

BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

of the Proposed District Plan
for Waimakariri District

**HEARING STREAM 12: REZONING REQUESTS (LARGER SCALE)
STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF DAVID COMPTON-MOEN (LANDSCAPE
VISUAL AMENITY)**

ON BEHALF OF

ANDREW CARR (SUBMITTER #158) 308 CONES ROAD

5 MARCH 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My full name is David John Compton-Moen.
- 1.2 I hold the position of Urban Designer / Registered Landscape Architect at DCM Urban Design Limited where I am the Director. I started DCM Urban in August 2016. Our office is based in Christchurch but we work throughout New Zealand on urban design and landscape projects.
- 1.3 I hold the qualifications of a Master of Urban Design (hons), Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (hons) and a Bachelor of Resource Studies (Planning). I am a Registered Landscape Architect of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, since 2001, a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and a member of the Urban Design Forum.
- 1.4 I have worked in the urban design, landscape architecture and planning fields for approximately 25 years, here in New Zealand and in Hong Kong. During this time, I have worked for both local authorities and private consultancies, providing expert evidence for urban design, landscape and visual impact assessments on a wide range of major infrastructure and development proposals.
- 1.5 Of particular relevance to this submission, I have provided advice for:
 - (a) 2021: Working for Waimakariri District Council, I prepared Urban Design evidence to assist with Private Plan Change 30 (Ravenswood Key Activity Centre) which sought to rezone parts of an existing Outline Development Plan to increase the amount of Business 1 land and remove a portion of Residential 6A land;
 - (b) 2020-21: Working with Waimakariri District Council, I have assisted with the development of four structure plans for future urban growth in Rangiora and Kaiapoi;
 - (c) 2021-23: Working with Rangiora Developments Ltd on the design of a new retirement village, Harlow Village, in southwest Rangiora;
 - (d) 2023-24: I am currently providing design and assessment advice for the rezoning of two properties in Woodend. The first from Rural Lifestyle to Large Lot Residential in the eastern part

of Woodend adjacent to the Woodend Bypass designation and the second from Rural Lifestyle to General Residential in the southern part of Woodend;

(e) 2021-present: I am currently providing design and assessment advice for the Ohoka plan change to establish a mix of different land uses as an extension to the existing settlement.

(f) 2012-present: I have worked on various stages of Silverstream Estates from assessing potential landscape and visual impacts resulting from a proposed retirement village, open space design and developing design guidelines for medium density housing.

1.6 As a result of my experience I consider that I am fully familiar with the characteristics of the scale and nature of activities that could establish if the submission is accepted and the land is rezoned.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 Although this is a Council hearing, I confirm I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note 2023 and that I have complied with it when preparing my evidence. Other than when I state I am relying on the advice of another person, this evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

3. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

3.1 I have been engaged by the submitter, Mr Carr (#158) to provide landscape and visual amenity evidence with regard to his submission for the rezoning of 308 Cones Road (**the site**).

3.2 I am aware that the site was identified as being suitable for rural residential development through the Waimakariri Rural Residential Strategy 2019. Subsequently the Council notified the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) with the site proposed to be zoned as Rural Lifestyle Zone (**RLZ**) and subject to a Large Lot Residential Zone Overlay (**LLRZO**). The submitter seeks

that the site is rezoned to Large Lot Residential Zone (**LLRZ**), that is, that the overlay is removed.

- 3.3 Under my instruction, my company prepared a landscape visual impact assessment report for the site. This is attached as Annexure A to this statement of evidence.
- 3.4 The provisions of the PDP require that an Outline Development Plan (**ODP**) is produced for all new LLRZ, and that the ODP covers all of the LLRZ (under SUB-P6 of the PDP). In this case, the immediately-adjacent lot at 90 Dixons Road was also notified as RLZ with LLRZO and a submission was made (#70) that this should also be rezoned to LLRZ. Accordingly my report addresses the effects arising from not only 308 Cones Road, but also 90 Dixons Road zoned as LLRZ.
- 3.5 I understand that my report was provided to the council for the purposes of feedback (as per Hearing Panel Minute 1, paragraph 75) on 15 November 2023. However an email received from the council on 9 February 2024 set out that the council had not reviewed it, due to not having the appropriate expertise.
- 3.6 Accordingly, I adopt this report for the purposes of this evidence, subject to any points of difference, clarification or addition detailed below.

4. SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Below I summarize the results of my assessment of the landscape visual effects arising from the site rezoning as sought by the submitter.
- 4.2 In terms of landscape character (including rural) and natural character of the area, subject to the mitigation measures proposed in my Assessment Report, the proposed rezoning will result in a Low magnitude of change on the existing rural residential and rural-lifestyle character, and values. The existing open pastoral character will change to a more enclosed, compartmentalised rural-residential character with a very low residential density. The existing character of the receiving environment is already modified with a mix of open fields, rural lifestyle properties and new semi-urban development. The only natural features of note are the two drains identified on the ODP, and the proposed rezoning provides the opportunity for these to be enhanced.

- 4.3 In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural-residential properties will experience a change in the existing views, but I do not consider these to be adverse. Nearby rural residential and large-lot residential properties, current and future including the Loburn Lea residential development, overlook the site and will have a mix of open, partial, and screened views of future development. Changes to views experienced by these residents are considered Low (Less than Minor - Effects) given the character of existing views, the existing level of development created by the Loburn Lea precincts and existing boundary treatments.
- 4.4 In terms of landscape values and the objectives and policies of the Waimakariri District Plan, I consider that the proposed ODP recognises and works with the landscape elements of value while creating a well-functioning residential development.

5. ADDITIONAL MATTER

- 5.1 I have been asked to provide my professional opinion on the ODP and narrative, both in respect of whether this achieves good design outcomes and also with regard to the appropriateness of the geographic extent of the ODP. I understand that the Submitter's planner Ms Kealey will also address the latter point.
- 5.2 In my view, the proposed ODP is appropriate, recognising landscape elements existing on the site and is consistent in terms of density when compared to the nearby residential development at Loburn Lea, the proposed rezoned site will have similar sized lots. The proposal will be viewed as a natural extension, geographically, of this area and will exhibit a similar level of openness and spaciousness.
- 5.3 I consider that the scale or extent of the ODP is appropriate and is a natural extension of the Loburn Lea Large Lot Residential area. Any amenity effects on existing and future residents can be successfully mitigated through the mitigation measures outlined in my original report, most of which would be considered further and implemented at the land use consent stage.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Based on my review of the landscape visual effects of the submission, I confirm my findings of my technical report, that:
- a. In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural-residential properties will experience a change in the existing views, but I do not consider these to be adverse.
 - b. Nearby rural residential properties, current and future including the Loburn Lea residential development, overlook the site and will have a mix of open, partial, and screened views of future development. I consider that changes to views experienced by these residents are Low (Less than Minor - Effects) given the character of existing views, the existing level of development created by the Loburn Lea precincts and existing boundary treatments.
 - c. In terms of landscape values and the objectives and policies of the Waimakariri District Plan, the proposed ODP recognises and works with the landscape elements of value while creating a well-functioning residential development.
- 6.2 Overall, I consider that adverse residual effects from the proposal are Less than Minor with a Low magnitude of change.
- 6.3 In respect of the ODP, I consider that the design is appropriate in terms of scale and siting being an extension of Loburn Lea and addresses all landscape and visual amenity aspects well.
- 6.4 In conclusion, I am therefore able to support the submission for the site to be rezoned as LLRZ.

DAVID COMPTON-MOEN

5 March 2024

ANNEXURE A: LANDSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT



308 CONES ROAD / 90 DIXONS ROAD REZONING, WAIMAKARIRI

ANDY CARR

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

Project No. 2023_090 | B



CARR – 308 CONES ROAD / 90 DIXONS ROAD REZONING, WAIMAKARIRI

Project no: 2023_090
Document title: Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

Revision: B
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Client name: Andy Carr

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

This report is supported by Appendix 1 Methodology, and Appendix 2 Figures, which contains the location of the proposed rezoning, existing character photos for surrounding context, key viewpoint photos of the existing site.

DCM Urban Design Limited have been commissioned by Andy Carr to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for a proposed rezoning to provide a greater area of residential development in Loburn approximately 3km from the Rangiora Town Centre. The rezoning seeks to create a new area of Large Lot Residential living as an extension of the existing settlement called Loburn Lea. The proposal covers an approximate area of 24.8ha and is currently zoned Rural under the operative Waimakariri District Plan. It is proposed to be zoned as Rural with a Large Lot Residential Zone Overlay in the proposed Waimakariri District Plan, and the proposal seeks to remove the overlay such that the site is zoned as Large Lot Residential Zone. If the rezoning is approved, it is estimated that the site will enable the development of approximately 46 new households.

As part of the rezoning, an Outline Development Plan (ODP) is proposed for the area and this is shown on page 3 of the attached figures Appendix 2.

2. METHODOLOGY

Refer to Appendix 1 for assessment methodology and terms used when assessing landscape and visual effects of the proposal.

3. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

3.1 EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscape character is the combination and composition of biophysical elements such as topography, vegetation, built form and sensory qualities perceived by humans. Landscape character is also spiritual, cultural, and social associations.

The receiving environment of the Loburn Sefton Downlands is characterised by smaller pastoral farming paddocks, with boundaries often delineated by well-established shelter belts of exotic species and rural dwellings surrounded by large trees. The site is bounded by Cones Road to the west, Dixons Road to the south and a gravel access road to the north (known locally as Harris Lane) which services access to 8 properties. The proposed site has a relatively flat topography with only minor undulations and a gentle gradient from north to south. The site has typical rural characteristics found within the Loburn Sefton Downlands including shelterbelts and agricultural paddocks. There is a 220kv transmission line that runs through the eastern part of the site, which has a 12m setback on either side. The rural infrastructure and shelter belts, though disrupting the continual views, have become integral to the rural aesthetic and identity of the area. The natural characteristics of the Loburn Sefton Downlands is considered to be modified, with a rural character as opposed to a natural character.

The Ashley Forest forms a distinct visual backdrop to the Loburn Sefton Downlands Area. A plantation forest is located on Mt Grey with the surrounding downlands area creating a transition both in landform and land use. The main characteristics of the downlands area is medium and small sized pastoral farming, with small areas of forestry and vegetated gullies extending down from the adjacent steeper slopes. A small part of the Ashley Forest extends into this area and there are also some plantation forestry operations and woodlots scattered

throughout the Loburn Downlands. The area around Loburn and Loburn North is more closely vegetated with exotic shelterbelts and amenity plantings directly surrounding residential dwellings. Other areas are predominantly used for pastoral grazing with the size of land holdings varying from small to large. The buildings in the downlands area range from homes and farm utility sheds clustered in well-established settings to relatively new medium to large residential dwellings. These patterns are rural in character resulting from the density of small rural lots surrounded by pastoral farming land¹.

Existing Vegetation types in the receiving environment are predominantly exotic species, with small pockets of native species located near drains and paddock boundaries. Vegetation is mainly used for shelter belts which run along the paddock boundaries and includes species such as *Pinus radiata*, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, and *Eucalyptus* varying in height between 7 – 15m. The shelter belts are orientated to block the prevailing winds and are primarily located to delineate property boundaries, and along roads. The majority of the site is open grass fields, with a minor water way and the overhead transmission lines on the eastern part of the site.

Overall, the vegetation cover in the area is considered to have a low sensitivity to change, given the high level of fast growing introduced exotic species and the lack of native vegetation.

Existing Drains & Natural Character, there are two farm drains that run through the site, one on the northeastern side of the site and one smaller one in the southeastern corner, these are shown on the proposed ODP and run in a north-south direction across the eastern part of the site. These drains are considered of low



Figure 1 – View looking east across the site, the low point / waterway on the southwestern corner can be seen in the foreground, this area is designated as stormwater reserve.



Figure 2 – View looking northwest across the site, the waterway that runs along the eastern part of the site can be seen in the distance. This area will become a stormwater reserve.

¹ Boffa Miskell WDC Rural-Boundary-Outline-for-District-Plan-Review-DPR-REVISION.pdf

sensitivity and are generally low points in the topography, where water gathers in the wetter months and in severe weather events. Within the site the two drains have no planting and are situated within the large paddocks. The drains have no edge or soil banks. No timber or concrete structures were noted. No native indigenous species of significance were noted, and presently the drains are considered to have a low sensitivity to change.

Existing Built Form, residential dwellings and farm structures are common throughout the area. The scale, character, form, and materiality of these structures vary throughout the receiving environment. There are several existing dwellings adjacent to the proposed site along Carrs Road and Cones Road. Dwellings are of typical rural residential character, having irregular bulk and location which are often supported by additional infrastructure and are separated by large fields and exotic vegetation.

The site is directly adjacent to the rural residential development of Loburn Lea, (which is zoned as Residential 4B in the operative District Plan and is proposed to be Large Lot Residential Zone in the proposed District Plan). Lots in Loburn Lea have an average size of approximately 5000m², with access off Carrs Road and Dixons Road. It is approximately 3km to the north of Rangiora where development has a typical medium density suburban character, and 2km northwest of Ashley Village where development has a typical rural suburban character and density.

Overall, the receiving environment has a rural and rural-residential, semi-open character on the outskirts of Rangiora which is considered a rural suburban township. There are various structures including dwellings, auxiliary structures, power lines and exotic vegetation clustered throughout the landscape, typical of rural landscapes within the Loburn and Ashley area. Some areas exhibit a high level of compartmentalisation (western side of Carrs Road) and are considered to have a moderate-low sensitivity to change.

3.2 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The character of the receiving environment is semi-open; to the east it is rural and is used primarily for agricultural purposes. To the west and south the character changes from rural to a rural residential character with lifestyle blocks, associated dwellings and landscaping creating a smaller compartmentalized pattern leading to a reduction in open character when compared to the open paddocks to the east.

The proposed development as shown on the ODP modifies the landscape of the existing site from one that is semi-open and agricultural in character to one that is more developed in nature, where infrastructure and amenities are more concentrated. Whilst the proposal does not physically modify the surrounding rural farmland and the surrounding lifestyle blocks, it changes the land use of the site and brings with it changes to the visual amenity and rural outlook currently experienced by adjoining properties. The proposed lot/section sizes will be a minimum of 5000m² as expected under a Large Lot Residential zoning.

To integrate the proposed development within the rural surroundings, the ODP creates the opportunity to introduce several measures to retain and introduce aspects of rural character through the mitigation of fencing types/position, additional landscape planting and bulk and location of development. The ODP also proposes design features such as the naturalisation of drains, additional green spaces, and street layouts that are of a rural typology. This approach will assist designers at the subdivision stage to ensure the development integrates into the landscape character of Loburn and the wider rural environment.

Character - The landscape and natural character of the site is considered to be already substantially modified, having been developed for agricultural use. The proposed ODP has incorporated the two minor drains into the design and will ensure their protection and enhancement by developing two riparian corridors that will provide

a natural buffer and potentially help create an ecological corridor from the Ashley River to the Ashley Forest. The current condition of the drains reflects the existing agricultural practices with the lack of protection or native riparian planting, an aspect which can be improved with the proposed ODP. Amenity values are to be enhanced and retained through native riparian and street tree planting which will be developed at the subdivision stage. The character of the area is considered to have a low sensitivity to change, and the magnitude of change is considered to be **less than minor**.

Topography - The existing topography is relatively flat, undulating slightly in a north-south direction. This means that the construction of dwellings and the road network will not require more than minor earthworks. The biggest change to topography will be the construction of open green space for stormwater management within the site. The effects on the existing topography are considered to be **less than minor**.

Vegetation - There is currently limited existing vegetation, and what is there is predominantly exotic species, the proposal can include additional vegetation being along the streets, private lots, public spaces and stormwater systems and reserves, which is considered to enhance the environment and help to retain existing rural qualities. Therefore, the effects on the existing vegetation are considered to be **less than minor**.

Drains - The natural drains within the site have been identified and the proposal can incorporate swales and open space stormwater reserves which can include additional planting and help with water management and infiltration of water runoff. In terms of adverse effects on the drains, only positive effects are expected to result from the proposal. Therefore, the effects on the existing drains that are identified on the ODP are considered to be **less than minor**.

Built Form & Structures - Built form within this wider rural-residential area varies, the density notably increases with new subdivision development as can be seen to the west with Loburn Lea. There will be an increase in the number of built structures, which will change the receiving environment's character from rural to rural-residential. Additional dwellings can be absorbed into the receiving environment while maintaining key landscape elements, such as natural screening. The effects on the existing built structures are considered to be **less than minor**.

Overall, the landscape character and land use of the area will shift from semi-open and agriculturally focused to a more compartmentalised character. Through several mitigation measures, the rural residential character similar to what can be seen in the Loburn Lea development will be retained and enhanced, where possible.

3.3 STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

The following phase of the landscape assessment evaluates landscape values, visual amenity or significant landscapes. The relevant Statutory Documents have been identified and the objectives, policies, and rules contained within them are used as a basis for assessing the proposed development and are referred to below:

- The Waimakariri District Plan (Operative & Proposed).
- Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)
- Waimakariri Rural Residential Development Strategy June 2019

3.4 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE VALUES

The proposal is located within the Rural Zone in the Waimakariri District and has been assessed below against the relevant Objectives, Policies and Rules of the Waimakariri District Plan (Operative & Proposed), the RMA

and the Waimakariri Rural Residential Development Strategy. These relate to landscape character, landscape values and visual amenity: (only relevant objectives and policies are assessed).

3.4.1 Waimakariri District Plan – Rural Zones (Operative & Proposed)

Under the Waimakariri District Plan the site is located within the Rural Zone and is not located within an Outstanding Natural Landscape/landscape of value or have any noted features. The Waimakariri District Plan identifies several Objectives and Policies which are considered relevant to this Plan Change from a Landscape perspective follow:

Rule 14

Objective 14.1.1 Maintain and enhance both rural production and the rural character of the Rural Zones, which is characterised by:

- *The dominant effect of paddocks, trees, natural features, and agricultural, pastoral, or horticultural activities*
- *Separation between dwelling/houses to maintain privacy and a sense of openness.*
- *A dwelling/house clustered with ancillary buildings and structures on the same site.*
- *Farm buildings and structures close to lot boundaries including roads.*
- *Generally quiet – but some significant intermittent and/or seasonal noise from farming activities*
- *Clean air - but with some significant short term and/or seasonal smells associated with farming activities.*
- *Limited signage in the Rural Zone*

Response

The proposed plan change has given careful consideration and application of design treatment to matters such as road hierarchy, density, spatial layout, and, existing blue networks which exist on site. While maintaining aspects of openness and rural character where possible, the development will not have any significant effects on aspects such as noise or smell to the wider environment. The proposal will be viewed as a natural extension of the existing Loburn Lea development and is consistent with the S32 Report and Rural Residential Development Strategy prepared by WDC which identifies the site for future change from rural to rural-residential (Large Lot Residential).

Policy 14.1.1.1 Avoid subdivision and/or dwelling house development that results in any loss of rural character or is likely to constrain lawfully established farming activities.

Response

As stated above, the rezoning has carefully considered the importance of the existing rural residential character in the receiving environment. The rural residential development of Loburn Lea is located adjacent to the proposal on the western side of Cones Road, and the development under the rezoning is likely to appear as a natural extension of this. Due to the existing land use and density of residential dwellings adjacent to the site, and the already smaller lifestyle blocks that are predominantly within the Loburn area, the proposal is not likely to constrain established farming activities.

Policy 14.1.1.2 Maintain the continued domination of the Rural Zones by intensive and extensive agricultural, pastoral and horticultural land use activities.

Response

While the receiving environment is zoned Rural, there has been a significant shift from high amenity productive land to one that has a higher density of dwellings. Adjacent to the proposal on the western side of Cones Road is Loburn Lea, a residential development of varying lot sizes (an average of approximately 5000m²), with more intensive, productive farming occurring to the south and east of the site.

Policy 14.1.1.3 Maintain and enhance the environmental qualities such as natural features, air and noise levels, including limited signage and rural retail activities that contribute to the distinctive character of the Rural Zones, consistent with a rural working environment.

Response

The rezoning seeks to maintain the rural character by enhancing and maintaining the two minor drains that run north south on the eastern and western corners of the site.

Policy 14.1.1.4 Maintain rural character as the setting for Residential 4A and 4B Zone.

Response

Although the proposed rezoning is not adjacent to any existing Residential 4A or 4B Zones. Loburn Lea is directly to the west of the site, on the western side of Cones Road, and the proposed lot sizes will be a minimum of 5000m², which will continue the rural residential outlook for existing Residential 4A and 4B Zones (proposed as LLRZ in the PDP) and the site will remain one that is more open and rural in character.

3.4.2 Resource Management Act 1991

Section 6 of the RMA identifies matters of national importance: *“In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:*

s.6 (b) *The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.*

s.6 (c) *The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.”*

Other matters are included under **Section 7**: *“In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to -*

(c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.”

Response

The site of the proposed rezoning is not considered to be within an outstanding natural landscape or have any features or significant indigenous vegetation. The minor drains within the site will be protected and enhanced as the proposal incorporates swales and open space stormwater reserves which will include additional planting and help with water management and infiltration of water runoff, only positive effects are expected to result from the proposal.

3.4.3 Waimakariri Rural Residential Development Strategy June 2019

This Strategy provides the framework for the future provision of land zoned for rural residential purposes in the Waimakariri District. It is identified in *Part 2 'Directions of Growth'* that both Ashely & Loburn are logical areas for potential growth. The Loburn Lea Residential 4B Zone area is located directly west of the proposed site and is approximately 40 hectares, containing 44 lots. It is anticipated that this rural residential 4B zone will naturally extend past the existing Loburn Lea area east into the surrounding farmland.

The proposed rezoning is considered to be a natural extension of the existing residential development at Loburn Lea. While the proposed density is higher than the existing land use, the rezoning will have an overall density that is the same as Loburn Lea, with the Large Lot Residential Zone for Loburn Lea and the site both specifying a minimum of 5,000m². It is considered appropriate for its setting on the edge of the Rangiora township when considering the significant addition to development capacity that contributes to well-functioning suburban environments. It is considered the site is in sequence with surrounding development adding to the capacity of Loburn and Rangiora, while retaining an overall rural residential character.

3.5 EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

The visual context of the receiving environment is considered to be a 1.5km offset from the edge of the site. This distance has been used due to the receiving environment's flat topography, resulting in visual effects which could result from the proposal (refer views from further away either not being possible or being indiscernible at distance. A series of key viewpoints were selected to show a representative sample of the likely to Appendix 2 for the relevant photos). Viewpoints are generally located on public land, and where possible located as close as possible to existing or proposed residential dwellings. In assessing the potential effect of a proposal, the quality and openness of the view is considered These were as follows:

VP1 - View looking south from 287 Cones Road

VP2 - View looking northeast from Cones Road & Dixons Road Intersection

VP3 - View looking southeast from 295 Cones Road

VP4 - View looking southeast from 308 Cones Road

The following table outlines the potential visual effects each Visually Sensitive Receptor might receive. The effects take into account the likely sensitivity of the receptor (based on type), combined with the likely magnitude of effects (a combination of distance from the proposal and degree of change) to determine what the likely residual effects from the proposal will be.

Table 1: Assessment of Effects on Visually Sensitive Receptors

Viewpoint	Visually Sensitive Receptors (VSR)	Distance from Proposal (m)	Type of View (open, partial, screened)	Sensitivity of VSR	Magnitude of Change	Effects (in RMA Terms)
1	Residents from properties at 279, 287, 295 and 303 Cones Rd	60-80	PARTIALLY SCREENED	Low -Moderate	Low	Less than Minor
	Vehicle users travelling south along Cones Rd	0	OPEN	Low	Very Low	Less than Minor
2	Vehicle users travelling north along Cones Rd	0	OPEN	Low	Very Low	Less than Minor
3	Residents at 295 Cones Rd	60	PARTIALLY SCREENED	Moderate	Low	Less than Minor
	Vehicle users along Cones Rd	0	OPEN	Low	Very Low	Less than Minor
4	Residents at 308 Cones Rd	30	OPEN	Moderate	Low	Less than Minor
	Vehicle users travelling along the gravel access Rd	0	OPEN	Low	Very Low	Less than Minor

VIEWPOINT 1 – VIEW LOOKING SOUTH FROM 287 CONES ROAD

Description of existing view – Views are open looking south across the site from Cones Road, with exotic shelterbelts and planting that run east west along Dixons Road creating a backdrop and a break in the open views. The site is to the left and is an open paddock sloping gently from north to south.

Effects on visual amenity – Open views will be experienced by those travelling south along Cones Road, the views experienced will change from a rural outlook to one that is rural residential, the addition of the stormwater reserve in the southwestern corner will provide a buffer and screening to the ODP area. The residents at 287 and 279, have extensive planting along the road boundary, and views will be limited to when entering and exiting their properties. Visual effects of the proposal are assessed as **low (or less than minor)**. Mitigation measure **MM1, MM4 MM5, MM6, MM7, MM8** will help to reduce any perceived residual visual effects.

VIEWPOINT 2 – VIEW LOOKING NORTHEAST FORM CONES RD & DIXONS RD INTERSECTION

Description of existing view – Views are open looking northeast across the site from the Cones Road, Dixon Road intersection. The rolling topography of the Loburn hills can be seen in the background with exotic shelterbelts and planting dotted throughout, creating a backdrop and a break in the open views. The site is to the right and is an open paddock sloping gently from north to south.

Effects on visual amenity – Open views will be experienced by those travelling north along Cones Road, and when travelling east along Dixons Road, the views experienced will change from a rural outlook to one that is rural residential, the addition of the stormwater reserve in the southwestern corner will provide a buffer and screening to the ODP area. Visual effects of the proposal are assessed as **low (or less than minor)**. Mitigation measure **MM1, MM5, MM6, MM7, MM8** will help to reduce any perceived residual visual effects.

VIEWPOINT 3 – VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST FROM 295 CONES ROAD

Description of existing view – Views are open looking east across the site from approximately 295 Cones Road, with exotic shelterbelts and planting that runs along the eastern boundary creating a backdrop to the view. The view is rural pastoral paddocks and is considered to have a low

Effects on visual amenity – Open views will be experienced by those travelling south along Cones Road, and the residents at 295 and 303 Cones Road, the views experienced will change from a rural outlook to one that is rural residential, the addition of boundary planting and fencing will provide a buffer and screening to the ODP area. Visual effects of the proposal are assessed as **low (or less than minor)**. Mitigation measure **MM1, MM2, MM3, MM4, MM5, MM6, MM7, MM8** will help to reduce any perceived residual visual effects.

VIEWPOINT 4 – VIEW LOOKING WEST ACROSS SITE FROM HARRIS LANE

Description of existing view – Views are open looking south across the site from Cones Road, with exotic shelterbelts and planting that run east west along Dixons Road creating a backdrop and a break in the open views. The site is to the right and is an open paddock sloping gently from north to south.

Effects on visual amenity – Views will be experienced by those travelling west along the gravel access road from Cones Road, the views experienced will change from a rural outlook to one that is rural residential. The property at 308A will experience views when driving along the access road, and when looking east, the property has large shelterbelts along the western, and eastern boundaries and part of the southern boundary. Visual effects of the proposal are assessed as **low (or less than minor)**. Mitigation measure **MM1, MM4, MM6, MM7, MM8** will help to reduce any perceived residual visual effects.

3.6 SUMMARY OF EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

In terms of visual effects, the proposed plan change is considered to have the following residual effects.

Effects on Nearby Residents

The bulk and density of the proposal is consistent with the character of the adjacent rural residential environment and with the inclusion of the proposed mitigation measures a high level of amenity can be retained. The properties with the largest potential adverse effects are residents at 279, 287, 295, 303 and 308A Cones Road, and 163, 147 Dixons Road due to their semi-open and open views towards the Site, although in many cases views are already screened due to existing landscape planting. Other residents adjacent to the proposal may have open views but these will not likely result in adverse effects, although there will be a change. The residents along Cones Road can reasonably expect development in some form on the site due to its inclusion in the Rural Residential Strategy and as a Large Lot Residential Zone Overlay in the proposed District Plan (and no submissions were made that opposed this). Given the proposed lot sizes, and design of the proposal, most residents will, due to their separation from the proposed development by existing roads and by either existing or proposed landscape planting, experience a Low magnitude of change or Less than minor adverse effects.

Effects on the Roadside and Users

Views of the proposal are generally open from the surrounding roads. Given the scale and character of the proposed rezoning, less than minor adverse effects are likely for road users. For the sections along Cones Road and Dixons Road, where potential adverse effects could result from the long stretch of proposed development, vehicle access is limited, limiting views into the site.

Overall, the proposal would result in a change in character from a semi open rural farming character to one that is more rural residential in nature with a higher level of compartmentalisation.

4. MITIGATION MEASURES

The following recommendations and mitigation measures are proposed to avoid, remedy or mitigate any potential adverse effects on the visual amenity as viewed from the surrounding receiving environment, noting some of the measures below are typically addressed at the subdivision or engineering approval stage.

- MM1** Provide large lot sizes to retain the rural-residential outlook and character of the area.
- MM2** Create streets which have a high level of amenity, provide for different modal allocation, and allow for an efficient use of land by having a street hierarchy with different road reserve widths depending on their classification.

These considerations would be addressed through the detailed design and consenting of any subdivision proposal(s) within the plan change areas.
- MM3** Create a well-connected walking and cycling network internally with the opportunity created to connect to key destinations (Loburn Domain, Ashley River), prioritising walking and cycling with a mix of on-road, separate, and off-road facilities to promote active transport modes.
- MM4** Allow for a high-quality landscape treatment at the entranceway and along the road corridor, minimizing potential effects on Cones Road and Dixons Road entrances.
- MM5** Provide a quantity of greenspace and facilities appropriate for the future population with green links extending through the site and connecting with adjoining recreation areas.
- MM6** Solid fencing should preferably be restricted to rear and side yards to retain an open character along streets and existing roads or at a minimum front boundary fencing will have restrictions. Side fencing should not extend forward of the front wall closest to the street of a house or would need to be limited in height.

This is a matter that would be incorporated into developer covenants that manage and implement specific design outcomes sought within the plan change areas.
- MM7** Identify and enhance waterway features on site.

MM8 Landscape Treatment A is designed to provide a visual buffer between the ODP and adjacent rural land and roads. The treatment consists of a single row of shelter belt trees (maximum spacing of 2000mm centres), using one, or more, of the following species:

- Popular
- Macrocarpa
- Pittosporum
- Totara
- Ribbonwood, or similar

5. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed Outline Development Plan is consistent in terms of density when compared to the nearby residential development at Loburn Lea, the proposed rezoned site will have similar sized lots.

With regards to the Waimakariri Rural Residential Development Strategy June 2019, the proposed Outline Development Plan will add additional residential capacity while maintaining the rural residential character of the existing landscape and zoning that aligns with Residential 4B (which has now been superseded as a land use category by Large Lot Residential). This increase in residential density is considered appropriate to meet the outcomes desired by the Waimakariri District Council. Any amenity effects on existing and future residents can be successfully mitigated through the proposed mitigation measures.

In terms of landscape character (including rural) and natural character of the area, subject to the mitigation measures proposed above, the proposed rezoning will result in a Low magnitude of change on the existing rural residential and rural-lifestyle character, and values. The existing open pastoral character will change to a more enclosed, compartmentalised rural-residential character with a very low residential density. The existing character of the receiving environment is already modified with a mix of open fields, rural lifestyle properties and new semi-urban development. The only natural features of note are the two drains identified on the ODP and these are proposed to be enhanced..

In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural-residential properties will experience a change in the existing views, but these are not considered adverse. Nearby rural residential properties, current and future including the Loburn Lea residential development, overlook the site and will have a mix of open, partial, and screened views of future development. Changes to views experienced by these residents are considered Low (Less than Minor - Effects) given the character of existing views, the existing level of development created by the Loburn Lea precincts and existing boundary treatments.

In terms of Landscape Values and the objectives and policies of the Waimakariri District Plan, the proposed ODP recognises and works with the landscape elements of value while creating a well-functioning residential development.

Overall, adverse residual effects from the proposal are considered to be Less than Minor with a Low magnitude of change.

APPENDIX 1: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The landscape and visual impact assessment considers the likely effects of the proposal in a holistic sense. There are three components to the assessment:

1. Identification of the receiving environment and a description of the existing landscape character, including natural character;
2. The landscape assessment is an assessment of the proposal against the existing landscape values;
3. The visual impact assessment is primarily concerned with the effects of the proposal on visual amenity and people, evaluated against the character and quality of the existing visual catchment.

The methodology is based on the Te Tangi a Te Manu - [Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guides \(July 2022\)](#)

1.0 LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT


1.1 Landscape Description and Characterisation

Landscape attributes fall into 3 broad categories: biophysical features, patterns and processes; sensory qualities; and spiritual, cultural and social associations, including both activities and meanings.

- Biophysical features, patterns and processes may be natural and/or cultural in origin and range from the geology and landform that shape a landscape to the physical artefacts such as roads that mark human settlement and livelihood.
- Sensory qualities are landscape phenomena as directly perceived and experienced by humans, such as the view of a scenic landscape, or the distinctive smell and sound of the foreshore.
- Associated meanings are spiritual, cultural, or social associations with particular landscape elements, features, or areas, such as tupuna awa and waahi tapu, and the tikanga appropriate to them, or sites of historic events or heritage. Associative activities are patterns of social activity that occur in particular parts of a landscape, for example, popular walking routes or fishing spots. Associative meanings and activities engender a sense of attachment and belonging.

Describing the landscape character is a process of interpreting the composite and cumulative character of a landscape, i.e. how attributes come together to create a landscape that can be distinguished from other landscapes. International best practice in characterisation has two dimensions of classification: the identification of distinctive types of landscape based on their distinctive patterns of natural and cultural features, processes and influences; and their geographical delineation. The characterisation of a landscape is not to rank or rate a landscape, as all landscapes have character, but determine what landscape attributes combine to give an area its identity, and importantly to determine an area's sensitivity, resilience or capacity for change.

Table 1: Continuum of Natural Character



Natural	Near-natural	Semi-natural (including pastoral agriculture and exotic forests)	Agricultural (arable and intensive cropping)	Near-cultural	Cultural	
Very high-pristine	High	Moderate High	Moderate	Moderate-low	Low	Very Low-nil

1.2 Landscape Values

Following the descriptive phase of landscape assessment, an evaluative phase is undertaken whereby values or significance is ascribed to the landscape.

Where Planning Documents have identified Outstanding Natural Features or Landscapes, the objectives, policies and rules contained within the plan are used as the basis for landscape significance or value, and it is these values which the proposal is assessed against. Where there is some uncertainty of the landscape value, such as when the District Plan has a broad description of an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL), but it is not site specific, or the site neighbours an ONL, it is often necessary to complete an assessment against the values of the District Plan for completeness sake. Most district plans have policies or objectives which are relevant to Landscape and Natural Character if proposed in a rural or sensitive environment.

An accepted approach, where the landscape value of the site is not identified in the District Plan under Section 6(b) of the RMA, is to use criteria identified in *Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc. & Ors v QLDC [2000] NZRMA 59* (generally referred to as the Amended Pigeon Bay criteria). The assessment criteria have been grouped into 3 broad categories or 'landscape attributes' which are to be considered:

1. Biophysical elements, patterns and processes;
2. Associative meaning and values including spiritual, cultural or social associations; and
3. Sensory or perceptual qualities.

2.0 VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In response to section 7(c) of the RMA, an evaluation is undertaken to define and describe visual amenity values. As with aesthetic values, with which amenity values share considerable overlap, this evaluation was professionally-based using current and accepted good practice. Amenity values are defined in the Act as *"those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes."* The visual assessment looks at the sensitivity of receptors to changes in their visual amenity through the analysis of selected representative viewpoints and wider visibility analysis. It identifies the potential sources for visual effect resulting from the Proposal and describes the existing character of the area in terms of openness, prominence, compatibility of the project with the existing visual context, viewing distances and the potential for obstruction of views.¹

The visual impact assessment involves the following procedures:

- Identification of key viewpoints: A selection of key viewpoints is identified and verified for selection during the site visit. The viewpoints are considered representative of the various viewing audiences within the receiving catchment, being taken from public locations where views of the proposal were possible, some of which would be very similar to views from nearby houses. The identification of the visual catchment is

¹ Reference: NZILA Education Foundation - Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management/ Best Practice Guide – Visual Simulations (2.11.2010)

prepared as a desktop study in the first instance using Council GIS for aeriels and contours. This information is then ground-truthed to determine the key viewpoints and potential audience. Depending on the complexity of the project a 'viewshed' may be prepared which highlights the 'Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence' (TZVI) from where a proposal will theoretically be visible from. It is theoretical as the mapping does not take into account existing structures or vegetation so is conservative in its results.

- Assessment of the degree of sensitivity of receptors to changes in visual amenity resulting from the proposal: Factors affecting the sensitivity of receptors for evaluation of visual effects include the value and quality of existing views, the type of receiver, duration or frequency of view, distance from the proposal and the degree of visibility. For example, those who view the change from their homes may be considered highly sensitive. The attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook from their home will have a significant effect on their perception of the quality and acceptability of their home environment and their general quality of life. Those who view the change from their workplace may be considered to be only moderately sensitive as the attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook will have a less important, although still material, effect on their perception of their quality of life. The degree to which this applies also depends on factors such as whether the workplace is industrial, retail or commercial. Those who view the change whilst taking part in an outdoor leisure activity may display varying sensitivity depending on the type of leisure activity and a greater sensitivity to those commuting. For example, walkers or horse riders in open country on a long-distance trip may be considered to be highly sensitive to change while other walkers may not be so focused on the surrounding landscape. Those who view the change whilst travelling on a public thoroughfare will also display varying sensitivity depending on the speed and direction of travel and whether the view is continuous or occasionally glimpsed.
- Identification of potential mitigation measures: These may take the form of revisions/refinements to the engineering and architectural design to minimise potential effects, and/or the implementation of landscape design measures (e.g. screen tree planting, colour design of hard landscape features etc.) to alleviate adverse visual effects and generate potentially beneficial long-term effects.
- Prediction and identification of the effects during operation without mitigation and the residual effects after the implementation of the mitigation measures.

3.0 EFFECTS METHODOLOGY

Analysis of the existing landscape and visual environment is focused upon understanding the functioning of how an environment is likely to respond to external change (the proposal). In terms of the receiving environment, this is the environment upon which a proposed activity might have effects. It is permissible (and often desirable or necessary) to consider the future state of the environment upon which effects will occur, including:

- the future state of the environment as it might be modified by the utilisation of rights to carry out permitted activities
- the environment as it might be modified by implementing resource consents that have been granted at the time a particular application is considered, where it appears likely that those resource consents will be implemented.

The assessment evaluates the resilience of the existing character, values or views and determines their capacity to absorb change. The proposal is assessed in its 'unmitigated' form and then in its mitigated form to determine

the likely residual effects. The analysis identifies opportunities, risks, threats, costs and benefits arising from the potential change.

Assessing the magnitude of change (from the proposal) is based on the Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines (July 2022)² with a seven-point scale, being:

VERY LOW / LOW / MODERATE-LOW / MODERATE / MODERATE-HIGH / HIGH / VERY HIGH

The guidelines provide the following table which is a useful comparison for analysis of the magnitude of change (NZILA) with the likely effects (RMA). Table 2: Change and Effects comparison table, comparison, Te Tangi a te Manu Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Guidelines, Page 151.

			SIGNIFICANT			
LESS THAN MINOR		MINOR	MORE THAN MINOR			
VERY LOW	LOW	LOW-MOD	MODERATE	MOD-HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH

The Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Guidelines however do not quantify 'what' the Magnitude of Change is. Below is a guide to how we have assessed the Magnitude of Change for this proposal:

- (a) Very Low – the change is negligible or are not readily discernible. For example the proposal may not be visible to the receptor or the change in character is negligible when compared to the permitted baseline and/or receiving environment.
- (b) Low – the change is discernible but do not adversely affect the viewer experience. For example it may be possible for the receptor to see the proposal but the effects are not considered adverse due to the quality of the current view or the oblique nature of the view.
- (c) Moderate – Low – the change is discernible and start to adversely affect viewer experience.
- (d) Moderate – the change is discernible and have an effect on the quality of the view but with the main 'view qualities' still intact.
- (e) Moderate-High – the change is discernible and changes the quality of the existing view, potentially with the loss of views.
- (f) High – the change is discernible and there is a loss of views or the changes greatly affect the quality of the view so that the character of existing view is fundamentally changed.
- (g) Very High – the change is discernible and there is a total loss of views or the changes significantly affect the quality of the view so that the character of existing view is fundamentally changed.

² https://nzila.co.nz/media/uploads/2022_09/Te_Tangi_a_te_Manu_Version_01_2022_.pdf

In determining the extent of adverse effects, taking into account the sensitivity of the landscape or receptor combined with the Magnitude of Change proposed, the level of effects is along a continuum to ensure that each effect has been considered consistently and in turn cumulatively. This continuum may include the following effects (based on the descriptions provided on the Quality Planning website – Determining the Extent of Adverse Effects³):

- **Indiscernible Effects** No effects at all or are too small to register.
- **Less than Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are discernible day-to-day effects, but too small to adversely affect other persons.
- **Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are noticeable but will not cause any significant adverse impacts.
- **More than Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are noticeable that may cause an adverse impact but could be potentially mitigated or remedied.
- **Significant Adverse Effects that could be remedied or mitigated** An effect that is noticeable and will have a serious adverse impact on the environment but could potentially be mitigated or remedied.
- **Unacceptable Adverse Effects** Extensive adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

4.0 PHOTOGRAPHY METHODOLOGY

All photos are taken using a SONY ALPHA A7 II digital camera with a focal length of 50mm. No zoom was used. In the case of stitched photos used as the viewpoint images, a series of 4 portrait photos were taken from the same position to create a panorama. The photos were stitched together automatically in Adobe Photoshop to create the panorama presented in the figures.

Reference: NZILA Education Foundation - [Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management/ Best Practice Guide – Visual Simulations \(2.11.10\)](#)

5.0 STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Relevant statutory documents in terms of Landscape Values and Visual Amenity are referred to in the LVIA.

³ <https://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/node/837>



APPENDIX TWO - LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FIGURES

308 CONES ROAD LOBURN
FOR ANDY CARR

15 November 2023
PROJECT NO. 2023-090
REVISION B



308 CONES ROAD, WAIMAKARIRI - LVIA FIGURES

Project no: 2023_090
Document title: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Revision: B
Date: 15 NOVEMBER 2023
Client name: ANDY CARR

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DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	REVIEW	APPROVED
A	09/11/2023	FOR COMMENT	NK	DCM	DCM
B	15/11/2023	For Consent	NK	DCM	DCM



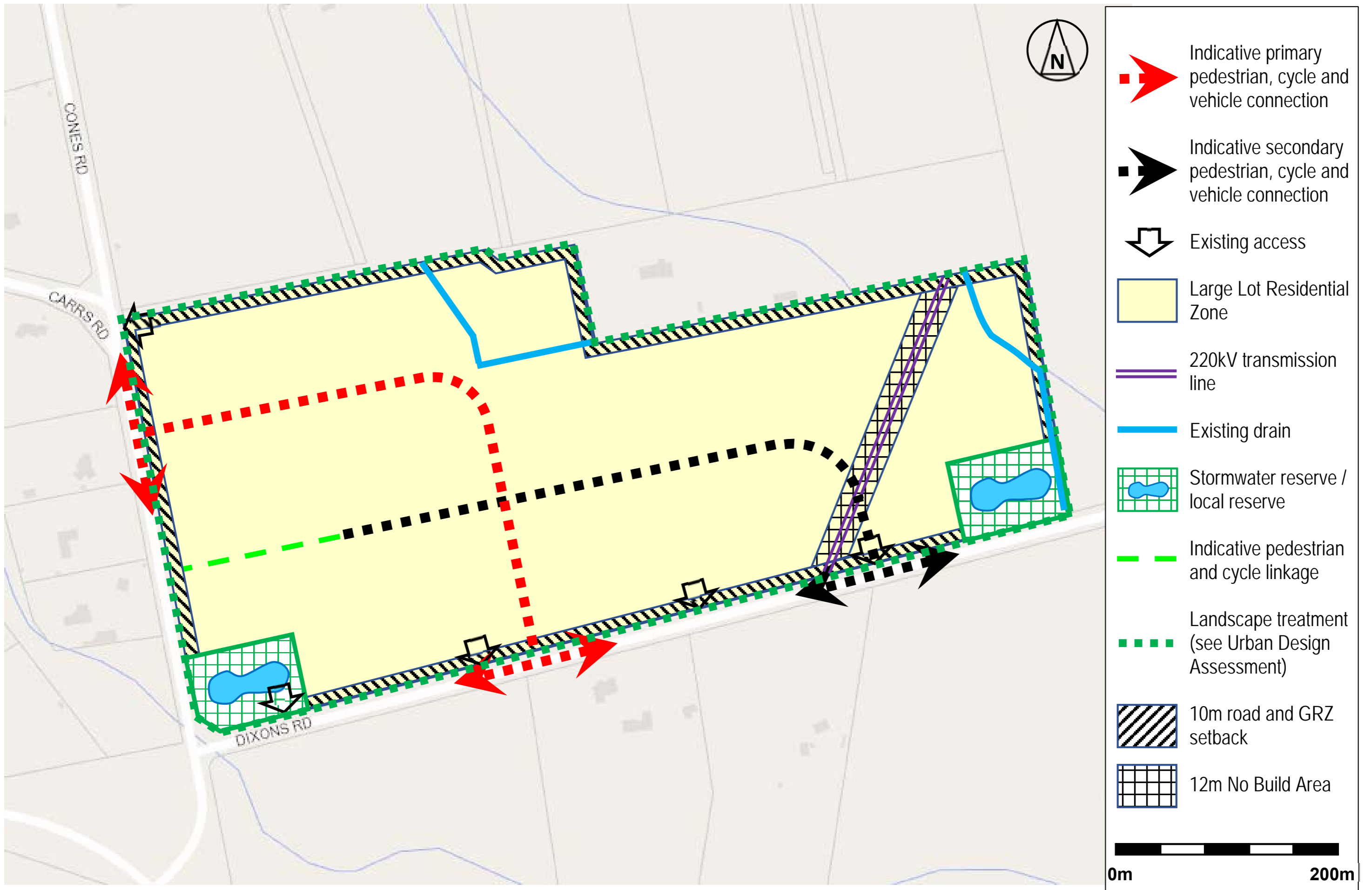
DCM URBAN DESIGN LIMITED

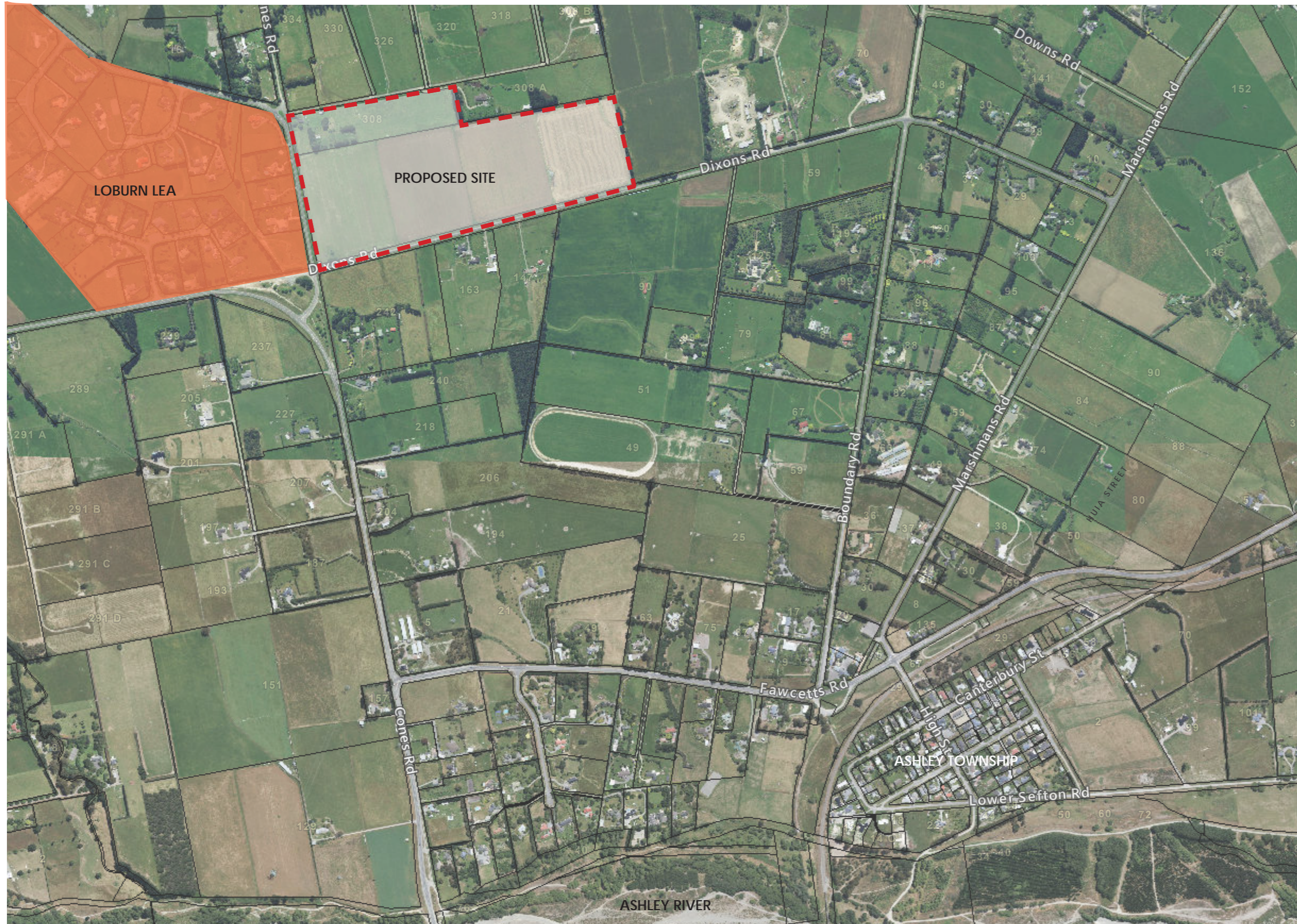
10/245 St Asaph Street
Christchurch 8011

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LEGEND

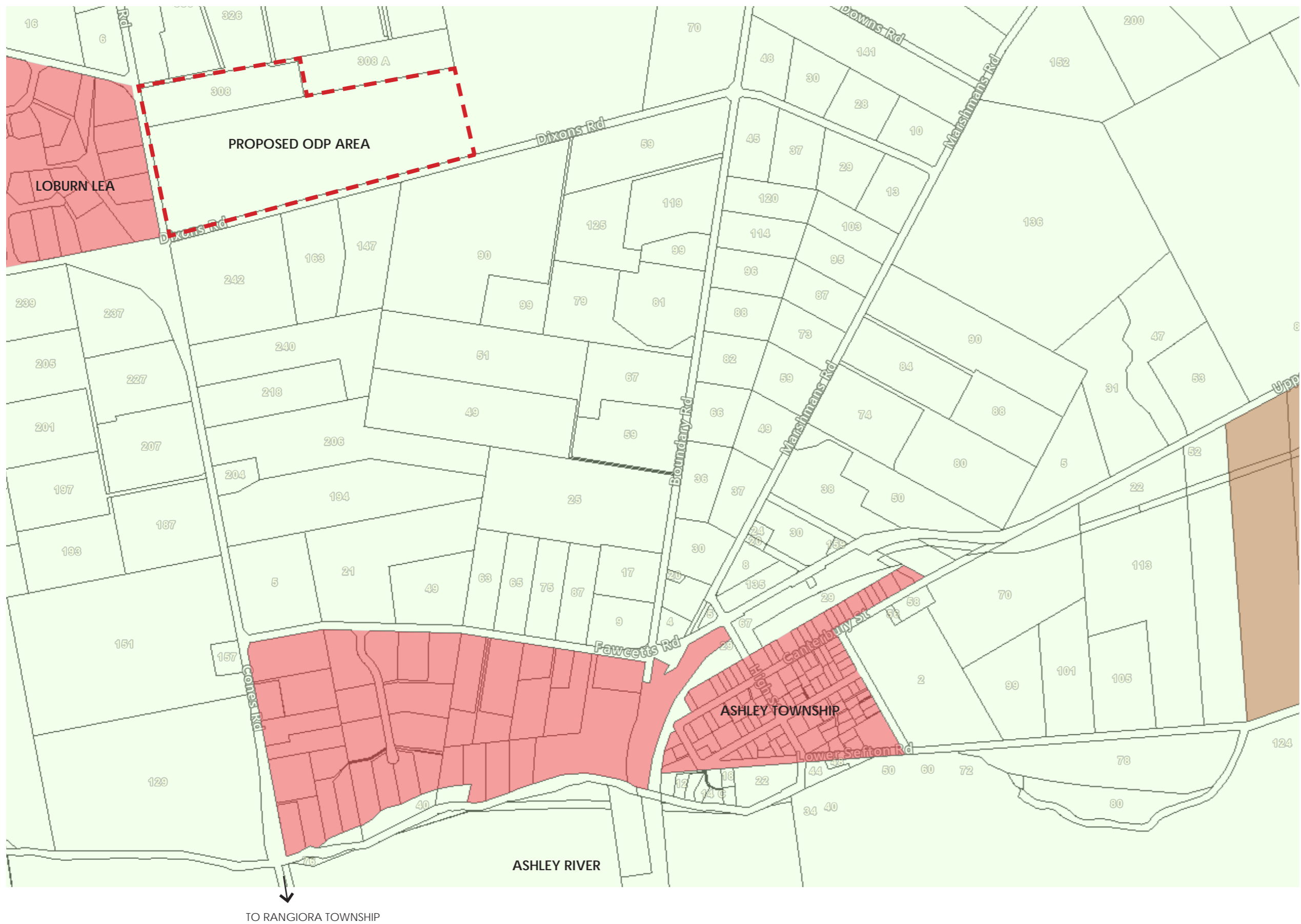
- PROPOSED SITE BOUNDARY
- LOBURN LEA RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

A. LOCATION PLAN (10,000@A3)

↓
TO RANGIORA TOWNSHIP

Map / image source: CANTERBURY MAPS





LEGEND

- - - Outline Development Plan Area
- Residential Zone
- Rural Zone
- Business Zone

A. LOCATION PLAN (10,000@A3)

Map / image source: CANTERBURY MAPS



LEGEND

CHARACTER PHOTOS

- A** Corner of Cones Road & Dixons Road
- B** 303 Cones Road
- C** 50 Fergus Road
- D** View Looking north down Adian Way

VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

- 1** View looking South from 295 Cones Rd
- 2** View looking Northeast from Cones Rd & Dixons Rd Intersection
- 3** View Southeast from 287 Cones Rd
- 4** View looking across site from Harris Lane



A View across the proposed site, from the corner of Cones Road and Dixons Road intersection. The typical rolling hill topography of Loburn can be seen in the background.



B Entranceway of 303 Cones Road, a typical driveway from the Loburn Lea Residential development that is adjacent to the proposed site.



D View looking North down Adian Way from Dixons Road.



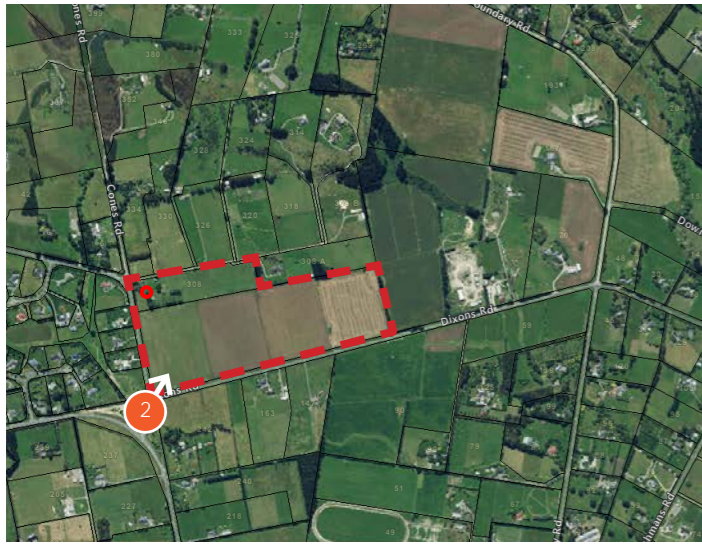
C Property at 50 Fergus Road, showing the larger lot size of the residential properties within the Loburn Lea development.



A. IMAGE LOCATION



B. EXISTING VIEW



A. IMAGE LOCATION



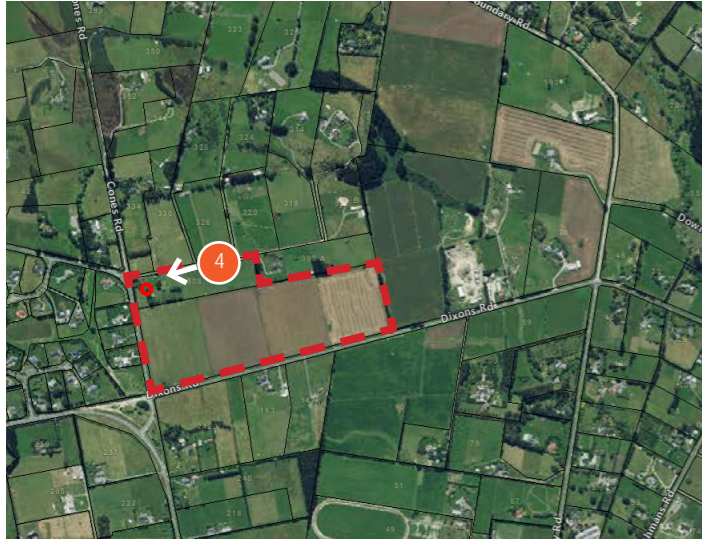
B. EXISTING VIEW



A. IMAGE LOCATION



B. EXISTING VIEW



A. IMAGE LOCATION



B. EXISTING VIEW