of my report I identified the key characteristics of the refined proposal, reproduced here for convenience as:

- (a) *An overall housing yield of between 500-600 units, or approximately half of that envisaged by Construkt Ltd and requested via the HVL submission. This equates to a gross density of 4 dwelling units per hectare ("du/ha"). However, if the rural-lifestyle "tail" and Havelock "village" areas of the Site (and the units likely within them) were set aside, the remaining 550 'urban' units would achieve a typical gross density of around 7 du/ha, or closer to 11 du/ha in net terms (once roads and public open spaces were also subtracted). In my opinion this reflects the optimum carrying capacity of the Site although it could be possible in later resource consents (and I would not oppose in principle) for multi-unit development to occur adjacent to the proposed reserves and/or Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre. Such developments would not in my opinion be likely to significantly change the overall scale of urban development possible on the Site.*
- (b) *For reference, using the Waikato 2070 estimate of 13,500 additional residents in Pokeno to 2070, the Site could therefore accommodate up to around 1,500 persons or 11% of potential growth forecast in Pokeno. This is indicative that the Site is likely to play a modest role in accommodating reasonably*

⁷ I refer to **Attachments 9** (concept master plan), **10** (zone plan) and **11** (a side-by-side master plan comparison) in my UDR, itself included as Appendix 2 to this evidence.

foreseeable growth in Pokeno, and also that Pokeno's urban footprint will need to significantly increase if the Waikato 2070 prediction is accurate.

- (c) Avoidance of development on the northern face of Transmission Hill facing Pokeno aligned with a 45dBA noise contour to ensure management of potential reverse sensitivity effects on existing industrial zoned land to the north. This includes a small section of proposed industrial zone at the Site's flat northern end at Yashili Drive (so as to avoid any residential development occurring there).*
- (d) A scaled-down commercial centre to serve the basic / daily needs of the neighbourhood.*
- (e) Road connections to Yashili Drive, Hitchen Road, Potter Road, Cole Road and Bluff Road, and a specific slow-speed, one-way road link connecting the "hill" (also referred to in the refined concept as "Havelock Hill") and "tail" (referred to in the refined concept as "Havelock Rural Lifestyle" or just "Lifestyle") parts of the Site so as to minimise disruption to the bush and SNA.*
- (f) An internal road network, tested by Civil Plan Ltd and Commute Ltd so as to confirm trafficable gradients can be achieved on the alignments shown, based on key external roads connecting through the Site and an internal 'loop' ("Road 3"). Secondary local roads, connected to form blocks where possible, then reinforce that frame.*
- (g) Retention of streams and natural wetlands and the enhancement of their riparian edges.*
- (h) Protection and enhancement of existing native bush and SNA areas.*
- (i) A limitation of urban-scale development (lots smaller than 1,000m²) to the "Havelock Hill" section of the Site where development would conveniently connect to Pokeno via Hitchen Road and a Yashili Drive extension. This road connection, in light of its significance, has been subjected to specific and quite detailed design as a necessary proof-of-concept exercise.*
- (j) Identification of a "slope residential" overlay on steeper parts of the Havelock Hill area of the Site where a typical lot size of 2,500m² would apply along with a requirement for specific geotechnical design. These parts of the Site would also enjoy revegetation for the most part around and between dwellings.*

- (k) *The fragmented historic “village” area would remain in rural zoning.*
- (l) *For the tail or Lifestyle area of the Site, a rural lifestyle cluster concept has been developed that would justify continuation of a through road link to Bluff Road⁸ (securing a relatively direct link from Pokeno to the Waikato River via the land at TaTa Valley), enable significant revegetation and restoration of the land, and ensure development with a distinctive and semi-rural quality to establish that remained subordinate in scale and location to the natural environment. This could accommodate a maximum of 55 units, identified in clusters by LA4 Ltd.*
- (m) *The “rural lifestyle cluster” was also identified on the basis of an outcome that would be compatible with the rural zoned land around the Site, and that into the long term, similar rural lifestyle development defining the long-term southern edge of Pokeno seems likely as the town continues to grow.”*

5. SUMMARY OF URBAN DESIGN EFFECTS

5.1 In section 3 of my UDR I identified the following assessment topics in terms of both relevant environmental effects and planning outcomes. These were derived from my reading of Section 6 (and 6A) of the RPS, Chapter 4 of the PDP (Topic 10 Council reply version), and the relevant non-statutory planning and growth documents relevant to Pokeno. The key assessment topics I identified were:

- (a) *“The development should contribute to a quality compact urban form that supports and enhances the local area.*
- (b) *The development should achieve a well-connected, integrated built form outcome, with residential areas having high amenity, and being healthy, attractive and safe.*
- (c) *Non-residential activities support the needs of people and the local community.*
- (d) *The development should maintain or enhance the character of the local area, and provide adequately for infrastructure.*
- (e) *Open spaces should be well integrated and physically connected where possible.*
- (f) *Reverse sensitivity effects with adjacent land uses are managed.*

⁸ This is because without sufficient development on that land and a need for access (which can then be leveraged from to form a connected local road link), I would be much less confident that such a link would be otherwise needed or likely to eventuate.

- (g) *The proposal should demonstrate how the site's opportunities and constraints have been positively responded to.*
- (h) *Overall urban design merit."*

5.2 In terms of urban design effects, I considered the refined re-zoning proposal to be acceptable and unlikely to result in any significant adverse effects. The following summary is a compilation of pertinent findings in section 7 of my UDR.

Urban form integration

- (a) The "Havelock Hill" part of the Site is suited to urban development subordinate to landform and environmental features but the constrained "Havelock Lifestyle" or 'tail' part of the Site was not. The refined re-zoning proposal incorporates and provides mechanisms to ensure that important natural features are protected and integrated into a future neighbourhood (notably the Precinct Plan and Overlays).
- (b) The Site connects to existing urban zones and would contribute to a compact urban form . In my opinion it would logically expand Pokeno in light of how much northern and western growth has occurred in recent times relative to the location of the town centre as the settlement's social and economic focal point. The refined proposal would be considerably better-connected and more logical as an expansion option for Pokeno than development on the eastern side of SH1, or the north-eastern side of both SH1 and SH2.
- (c) The proposal would provide meaningfully improved connectivity in south Pokeno, linking Bluff Road, Pioneer Road, and Miller Road to Hitchen Road and Yashili Drive and linking Pokeno Town Centre to the Waikato River without the use of SH1 as is currently required. It would also connect Potter Road, Ewing Road and Trig Road to Hitchen Road and Yashili Drive. In my opinion this is a positive enhancement, although is not regarded as being likely to induce large-scale movement flows.

Development scale and choice

- (d) The proposal's likely yield of 600 units will optimise the carrying capacity of the Site to accommodate housing and help meet the District's (and Pokeno's) growth needs in a way that is efficient and appropriate (achieving a density something between 7 du/ha (gross) to 11 du/ha (net).

- (e) Using Waikato 2070's Pokeno concept plan as indicative of potential shorter-term (1-10 years) residential growth options available, I consider the Site sits in the middle of the range, being inferior to some of the identified options, equivalent to some; and superior to others. There are no combinations of known growth options that would in my opinion together be so superior to the Site that it should not be zoned now based on its own characteristics and proximity to Pokeno town centre. I do not consider that delaying the zoning of the land now would lead to a materially higher yield or more efficient outcome in the future.

Development layout and site features

- (f) The proposal will enhance the quality of existing streams and their margins on the Site, and lead to substantial revegetation of the Site in both the Havelock Lifestyle (tail) area as well as the Slope Residential Overlay (where a key technique to manage potential geotechnical slope subsidence or soil creep around and between dwellings will be dense vegetation).
- (g) The concept plan also demonstrates that in many cases a 'conventional' block structure will be possible with lots aligned back-to-back and fronting a street. This is regarded as the optimal urban structure for both connectivity, safety, and built form amenity. Where development is likely to include more rear lots, this coincides with the Slope Residential overlay and where lots will be much larger. I consider that this will mitigate potential adverse amenity effects of rear-lot development patterns.
- (h) On-site residents will also be able to enjoy the frequent views available from street vistas out across Pokeno (north) and to the Waikato River (south-east and south). The proposed hilltop reserve on Transmission Hill would be a particularly memorable landmark. Overall, I consider the refined proposal is likely to result in a very pleasant, high-quality living environment that will also offer convenient accessibility to Pokeno Town Centre. Although I would not consider the proposed residential zone area to place residents within a convenient 10-minute walk of Pokeno Town Centre, the entirety of the residential zone would be within 2km of the centre (2km representing the upper-bound of almost all pedestrian trips), and would be walkable for most residents if a necessity arose. The town centre would be within a convenient 10-minute bicycle or e-scooter ride from the proposed residential zone however.

Non-residential uses

- (i) A small on-site area of Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre is proposed at a locally strategic confluence of roads. This will allow it to enjoy the greatest possible visual exposure to the greatest possible number of passers-by. I envisage a small collection of daily-need or convenience stores would be possible (i.e., a combination of dairy / café / hairdresser etc.), up to between 1,000m² – 1,500m² in GFA. It would not be of a scale, or be in a location, where it could materially compete with or undermine Pokeno Town Centre.
- (j) A small sliver of Industry zone is proposed at the northern and flat end of the Site directly adjoining the existing industrial zone. This is not envisaged as being able to accommodate industrial development of note and has been positioned to provide a transition between the proposed residential development and existing industrial activities. In that respect it is a part of the refined proposal's response to potential reverse sensitivity effects although it could prove possible to accommodate a very small-scale light-industry activity here, such as a boutique tradesperson's place of business. I regard this as a compatible fit with that existing industry zone interface and transition into the Site from Yashili Drive.

Character and amenity

- (k) In terms of Pokeno as a whole, I consider that there is no scenario where the character of the original small settlement can be safeguarded in absolute terms; there has been and currently is planned to be a magnitude of growth several times the scale of that village and it is transitioning into a quite large-scale urban town. In that context and considering the recent residential development that has occurred east of SH1 (Dean Road / McIntosh Drive); to the north at Mark Ball Drive and Helenslee Road; and to the west and south-west at Harriet Johnston Drive, Hitchen Road and Yashili Drive, I consider the refined proposal will join these as part of a logical and generally concentric expansion of Pokeno.
- (l) Retention of the northern face of Transmission Hill will retain the existing green backdrop that sits south of Pokeno and the existing industrial zone. I consider that this is the most important character contribution that the Site makes to Pokeno as a whole. This will be accentuated by the creation of a future public open space reserve on the top of the hill (a matter for the Council to separately determine at the time of subdivision).
- (m) In terms of the Site itself, the refined proposal and the Precinct Plan and Overlays are based on following the natural lay of the land and distribution of

environmental features. All significant features and streams will be protected along with natural wetlands and a substantial enhancement of ecological values. Although urban development in the Havelock Hill area will still result in a substantial visual change, I consider that this will be acceptable and have similar residential and character values as the recent neighbourhoods that have developed in Pokeno.

Potential reverse sensitivity

- (n) In terms of the existing residential development near the Havelock Hill area's western boundary, a generally like-with-like residential interface is proposed and this will be compatible. The Yashili Drive extension, and other connectivity options, will also ensure that large volumes of new traffic do not undermine amenity values within the existing Hitchen Road subdivision. The proposed Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre will likely provide amenity benefits to that existing residential area.
- (o) The principal reverse sensitivity risk is the existing industrial zone to the north. In this respect it is proposed to set any residential development back behind a predicted 45dBA contour. This also coincides with much of the northern face of Transmission Hill intended to be kept clear of development as part of the existing green backdrop to Pokeno. I consider that this setback, and the sliver of Industrial zoned land at the Site's northern Yashili Drive interface, will provide a logical framework to manage potential reverse sensitivity effects.

6. SUMMARY OF PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 I refer to paragraph 5.1 to introduce the assessment topics I identified as relevant to the submission.

6.2 I concluded that the proposal was in-line with the relevant planning outcomes in urban design terms, although in my UDR I provided an overall summary assessment. For the purposes of this statement of evidence I will elaborate on this further and provide the Commissioners with specific Plan references for their convenience. Specifically:

- (a) In terms of the RPS Section 6 and 6A:
 - (i) The refined re-zoning has been arrived at through a comprehensive review of the relief sought in HVL's original submission. This had regard to section 6A of the RPS (specifically addressed below) (6.1(a)). It was arrived at based on a technical evaluation of an existing and quite

detailed concept master plan (Construkt Ltd, 2018), and resulted in a replacement concept plan. I consider that this was very rigorous and recognised and addressed potential cumulative (and other) effects of future subdivision use and development (6.1(b)). I consider that in this instance there is a high level of certainty as to the likely long-term effects of the land's subdivision, use and development (6.1(c)). Lastly, the refined proposal has been developed being particularly sensitive to the existing built environment including opportunities for integration and connectivity, and potential reverse sensitivity effects with the existing industrial area to the Site's immediate north-east (6.1(d)).

- (ii) In terms of 6.1.2, particular regard has been had of potential reverse sensitivity effects and the refined re-zoning proposal includes specific methods to address these.
- (iii) The proposed Havelock Lifestyle (tail) area of the Site is consistent with the locations identified for rural-residential development at 6.1.5 (and 6.17) including that the tail area is not suitable for current or future urban development, and is suitably clear of hazard areas, industry, high-class soils or potential primary production, and significant mineral resources.
- (iv) In terms of 6.1.6, the proposal is consistent with the Council's Waikato 2070 growth strategy, which identifies the Site for 3-10-year residential development purposes.
- (v) In terms of 6.1.7, I understand that the Council has not produced a Pokeno-specific structure plan. I do not consider one is relevant or necessary to evaluate the merits of the submission or have confidence that an optimal spatial strategy has been arrived at. In particular:
 - (1) Pokeno is relatively small and the merits of re-zoning requests can in my opinion be properly understood in the absence of a structure plan, particularly where (such as is the case for this submission) concept master plans have been prepared and can allow thorough spatial testing to occur).
 - (2) I confirm that as part of the work I undertook in my UDR, I considered the Site relative to other residential growth areas identified in Waikato 2070 in light of site visits, the RPS (notably the principles at 6A), and the outcomes sought in the Future

Proof strategy. This has allowed my opinion to be informed by a wider perspective rather than being too narrowly focused only on the Site. As a result of this, my assessment of the Site has inherently included how it would sit and function as a part of Pokeno.

- (3) The technical work undertaken as part of the submission and then subsequent work undertaken to arrive at the refined proposal is in my view of greater technical depth and robustness than I would expect of a structure plan (for example compare the Council's 2008 Pokeno Structure Plan in Attachment 5 of my UDR with the refined proposal concept plan in Attachment 9 of my UDR).
 - (4) The technical work underpinning the refined proposal and the concept plan arrived at followed the same spatial planning principles set out in the RPS as would have guided a structure plan.
 - (5) In this instance the Site has 'live zoned' land north and north-west, and can be seen as a rounding out of an existing pattern within environmental constraints in a way that is quite self-contained. It can be distinguished from re-zoning proposals on land that could theoretically expand urban development through it to elsewhere.
 - (6) The potential means of integrating the Site into the wider area and addressing immediate neighbours (including the industrial zone) have in my opinion been optimised in the refined proposal and would not materially change if the exercise had been undertaken as part of a Pokeno-wide study.
- (vi) I consider that the technical work undertaken to substantiate the refined proposal and the proposed zone, precinct and overlay provisions proposed satisfy the information requirements set out at 6.1.8 (in urban design terms).
- (vii) In terms of policy 6.5, I consider the refined re-zoning is appropriate in part because it will enable a convenient connection to be made with the Pokeno Town Centre in a way that, while near the limit of a convenient walk, would be within a convenient bike-ride from within the proposed

residential zone. A multi-modal transport network for the Site is proposed, and a small neighbourhood centre will also help to minimise transport and the efficient use of energy.

- (viii) In terms of 6.12 and 6.14, I consider that the refined re-zoning would be in keeping with the settlement pattern planned by the Future Proof strategy.
- (ix) In terms of policy 6.15, the proposal has been estimated as likely to deliver a net housing yield of approximately 11 households per hectare rather than the 12-15. I discuss this in more detail below at 6.2(b)(ii) and PDP policy 4.1.5. At the high level, the RPS policy is driven by the desire to achieve a compact urban environment, support existing centres, and enable multi-modal transport (such as being able to conveniently bicycle from the Site to the Pokeno Town Centre). In my opinion the refined re-zoning seeks to maximise the development potential of the Site but in a way that also respects environmental sensitivities and the important character outcome of the northern green 'backdrop' of Transmission Hill. In this respect I consider it to be in keeping with the policy's intent. However, resource consent applications to maximise density adjacent to key public open spaces and a neighbourhood centre could allow a higher density than I have estimated to be achieved.
- (x) In terms of policy 6.16, the refined proposal seeks to reinforce and support Pokeno Town Centre. The proposed neighbourhood centre would help to support residents' daily convenience needs only and would not disrupt the planned network of centres and commercial areas.
- (xi) Turning to the development principles at RPS 6A, and in summary:
 - (1) The refined re-zoning achieves or is consistent with points (a), (b), (d), (e), (h), (i), (j), (k), (m), (o), (p) and (t). Overall, in urban design terms I consider the refined re-zoning to be in line with the circumstances where the RPS promotes development. The refined re-zoning will contribute to the compact growth and development of Pokeno.
 - (2) In terms of the specific principles identified for rural-residential development, the refined re-zoning achieves or is consistent with points (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h). Overall, in urban design

terms I consider the refined re-zoning to be an effective use of rural-residential development to efficiently use land close to Pokeno (but unsuited for urban development), and achieve environmental restoration and enhancement.

(b) In terms of the PDP and Chapter 4:

- (i) The refined re-zoning will consolidate growth around the existing town of Pokeno, in a manner that can conveniently connect into existing road networks and specifically, via Yashili Drive, into the town centre (objective 4.1.2).
- (ii) In terms of policy 4.1.5, I regard this as being motivated by a desire to use residential land as efficiently as possible. The policy is consistent with RPS policy 6.15 that I discussed above. The refined re-zoning of the Site to Residential zone, based on the concept master plan and an assumption of single-house-per-single-lot outcomes, would achieve a net density of approximately 11 units per hectare. This is less than the minimum 12-15 households per hectare described in policy 4.1.5 but not significantly so. However, this estimate has been arrived at on the basis of the carrying capacity of the land because of its characteristics, as well as a prudent conservatism in high-level land yield estimates (i.e., assumptions regarding what configurations of subdivision may or may not be readily consentable such as earthworks and retaining walls to establish higher density outcomes). I am confident that a substantially higher-density outcome (such as originally proposed by Construct in 2018 accompanying the original submission) is not achievable. It would however be possible that through resource consents additional density pushing the overall net density to over 12 households per hectare is achievable (such as if several of what I have identified as single houses were developed as duplexes - or two dwellings within the same building, or if some of the blocks of land adjacent to the proposed neighbourhood centre were developed in a more integrated fashion through the multi-unit housing provisions of the PDP). In light of all of the above I consider that it would be self-defeating to not zone the land now on the basis of it possibly not being able to achieve 12-15 households per hectare, in favour of land that was further or less connectable with the Pokeno town centre.

- (iii) Development within the zone can appropriately maintain the existing character of Pokeno, primarily through retention of the green backdrop provided by the northern side of Transmission Hill. The development would otherwise have minimal direct visibility from within Pokeno town centre, and the zone, precinct and overlay provisions proposed would ensure new development was of well-connected and attractive (objective 4.1.7).
- (iv) In terms of policy 4.1.8, the refined re-zoning proposed would be highly integrated with existing developed areas (4.1.8(a)), including residential land to the north-west (Hitchen Road). A number of road connections and other pedestrian and cycle trails will be possible and south-Pokeno's movement network would be particularly improved (4.1.8(a)(i)). A small neighbourhood centre is proposed for residents' daily needs (4.1.8(a)(ii)) and future open spaces have been also suggested in what I consider to be ideal locations (4.1.8(a)(iii)). Residential subdivision would be guided by the proposed zone, precinct and overlay requirements as well as any other District-wide guidance that may be determined through the PDP (4.1.8(a)(iv)).
- (v) The concept plan has been thoroughly tested including in terms of the land's form and shape. I consider that it will be possible to develop the land in a manner that can maintain the fundamental shape, contour and landscape characteristics of the Site (4.1.9) and in particular the existing ridgeline within the Site.
- (vi) Policy 4.1.11 is specific to Pokeno. In my opinion the refined re-zoning will not compromise the potential for further growth of the town (4.1.11(a)(i)); will integrate walking and cycling networks (and streets) with the existing urban area (4.1.11(a)(ii)); and avoid reverse sensitivity effects from strategic transport infrastructure networks noting that one effect of the proposal would be to allow Pokeno town centre to connect to the Waikato River without residents having to use State Highway 1 as is currently the case (4.1.11(a)(iii)).
- (c) In terms of the NPS: UD and its concept of a well-functioning urban environment, I consider that based on the above the refined proposal will contribute to this outcome. The refined proposal will promote housing choice in a way that will be well-connected, integrate well with existing urban

development, promote active transport (and reduce greenhouse emissions associated with daily need transport), and reinforce Pokeno as a self-sufficient town.

7. COUNCIL S.42A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 I have read the s.42A report of Dr. Davey dated 19 January 2021. In urban design terms the principal issue arising is that of the best-practice “third lens” Dr. Davey has used to help him evaluate the submissions and issues raised by the submissions⁹. They are in summary:

- (a) Economic costs and benefits are considered.
- (b) Changes should take into account the issues debated in recent plan changes.
- (c) Changes to zone boundaries are consistent with the maps in the plan that show overlays or constraints (e.g., hazards).
- (d) Changes should take into account features of the site (e.g., where it is, what the land is like, what it is used for and what is already built there).
- (e) Zone boundary changes recognise the availability or lack of major infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, stormwater, roads).
- (f) There is adequate separation between incompatible land uses (e.g., houses should not be next to heavy industry).
- (g) Zone boundaries need to be clearly defensible, e.g., follow roads where possible or other boundaries consistent with the purpose of the zone.
- (h) Zone boundaries should follow property boundaries.
- (i) Generally, no “spot zoning” (i.e. a single site zoned on its own).
- (j) Zoning is not determined by existing resource consents and existing use rights, but these will be taken into account.
- (k) Roads are not zoned.

7.2 Dr. Davey’s third lens is based on a series of principles created for the Auckland Unitary Plan. I participated in that process and am familiar with the principles. I regard

⁹ These are set out at page 35 of Dr. Davey’s s.42A report (paragraph 161).

them as a combination of questions of basic fitness-for-purpose or ‘common sense’ (principles (a) to (h)), and fairly arbitrary editorial preference (principles (i) to (k)).

- 7.3 I have no opinion on what weighting should be placed on Dr. Davey’s “third lens”, or how it might sit relative to the statutory tests set out in the RMA. But in urban design terms (at least as it relates to principles (a) to (h)), the principles are uncontroversial and fairly standard matters that I would regard as everyday considerations in my work.
- 7.4 It follows that I am very comfortable with principles (a) to (h). In particular, I consider they can be regarded as an extension of the RMA s.32 plan-making tests of efficiency and effectiveness – but directed to the question of whether a specific proposition is likely to be spatially effective and efficient in the real-world. They add nothing to the considerations that I have already followed in contributing to preparation of the refined proposal and my assessment of it in terms of the outcomes and environmental effects identified in the RPS and PDP frameworks.
- 7.5 I am not opposed to, but advise caution in regard to rigid adherence to, principles (i) to (k). In particular:
- (a) Opposing spot zones as a principle is usually contradicted by the desire to provide spot zones throughout those same plans. In the case of the Auckland Unitary Plan, despite using the ‘no spot zones’ principle, spot zones nonetheless proliferate throughout the Plan specifically in terms of that Plan’s Neighbourhood Centre zone and all of the smaller-scale Open Space zones (both used literally everywhere in the urban area). In my opinion whether or not spot zoning arises in a Plan should in the first instance be a function of the number and variety of land use zones identified within the ‘toolbox’, and how spatially small-scaled or detailed their allocation on land is proposed to be. For completeness, I regard it as administrative double-speak to spatially identify a small-scale or single-site feature in a Plan but side-step the spot-zone question by naming the method an overlay or precinct instead.
 - (b) The relevance of resource consents and existing use rights is in my opinion a wider and more fundamental question of whether the proposed zone framework seeks to retain the existing environment’s status quo (keep things as they are) or enable a future state or change. In urban design terms I am familiar with multiple examples of both. In this context, existing resource consents and use rights might be irrelevant, somewhat relevant, or determinative on a case-by-case basis.

- (c) The matter of zoning roads is usually one of Council asset management preference and whether it wishes to subject its LGA operations to RMA oversight. I have no opinion on the properness of that but would note that not all roads are public. In the case of private roads, promoting a no-zone situation may rise questions as to s.9 RMA and, for example, what might happen if a group of residents wished to place structures in their private road. This may however simply be a matter of having very precise definitions within the PDP. There is also a follow-on question of what happens to zoned land that is subdivided to create new roads after completion of the plan making exercise, and whether newly vested roads should then be subject to further plan changes to remove the zone(s).

- 7.6 For completeness, I am comfortable that in urban design terms considering Dr. Davey's "third lens" changes none of the conclusions I have reached, my opinions on the practical urban design merit of the refined proposal, or the appropriateness of the submitter's Site for re-zoning when considered against the other urban expansion land identified in the Council's Waikato 2070 strategy. In my opinion the refined proposal is highly compatible with and achieves the principles set out in Dr. Davey's "third lens".

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 I have assessed the HVL submission and on the basis of refinements to the original relief sought, support the re-zoning requested. In urban design terms:

- (a) The Site is appropriate to help accommodate growth in Pokeno although given the Site's characteristics development should be managed so as to remain subordinate to important environmental and landscape features. This will limit development to approximately 600 units, or a likely average density in the proposed Residential zone area (Havelock Hill) of between 7 du/ha (gross) to 11 du/ha (net). In my opinion this is the optimal yield that the Site can support, and overall the Site can accommodate approximately 11% of the growth for Pokeno identified by the Council as needed between now and 2070. In light of the Site's proximity to Pokeno and its own sensitivities, I consider that this is a practical and effective urban form solution for the settlement;
- (b) The Site is consistent with the circumstances where the RPS and PDP contemplate the creation of new green field urban zones to expand existing small towns.

- (c) Development of the land will bring connectivity and integration benefits across south Pokeno, and a connection to be made with the Waikato River.
- (d) Development of the Site will change its visual characteristics substantially but not give rise to any inappropriate or significant urban design effects. This is because:
 - (i) The scale of the re-zoning is not excessive or out-of-place relative to the existing scale of Pokeno and the other growth areas that will be needed to meet growth predicted by the Council to occur in Pokeno to 2070. I consider the refined proposal will help to 'round out' the town to the south and help retain as much spatial centrality as possible to the town centre, by way of a counter-balance to ongoing expansion north, west and east.
 - (ii) From Pokeno the green backdrop of Transmission Hill's northern face will be largely retained, with most of the proposed development not directly visible.
 - (iii) Connectivity can be achieved with numerous existing roads and a quite direct (and convenient) connection to the town centre is possible via Yashili Drive.
 - (iv) The proposal is to use the Council's own zone framework other than in respect of a lower-density Slope Residential overlay, and a rural lifestyle cluster approach on the "tail" or Havelock Lifestyle part of the Site. These augmentations respond directly to the Site's characteristics and will not result in land use outcome that are 'out of step' with the generality of development patterns seen in Pokeno.
 - (v) The concept master plan that has been developed goes beyond the level of technical investigation that typically occurs in association with land re-zoning and gives me confidence that a workable urban development pattern of streets, blocks and allotments can be achieved. This will include protection of important environmental features and delivery of roads at workable gradients.
 - (vi) Overall, a high-quality residential neighbourhood can be achieved that will be reasonably contiguous with the existing extend of land use zones

in Pokeno, and contribute to the housing and lifestyle choices on offer in the town.

- (e) Having considered the s.42A report of Dr. Davey, I consider that the “third lens” he has proposed is by-and-large uncontroversial and based on practical, every-day considerations. They are consistent with the approaches that I have taken towards developing the refined proposal that is before the Commissioners. As a direct result of that, Dr. Davey’s “third lens” raises no issues or concerns in relation to either the refined proposal or the conclusions I have reached.

8.2 Overall and on the basis of all of the above, I consider that in urban design terms there is a compelling case to re-zone the HVL land as sought in the refined proposal, and that it would be effective, efficient, and most appropriate to do so.

Ian Colin Munro

17 February 2021

APPENDIX 1 – CV OF IAN COLIN MUNRO

- ▶ Full Member, New Zealand Planning Institute; Member, Urban Design Forum.
- ▶ Member of Auckland Council's Urban Design Panel, and currently one of its Chairs.
- ▶ Professional Teaching Fellow (periodic), University of Auckland School of Architecture and Planning in urban design, urban planning, and local government topics.
- ▶ 2001 - present: Extensive experience in the preparation and/or assessment of approximately two-thousand resource consent applications and/or urban design reviews including for subdivision; residential; rural; mixed use / town centre; industrial; designation / infrastructure; & comprehensive structure plan matters in Rodney District, North Shore City, Waitakere City, Auckland City, Thames Coromandel District, Kapiti Coast District and Queenstown Lakes District.
- ▶ 2013: Urban Design Witness, Kapiti Coast District Council, Plan Change 72A, Paraparaumu Town Centre zone.
- ▶ 2014 - 2018: Expert witness, Auckland Council PAUP, Business zones and urban design provisions including Environment Court appeals to transport provisions.
- ▶ 2014 - 2018: Expert witness, Brecon Street Partnership Ltd, Plan Change 50, Queenstown centre.
- ▶ 2014 - 2015: External facilitator, Richmond Residential Density Project.
- ▶ 2014 - 2015: Advisor, Dunedin City Council 2GP review (urban provisions).
- ▶ 2012 - 2013: Urban Design Advisor, Kapiti Coast District Council Paraparaumu Centre Structure Plan finalisation.
- ▶ 2014 - present: Urban Designer, Flat Bush Stage 3 Special Housing Area, Murphys Development Ltd.
- ▶ 2014 - present: Design Leader and Urban Designer, Auranga development, Ma Development Enterprises Ltd.
- ▶ 2016 - present: Design Leader and Urban Designer, Rotokauri North Special Housing Area, Hamilton, Ma Development Enterprises Ltd.
- ▶ 2017 - Design leader, Wainuiomata North Development Framework, Hutt City Council.
- ▶ 2018 – present: urban designer, Warkworth Land Company Ltd, Clayden Farm, Warkworth, Auckland.
- ▶ 2019 – present: urban designer, Warkworth Developments Ltd, Stubbs Farm, Warkworth, Auckland.

**APPENDIX 2 – IAN MUNRO URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF ORIGINAL SUBMISSION
AND REFINED PROPOSAL, JANUARY 2021**

urban design assessment
5 YASHILI DRIVE, AND 88, 242 (IN PART) AND 278
BLUFF ROAD, POKENO

for

HAVELOCK VILLAGE LTD.

by

IAN MUNRO

january 2021

executive summary

This report documents an independent analysis of a submission (#862) to the Proposed Waikato District Plan to re-zone approximately 148ha of land at 5 Yashili Drive and 88, 242 (in part), and 278 Bluff Road, Pokeno, for Havelock Village Ltd (“HVL”). The submission has been made to Waikato District Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) as part of the Council’s Proposed District Plan (“PDP”) process. The key conclusions of this report are that:

- a. The Site is in-part suitable for urban development but not to the extent identified in the original submission. A review of that submission and multiple layers of site and locality analysis have identified a refined re-zoning proposal. This assessment is focussed on that refined proposal.
- b. The Site has two spatial areas, being “Havelock Hill” (“Hill”) and the “tail” or “Havelock Rural Lifestyle” (“Lifestyle”). The Hill area is close and can be connected to Pokeno and is suited to urban development subject to largely conventional exclusions around open spaces, environmental features, and the northern face of the area that serves as a green backdrop to Pokeno. The Lifestyle area is not suitable for urban development because of its separation from Pokeno but is compatible with a limited-scale, environmental enhancement-based cluster development.
- c. The proposal utilises the zones identified by the Council in its s.42A report but includes a site-specific Precinct Plan and Overlays identifying Significant Natural Areas; environmental protection areas; indicative (key) roads and other transport linkages; a buffer area for the protection of existing Industrial-zoned land north of the Site; a potential hilltop park; and lower-density slope residential and rural lifestyle cluster housing areas that will be subject to specific planning controls. These methods will ensure that the Site’s key natural characteristics and other design opportunities will be properly responded to, including by way of protection, by subsequent development. Overall, a development yield of around 600 units is likely.
- d. A concept plan has been developed for the Site. It was derived from a review of the master plan included as part of the original submission. It has been an important part of the technical process of confirming the optimal urban design solution for the land. Its principal elements form the basis of the zone and Precinct Plan / Overlay content proposed). The concept plan demonstrates that the land is capable of delivering an integrated, well-connected and spatially coherent urban form outcome in line with the outcomes sought by the PDP (Chapter 4) and RPS (Chapters 6 and 6A). This includes a small Business zone (centre) at the confluence of Hitchen Road, Potter Road, and Yashili Drive extension where commercial benefits from exposure to the highest possible volume of passing traffic will be greatest. In this respect, the proposed land use strategy and zones for the Site have been thoroughly tested and appropriately distributed.
- e. In consideration of the residential expansion areas identified for Pokeno by the Council in its (non-statutory) Waikato 2070 strategy (2020), the Site is of lesser merit than the identified Hillpark Drive, Hitchen Block, and eastern sector of the Munro Block areas; comparable merit to the western-sector of the Munro Block area; and (considerably) superior to the Pokeno East areas. It is noted that in urban design terms it would be desirable to maximise the potential of land for development on the western side of State Highway 1 prior to further development across the State Highway.
- f. The proposal will result in a number of adverse urban design effects, although none are considered to be unusual or severe in the context of urban land re-zoning. Positive urban design effects will also occur or be enabled through future subdivision. The scale and spatial relationship between the proposed Site re-zoning and remainder of Pokeno will include a partial severance (the Site’s elevation, open-space of the Hill’s northern face, and buffer area for the existing Industrial zone), but this is also not unusual or remarkable given the context of future outward urban growth in Pokeno including where small towns within flat valleys have grown up into surrounding slopes.

The refined relief now sought by the Submitter could be accepted on urban design grounds.

contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Background, scope and involvement	4
3.	Urban design framework	6
4.	Site and context analysis	9
5.	Summary assessment of original submission	12
6.	The refined proposal	14
7.	Assessment of plan change application	16
8.	Conclusions	31
	Attachments	33

contact

ianmunro

B.Plan (Hons); M.Plan (Hons); M.Arch (Hons); M.EnvLS (Hons); M.EngSt (Hons); MNZPI

(e) ian@ianmunro.nz

(m) 021 900 993

1. introduction

- 1.1 This report documents an independent analysis of a submission (#862) to the Proposed Waikato District Plan to re-zone approximately 148ha of land at 5 Yashili Drive and 88, 242 (in part), and 278 Bluff Road, Pokeno, for Havelock Village Ltd (“HVL”). The submission has been made to Waikato District Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) as part of the Council’s Proposed District Plan (“PDP”) process.
- 1.2 HVL’s requested relief in its original submission is not supported. However, on the basis of a 9-month period of further assessment and review in 2020, and with specific technical traffic, ecology, landscape, acoustic, civil engineering, and geotechnical input, a refined re-zoning proposal (“**refined proposal**”) has been arrived at and is now what is requested by the Submitter. This report focuses on and assesses the refined proposal.
- 1.2 For full details of the refined proposal, the application and planning analysis (s.32 report) prepared by Tollemache Consultants Ltd is referred to.

2. background, scope and involvement

- 2.1 I was formally engaged by HVL as its urban design consultant in late 2019, after it had prepared and lodged its submission and further submission to the PDP. That was based on a concept master plan prepared by Construkt Ltd (“Havelock Village Project”, October 2018, included as Appendix E to the HVL submission prepared by Birch Surveyors Ltd). I was engaged to review the submission and, if I could support it, prepare expert evidence for the Council’s PDP hearings on Topic 25 – Zone Extents.
- 2.2 After visiting the Site including all of Pokeno including Pokeno East, and reviewing the PDP and RPS provisions identified to me by Tollemache Consultants Ltd (Chapter 4, PDP and Chapters 6 and 6A, RPS), I identified that I did not support the scale or extent of urban development proposed in the original submission.
- 2.3 In conjunction with HVL’s other consultants a thorough process of review and assessment occurred to identify an outcome that would be supportable. This has resulted in the refined proposal that is now sought by the Submitter.
- 2.4 The specific process followed to undertake this urban design assessment is as follows:
 - a. Site visits taking in the Site and Pokeno as a whole, including Pokeno East, were undertaken.

- b. The original submission was considered alongside the RPS and PDP provisions relevant to urban form and growth outcomes.
- c. A high-level framework to review the original submission and identify an alternative that could be supported was agreed between HVL and its consultants.
- d. Numerous workshops were held throughout 2020 to discuss and review the Site and proposed re-zoning, and a series of technical investigations were undertaken.
- e. A refined concept plan was developed in conjunction with Civil Plan Ltd and LA4 Ltd that sought to better ground-truth the identified issues than occurred in the original submission.
- f. The refined concept plan was subject to a series of further specific site visits and working sessions to reconcile it in terms of planning zones and methods that would be a logical fit with the PDP approach.
- g. I participated in a Hui (via Zoom software) at HVL's Auckland office on 4 September 2020 to discuss the refined concept and its underlying principles, and obtain feedback from Iwi.
- h. An overall refined re-zoning proposal was indicatively arrived at and subjected to an evaluation against the PDP and RPS provisions (noting that the PDP provisions had been evolving through the on-going PDP process), and relevant non-statutory growth-related documents, including Future Proof (2017), Waikato Blueprint (2019), and Waikato 2070 (2020).
- i. A final round of adjustments and refinements were workshopped within the HVL consultant team.
- j. This assessment report was prepared.

2.5 I am aware that HVL's related company Tata Valley Ltd has made a separate submission relating to land adjacent to the Site for a hotel, visitor accommodation and farm park activity. I have not participated in that process and it has formed no part of my assessment of the refined proposal other than, in the development of the refined proposal, to ensure that transport access to that land was provided for. For completeness, I have no opinion on the merits of the Tata Valley Ltd submission. I do not consider that the refined proposal for HVL has any material urban design consequence, good or bad, on that separate proposal or whether it should proceed.

3. urban design framework

- 3.1 Although historically focused on the way in which private space and development impacted on public space, 'urban design' now encompasses a wide range of potential considerations. This is best evidenced by the breadth of matters included in MfE's 2005 New Zealand Urban Design Protocol. As a result of this breadth urban design analyses, when based only on preferred or 'ideal' urban design prerogatives, do not always match well with the specific matters relevant to Resource Management Act proceedings. Practical challenges faced by urban designers working under the RMA, and which have been factored into this assessment, include that:
- a. urban design outcomes only apply to the extent that they are relevant to the specific resource management issues relevant to each specific application (primarily the relevant objectives and policies applicable to a specific plan change);
 - b. RMA plans need to be generally interpreted in light of what the specific objectives and policies mean and with reference to the methods used by each Plan to implement those provisions – not against what outcomes an urban designer might consider to be preferred or ideal in pure urban design terms; and
 - c. the RMA provides for positive environmental effects and outcomes but does not require them (unless a NPS or Plan requires them).
 - d. The RMA plan change s.32 test of "most appropriate" means "best suited and reasonable to the circumstance", and does not mean "perfect" or "ideal" in terms of specialist inputs including urban design.
- 3.2 In this instance, the refined proposal is for a scale and type of land use and development that is in line with the plan-making and land use frameworks set out within the PDP and RPS. As such, for this assessment it is not considered necessary to identify urban design outcomes or precedents beyond the provisions of those Plans. However, consideration of Future Proof (regional-scale), Waikato Blueprint (district-scale), and Waikato 2070 (Pokeno-scale) have also been important cross-references. Waikato 2070 has been particularly useful as it sets out the Council's latest thinking on candidate areas for urban expansion at Pokeno to help accommodate projected urban growth needs (from approximately 2,500 persons in 2020 to 16,000 persons in 2070, a 6-fold increase). I have also considered the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 ("**NPS: UD**") and its concept of a well-functioning urban environment (objective 1 and policy 1). The NPS: UD does not add any specific spatial outcomes to those set out within the PDP and RPS, but do provide for something of an overall strategic appraisal.

- 3.3 The key provisions of the RPS relevant to the proposal in urban design terms are **Chapters 6 (Built Environment) and 6A (development principles)**. The key provisions of the PDP relevant to the proposal in urban design terms are in **Chapter 4 (Urban Environment)**¹.
- 3.4 Tollemache Consultants Ltd have also briefed me that in the Council's s.32 report relating to matters of strategic direction and management of growth (2018) identified seven key resource management issues. These are:
- a. Strategic direction of growth - Failure to have a strategic framework for growth has adverse effects on the ability to achieve connected and integrated communities
 - b. Housing Choice - There needs to be a range of housing choice available, flexible enough to meet the changing needs of the community
 - c. Accommodating population growth - Enabling sufficient housing stock in appropriate locations to meet population growth projections.
 - d. Compact urban form - A compact urban form creates sustainable communities and effective use of resources
 - e. Local Character - Development has the potential to change the character, role and function of towns and villages
 - f. Development Densities - There are densities specified in Future Proof and the Regional Policy Statement which the District Plan must assist in delivering.
 - g. Management of urban activities in the rural environment - Urban activities should be located in urban environments, with rural environments reserved for those activities which depend on rural resources.
- 3.5 These issues address what I would describe as fairly standard design starting-points, and are similar to what I typically see across the country. They reflect a generally consistent attitude towards growth management that prioritises built form efficiencies and character qualities associated with a sense of place. In the last decade, a markedly increased emphasis on providing forwards-planning and additional land zoning has also been evident and has also occurred in Waikato District. I would observe that these three planning focal points are not always compatible with one another, for example when:
- a. A desire for greater 'compactness' and settlement efficiency by way of greater land use mix and higher densities around centres or 'nodes' conflicts with an established development and density pattern that enjoys an identifiable and locally-valued built form character.

¹ Tollemache Consultants Ltd has provided me with the Council's rebuttal version of Chapter 4 from the Topic 10 Hearing and I have used that version in this report.

- b. A need to accommodate growth likely to significantly transform the scale of a settlement conflicts with the key local identity and built form character qualities that are derived from that small-scale and size of settlement (this is in part induced by planning policies promoting contiguous urban expansion rather than new villages and settlements).
- c. A direct trade-off between opportunities to 'grow upwards' or 'grow outwards' in terms of a literal spatial compactness (extent of zone). Arguments to maintain existing built form character and limit intensification or densification are often key justifications to promote additional outward expansion of small settlements.

3.6 Having considered the relevant provisions of the RPS and PDP, and related matters identified above, the planning outcomes and environmental effects to be addressed can be synthesised (for simplicity) into the following topic headings:

- a. The development should contribute to a quality compact urban form that supports and enhances the local area².
- b. The development should achieve a well-connected, integrated built form outcome, with residential areas having high amenity, and being healthy, attractive and safe³.
- c. Non-residential activities support the needs of people and the local community⁴.
- d. The development should maintain or enhance the character of the local area, and provide adequately for infrastructure⁵.
- e. Open spaces should be well integrated and physically connected where possible⁶.
- f. Reverse sensitivity effects with adjacent land uses are managed⁷.
- g. The proposal should demonstrate how the site's opportunities and constraints have been positively responded to⁸.
- h. Overall urban design merit⁹.

² This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 6.16, and 6.17, and PDP 4.1.1, 4.1.2 (and 4.1.11), and 4.1.7.

³ This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.1, 4.1.7, 4.2.1, 4.2.9, and 4.4.1.

⁴ This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.5.1, 4.5.25, and 4.5.30.

⁵ This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.7, 4.2.1, 4.2.14, and 4.2.16.

⁶ This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.7 (and 4.1.8).

⁷ This relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.4.1, 4.6.1, and 4.6.6.

⁸ This relates, in an overall sense, to the entirety of the relevant RPS (Ch 6 and 6A) and PDP (Ch 4) provisions in terms of how the proposal will minimise adverse effects generally.

⁹ This relates, in an overall sense, to the entirety of the relevant RPS (Ch 6 and 6A) and PDP (Ch 4) provisions.

4. site and context analysis

site analysis

- 4.1 The Site has been described extensively within the Birch Surveyors Ltd submission and Construct urban design report. I am in general agreement with the descriptions provided of the Site, its surrounds, and Pokeno. However, and in summary, the following are what I regard as the Site's key urban design characteristics:
- a. The Site is 148ha in area, has an irregular shape, and includes a substantial range of elevations, from approximately 10m up to approximately 123m. The twin caps of Transmission Hill and Potters Hill, and an east-west ridge connecting them, are visually obvious. The slope of Transmission Hill in particular forms a green backdrop to Pokeno (**Attachment 1**).
 - b. The Site has two principal sectors or areas, and a third minor one (**Attachment 2**). These are:
 - i. A "hill" area, forming the bulk of the Site adjacent to the existing zoned area of Pokeno.
 - ii. A "tail" area, stretching down from the two hills towards the Waikato River, and containing a bulb at the southern end.
 - iii. A historic "village" area, apparently part of what was envisaged as the original Havelock Village but on relatively steep land. This also includes a number of stand-alone areas of land resembling some of what would have been original allotments within the village.
 - c. The Site also contains numerous areas of bush, streams, infrastructure, and paper roads linking Bluff Road to Potter and Hitchen Roads (**Attachment 3**). A key area of bush and Significant Natural Area sits at the Site's 'choke point' between the "hill" and "tail" areas, and the topography here is quite steep.
 - d. The Site is otherwise in pasture and has been used for low-to-modest intensity farming activity. From the top of the hills, expansive views of the surrounding environment are possible.
 - e. I understand that the Site is of interest to local Mana Whenua including on the basis of a historic Pa site.
 - f. Access to the Site is possible or potentially possible via Hitchen Road, Potter Road, Bluff Road and Coles Road. A key connection to Yashili Drive has also been identified and is available.

- g. The Site sits south of Pokeno with industrial and residential zones now adjoining parts of its north-eastern and north-western boundaries. Much of the principal “hill” area is theoretically (subject to a road linkage via Yashili Drive in particular) very close to the Pokeno commercial centre, although would be towards the limit of a convenient walking distance (900m or less) (**Attachment 4**).
- h. The industrial land to the immediate north has been largely developed and is a significant employment resource for the community.
- i. Pokeno has grown at a rapid pace in the last 10 years, with residential expansion to the north and east across the State Highway, and then more recently in a west-wards direction occurring. This reflects the obvious ease of expanding over generally flat land although in consequence development is now occurring, especially east of the Highway, that has little if any functional connection with the Pokeno centre. It would appear optimistic to assume that land developed within the last 10-years might become available for intensification in the short-term. This suggests that additional greenfield expansion will be necessary to accommodate most foreseeable growth, and this is in line with the work undertaken by the Council’s growth management work.
- j. Various Council-based concept plans and Structure Plans have been prepared over time but only in the most recent 2020 “Waikato 2070” work has the Site been identified as part of Pokeno’s future urban environment (**Attachments 5 and 6**). I consider that this is a rational outcome of conventional planning approaches. The challenges of developing and integrating sloped land on a sensitive site have had to reach a tipping point whereby the Site’s proximity to Pokeno centre, in the context of the scale of growth projected and in comparison to alternative development areas available, makes it “the next-best cab on the rank”.
- k. In this respect, my assessment is that the Site is less desirable to accommodate future growth in Pokeno than existing zoned land (intensification) or new greenfield land immediately west of the settlement at Munro Road. But it then sits as comparably meritorious with flatter land further away from Pokeno northwards or further westwards. It is superior to further development on the eastern side of State Highway 1 given how far from Pokeno, and how poorly connected with it, that land is (**Attachment 7**).
- l. However, the Site’s elevation and undulating topography makes it suited for residential development, and small-scale commercial use, rather than industrial development.
- m. Other adjoining land is rural or rural-residential in nature, and from several vantage points on the Site (but in particular the tail area), views of 1-5 dwellings are possible although separation distances are substantial.

- n. The Site is zoned for a combination of mineral extraction and rural in the Operative District Plan, and rural in the PDP.

4.2 In summary the Site's key urban design opportunities are:

- a. The potential for a new connection at Yashili Road would make the Site close and conveniently accessible to the Pokeno commercial centre and existing development.
- b. The Site lends itself to elevated development with excellent outlook, likely avoidance of exposure to fog, and a distinctive lifestyle quality different to the options available within the flat basin.
- c. The potential to connect existing roads around the Site, namely Hitchen Road, Potter Road and Bluff Road would provide connectivity benefits and also provide a means of connecting Pokeno to the Waikato River without reliance on the State Highway.
- d. In recognition of the Site's environmental sensitivities, development done-well could include opportunities to enhance and restore native bush, habitat, and stream / riparian areas and wetlands.
- e. The Site would also be very close to employment opportunities and for persons occupying the "hill" area of the Site, it would be possible to walk or cycle to work in many instances.
- f. It would be possible to integrate residential development with existing development and zoned land north-west at Hitchen Road.

4.3 In summary the Site's key urban design constraints are:

- a. The distance from Pokeno, topography and environmental sensitivity of the "tail" area make it unsuitable for urban-scale development.
- b. Within the Site's "hill" sector, areas of slope are also such that lower densities would be advisable in places. The fragmented spatial configuration of the historic Havelock "village" area also makes this difficult to envisage urban-scale development occurring.
- c. Existing streams and wetlands would need to be protected from development and subject to enhancement.
- d. The existing paper roads follow alignments that, having walked them, do not appear to be realistically developable. However these could still function successfully as pedestrian / cycle / bridle routes. Connecting the "hill" and "tail" areas is also very constrained due to the change in topography that exists along with existing bush and the SNA.

- e. The northern face of Transmission Hill and its peak form an important backdrop to Pokeno and should remain clear of development. This is also exposed and close to the existing industrial zoned land and development, making it further challenging to develop in terms of potential reverse sensitivity effects and practical amenity nuisance risks.

5. summary assessment of original submission

- 5.1 On the basis of its own analysis and technical reports available to it, Construkt Ltd prepared a master plan for the Site in 2018 and this underpinned the original zones and Plan provisions sought in HVL's submission to the PDP (**Attachment 8**). Although the master plan was not itself proposed to sit within the District Plan, the technique of master plan testing is one that is now commonplace and on that I consider extremely desirable by landowners for all new re-zoning proposals of any scale where possible (it would be plainly impractical for Councils to imagine master plans for their entire districts as part of District Plan reviews). Concept master plans are very valuable mechanisms to 'ground truth' development assumptions and allow informed decisions to be made with confidence that successful outcomes can be achieved. It helps to avoid situations where Planning outcomes identified for land cannot actually be achieved.
- 5.2 I reviewed the Construkt Ltd concept master plan and concluded that it had numerous logical and commendable components. But overall, I did not support the scale and intensity of development (approximately 1,025 units) envisaged by Construkt Ltd. I consider it likely that Construkt Ltd relied on incomplete information and otherwise made incorrect assumptions regarding the scale of landform and environmental modifications that might be possible (noting in particular that the 2020 National Environmental Standard for Freshwater Management that has made removal of natural wetlands a Prohibited Activity did not apply in 2018).
- 5.3 Particular elements of the Construkt Ltd concept master plan that are in my opinion successful or desirable are:
 - a. Connecting roads around the Site together and direct connections with all of Hitchen Road, Potter Road, Bluff Road, Cole Road, and McDonald Road¹⁰ / Yashili Drive.
 - b. Provision for a very small centre located at the confluence of Hitchen Road, Potter Road, a link road through the Site to Bluff Road, and a road connection through to Yashili Drive / McDonald Road.
 - c. Provision for a network of pedestrian / cycle / bridle trails through the Site and integration with (to be enhanced) stream corridors.

¹⁰ This would require agreement with intervening landowners.

- d. Retention of Transmission Hill as a public park and part of the northern hill face as a green backdrop to Pokeno.
- e. A notionally well-connected street network responding to and terraced down the slopes of the hills.
- f. The principle of enabling a variety of residential densities on the Site.
- g. Integration and retention of public infrastructure including the water reservoir, gas pipeline, and transmission masts.

5.4 Particular elements of the Construkt Ltd concept master plan that are in my opinion unsuccessful or undesirable are:

- a. Many of the roads are on gradients that do not seem at all achievable (i.e., steeper than 1:10), and appear to rely on significant earthworks being undertaken including a lowering of the hills and/or substantial filling of the valleys (or significant and frequent retaining walls in excess of 4-5m in height).
- b. The distribution of densities is difficult to follow based either on the Site's topography or proximity to Pokeno.
- c. Although the location for the small commercial centre is agreed with, its configuration is self-defeating and would disperse potential commercial use along too much street frontage (on all sides of a small 'island' block). It should be effectively cut in half in a north-west to south-east direction and have no road along its north-eastern side; this would force a single, focussed commercial development facing a single road edge.
- d. Most of the open space areas shown are implied to be publicly owned or at least available for use by the public. This is not made clear and, in my opinion, it is inherently inferior to rely on private ownership for public pedestrian / cycle facilities. Most of these quasi-public spaces are shown as being 'backed' on to by development rather than being 'fronted' as is preferable in general urban design practice or public open space.
- e. I do not see how the fragmented part of the Site within the historic Havelock "village" area could be functionally developed and serviced separate from the intervening and adjoining fragments.
- f. I am particularly unsupportive of the extent of development indicated on the "tail" of the Site. The concept master plan shows pockets of poorly connected and relatively high-density housing on, in places, steeply sloping land. This part of the proposed development would not functionally form part of Pokeno of the neighbourhood within the Site itself. This aspect of the master plan is simply out of place.

- 5.5 Overall, I considered the underlying principles and thinking of Construkt Ltd to be generally sound. However, the concept, in its execution, is simply too aggressive. As a consequence, I did not agree that it would be consistent with the compact, high-quality urban built form outcomes required by the PDP and RPS planning frameworks. The scale of landform modification and engineering works likely to be required, including frequent south-facing retaining walls, would also be likely to result in significant adverse environmental and future (on site amenity) effects. The “tail” area would result in a largely isolated island of housing.
- 5.6 It follows that I was also unable to support the land use zones and other Plan provisions requested by HVL in its submission.

6. the refined proposal

- 6.1 HVL requested its consultants to work collaboratively to identify, if possible, a refined proposal that they could support. Over a 9-month period across 2020 I worked with several of the consultants directly including by way of technical workshops and working sessions. This also allowed me to enjoy a greater extent of site-specific investigation than Construkt Ltd did in 2018. The result of this process was a revised and scaled-down development concept and accompanying planning provisions (**Attachments 9, 10 and 11**). The concept plan was developed in conjunction by HVL’s consultants but primarily Civil Plan Ltd and myself.
- 6.2 In summary, the key characteristics of the refined proposal are:
- a. An overall housing yield of between 500-600 units, or approximately half of that envisaged by Construkt Ltd and requested via the HVL submission. This equates to a gross density of 4 dwelling units per hectare (“**du/ha**”). However, if the rural-lifestyle “tail” and Havelock “village” areas of the Site (and the units likely within them) were set aside, the remaining 550 ‘urban’ units would achieve a typical gross density of around 7 du/ha, or closer to 11 du/ha in net terms (once roads and public open spaces were also subtracted). In my opinion this reflects the optimum carrying capacity of the Site although it could be possible in later resource consents (and I would not oppose in principle) for multi-unit development to occur adjacent to the proposed reserves and/or Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre. Such developments would not in my opinion be likely to significantly change the overall scale of urban development possible on the Site.
 - b. For reference, using the Waikato 2070 estimate of 13,500 additional residents in Pokeno to 2070, the Site could therefore accommodate up to around 1,500 persons or 11% of potential growth forecast in Pokeno. This is indicative that the Site is likely to play a modest role in accommodating reasonably foreseeable growth in Pokeno, and also that

Pokeno's overall existing urban footprint will need to significantly increase if the Waikato 2070 prediction is accurate.

- c. Avoidance of development on the northern face of Transmission Hill facing Pokeno aligned with a 45dBA noise contour to ensure management of potential reverse sensitivity effects on existing industrial zoned land to the north. This includes a small section of proposed industrial zone at the Site's flat northern end at Yashili Drive (so as to avoid any residential development occurring there).
- d. A scaled-down commercial centre to serve the basic / daily needs of the neighbourhood.
- e. Road connections to Yashili Drive, Hitchen Road, Potter Road, Cole Road and Bluff Road, and a specific slow-speed, one-way road link connecting the "hill" (also referred to in the refined concept as "**Havelock Hill**") and "tail" (referred to in the refined concept as "Havelock Rural Lifestyle" or just "**Lifestyle**") parts of the Site so as to minimise disruption to the bush and SNA.
- f. An internal road network, tested by Civil Plan Ltd and Commute Ltd so as to confirm trafficable gradients can be achieved on the alignments shown, based on key external roads connecting through the Site and an internal 'loop' ("Road 3"). Secondary local roads, connected to form blocks where possible, then reinforce that frame.
- g. Retention of streams and natural wetlands and the enhancement of their riparian edges.
- h. Protection and enhancement of existing native bush and SNA areas.
- i. A limitation of urban-scale development (lots smaller than 1,000m²) to the "Havelock Hill" section of the Site where development would conveniently connect to Pokeno via Hitchen Road and a Yashili Drive extension. This road connection, in light of its significance, has been subjected to specific and quite detailed design as a necessary proof-of-concept exercise.
- j. Identification of a "slope residential" overlay on steeper parts of the Havelock Hill area of the Site where a typical lot size of 2,500m² would apply along with a requirement for specific geotechnical design. These parts of the Site would also enjoy revegetation for the most part around and between dwellings.
- k. The fragmented historic Havelock "village" area would remain in rural zoning.
- l. For the tail or Lifestyle area of the Site, a rural lifestyle cluster concept has been developed that would justify continuation of a through road link to Bluff Road (securing a relatively direct link from Pokeno to the

Waikato River via the land at TaTa Valley), enable significant revegetation and restoration of the land, and ensure development with a distinctive and semi-rural quality to establish that remained subordinate in scale and location to the natural environment. This could accommodate about 55 units, identified in clusters by LA4 Ltd.

- m. The “rural lifestyle cluster” was also identified on the basis of an outcome that would be compatible with the rural zoned land around the Site, and that into the long term, similar rural lifestyle development defining the long-term southern edge of Pokeno seems likely as the town continues to grow.

7. assessment

the development should contribute to a quality compact urban form that supports and enhances the local area

- 7.1 This topic is primarily derived from RPS 6.1 (and 6A), 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 6.16, and 6.17, and PDP 4.1.1, 4.1.2 (and 4.1.11), and 4.1.7.
- 7.2 In my opinion the refined proposal will successfully contribute to the quality compact urban form sought for Waikato, and also both support and enhance Pokeno’s south. My key reasons for this are:
 - a. The RPS and PDP guidance on “compact urban form” focuses on accessibility and convenience by way of land use density and land use mix, enabling more people to access more things on foot or other active mode. It does not seek an absolute minimum spatial ‘waistline’ for settlements. In this respect the Site is very close and accessible to an existing industrial zone, Pokeno town centre and the other social infrastructure available within the town centre.
 - b. The provision for development within the “Havelock Lifestyle” or “tail” part of the Site has been limited because it is not appropriately proximate to the Town Centre and other activities.
 - c. The Site is suited for residential-dominant development subordinate to landform and environmental features. Based on the concept plan I am confident that an appropriate subdivision and development outcome in line with what is sought by the PDP framework will be possible on the Site.
 - d. The new zone does connect to existing zones and does in my opinion logically expand Pokeno in light of how much northern and western growth has occurred in recent times relative to the location of the town centre as the settlement’s social and economic focal point. The refined

proposal would be considerably better-connected and more logical as an expansion option for Pokeno than development on the eastern side of SH1, or the north-eastern side of both SH1 and SH2.

- e. Provision for open spaces and a small Business Zone (Neighbourhood Centre) at a logical on-site confluence of roads will provide for convenience needs and also serve passers-through without competing with or undermining the Pokeno Town Centre.
- f. Protection of the northern flank of Transmission Hill will retain the existing green backdrop of the township and also help to separate and protect the existing industrial zone from new residential development. The extent and characteristics of this separation would form a real-world severance, but this is not in my opinion unusual or out of the ordinary. In particular:
 - i. Streams, railway lines, major arterial roads and state highways are common across urban settlements. State Highways and rivers form the most challenging severances even when spatially narrow because of the very infrequent nature of crossing opportunities provided across them. A good example is that of Raglan and how the harbour separates different parts of it from one another.
 - ii. Large reserves also occur in urban settlements and create open space gaps between development. In this respect, a 'compact urban form' does not mean that all development should be crowded together on all sides; Auckland's volcanic cones and Wellington's frequently undevelopable slopes (town belt) serve as examples of this at the large scale.
 - iii. In any event, it remains desirable to use separation distance where possible to buffer residents from industrial activities that are needed and occur within urban settlements.
 - iv. A stream network in North Pokeno between Hillpark Drive and Mark Ball Drive is a local example of practical everyday severances that fracture urban areas (but which at the same time also provide local character and amenity values).
- g. Notwithstanding my opinion that the Site will form a logical part of Pokeno rather than a new town or isolated subdivision, I am familiar with a number of smaller-towns that have developed in a poly-nodal or otherwise dis-contiguous manner and which appear to function acceptably. In this respect the refined proposal will be superior, in terms of basic urban form connectivity and contiguity, than:
 - i. Rangitahi and Raglan, Waikato District;
 - ii. Mangawhai and Mangawhai Heads, Kaipara District;
 - ii. Woodend and Pegasus, Waimakariri District;

- iv. Wanaka, 3-Parks, North Lake and Albert Town, Queenstown Lakes District; and
 - v. Frankton Flats, Jacks Point, Shotover Country, Quail Rise, and Lake Hayes Estate, Queenstown Lakes District.
- h. At such time as a public bus service might exist in Pokeno, the Site offers a logical extension to what would be an orbital route of Hitchen and / or Harriet Johnston Drive, then into the Site and down to the Yashili Drive extension that the proposed zone would enable.
 - i. The proposal would provide meaningfully improved connectivity in south Pokeno, linking Bluff Road to Hitchen Road and linking Pokeno Town Centre to the Waikato River without the use of SH1 as is currently required. In my opinion this is a positive enhancement, although is not regarded as being likely to induce large-scale movement flows.
 - j. The proposal's likely yield of 600 units will optimise the carrying capacity of the Site to accommodate housing and help meet the District's (and Pokeno's) growth needs in a way that is efficient and appropriate (achieving a density something between 7 du/ha (gross) to 11 du/ha (net). Using Waikato 2070's Pokeno concept plan as indicative of potential shorter-term (1-10 years) residential growth options available, I consider the Site sits in the middle of the range, being inferior to some of the identified options, equivalent to some; and superior to others. There are no combinations of known growth options that would in my opinion together be so superior to the Site that it should not be zoned now based on its own characteristics and proximity to Pokeno town centre. I do not consider that delaying the zoning of the land now would lead to a higher yield or more efficient outcome in the future; the yield proposed is in my opinion near the highest that is sustainable on the land and this has been derived from an earlier Construct Ltd concept plan proposing 1,025 units on the Site. The resource consent process would however still enable case-by-case proposals for additional yield to be tested, and as such a yield of more than 600 units may be achievable.
 - k. The proposal will enhance the quality of existing streams and their margins on the Site, and lead to substantial revegetation of the Site in both the Havelock Lifestyle (tail) area as well as the Slope Residential Overlay (where a key technique to manage potential geotechnical slope subsidence or soil creep around and between dwellings will be dense vegetation).

7.3 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the refined proposal would not result in any problematic or unusual effects that do not typically come with land development or subdivision. The design process followed, Precinct Plan and associated plan provisions proposed

will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects related to a quality compact urban form and Pokeno.

- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the refined proposal is consistent with the built-form outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing new urban zones as extensions to existing small towns is appropriate.
- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the refined proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

the development should achieve a well-connected, integrated built form outcome, with residential areas having high amenity, and being healthy, attractive and safe

- 7.4 This topic is primarily derived from RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.1, 4.1.7, 4.2.1, 4.2.9, and 4.4.1.
- 7.5 In my opinion the refined proposal will achieve this outcome. My key reasons for this conclusion are:
 - a. The proposal will enable connections to be made with Potter, Hitchen, Bluff and Cole Roads, and Yashili Drive. In this respect the proposal will strategically 'close the loop' around south Pokeno in a way that is unlikely to otherwise occur. I regard this, and the resultant east-west as well as north-south (Pokeno-to-river) movement that will be possible, to be inherently positive outcomes.
 - b. The placement of a proposed Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre at the key on-site confluence of the road network to be logical in terms of conventional centre-planning, but also likely to reinforce that confluence as a minor node or 'cross-roads'.
 - c. The frame of an internal road network would be signalled on the Precinct Plan and this matches the route shown by Civil Plan and Commute Ltd to be achievable based on the landform. The concept plan shows how an acceptably connected supporting local street network could also be achieved, and something like that shown on the concept plan is likely based on simply following the pattern of the key loop road on the Precinct Plan. However, it is noted that on land as sloped as the Site and also in light of the streams within it, a highly connected grid pattern will never be achievable. I consider that it will be the combination of streets and off-road pedestrian / cycle / bridle trails together that fully open up the Site to movement.
 - d. Based on the technical work completed to date in reviewing the Construct Ltd work in 2018 that has led to the refined proposal, I am satisfied that a

level of on-site residential amenity in accordance with PDP will be achievable and, in most cases, exceeded. One reason for this is that sloped land has an urban development benefit of allowing a more spacious and wide-field outlook to be provided where residents are able to look out and above their neighbours. This is not possible on flat land and where achievement of minimum separation distanced between people and buildings is a more fundamental design concern.

- e. The overall opportunity of living on high ground will in my opinion offer a complement to the predominantly flat-land that most other housing in Pokeno is based on.
- f. The proposal for a combination of residential densities (vacant fee simple lots between 450m² – 900m², plus the 2,500m² + slope residential, + the rural lifestyle clusters) is based on the characteristics of the land and will also enable housing choice. Resource consent opportunity will also exist for limited quantities of higher-density development (multi-unit housing) to also be considered (and would be, in-principle, appropriate adjacent to the Business zone and open spaces).
- g. The concept plan also demonstrates that in many cases a 'conventional' block structure will be possible with lots aligned back-to-back and fronting a street. This is regarded as the optimal urban structure for both connectivity, safety, and built form amenity. Where development is likely to include more rear lots, this coincides with the Slope Residential overlay and where lots will be much larger. I consider that this will mitigate potential adverse amenity effects of rear-lot development patterns.
- h. On-site residents will also be able to enjoy the frequent views available from street vistas out across Pokeno (north) and to the Waikato River (south-east and south). The proposed hilltop reserve on Transmission Hill would be a particularly memorable landmark. Overall, I consider the refined proposal is likely to result in a very pleasant, high-quality living environment that will also offer convenient accessibility to Pokeno Town Centre. Although I would not consider the proposed residential zone area to place residents within a convenient 10-minute walk of Pokeno Town Centre, the entirety of the residential zone would be within 2km of the centre (2km representing the upper-bound of almost all pedestrian trips), and would be walkable for most residents if a necessity arose. The town centre would be within a convenient 10-minute bicycle or e-scooter ride from the proposed residential zone however.
- i. The concept plan, and the Precinct Plan and Overlays derived from that, are based on analysis of the Site's environmental qualities and constraints, and is in my opinion well-integrated with those features. I consider that a future subdivision of the Site likely to create a distinctive neighbourhood that will look and feel nestled into, and be compatible with, the Site's natural features. It will not have the characteristics of generic or uniform 'sprawl' climbing up and over the slopes.

- j. The protection of the northern face of Transmission Hill and potential new hilltop park will together also help integrate the Site compatibly into Pokeno in a way that maintains the visual quality of the existing green backdrop while also contributing to the management of potential reserve sensitivity effects.
- k. Having considered the RPS and PDP and the refined proposal together, I do not consider that there is any need for additional management techniques (such as design guidelines or bespoke development controls) over and above what has been proposed.

7.6 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the refined proposal would not result in any adverse urban design effects that are remarkable or out of the ordinary for new green field development in the context of a small but rapidly growing town like Pokeno. Overall, I consider the refined proposal is likely to result in a number of successful urban design outcomes at the time of future subdivision and development. The design process followed, Precinct Plan and associated Plan provisions proposed will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects.
- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the refined proposal is consistent with the built-form outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing new urban zones as extensions to existing small towns is appropriate.
- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

non-residential activities support the needs of people and the local community

7.7 This topic is primarily derived from RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.5.1, 4.5.25, and 4.5.30.

7.8 The refined proposal in my opinion provides for the needs of the local community. It will also do so in a way that will not result in problematic amenity effects between employment and residential activities. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. The refined proposal is envisaged to function and form as a part of Pokeno. Residents would rely on existing employment, amenity, social service, educational and town centre services within that local area. In that respect the refined proposal is not for a stand-alone urban development.

- b. A small on-site area of Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre is proposed at a locally strategic confluence of roads. This will allow it to enjoy the greatest possible visual exposure to the greatest possible number of passers-by. This is a key centre-planning characteristic that all successful retail nodes are based on. The small centre will serve not only the residents within the Site but passers-by in a convenient manner. I envisage a small collection of daily-need or convenience stores would be possible (i.e., a combination of dairy / café / hairdresser etc.), up to between 1,000m² – 1,500m² in GFA. It would not be of a scale, or be in a location, where it could materially compete with or undermine Pokeno Town Centre.
- c. A small sliver of Industry zone is proposed at the northern and flat end of the Site directly adjoining the existing industrial zone. This is not envisaged as being realistically able to accommodate industrial development of note and has been positioned as a means of avoiding any residential development within the 45dBA noise contour identified around the existing industry zone. In that respect it is a part of the refined proposal's response to potential reverse sensitivity effects although it could prove possible to accommodate a very small-scale light-industry activity here, such as a boutique tradesperson's place of business. I regard this as a compatible fit with that existing industry zone interface and transition into the Site from Yashili Drive.
- d. The new zone would also provide for its own public open spaces and reserves, with an optimal location being the hilltop of Transmission Hill. This has been identified on the Precinct Plan because of its obvious appeal and although the Council could prefer an alternative at the time of subdivision, I would expect there to be a need for the merits of a hilltop park to be formally considered and assessed as part of any relevant subdivision application. New public reserves would meet the needs of the new community and be sized in accordance with Council requirements at the time of subdivision.
- e. The proposal is to be for otherwise residential activity and in light of nearby employment land this is in my opinion appropriate not only in recognition of the undulating and sloped nature of the Site (which does not lend itself to employment uses) but the existing employment opportunities that exist to the immediate north.

7.9 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the refined proposal would result in an appropriately small-scale non-residential neighbourhood centre activity that will help to meet the needs of the community as well as the existing industry and town centre zones to the north as a source of very close-by jobs. The design process followed, location and size of the Business zones, Precinct Plan and associated

Plan provisions proposed will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects.

- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the refined proposal is consistent with the built-form outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing a Business or centre zone is appropriate.
- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

the development should maintain or enhance the character of the local area, and provide adequately for infrastructure

7.10 This topic relates in particular to RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.7, 4.2.1, 4.2.14, and 4.2.16.

7.11 In my opinion the proposal will appropriately maintain the Site's and Pokeno's existing character values but will substantially change the visual appearance of the Site. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. The timing and provision of infrastructure has been addressed by other specialists and I understand the detail solution(s) for the Site would be demonstrated at the time of resource consent. In terms of the site-wide vision presented in the refined proposal, I do not see any infrastructure deficit relevant to urban design, and I note that the existing water reservoir and gas pipeline can be catered to.
- b. In terms of Pokeno as a whole, I consider that there is no scenario where the character of the original small settlement can be safeguarded in absolute terms; there has been and currently is planned to be a magnitude of growth several times the scale of that village and it is transitioning into a quite large-scale urban town. In that context and considering the recent residential development that has occurred east of SH1 (Dean Road / McIntosh Drive); to the north at Mark Ball Drive and Helenslee Road; and to the west and south-west at Harriet Johnston Drive and Hitchen Road, I consider the refined proposal will join these as part of a logical and generally concentric expansion of Pokeno.
- c. Retention of the northern face of Transmission Hill will retain the existing green backdrop that sits south of Pokeno and the existing industrial zone. I consider that this is the most important character contribution that the Site makes to Pokeno as a whole. This will be accentuated by the creation of a future public open space reserve on the top of the hill (a matter for the Council to separately determine at the time of subdivision).
- d. In terms of the Site itself, the refined proposal and the Precinct Plan and Overlays are based on following the natural lay of the land and

distribution of environmental features. All significant features and permanent streams will be protected along with natural wetlands and a substantial enhancement of ecological values. Although urban development in the Havelock Hill area will still result in a substantial visual change, I consider that this will be acceptable and have similar residential and character values as the recent neighbourhoods that have developed in Pokeno.

- e. The urban development proposed will be consistent with the existing residential development in Pokeno and as enabled by the proposed PDP residential zone framework. In that respect the new housing that could result on the site will be character-compatible. This will include the design of new roads and provision of riparian areas around streams; these will each be subject to the Council's preferences at the time of resource consent. On this basis I consider the refined proposal to contain no novel or unusual urban development characteristics, with the Slope Residential Overlay providing a low-density and certain framework for managing the slopes.
- f. In terms of the fragmented "village" area of the Site, retaining this as rural zone is in my opinion the superior option to keep this bundle of titles with a uniform character and amenity.
- g. In terms of the Havelock Lifestyle area, this will retain a predominantly bushed rural feel, with discrete housing clusters nestled in natural folds and curves in the landform. This will also be visually compatible with the rural land and occasional homes adjacent to this part of the Site. Although the principle of semi-rural housing clusters is not new, it is not widespread in Pokeno. Nonetheless, I consider it to be a logical fit with the contours and landform of the Site, and will allow the "tail" area to retain a generally rural visual quality. It is overall a more sensitive and site-responsive design outcome than more conventional rectilinear 'checker-board' subdivision patterns can deliver, such as in my opinion can be seen in Pokeno East.
- h. The refined proposal will give rise to a distinctive neighbourhood and public vistas from roads and open spaces will allow scenic views across Pokeno and out to the Waikato River. I consider that these will provide public amenity benefits and help integrate the Site as a part of Pokeno rather than something separate from it.
- i. Overall, the proposal will not be widely visible from the 'flat' of Pokeno and will in that respect not have a problematic adverse visual character effect of concern. Functionally the Site will add a logical outlet for growth that will reinforce and support Pokeno and in so doing reinforce its 'functional' character values as the focal point of the settlement.
- j. Overall, and in terms of the Site itself, I consider that there will be widespread visual change, being predominantly urban development in the Havelock Hill area, and predominantly bush revegetation in the

Havelock Lifestyle area. I do not consider these changes to be inherently adverse in urban design terms, although I do acknowledge that a large part of my support for the refined proposal is the degree of external connectivity it offers and in particular the Yashili Drive extension as a direct linkage into the town. Without those, I consider the refined proposal would be of lesser merit.

7.12 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the refined proposal would result in a substantial visual change to the Site although overall it is a change that is in line with that signalled by the Waikato 2070 growth strategy and comparable to other growth areas around Pokeno that have developed in the past 15 years. Development of the Site will be managed by the Precinct Plan and Overlay provisions, and underlying subdivision and zone frameworks. I am in particular satisfied that an urban form outcome will be achieved that maintains and is compatible with the built form character of Pokeno. The design process followed, Precinct Plan and associated provisions proposed will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects.
- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the proposal is consistent with the built-form character outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing new urban expansions around existing small towns is appropriate.
- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

open spaces should be well integrated and physically connected where possible

7.13 This topic is primarily derived from RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.1.7 (and 4.1.8).

7.14 In my opinion the proposal will be appropriate. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. The Site contains bush and Significant Ecological Areas and the refined proposal (and Precinct Plan in particular) seek to protect and augment these as part of larger-scale networks.
- b. Substantial additional revegetation, which may in time come to be classified as significant, is also expected on the Slope Residential Overlay and generally within the Havelock Lifestyle area.
- c. Retention of the northern face of Transmission Hill and identification of a (potential) future public park on the hilltop will in my opinion be very

appropriate and desirable. The principal loop road would be able to adjoin and connect with the hilltop reserve. This is consistent for example with the approach to Pukekohe Hill which has a reserve on the peak.

- d. The stream corridors are understood to not trigger esplanade reserves on either side, but a simpler riparian setback requirement. Ideally, such features are provided with roads fronting either or both sides (especially where a public esplanade reserve is to be provided) but having reviewed the Construct Ltd 2018 master plan and worked collaboratively on the refined proposal's concept plan I am satisfied that this is unlikely to prove achievable on the Site to the gradients of the land and without substantial earthworks which should in my preference be minimised. Because they are likely to not have public frontage, I would not expect the stream corridors to contain public walkways or trails. I do not consider this likely to result in any adverse urban design effect of concern because their ecological functions are not dependent on public access, and that the network of streets and walkways that will be provided will still achieve an acceptable movement opportunity across the Site.
- e. Existing paper roads through the Site, which I have walked across, are not suitable for conversion to full roads but can be retained as walkways / cycleways / bridle trails and the Precinct Plan identified this.
- f. Natural wetlands would be protected and stormwater facilities would be provided adjacent to the streams.
- g. There are no known needs for large-scale sports fields, school grounds, or other large public open spaces over and above what has been identified on the Precinct Plan.
- h. Overall, it is not possible to integrate open spaces with public streets in to the same extent that is often possible on flatter land but nonetheless I consider a successful 'green network' will result on the Site (although much will remain in private ownership).

7.15 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the refined proposal can accommodate a new neighbourhood park in an acceptable configuration at the top of Transmission Hill should the Council require this at the time of subdivision consent. Retained and enhanced streams on the Site and substantial bush revegetation will provide visual and recreational amenity.
- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the proposal is consistent with the open space outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing new urban expansions to existing small towns is appropriate.

- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

reverse sensitivity effects with adjacent land uses are managed

7.16 This topic is primarily derived from RPS 6.1 (and 6A), and PDP 4.4.1, 4.6.1, and 4.6.6.

7.17 In my opinion, the refined proposal will successfully manage reverse sensitivity effects on adjacent activities. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. In terms of adjacent rural land around the proposed Havelock Lifestyle area, the clustered development approach and substantial revegetation proposed will be compatible with and not give rise to any reverse sensitivity effects of any concern.
- b. In terms of the existing residential development near the Havelock Hill area's western boundary, a generally like-with-like residential interface is proposed and this will be compatible. The Yashili Drive extension, and other connectivity options, will also ensure that large volumes of new traffic do not undermine amenity values within the existing Hitchen Road subdivision. The proposed Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre will likely provide amenity benefits to that existing residential area.
- c. The principal reverse sensitivity risk is the existing industrial zone to the north. In this respect it is proposed to set any residential development back behind a predicted 45dBA contour. This also coincides with much of the northern face of Transmission Hill intended to be kept clear of development as part of the existing green backdrop to Pokeno. I consider that this setback, and the sliver of Industrial zoned land at the Site's northern Yashili Drive interface, will provide a logical framework to manage potential reverse sensitivity effects.

7.18 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, the revised proposal would result in a successfully planned mix of uses that will not give rise to any reverse sensitivity effects of concern. The design process followed, Precinct Plan and associated Plan provisions proposed will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects.
- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the revised proposal is consistent with the built-form outcomes sought including the circumstances where reverse sensitivity effects are likely or should be avoided.

- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

the proposal should demonstrate how the site's opportunities and constraints have been positively responded to

- 7.19 At the fundamental design and layout level, the way in which a proposal responds to its site characteristics, opportunities and constraints is regarded by urban designers as one of the key ways that potential adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated (and that potential positive effects can be maximised). In this respect, this topic relates to all of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions.
- 7.20 In my opinion, the proposal represents a logical and successful response to its context. My key reasons for this conclusion are:
 - a. The Site is appropriate for urban development on its elevated Havelock Hill area due to proximity and connectivity to Pokeno town centre. Having understood the growth context for Pokeno and considered the Site relative to other Council-identified shorter-term (1-10 year) growth locations, the Site sits towards the middle of the options in terms of overall merit and I see no sound basis to exclude the Site but not the other Waikato 2070-identified options.
 - b. Retention of the northern face of Transmission Hill and provision for a hilltop park are very important means of integrating the refined proposal with Pokeno and of maintaining existing amenity and character values that the exposed hill face currently provides.
 - c. Appropriate setbacks have been proposed to manage potential reserve sensitivity risks from adjacent industrial-zoned land and activities.
 - d. Significant Ecological Areas, natural streams, streams, and existing areas of sensitive bush will be retained and, overall, substantially enhanced.
 - e. The lessening of density now proposed in the Havelock Lifestyle of "tail" part of the Site will respond positively to the characteristics and sensitivities of this part of the Site, including its separation from Pokeno town centre.
 - f. The Precinct Plan and Overlays will ensure a context-sensitive and site-specific development outcome is achieved that minimises necessary landform modifications, works with the underlying landform of the Site, and results in a distinctive neighbourhood of approximately 600 new units.

- g. Opportunities for enhance connectivity have been maximised and a proposed Business zone / Neighbourhood Centre has been positioned to take best advantage of that connectivity.
- h. The comprehensive review of the Construkt Ltd 2018 master plan and preparation of a refined concept plan has allowed a sophisticated understanding of the Site to emerge and confidence that a high-quality built form outcome can be achieved through the subdivision and land use consent process.
- i. The Slope Residential Overlay is particularly supported as an effective urban design means of managing parts of the Site with steeper slopes. Lower density residential development is appropriate in this context.
- j. The context of Pokeno has been further recognised in the way that the refined proposal is based on PDP zone frameworks where this has been possible.
- k. The scale of development to be enabled, at around 600 new units, represents 11% of the 50-year growth identified by the Council, and on an area of land identified by the Council in its most-recent (non-statutory) thinking on the matter. This is in my opinion indicative that it is not over-scaled or excessive. I consider the proposed re-zoning is comparable in size and extent to other re-zoning exercises in Pokeno over the past 15-years.
- l. Development in Pokeno has traditionally occurred on flat land immediately around the town but as it has expanded development has begun creeping onto the hills. The proposal would be for the most elevated housing area in Pokeno but it is in my opinion amongst the next most obvious and suitable growth areas.
- m. Overall, the proposal is for a suitable expansion to Pokeno, a settlement identified in Regional and District growth strategies as intended and suitable for additional growth.

7.21 On the basis of the above, I consider that:

- a. In terms of any adverse urban design effects, I consider the proposal responds logically and appropriately to the site's opportunities and constraints. The design process followed, Precinct Plan and associated Plan provisions proposed will be successful at avoiding, remedying or mitigating potential urban design effects.
- b. In terms of the relevant RPS and PDP provisions, I consider the proposal is consistent with the built-form outcomes sought including the circumstances where establishing new urban expansions to existing small towns is appropriate.

- c. In overall consideration of the above, I consider that the proposal represents the most appropriate urban design PDP outcome for the land and it is supported.

overall urban design merit

- 7.22 In light of the above analyses, I have turned my mind to a cumulative and overall assessment of urban design merit.
- 7.23 The refined proposal is unusual in that it is very different, and of a lesser scale, intensity and character, to what was sought in the original submission made by HVL to the Council. The review of the submission has followed a design-led process and identified the most-appropriate framework for the site. In my opinion the design process was comprehensive and of a depth that is commensurate to the scale and potential environmental effects that re-zoning the land as now proposed could give rise to.
- 7.24 The proposed zone framework, provisions, Precinct Plan and Overlays will ensure subdivision and development maintains and enhances the planned character and other qualities of Pokeno. The concept master plan gives me confidence that the zones proposed will be of a sufficient size and design that the 'downstream' resource consent provisions triggered in PDP can be met. I consider that the development principles set out in Chapter 6A of the RPS can be appropriately met.
- 7.25 On balance, I consider the refined proposal to adequately reflect the outcomes sought by the RPS and PDP for new urban zones that expand existing small towns, and that any adverse effects arising from subdivision and development of the land will be appropriate in urban design terms. Numerous positive effects are also likely, including for the existing community.
- 7.26 On the basis of the above and overall, I consider that the proposal could be supported on urban design grounds. In terms of the NPS: UD, I consider that the refined proposal will contribute to a well-functioning urban environment. This is because:
 - a. The proposal will support a variety of housing and lifestyle choices;
 - b. Support the self-sufficiency of Pokeno and allowing people to live, work and play in the area;
 - c. Provide for good accessibility for people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces;
 - d. Due to its proximity to Pokeno town centre (and on the basis of enhanced connections being established at the time of subdivision), will contribute to active transport and a reduction in greenhouse emissions;

- e. The refined proposal would substantially change the existing area but not in a way that would result in significant adverse effects and which will provide new amenity values for new residents; and
- f. The refined development would bring benefits to Pokeno in terms of a well-functioning urban environment including by being superior to some other potential growth areas (reduced need for transport), and providing for protection or enhancement of on-site environmental features.

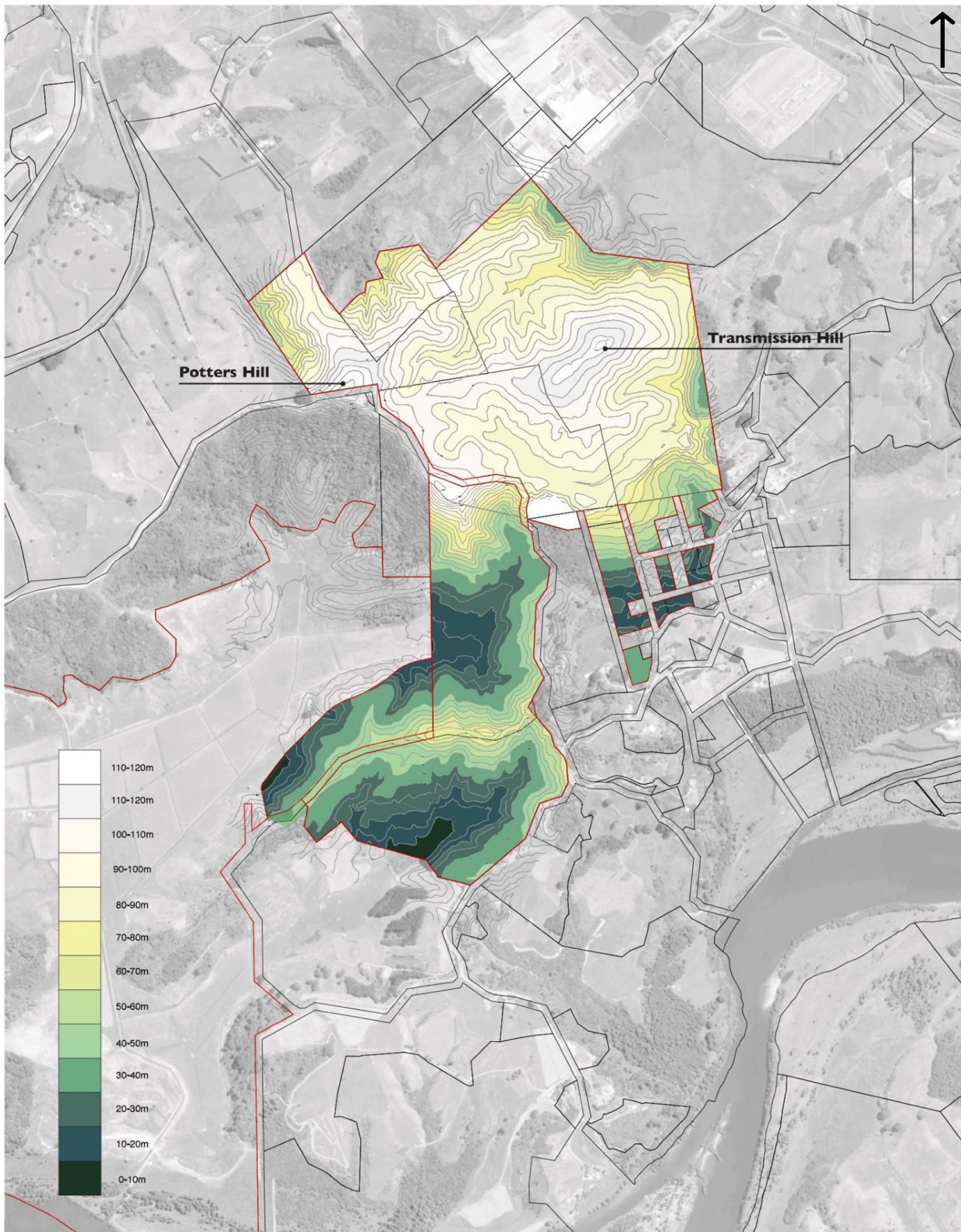
8. conclusions

- 8.1 This report has documented an independent analysis of a submission (#862) to the Proposed Waikato District Plan to re-zone approximately 148ha of land at 5 Yashili Drive and 88, 242 (in part), and 278 Bluff Road, Pokeno, for Havelock Village Ltd ("**HVL**"). The submission has been made to Waikato District Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**") as part of the Council's Proposed District Plan ("**PDP**") process. The key conclusions of this report are that:
- a. The Site is in-part suitable for urban development but not to the extent identified in the original submission. A review of that submission and multiple layers of site and locality analysis have identified a refined re-zoning proposal. This assessment is focussed on that refined proposal.
 - b. The Site has two spatial areas, being "Havelock Hill" ("**Hill**") and the "tail" or "Havelock Rural Lifestyle" ("**Lifestyle**"). The Hill area is close and can be connected to Pokeno and is suited to urban development subject to largely conventional exclusions around open spaces, environmental features, and the northern face of the area that serves as a green backdrop to Pokeno. The Lifestyle area is not suitable for urban development because of its separation from Pokeno but is compatible with a limited-scale, environmental enhancement-based cluster development.
 - c. The proposal utilises the zones identified by the Council in its s.42A report but includes a site-specific Precinct Plan and Overlays identifying Significant Natural Areas; environmental enhancement areas; indicative (key) roads and other transport linkages; a buffer area for the protection of existing Industrial-zoned land north of the Site; a potential hilltop park; and lower-density slope residential and rural lifestyle cluster housing areas that will be subject to specific planning controls. These methods will ensure that the Site's key natural characteristics and other design opportunities will be properly responded to, including by way of protection, by subsequent development. Overall, a development yield of around 600 units is likely.

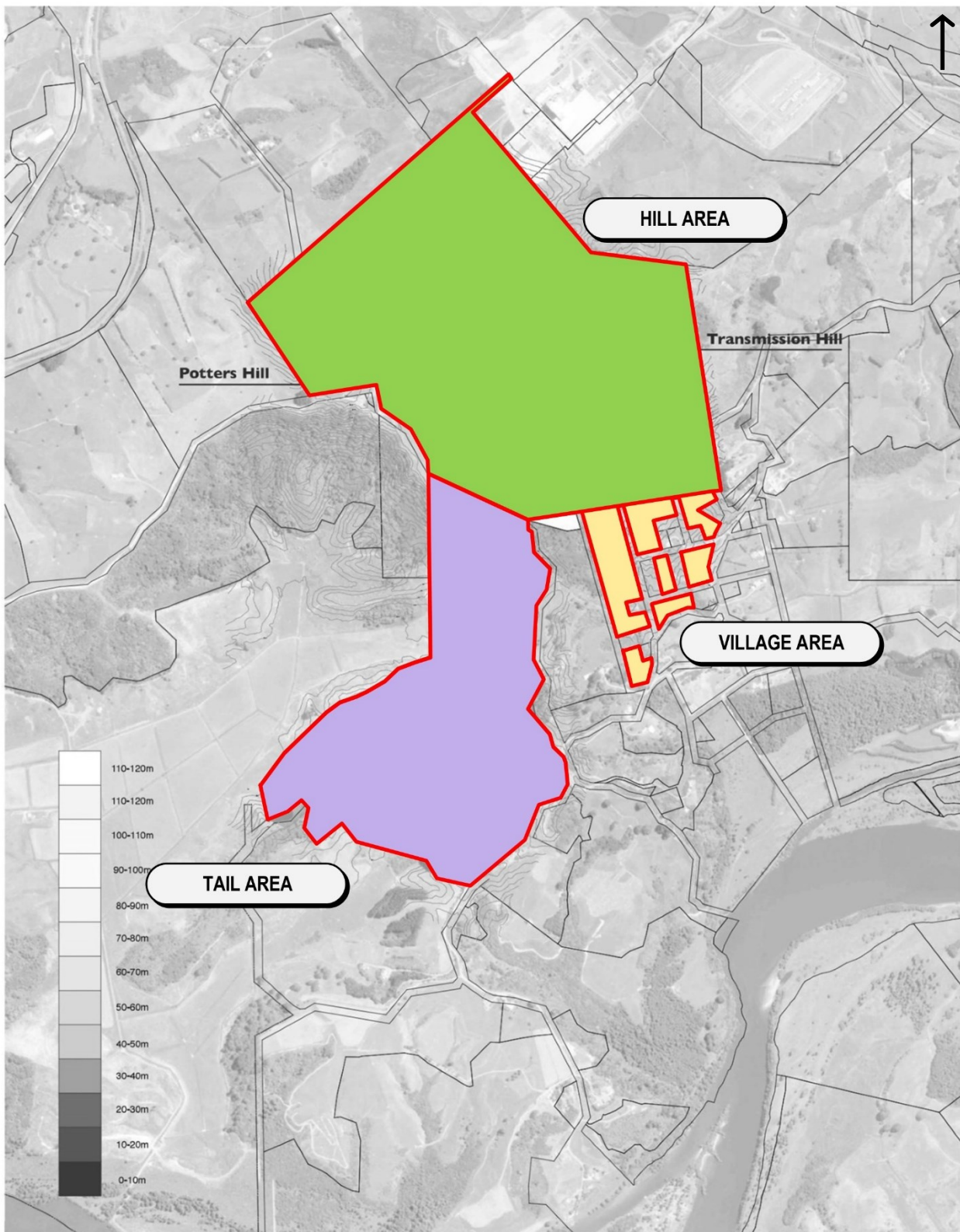
- d. A concept plan has been developed for the Site. It was derived from a review of the master plan included as part of the original submission. It has been an important part of the technical process of confirming the optimal urban design solution for the land. Its principal elements form the basis of the zone and Precinct Plan / Overlay content proposed). The concept plan demonstrates that the land is capable of delivering an integrated, well-connected and spatially coherent urban form outcome in line with the outcomes sought by the PDP (Chapter 4) and RPS (Chapters 6 and 6A). This includes a small Business zone (centre) at the confluence of Hitchen Road, Potter Road, and Yashili Drive extension where commercial benefits from exposure to the highest possible volume of passing traffic will be greatest. In this respect, the proposed land use strategy and zones for the Site have been thoroughly tested and appropriately distributed.
- e. In consideration of the residential expansion areas identified for Pokeno by the Council in its (non-statutory) Waikato 2070 strategy (2020), the Site is of lesser merit than the identified Hillpark Drive, Hitchen Block, and eastern sector of the Munro Block areas; comparable merit to the western-sector of the Munro Block area; and (considerably) superior to the Pokeno East areas. It is noted that in urban design terms it would be desirable to maximise the potential of land for development on the western side of State Highway 1 prior to further development across the State Highway.
- f. The proposal will result in a number of adverse urban design effects, although none are considered to be unusual or severe in the context of urban land re-zoning. Positive urban design effects will also occur or be enabled through future subdivision. The scale and spatial relationship between the proposed Site re-zoning and remainder of Pokeno will include a partial severance (the Site's elevation, open-space of the Hill's northern face, and buffer area for the existing Industrial zone), but this is also not unusual or remarkable given the context of future outward urban growth in Pokeno including where small towns within flat valleys have grown up into surrounding slopes.

8.2 The refined relief now sought by the Submitter could be accepted on urban design grounds.

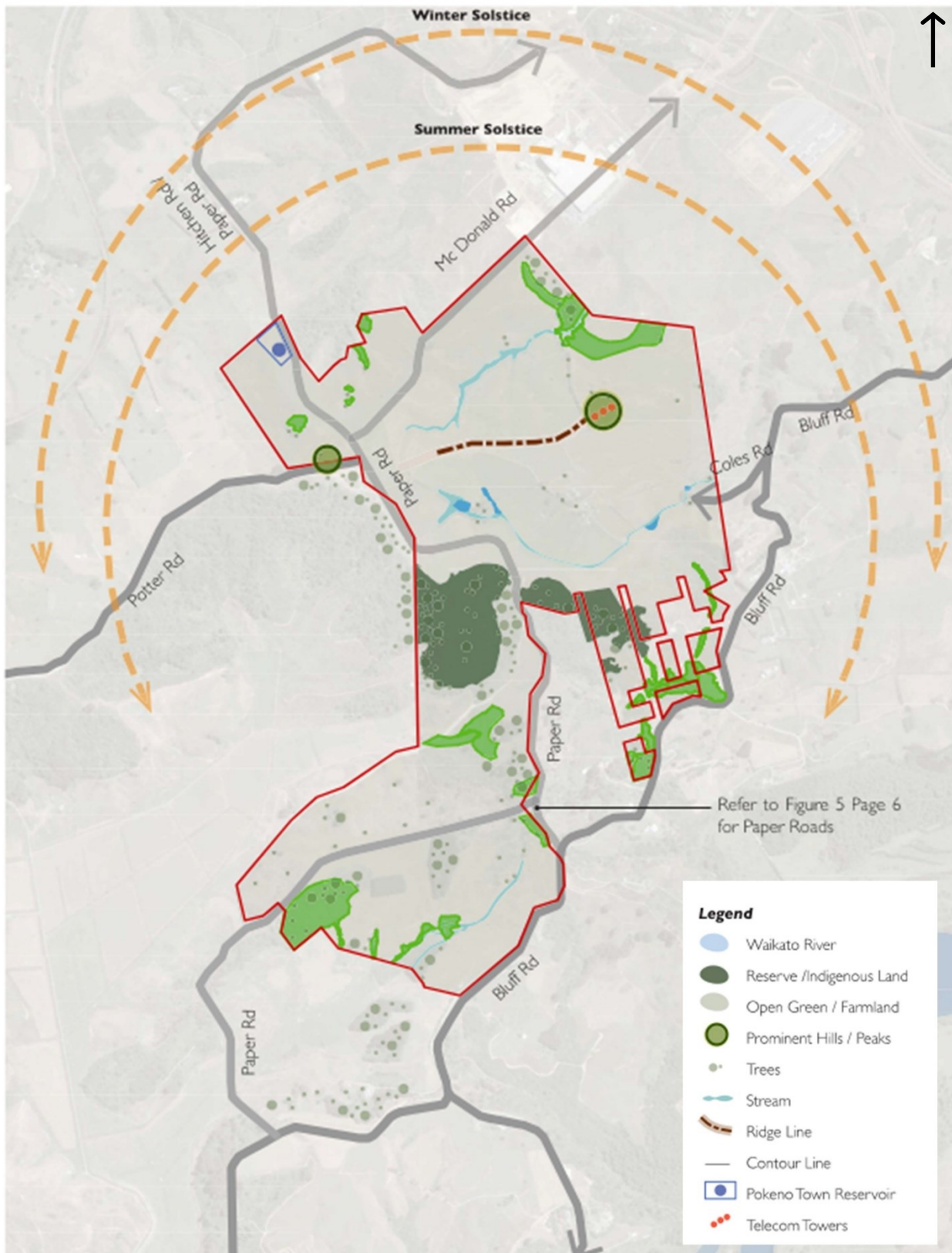
ATTACHMENT 1 – Site analysis - topography, source: Construkt Ltd, 2018, page 19, no scale.



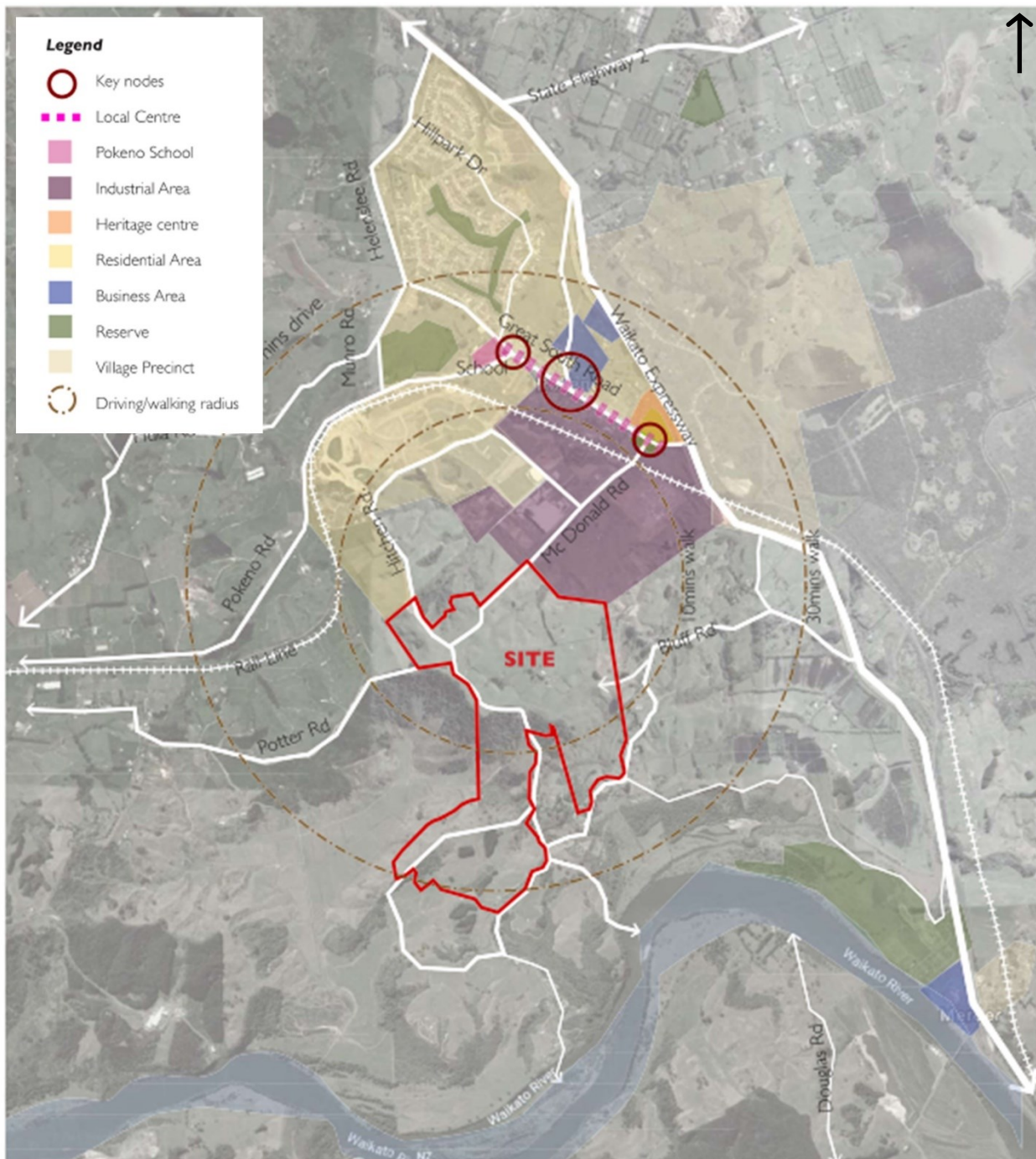
ATTACHMENT 2 – Site analysis - areas, no scale.



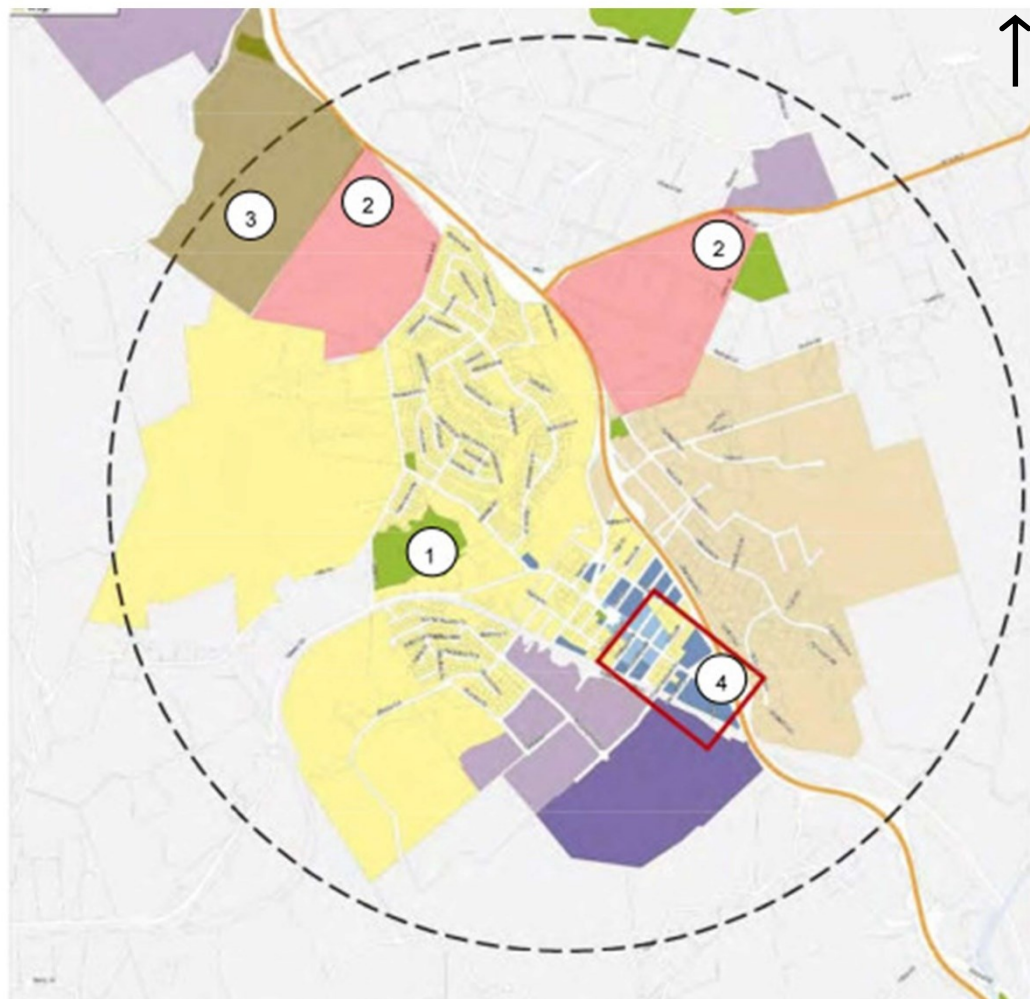
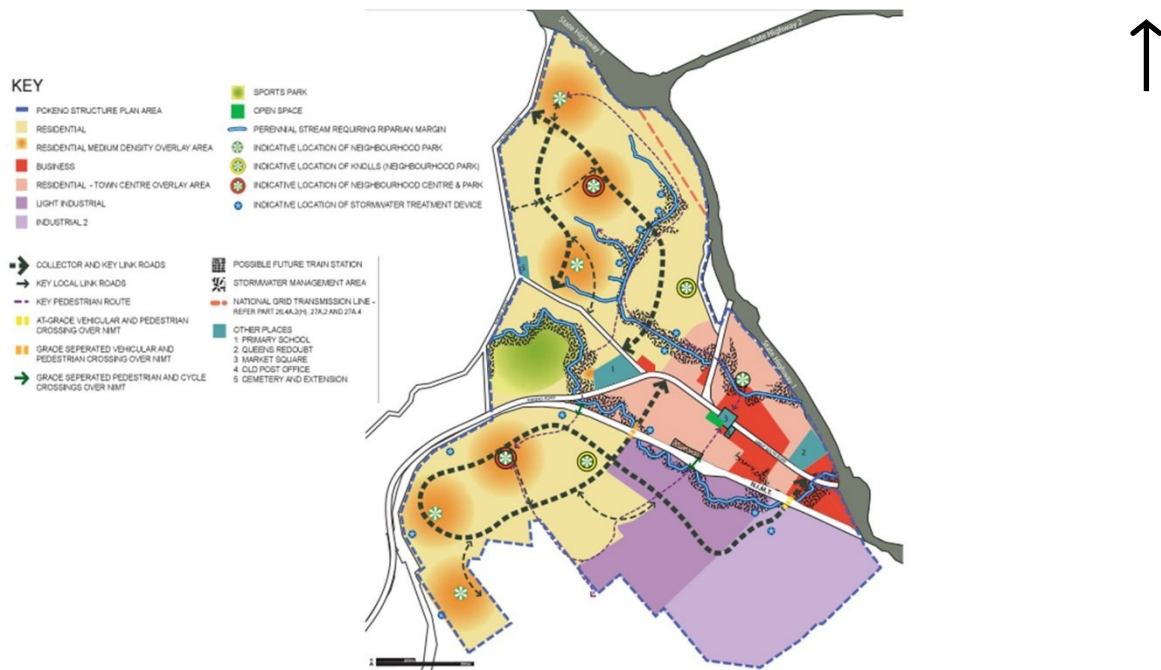
ATTACHMENT 3 – Site analysis – environmental features, source: Construkt Ltd, 2018, page 20, no scale.



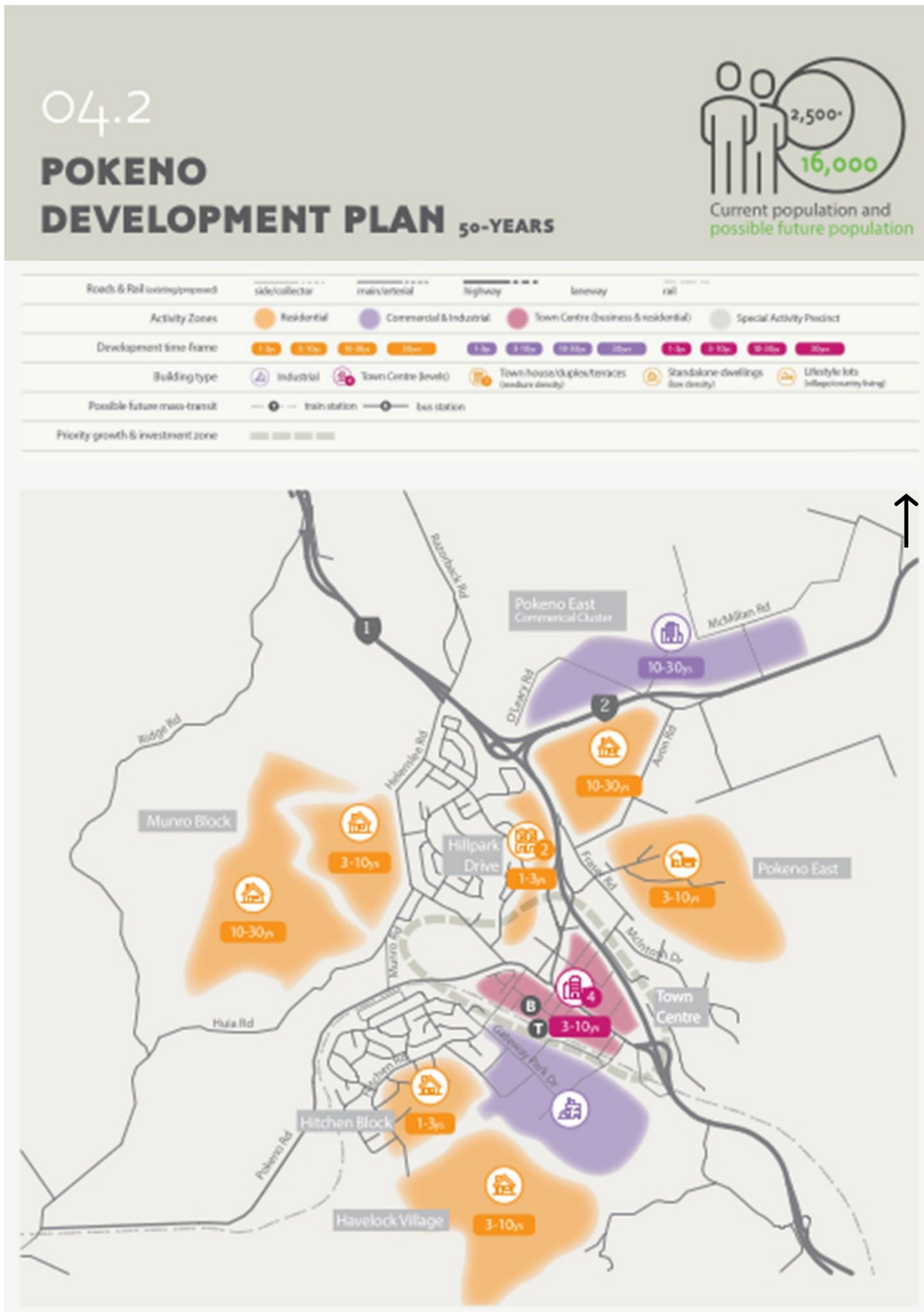
ATTACHMENT 4 – Site analysis – wider Pokeno context, source: Construkt Ltd, 2018, page 5, no scale.



ATTACHMENT 5 – Pokeno Structure Plan, 2008, no scale (top) and Pokeno Local Area Blueprint, 2019, no scale (bottom).



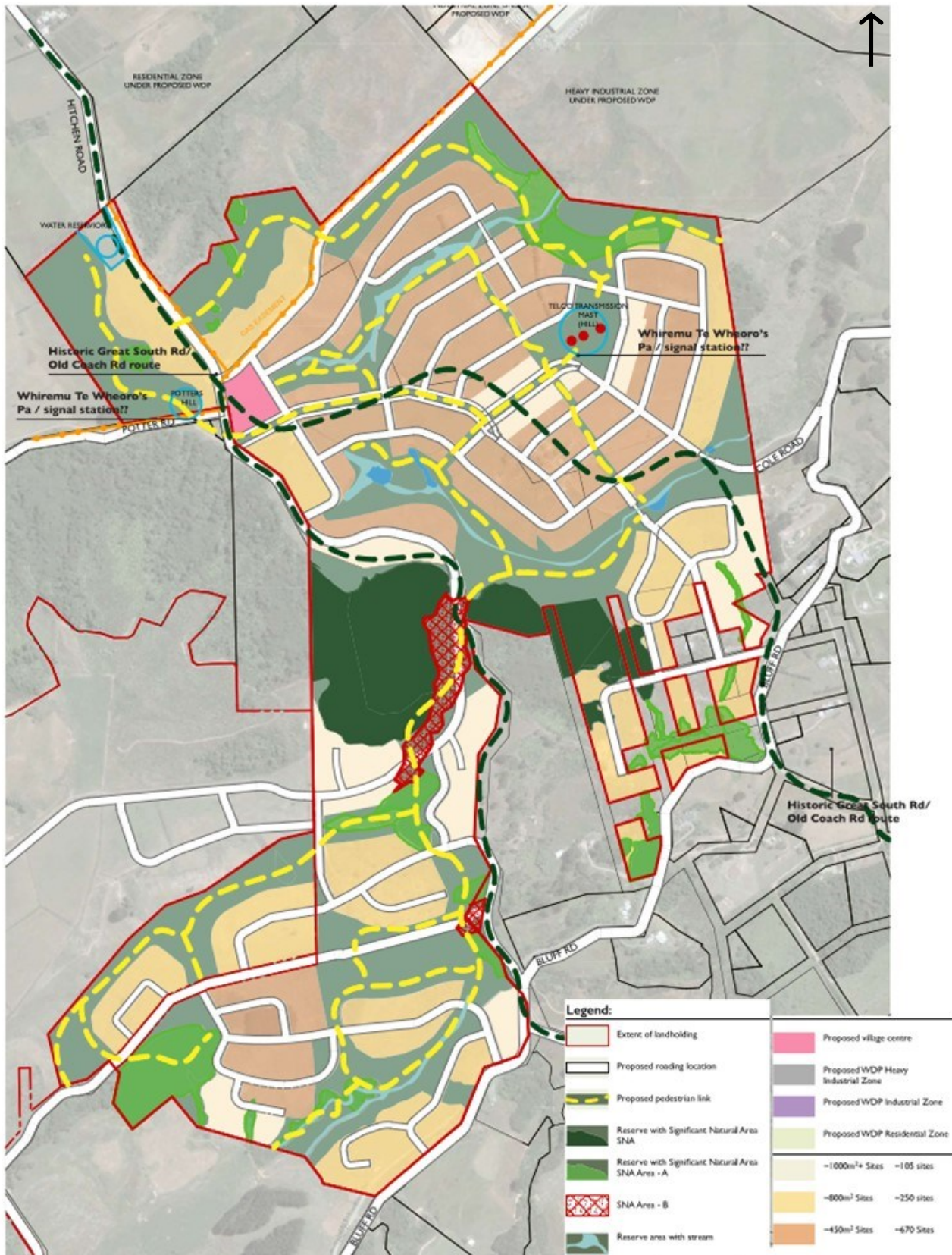
ATTACHMENT 6 – Pokeno growth concept, Waikato 2070, 2020, no scale.



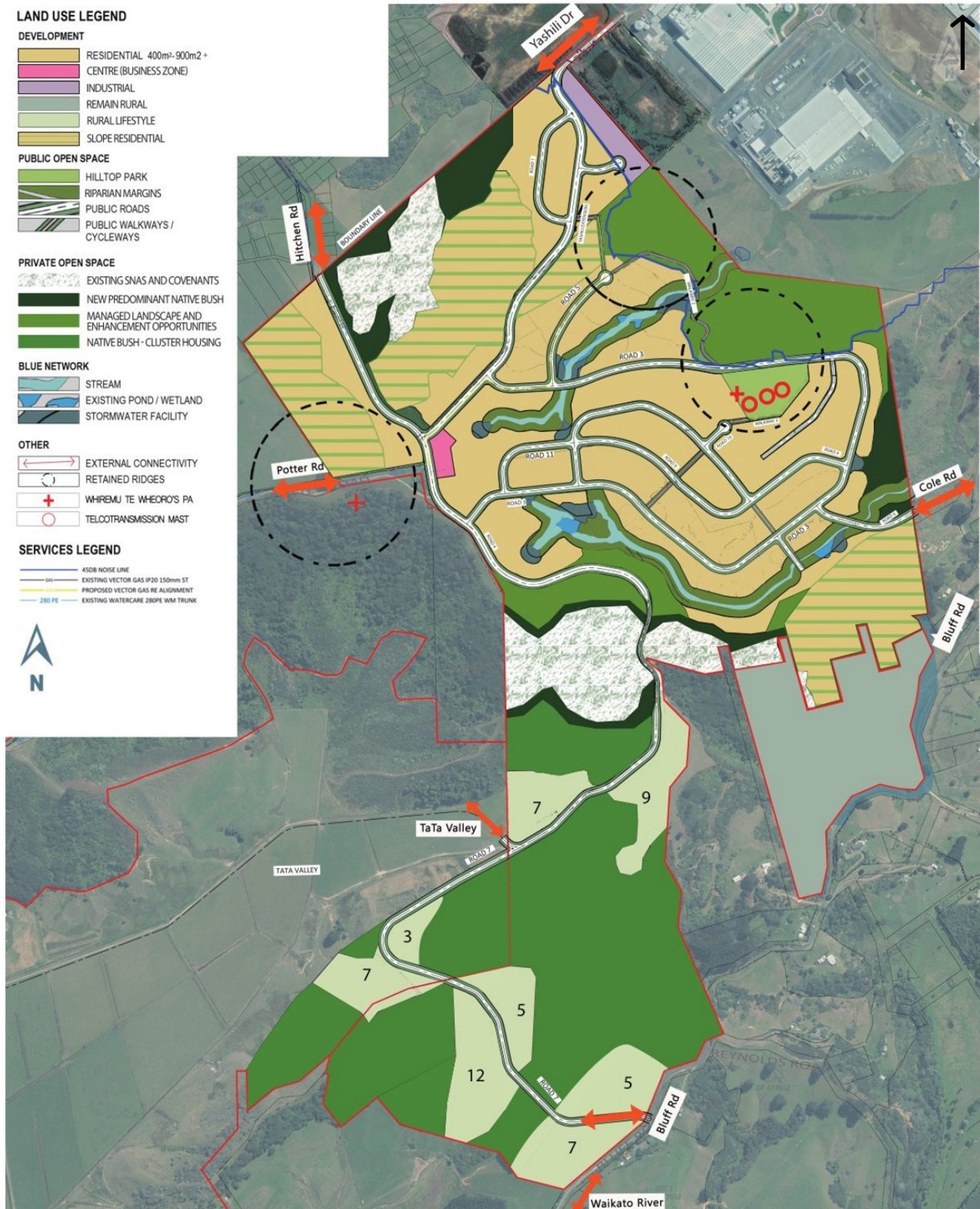
ATTACHMENT 7 – Ranking of residential growth areas identified for Pokeno in Waikato 2070, no scale.



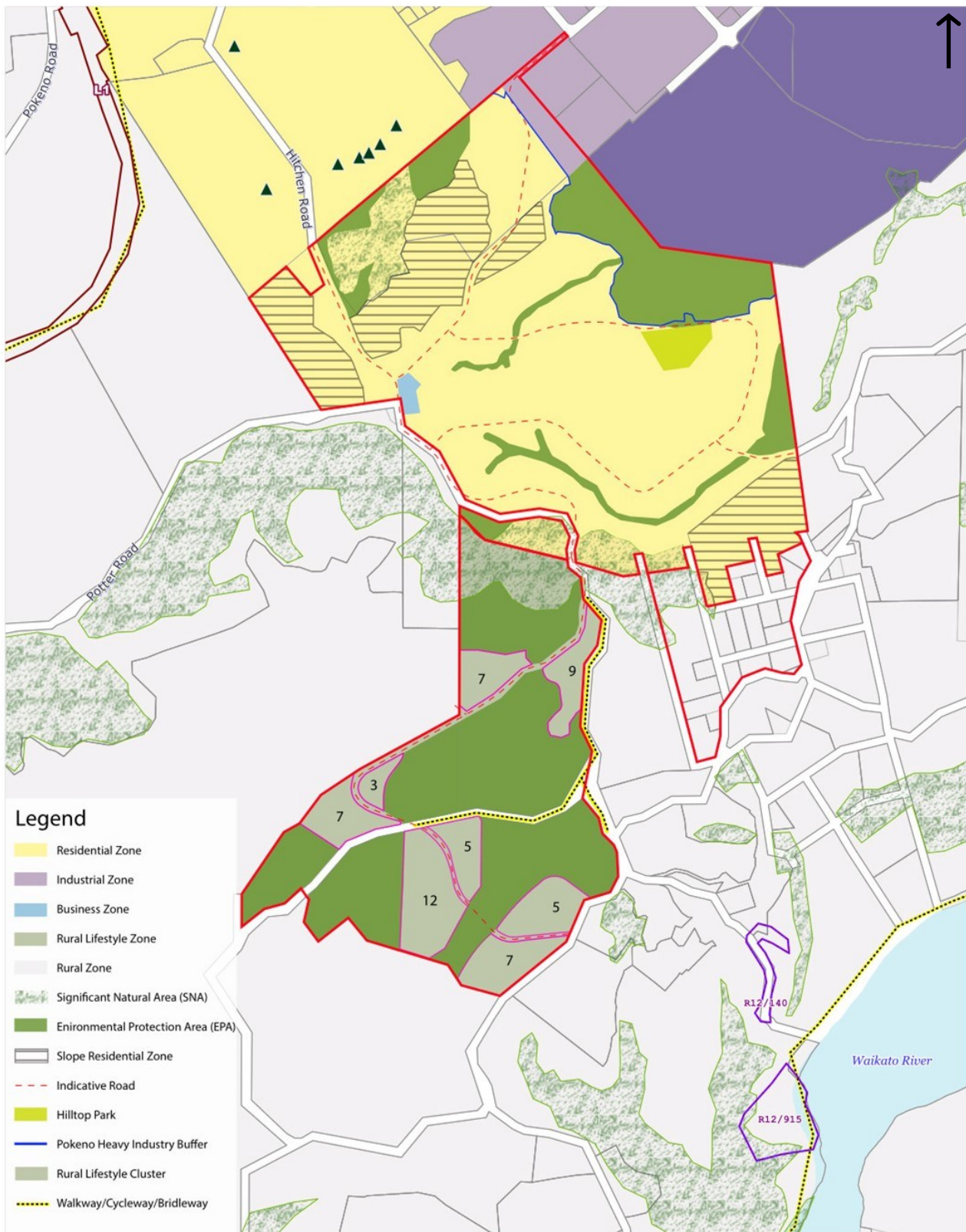
ATTACHMENT 8 – Concept master plan prepared by Construkt Ltd as part of the HVL original submission on the PDP, no scale.



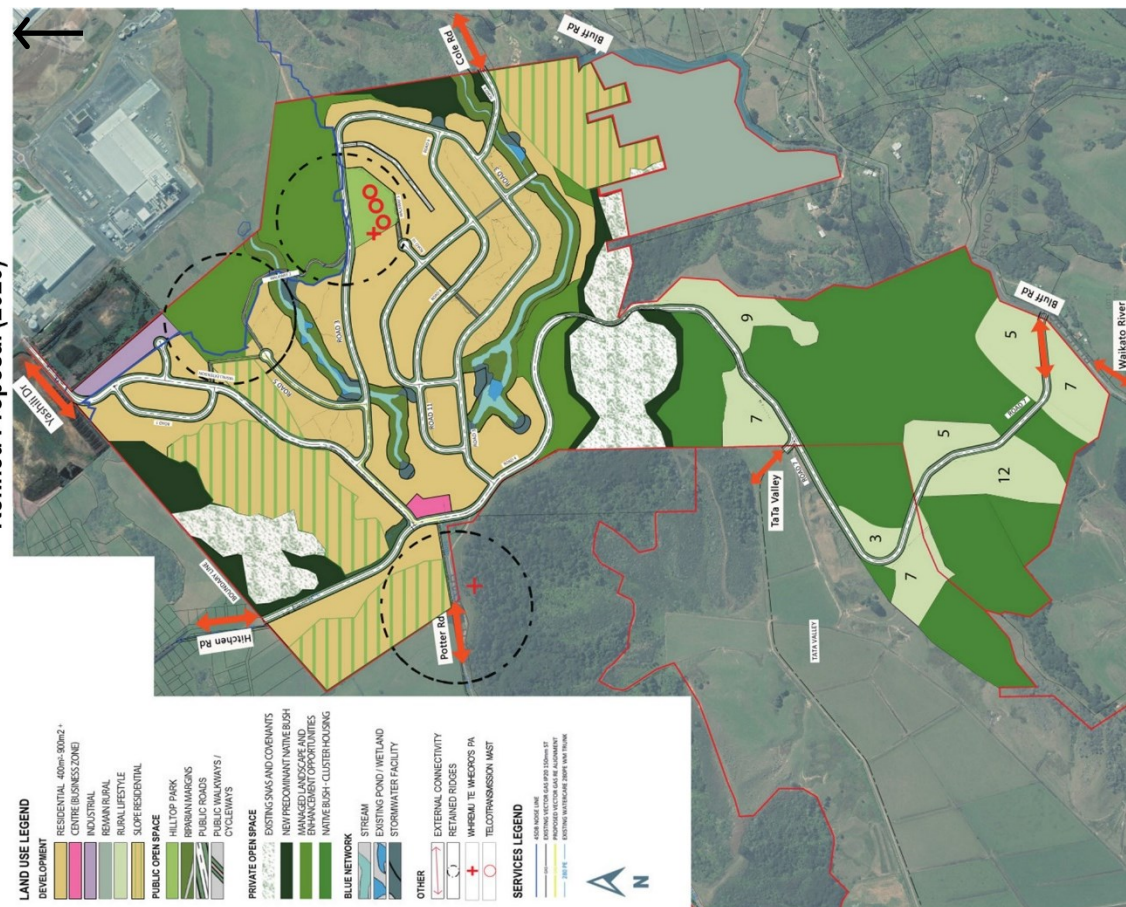
ATTACHMENT 9 – Refined master plan concept, no scale.



ATTACHMENT 10 – Refined Zone, Precinct Plan and Overlays, no scale.



Refined Proposal (2020)



Original Submission (2018)

