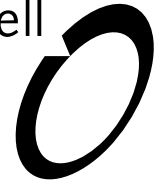




APPENDIX F

Landscape and Visual Assessment

Boffa Miskell



Ryburn & Ōhaupō Road Private Plan Change

Landscape Effects Assessment
Prepared for Honeycomb Developments

8 July 2025





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CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Scope of the report	1
1.2	Project background	1
1.3	Assessment Process	1
2.0	Existing Environment	2
2.1	Landscape Context	2
2.2	Site Description	3
2.3	Visual Catchment	4
3.0	Proposal Description	6
4.0	Relevant Statutory Provisions	8
4.1	Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)	8
4.2	Waipā District Plan (WDP)	8
5.0	Assessment of Effects	10
5.1	Landscape Effects	11
5.2	Visual Effects	12
6.0	Recommendations	13
7.0	Conclusions	15

Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

Appendix 2: Graphic Supplement (bound separately)

Graphic Supplement (bound separately)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scope of the report

Boffa Miskell Limited (BML) has been engaged by Honeycomb Developments to undertake a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LEA) for a proposed Private Plan Change (PPC) located at 4336 Ohaupo Road, Ōhaupō (otherwise referred to as 'The Site' in this report). The Site is approximately 21.505 hectares in area and is zoned Rural within the Waipā District Plan (WDP). The Site is also subject to the State Highway 3 (Hamilton to Te Awamutu) Scenic Corridor policy overlay. This PPC seeks to rezone the Site to Large Lot Residential to enable residential development.

This LEA sets out an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed land use change within the Site, on the immediate and surrounding environment and assess the removal of the Scenic Corridor policy overlay.

1.2 Project background

Boffa Miskell has previously assist Honeycomb Developments with a resource consent application for the three-lots at 4294 Ōhaupō Road, Ōhaupō, that have already been subdivided. For completeness these are also included within the PPC for rezoning.

1.3 Assessment Process

This assessment follows the concepts and principles outlined in *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines*¹. A full method is outlined in **Appendix 1** of this report. In summary, the effects ratings are based upon a seven-point scale which ranges from very low to very high.

A Site visit was undertaken by Jo Soanes, Landscape Architect at Boffa Miskell on Monday 3rd February and May 1st, 2025, for the purpose of understanding the existing wider landscape character, existing Site conditions, the relationship of the Site to the existing surrounding development, visibility and viewing audience. Photographs were taken to illustrate the Site and landscape context.

This assessment is accompanied by a **Graphic Supplement** which includes a Landscape Context Plan, Site Context Plan, ZTV Mapping, Viewpoint Photograph Location Plan, and annotated photographs of the Site and its surrounding environment. Visual simulations were not included in this assessment.

¹ *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines*, Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

2.0 Existing Environment

2.1 Landscape Context

The Site is located within a rural area directly south of the Ōhaupō Township and approximately 8 kilometres north of Te Awamutu. It lies within a broader landscape characterised by predominantly flat to gently undulating, low-lying river plains, interspersed with a network of rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands. This rural landscape is framed by prominent hill country and volcanic landforms, notably the peaks of Maungatautari Mountain, Maungakawa, and Te Tapui to the east, and Mount Pirongia to the west. The fertile soils of this area support productive agricultural land use, contributing to a working rural landscape defined by rectilinear field patterns and linear shelterbelts. The Site itself is not identified as an Outstanding Natural Feature or Landscape (ONFL) under the Waipā District Plan, with the closest ONFL being Mount Pirongia, located approximately 13 kilometres to the southwest.

However, the Site falls within the State Highway 3 (SH3) Scenic Corridor, a designated landscape protection area under the Waipā District Plan, established to maintain landscape quality and visual amenity of views toward key natural features from the highway. This corridor occupies a ridgeline running broadly north–south between Hamilton and Te Awamutu, offering expansive and memorable views towards the volcanic cones (notably Mount Pirongia, which has a high point of 959 metres above sea level), as well as peat lakes such as Lake Rotomanuka, Lake Serpentine, Lake Ngaroto, and Lake Ruatuna, and the undulating rural landscape.

Ōhaupō is the primary settlement in the vicinity, located directly north of the Site. The Township is bounded by State Highway 3 to the east and the North Island Main Trunk Railway (NIMTR) to the west. State Highway 3 serves as the major travel route between Hamilton and Te Awamutu. While much of Ōhaupō remains rural in character, it is identified in the 2050 Waipā District Growth Strategy (Figure 1 Ohaupo Growth Map Waipa District Plan), which sets out an integrated approach to managing growth within the district. Areas adjoining the Town centre are either developed as large-lot residential sections or identified as Growth Cells for future residential development.

There are numerous residential dwellings located within the State Highway 3 Scenic Corridor. Most of these are situated on elevated sites or on land below the road corridor; however, some dwellings are positioned at the same elevation as SH3, which can partially obstruct views across the surrounding landscape.

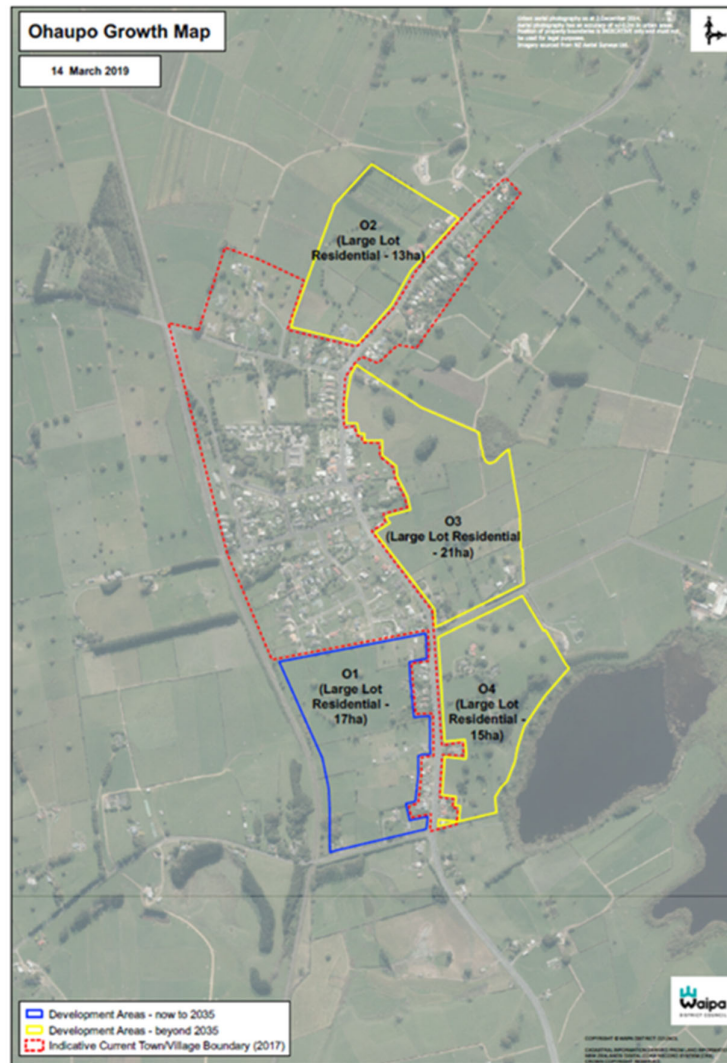


Figure 1 Ohaupo Growth Map Waipā District Plan

2.2 Site Description

The Site comprises approximately 21.505 hectares of rural land located at 4336 Ōhaupō Road (Figure 2 Site Context Plan), situated immediately south of the Ōhaupō township in the Waipā District. It is bound by Ryburn Road to the north, State Highway 3 (Ohaupo Road) to the east, and the North Island Main Trunk Railway (NIMTR) to the west. The surrounding context includes a new three-lot subdivision currently under construction to the immediate northeast, and further north, across Ryburn Road, lies a large-lot residential area developed under the Growth Strategy. The land to the east, south, and west of the Site remains in rural use, comprising open farmland with single-storey dwellings and associated outbuildings. Lake Rotomanuka is located approximately 260 metres northeast of the Site, and the nearest Significant Natural Area (SNA) is located approximately 200 metres away, along the margins of this peat lake. The Site currently contains a number of farm structures, including existing sheds and a water tank positioned in the northeast and southeast corners, adjacent to SH3. There is a farm access off SH3 and Ryburn Road.

Topographically, the Site displays variation in landform. The terrain generally slopes down from the ridge at SH3 towards the railway line to the west, as well as from the northern and southeastern boundaries towards a low point in the southwestern corner. The landform includes both flatter alluvial plains (with slopes <5 degrees) and moderately graded terraces (5–45 degrees), particularly evident along the northern and eastern

boundaries. An historic river terrace, with a westerly aspect, runs approximately north-south through the centre of the Site and is a dominant landform feature. The existing contours range from approximately 71 metres to 40 metres RL. A drainage channel follows the western boundary alongside the railway line and functions as the primary stormwater discharge route. (Refer to Figure 2, Appendix 2).

The Site is predominantly composed of open pastoral grassland, interspersed with isolated exotic trees and informal hedgerows. Established exotic shelterbelts define the northern and northeastern boundaries, while several ponds are situated centrally. Vegetation characteristic of unmanaged rural landscapes is present, including invasive and weedy species such as blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), and greater bindweed (*Calystegia silvatica*).

Scattered mature exotic tree species occur throughout the Site, including liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), London plane (*Platanus × hispanica*), black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), and macrocarpa (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*). Three wetland areas have been identified: one in the southeastern corner and two along the southern boundary.

The Site reflects the typical landscape of the Hamilton Ecological District, where extensive historical land use changes have resulted in the widespread removal of indigenous vegetation, drainage of wetlands, and conversion to exotic pasture.

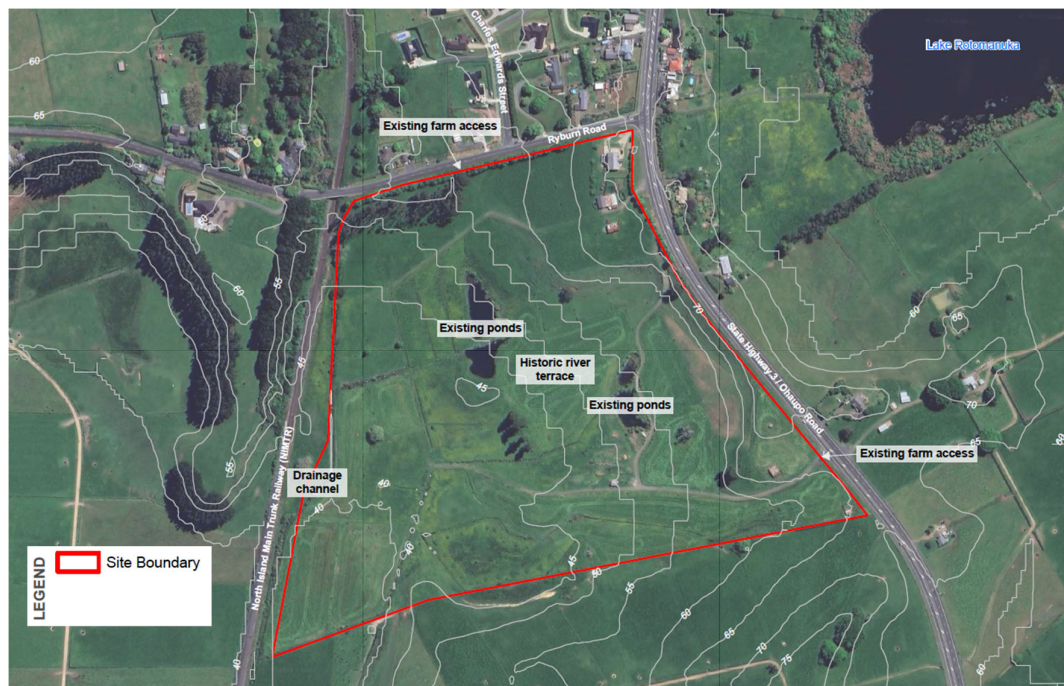


Figure 2 Site Context Plan

2.3 Visual Catchment

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

Due to the elevated aspect of the Site located at Ōhaupō road level and then the sloping and undulating nature of the Site's terrain down towards the railway, the eastern extent of the Site including the existing farms

sheds, water tank and vegetation are visible from State Highway 3. The Site becomes less visible further towards the west due to the sloping nature of the Site.

The Site becomes less discernible, due to the distance and sloping nature of the Site. Viewing audiences from private properties will be those predominantly on State Highway 3 / Ōhaupō Road and Ryburn Road.

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

- Users of State Highway 3 / Ōhaupō Road
 - This viewing audience will have elevated oblique views looking over the Site. Views are transient and partial as the Site is typically observed at speeds of 100km/h and is partially screened by intervening topography and established vegetation adjacent to the road.
- Users of Ryburn Road
 - This viewing audience will have transient and oblique views towards the Site. Glimpsed views are potentially available through gaps between existing vegetation; however the Site is largely screened by intervening established vegetation along the road.
- Users of Charles Edwards Street
 - This viewing audience will have transient and frontal views towards the Site. Glimpsed views are potentially available through gaps between existing vegetation; however the Site is largely screened by existing shelterbelt along northern boundary of the Site.
- Private properties
 - 5 Ryburn Road – this property is located directly northeast of the Site. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and has elevated views looking southwest towards the Site. Existing sheds south of the property partially screens views.
 - 7 and 13 Ryburn Road – these properties are located directly northeast of the Site.
 - 6, 12, 18 and 28 Ryburn Road – these properties are located to the north of the Site across Ryburn Road. These properties contain single-storey dwellings and appear orientated north away from the Site. Potential glimpsed views are available through gaps between existing vegetation; otherwise the Site is largely screened by existing shelterbelt along northern boundary of the Site.
 - 4301 Ohaupo Road – this property is located to the east of the Site across State Highway 3 / Ohaupo Road. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and appears orientated east away from the Site. The Site is largely screened by existing vegetation curtailing the dwelling.
 - 4311 Ohaupo Road – this property is located at a lower elevation to the east of the Site across State Highway 3 / Ohaupo Road. This property contains two two-storey dwellings that appear orientated east, away from the Site. Potential glimpsed views towards the Site are available, however the existing vegetation curtailing the dwellings and along the Site's eastern boundary largely screen views.
 - 4333 Ohaupo Road – this property is located to the east of the Site across State Highway 3 / Ohaupo Road. This property contains a single-storey dwelling that appears orientated northeast away from the Site. Existing vegetation within the property and intervening landform of the Site partially screen views of the Site.
 - 4349 Ohaupo Road – this property is located to the southeast of the Site across State Highway 3 / Ohaupo Road. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and appears orientated northeast away from the Site. Views northwest towards the Site is partially screened by intervening vegetation and topography.

- 4374 Ohaupo Road – this property is located to the south of the Site. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and appears oriented west. Views north and northwest towards the Site are screened by existing vegetation curtailing the dwelling and intervening topography.
- 40, 46, 52, 53 and 55 Ryburn Road – these properties are located to the northwest of the Site. These properties contain single-storey dwellings and appear orientated either north to northeast or west away from the Site. Views looking east and southeast towards the Site are either screened by existing vegetation curtailing the dwellings or vegetation in the wider landscape.
- 73 Ryburn Road – this property is located approximately 360 metres northeast of the Site. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and associated farm sheds. Views from the dwelling looking east and southeast towards the Site are screened by vegetation curtailing the dwelling.
- 123 Ryburn Road – this property is located approximately 700 metres west of the Site. This property contains a single-storey dwelling and associated farm shed. Open views from the dwelling looking west towards the Site are partially obscured by intervening vegetation.
- 137, 145 and 147 Ryburn Road – these properties are located approximately 810-890 metres west of the Site. These properties contain single-storey dwellings and have open views looking east. Intervening vegetation partially screens views towards the Site.

3.0 Proposal Description

The development (*refer to Figure 3*) will be accessed from Ryburn Road, with a new internal road constructed to facilitate vehicle circulation throughout the subdivision. The proposal includes the creation of approximately 40 residential lots (*refer to Figure 4*) ranging in size from approximately 2,526m² to 9,300m². These lots will be accessed via several accessway lots off Ryburn Road.

Stormwater management is proposed to be achieved through a combination of overland flow paths, roadside soakage swales, and on-lot stormwater tanks. Each residential lot will require its own water supply and wastewater servicing, consistent with rural-residential development standards. Earthworks will involve the cutting of elevated landforms along the northern and eastern edges of the Site and the placement of fill in the southwestern portion to create suitable platforms for development.

Landscape treatments are proposed to include rural-appropriate features such as post-and-rail fencing to reinforce the rural character and visually integrate the development into its wider landscape context.

A comprehensive proposal is detailed in Assessment of Environment Effects (AEE) prepared by Mitchell Daysh.

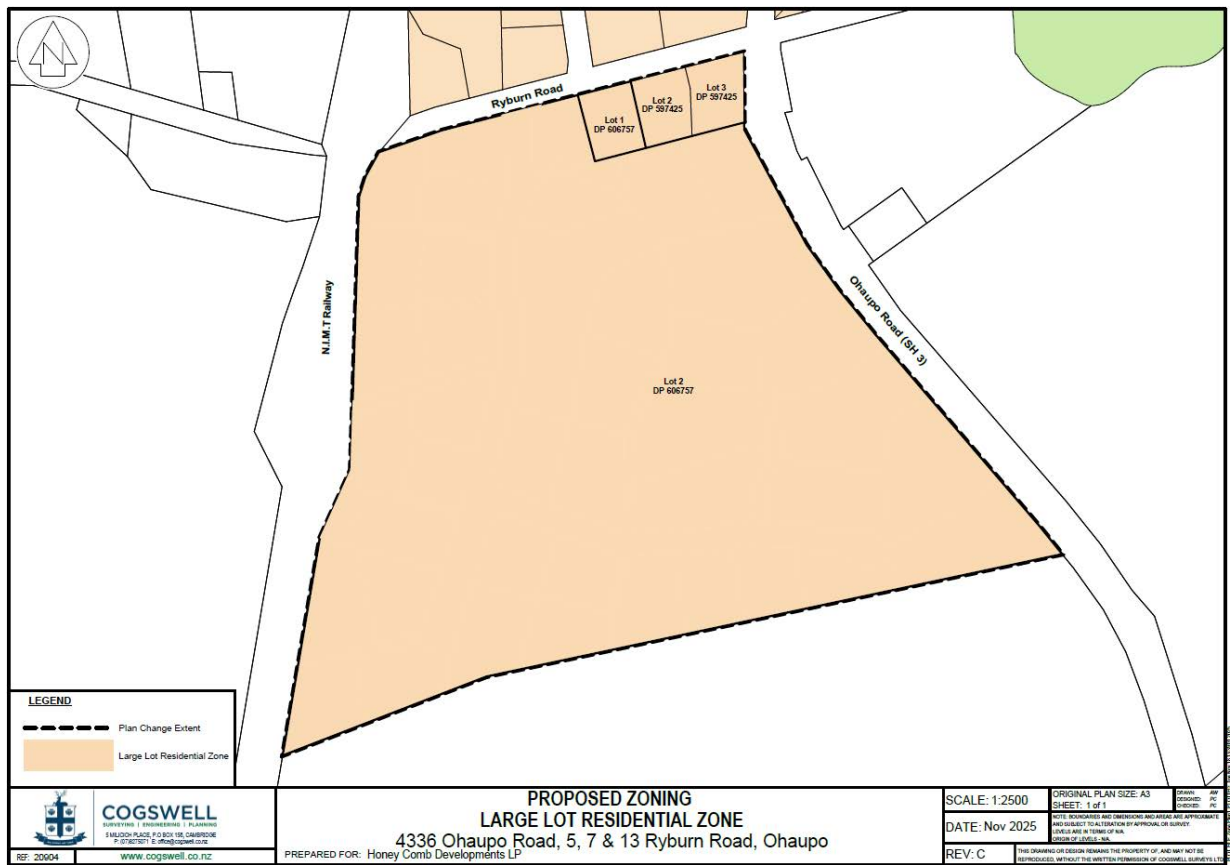


Figure 3 Proposed Plan Change Plan



Figure 4 Indicative Concept Plan (nothing it is subject to refinement at resource consent stage)

4.0 Relevant Statutory Provisions

The following addresses the provisions relevant to this assessment, a full planning assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions is provided in the application AEE prepared by Mitchell Daysh.

4.1 Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

Part 2 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) sets out the purpose and principles of the Act. Part 2, Section 5 states that the purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

Section 6 sets out the matters of importance that must be recognised and provided for in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is identified as a matter of national importance in Section 6(b). There are no identified outstanding natural features or landscapes within the Site or its immediate vicinity.

Section 7 identifies a range of matters that shall be given particular regards to in achieving the purpose of the RMA. Section 7(c) in relation to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values and Section 7(f) in relation to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment are particularly relevant to this project.

4.2 Waipā District Plan (WDP)

The entirety of the Site is currently zoned Rural within the Waipā District Plan (WDP) (Refer to Figure 5, Appendix 2). WDP identifies the elements that define the District's rural character and these are:

- a. *Areas of vegetation (in a natural state or managed, indigenous and/or exotic), such as pasture used for grazing stock, crops, forest and scrub, riparian stream margins, lakes and wetlands; and*
- b. *Open landscapes containing natural features and scenic vistas including flat to rolling terrain, volcanic cones, streams, lakes, peat lakes, rivers and wetlands that are largely free from development; and*
- c. *Low density widely spaced built form, with dwellings and farm buildings dispersed in the wider landscape; and*
- d. *Land uses of a predominantly production or rural working nature such as farming and related farm storage sheds, stock yards, farm animals and houses, and the widespread use of machinery supporting the principal productive land use. The characteristic noises and odours of farming are part of the rural working nature of the Rural Zone; and*
- f. *Infrequent rural based industry sites such as cool stores and wineries, as well as infrequent mineral and aggregate extraction sites, intensive farming operations and rural service providers such as agricultural contractors; and*
- i. *An extensive network of roads with varying traffic levels, primarily without kerbs, footpaths or other urban structures such as street lighting, unless required for road safety reasons. Higher traffic levels occur on State Highways, arterial and some collector roads; ...*

Below outlines the provisions of the Rural zone:

Objective – Rural character

4.3.7 Rural character and amenity is maintained.

Policies – Rural Character

4.3.7.1 Land use activities should be at a density, scale, intensity and location to maintain rural character.

4.3.7.2 Rural character and associated amenity values shall be maintained by ensuring rural land uses predominate in the Rural Zone, and buildings are of an appropriate scale and location.

Objective – Rural amenity: setbacks

4.3.8 To maintain rural character and amenity and avoid reverse sensitivity effects.

Policy – Transport network boundaries

4.3.8.1 Buildings and activities are set back from road boundaries and railway tracks to maintain safety, rural character and amenity, and to avoid reverse sensitivity effects.

Policy – Internal boundaries

4.3.8.2 Buildings and activities are set back from rear boundaries and side boundaries to maintain rural character and amenity and avoid reverse sensitivity effects.

Large Lot Residential Zone

Objective – Large Lot Residential Zone character

3.3.3 To maintain and enhance the key aspects of character within the Large Lot Residential Zone

Policy – Character

3.3.3.1 Buildings and activities within the Large Lot Residential Zone are designed, located, scaled and serviced in a manner that does not detract from the character of the area. In particular, they should maintain the character of open space, low-density residential development with a feeling of spaciousness; connections to the natural landscape; and the absence of Council wastewater services, and lower levels of other infrastructure in comparison to the Residential Zone.

The Site also sits within the State Highway 3 Scenic Corridor policy overlay under the WDP. Appendix N9 of the WDP provides a description of the road corridor and it states:

N9.5.1 This road corridor is located on a ridge with views out to Pirongia to the west and the steep hill country to the east, as well as views to Maungatautari and Kakepuku. There are also views down from the ridge to the nationally significant peat lakes which lie on the flat land at the base of the ridge. The lakes are surrounded by raupō and flax with willows in some places. There are also groups of kahikatea in the pasture around them. The combination of lake and wetland fringe gives these lakes high natural character and ecological values.

Section 25.3 sets out the objective and policies of Viewshafts and State Highway 3 scenic corridor:

Objective

25.3.5 To maintain views to identified landscape features from viewshafts and the State Highway 3 scenic corridor identified on the Planning Maps, while recognising the landscape values associated with working pastoral environments.

Policies – Protection of viewshafts

25.3.5.1 To maintain the viewshafts to Mt Pirongia, Mt Kakepuku, Maungatautari Mountain, Mt Te Kawa, the District's peat lakes, and Rangiaowhia Ridge; buildings, forestry, woodlots, artificial screens, and shelter belts shall be located to retain these views, from the identified viewshafts along State Highway 39, the Cambridge to Te Awamutu Road, and the Rangiaowhia and Paterangi ridges.

Policy – State Highway 3 scenic corridor between Hamilton and Te Awamutu

25.3.5.2 The values of the State Highway 3 scenic corridor are the prominent and memorable views to the outstanding natural landscape features, the volcanic cones and views of nationally significant

peat lakes. The location of buildings, driveways and infrastructure, shelterbelts, artificial screens, woodlots and commercial forestry shall be managed to recognise, maintain or enhance the views.

The relevant themes of the objectives and policies relating to the current land use at the site include:

Maintain rural character and amenity, including:

- Open landscapes with natural features and scenic vistas.
- Low-density, widely spaced built form.
- Predominantly production-based land uses (e.g. farming, stock grazing).

Locate buildings and structures to:

- Avoid dominating or disrupting prominent landscape features and open views.
- Maintain a feeling of spaciousness and open character.
- Minimise visual clutter when viewed from public roads, particularly SH3.

Ensure setbacks from:

- Road frontages and rail corridors to protect rural character and visual amenity.
- Internal boundaries to reduce visual dominance and avoid reverse sensitivity.

Design developments so that:

- Buildings are appropriately scaled and sited to blend into the rural context.
- Landscaping enhances rather than screens or encloses natural views.

Protect viewshafts to identified features, such as:

- Mount Pirongia, Mount Kakepuku, Maungatautari Mountain, and peat lakes.
- Avoid planting or building in locations that would obstruct these views.

The assessment of landscape effects addresses the landscape character and rural character values attributed to the site and its relationship to the surrounding rural landscape and properties. The assessment of visual effects more specifically addresses visual amenity and visual effects resulting from the proposed structure plan change.

5.0 Assessment of Effects

Landscape and visual impacts result from natural or induced change in the components, character or quality of the landscape. Usually these are the result of landform or vegetation modification or the introduction of new structures, facilities or activities. All these impacts are assessed to determine their effects on character and quality, amenity as well as on public and private views.

In this study, the assessment of potential effects is based on a combination of the landscape's sensitivity and visibility together with the nature and scale of the development proposal.

Particular effects considered relate to the following:

- Landscape / rural character effects
- Visual amenity effects from public and private locations;
- Potential cumulative effects; and
- An assessment in relation to the relevant statutory provisions.

5.1 Landscape Effects

5.1.1 Landscape Character Effects

Landscape character is derived from the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular landscape. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and features of human settlement. It creates the unique sense of place defining different areas of the landscape.

When assessing the potential effects arising from a plan change, the assessment should consider the nature of the maximised potential future development enabled by the provisions of the plan change.

5.1.2 Direct Landscape Effects

The conversion of the 21.505-hectare site from rural to large lot residential (urban form) development will lead to a change in the character of the landscape. It is consistent with the changes that is already occurring on land immediately to the north within the Charles Edwards Street development.

Whilst substantial landscape change will occur, elements of the site's existing character will be retained through the integration of stormwater ponds in the structure plan. These are proposed within the location of existing ponds and the natural low-lying areas of the site. By aligning with the existing landform, the stormwater ponds present an opportunity to restore and enhance the natural character of the water bodies, while also contributing to the site's open space network and providing recreational amenity for future residential development.

Earthworks across the Site, to establish the access road and land suitable for development and building platforms will reduce the undulating nature of the topography. The characteristic highpoint to the east adjacent to SH3 will undergo a level of modification as a result of preparing the land for building platforms and development, however this area will still remain as a high point within the Site. The arrangement of the open space and stormwater / wetlands will retain a conceptual relationship with the original topography in relation to the low elevation of the Site. There is no vegetation identified to be significant in terms of ecological values or are mature native trees. The existing vegetation within the site, associated with its rural pastoral land use, is not considered of sufficient value to justify retention or protection and does not relate to the intended future residential land use. Development of the site enabled by the PPC will ultimately provide an enhanced level of soft landscape, including planting of stormwater ponds, reserve space, street trees and future garden curtilage planting within lots.

The site includes southern and western boundaries to the rural environment. While the housing density proposed is greater than the existing rural environment, design and planning of the proposed interface includes a range of proposed building setbacks and proposed planting. This will enable the creation of an integrated development capable of accommodating the increased density, minimise effects and an appropriate interface with the neighbouring rural zone.

In the wider landscape context, the site is adjacent to the NIMTR to the west and SH3 to the east and is backdropped by Mount Pirongia and associated Forest Park in the far distance. Future development of the site has the potential to reduce some views towards Mount Pirongia from SH3 (as discussed further in Section 5.1.3).

In summary, landscape change will occur progressively over time. However, the site will continue to respond to the natural landscape through the inclusion of stormwater ponds, environmental features such as planting, and visual connections to the surrounding rural environment. The anticipated development outcomes are considered to align with the expectations of the WDP and are consistent with the staged landscape change already occurring through rural subdivision to the north. The landscape effects on rural character are assessed as **low moderate**.

5.1.3 Effects on the Scenic Corridor

The site forms part of the visual experience from the SH3 Scenic Corridor between Hamilton and Te Awamutu, as identified in the District Planning Maps under the Waipā District Plan (WDP). This corridor is recognised as a 'Special Landscape Character Area' due to the elevated alignment of SH3, which provides expansive views to either side, including volcanic cones, low-lying peat lakes, swamps, and a rolling rural landscape—some of which are identified as Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes under the WDP.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping indicates that visibility of the site is limited, and views towards Mount Pirongia are retained (Refer to Figure 3, Appendix 2). This is due to the sloping topography of the site and the higher elevation of SH3 in relation to it. On this basis, it is recommended that the portion of the SH3 Scenic Corridor across the site be removed as part of this PPC.

The SH3 Scenic Corridor extends approximately 25 km in total, while the PPC site occupies around 520 m along this corridor. Careful placement of future buildings, control of building heights, and appropriate vegetation along the SH3 frontage will ensure that removal of the Scenic Corridor overlay is appropriate and that key views, particularly towards Mount Pirongia, are maintained.

5.2 Visual Effects

Visual effects that relate to the amenity value of a landscape includes the “natural and physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of this pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreation attributes”.

The specific nature of visual effects will depend on the future specific subdivision plans. The subdivision will require a resource consent which will need to include a landscape design proposals, including planting interface treatment, stormwater planting, reserve and lot design recommendations (such as design guidelines) and earthworks for the establishment of infrastructure for the residential subdivision.

The level of change is considered in relation to the sensitivity of the viewing audience, when evaluating the significance of any effects. The sensitivity may be influenced by a number of factors, which include but are not limited to: the reason for a viewing audience being the viewpoint of looking at the view (e.g. if they are motorists); the existing (and likely future) character of the view, the viewing distance and duration.

Judgements made in relation to the potential effects are based upon the information contained within the structure plan concept and infrastructure reports, and the relationship these have with the underlying development of the structure plan.

5.2.1 Effects from public vantage points

As described in Section 2.3, the public vantage points where views of the proposed development would be available are the users of State Highway 3 / Ōhaupō Road, Ryburn Road and Charles Edward’s Street.

Views from the Immediate Vicinity

Views from the immediate vicinity of the site include those experienced by users of surrounding roads. Representative photographs of these viewpoints are provided in the Graphic Supplement attached to this report. These views have been assessed in relation to the expectations set out in the WDP.

The WDP applies a high-level rural zoning to the site, including recognition of viewshafts and the SH3 Scenic Corridor. As such, local viewing audiences are likely to experience a change in outlook, with a noticeable shift in visual character as the land use transitions from rural to large-lot residential. These changes will be comparable to existing residential development in the nearby Ōhaupō village to the north, and the more recent Charles Edwards Street rural-residential subdivision. Although the latter is at a greater density, it includes similar design treatments such as post-and-rail fencing, single-storey dwellings, building setbacks, and interface planting.

While the proposed development represents an increase in density relative to the current rural environment, the larger lot sizes compared to adjacent residential areas are considered to be an appropriate response to the SH3 and Ryburn Road context.

Road users and visitors to Ōhaupō are considered to have a lower sensitivity to this type of landscape change. However, careful attention will be required to ensure that wider views toward Mount Pirongia are preserved. In contrast, residential viewers in close proximity to the site are expected to have a higher sensitivity to visual change. For these residents, the proposed development will result in a loss of rural outlook. It is noted, however, that all immediate viewing audiences have either SH3 or Ryburn Road located between their properties and the site, which provides some degree of separation and visual buffering. Overall, the visual effects from the immediate vicinity are assessed as **low**.

Wider Context Views

Wider contextual views of the Site defined as views which include the Site within the context of the wider area. These views are more obtainable to the west of the Site due to the flatter landform and that the highpoint located along SH3 to the east of the Site. To the south undulating hilled landform and vegetation screens majority of views. To the north views are constricted by existing development.

The increase in development will result in a shift from a rural to a more built character when viewed from the wider landscape. The proposed structure plan provides for open space associated with stormwater ponds and locates proposed building areas away from rural interfaces and State Highway 3 (SH3). As a result, potential adverse effects on wider views are assessed as up to **low**. There is potential to enhance the future subdivision development including factors such as density, building setbacks, and landscape treatments along the rural interface.

6.0 Recommendations

The overall design for the proposed development incorporates rural characteristics, albeit in the context of higher density. These are in relation to provision of open space, stormwater ponds particularly and the wider connections and interface with the rural zone.

The objective of the following mitigation and design control measures are to ensure that future development within the site occurs in such a way that landscape and visual effects are acceptable.

Mitigation Measures

Earthworks

- The earthworks for the building platforms should be kept to a minimum. The building platform should be cut to sit the building down 'in' the landscape, rather than 'on' the landscape. The cut and fill slopes should be carefully shaped to blend the building sites into the surrounding natural landform, avoiding artificial bumps and banks.
- Similarly, the earthworks required to form access ways to the building sites should be kept to a minimum. Any cut and fill faces should be hydro-seeded or planted, to ensure that earthworks scars are vegetated to integrate with the adjacent land cover.

Fencing

- Semi open fencing treatments, such as post and wire, are recommended to maintain openness between the buildings and reinforce the rural character of the area. Any screens or walls within the lots are recommended to be planted with shrubs and climbers to soften the structure. The entrances to lots and Right of Ways should be low key, such as post and rail fences with accent planting. Elaborate walls with pillars should be avoided.

State Highway 3 Boundary

- Single-story buildings (maximum building height of 5 m)
- Fencing and hedge planting requirements limit height to 1.2 m along road frontage (in accordance with the WDP standards)

The following design considerations could be considered by the developer as part of the future subdivision consent as covenants but are not necessary to be included in the proposed plan change.

Buildings

- The building form should be modulated into a series of smaller interconnected forms so that the main façade is stepped in and/or extruded outwards so that it sits comfortably in the landscape rather than risking a large, bulky building, with long uninterrupted facades.
- The roofs should be pitched to help suppress the buildings into the landscape. The roof pitch should be between 15 and 30 degrees, to avoid steep prominent roofs. As roofs reflect more light than walls, they should be darker than the walls to visually anchor the buildings into the landscape.
- All buildings should have overhangs, pergolas or eaves to cast shadows on exterior walls. Such shadow features shall be a minimum of 0.6m deep, extending to 1.2m where walls have more than 50% glazing.
- The exterior walls should be textured to cast shadow lines, such as timber weatherboard, brick and stone masonry block. Smooth plastered walls should be avoided.
- Glazing should minimise reflectivity with shadows from overhangs, eaves, etc. and the use of clear, grey-green or bronze glass, with recessive tints. Highly reflective mirror glass should be avoided.
- Sympathetic colours low in reflectivity should be used for all external components of buildings and structures (including guttering, spouting, and window joinery), such as natural tones within the British Standard (BS) 5252 range, Groups A and B with a reflectivity value of less than 60% for exterior walls and 40% for roofs.
- Ancillary buildings, such as garages and sheds, should be subject to the same building design controls as the main dwelling, so that they are also integrated into the landscape.

Landscape Planting

- Tree planting should be undertaken along the lot boundaries to provide partial screening and backdrop planting to the buildings while framing views of the wider landscape. The tree planting should be established as early as possible to provide the earliest mitigation benefits.

It is also recommended that concept landscape plans are provided as part of the subdivision consenting process, including the following:

- Design approach.
- Street tree and amenity planting.
- Boundary treatments including planting and fencing.
- Reserve design, including pond, planting and opportunity for seating and pathways.
- Fencing plan.

7.0 Conclusions

The site is zoned Rural and is located within the Scenic Corridor (Hamilton to Te Awamutu) Special Landscape Character Area under the WDP.

The guidelines for this Special Landscape Character Area seek to maintain views to outstanding landscape features—such as volcanic cones and peat lakes—and protect the rural character of the surrounding landscape. The development of the site will not obstruct these key views as experienced from the elevated ridge of SH3. Accordingly, removal of the Scenic Corridor overlay from the site, as proposed through this PPC, is considered appropriate.

The proposal involves the rezoning of land to allow for large lot residential development along with associated road infrastructure. The majority of the building platforms are located on the flatter parts of the site, with only three of the six platforms situated on the upper slopes within the Scenic Corridor area along SH3.

The site is well positioned to accommodate built form. The proposed plan change enables residential development in a manner that preserves the site's landscape qualities and responds to the surrounding context. While the site does not contain features of significant ecological or cultural value (such as Significant Natural Areas or notable trees), the proposed layout reflects the site's topography and includes open space areas that connect with existing stormwater features, including the pond.

From the local context, viewers will perceive a change in character—from rural to rural-residential. In the short term, this will introduce new visual elements and built forms into the landscape. However, the proposed development is designed to integrate with the existing and planned residential development on the southern edge of Ōhaupō.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Method Statement

22 November 2023

This assessment method statement is consistent with the methodology (high-level system of concepts, principles, and approaches) of 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. The assessment provides separate chapters to discuss landscape, visual and natural character effects where relevant, but is referred to throughout as a Landscape Effects Assessment in accordance with these Guidelines. Specifically, the assessment of effects has examined the following:

- *The existing landscape;*
- *The nature of effect;*
- *The level of effect; and*
- *The significance of effect.*

The Existing Landscape

The first step of assessment entails examining the existing landscape in which potential effects may occur. This aspect of the assessment describes and interprets the specific landscape character and values which may be impacted by the proposal alongside its natural character where relevant as set out further below. The existing landscape is assessed at a scale(s) commensurate with the potential nature of effects. It includes an understanding of the visual catchment and viewing audience relating to the proposal including key representative public views. This aspect of the assessment entails both desk-top review (including drawing upon area-based landscape assessments where available) and field work/site surveys to examine and describe the specific factors and interplay of relevant attributes or dimensions, as follows:

Physical –relevant natural and human features and processes;

Perceptual –direct human sensory experience and its broader interpretation; and

Associative – intangible meanings and associations that influence how places are perceived.

Engagement with tāngata whenua

As part of the analysis of the existing landscape, the assessment should seek to identify relevant mana whenua (where possible) and describe the nature and extent of engagement, together with any relevant sources informing an understanding of the existing landscape from a Te Ao Māori perspective.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Provisions

The relevant provisions facilitating change also influence the consequent nature and level of effects. Relevant provisions encompass objectives and policies drawn from a broader analysis of the statutory context and which may anticipate change and certain outcomes for identified landscape values.

The Nature of Effect

The nature of effect assesses the outcome of the proposal within the landscape. The nature of effect is considered in terms of whether effects are positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) in the context within which they occur. Neutral effects may also occur where landscape or visual change is benign.

It should be emphasised that a change in a landscape (or view of a landscape) does not, of itself, necessarily constitute an adverse landscape effect. Landscapes are dynamic and are constantly changing in both subtle and more dramatic transformational ways; these changes are both natural and human induced. What is

important when assessing and managing landscape change is that adverse effects are avoided or sufficiently mitigated to ameliorate adverse effects. The aim is to maintain or enhance the environment through appropriate design outcomes, recognising that both the nature and level of effects may change over time.

The Level of Effect

Where the nature of effect is assessed as ‘adverse’, the assessment quantifies the level (degree or magnitude) of adverse effect. The level of effect has not been quantified where the nature of effect is neutral or beneficial. Assessing the level of effect entails professional judgement based on expertise and experience provided with explanations and reasons. The identified level of adverse natural character, landscape and visual effects adopts a universal seven-point scale from **very low** to **very high** consistent with Te Tangi a te Manu Guidelines and reproduced below.

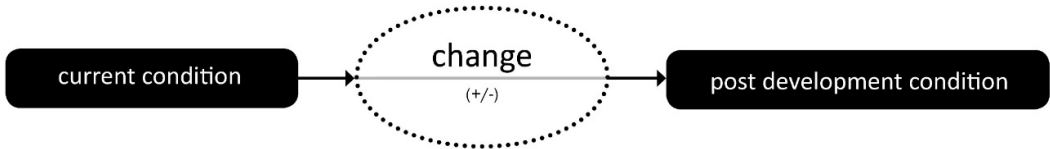


Landscape Effects

A landscape effect relates to the change on a landscape’s character and its inherent values and in the context of what change can be anticipated in that landscape in relation to relevant zoning and policy. The level of effect is influenced by the size or spatial scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of landscape change on the characteristics and values within the specific context in which they occur.

Visual Effects

Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects. They are consequence of changes to landscape values as experienced in views. To assess where visual effects of the proposal may occur requires an identification of the area from where the proposal may be visible from, and the specific viewing audience(s) affected. Visual effects are assessed with respect to landscape character and values. This can be influenced by several factors such as distance, orientation of the view, duration, extent of view occupied, screening and backdrop, as well as the potential change that could be anticipated in the view as a result of zone / policy provisions of relevant statutory plans.



The Significance of Effects

Decision makers assessing resource consent applications must evaluate if the effect on individuals or the environment is less than minor² or if an adverse effect on the environment is no more than minor³. For non-complying activities, consent can only be granted if the s104D 'gateway test' is satisfied, ensuring adverse effects are minor or align with planning objectives. In these situations, the assessment may be required to translate the level of effect in terms of RMA terminology.

² RMA, Section 95E

³ RMA, Section 95E

This assessment has adopted the following scale applied to relevant RMA circumstances⁴ (refer to diagram below), acknowledging low and very low adverse effects generally equate to 'less than minor' and high / very high effects generally equate to significant⁵.



⁴ Seven-point level of effect scale. Source: Te tangi a te Manu, Pg. 15
⁵ The term 'significant adverse effects' applies to specific RMA situations, including the consideration of alternatives for Notices of Requirement and AEEs, as well as assessing natural character effects under the NZ Coastal Policy Statement.

Appendix 2: Graphic Supplement (bound separately)

RYBURN & ŌHAUPŌ ROAD PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE

GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT

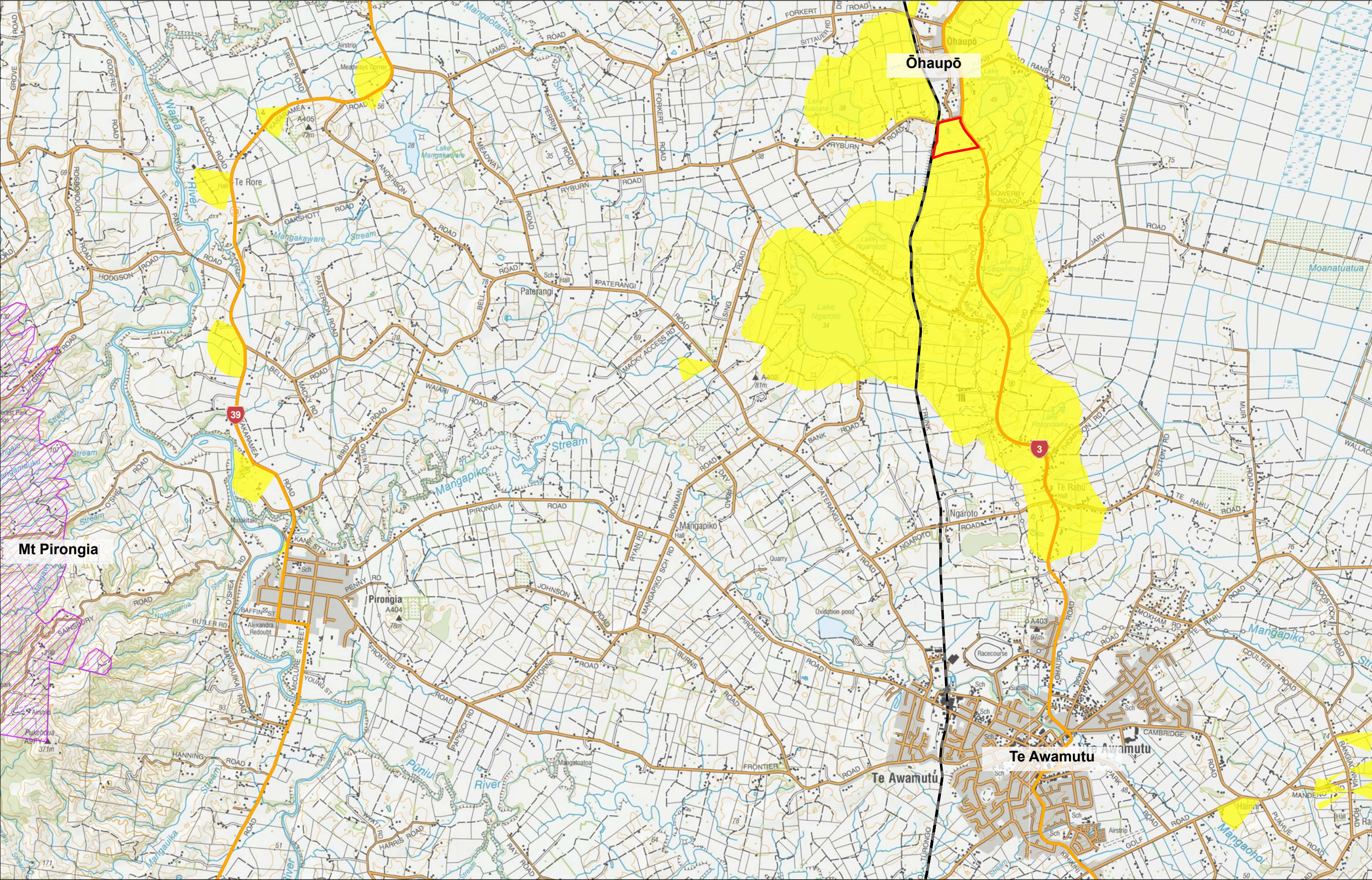
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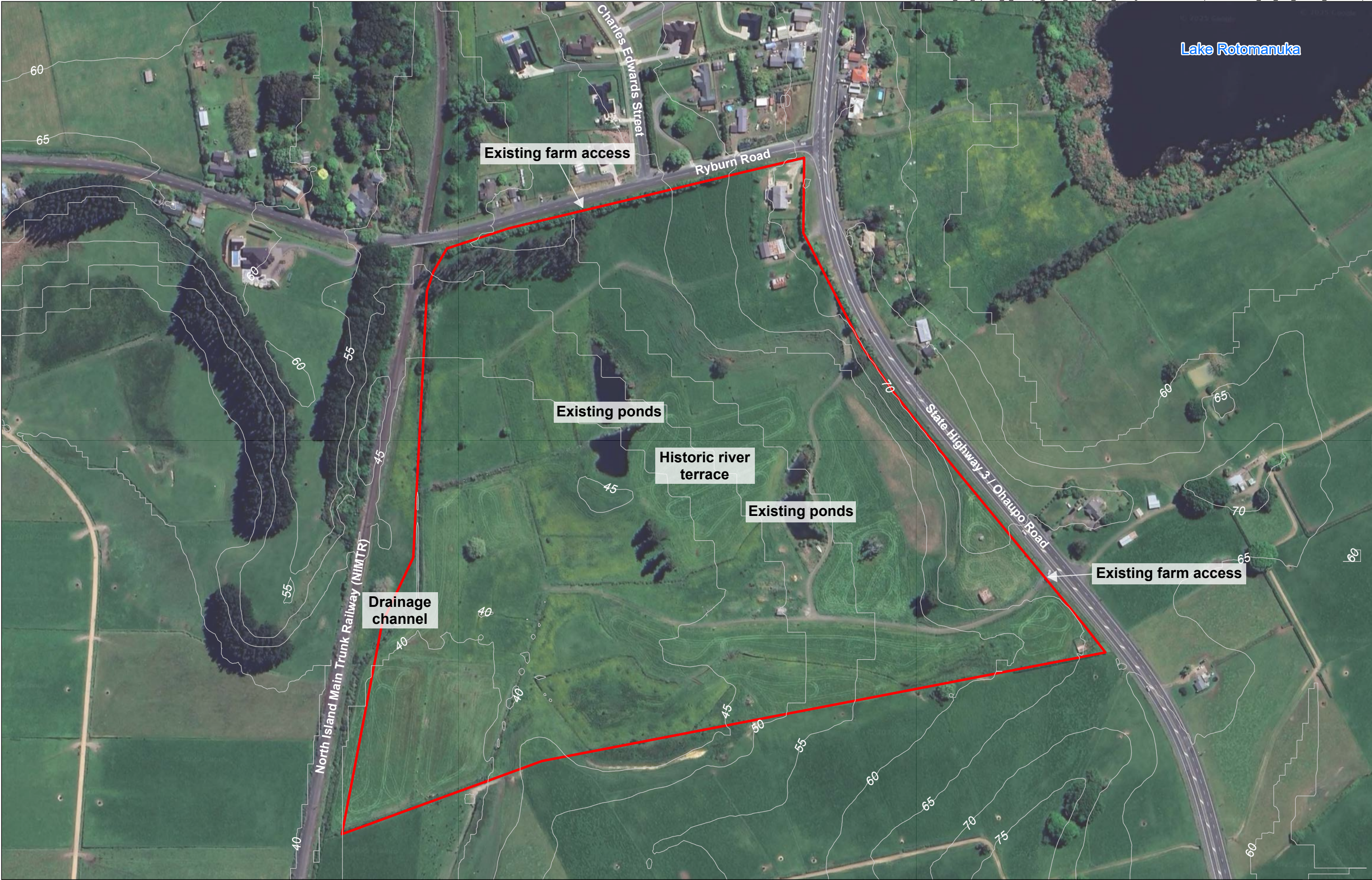


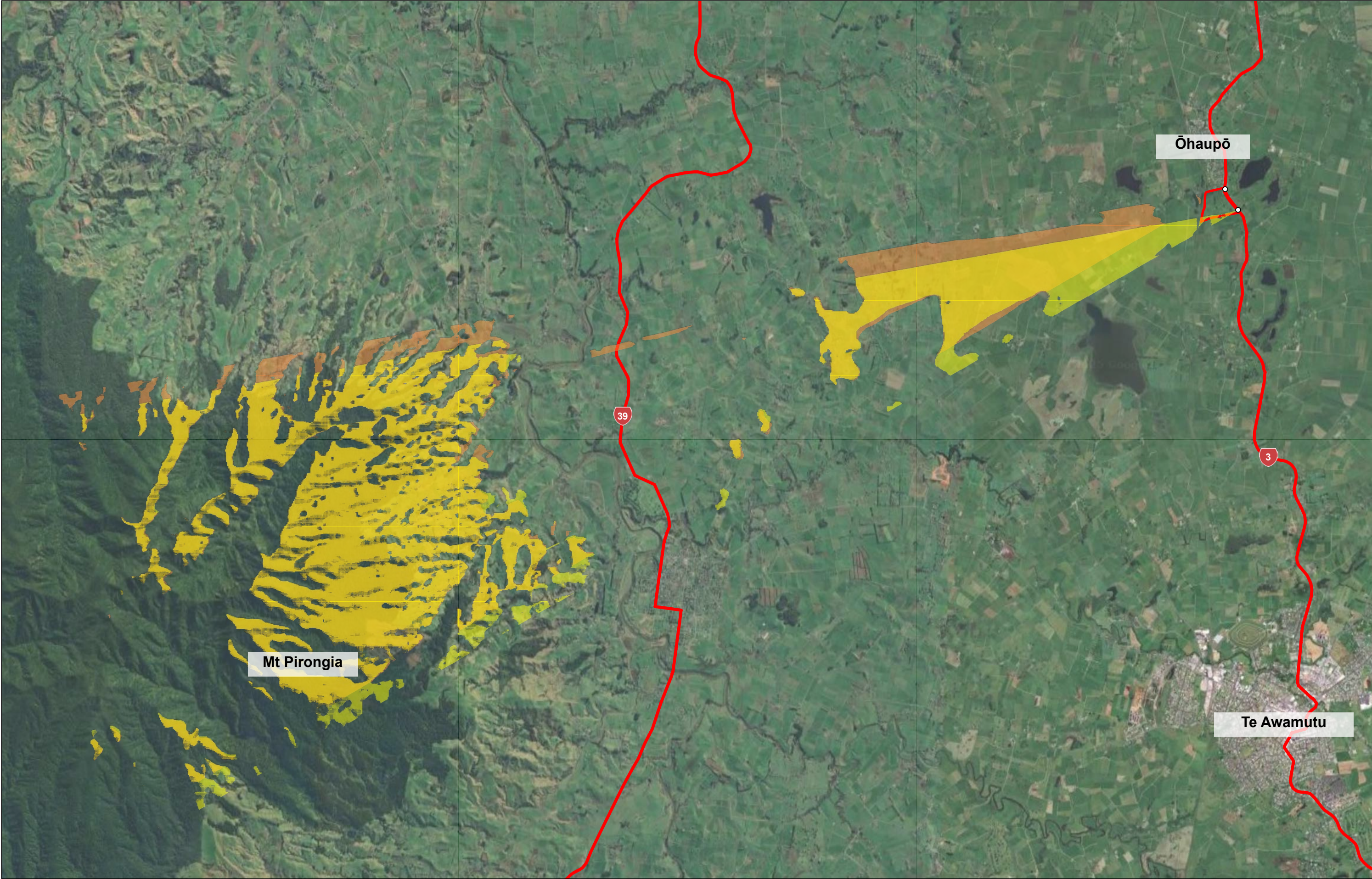


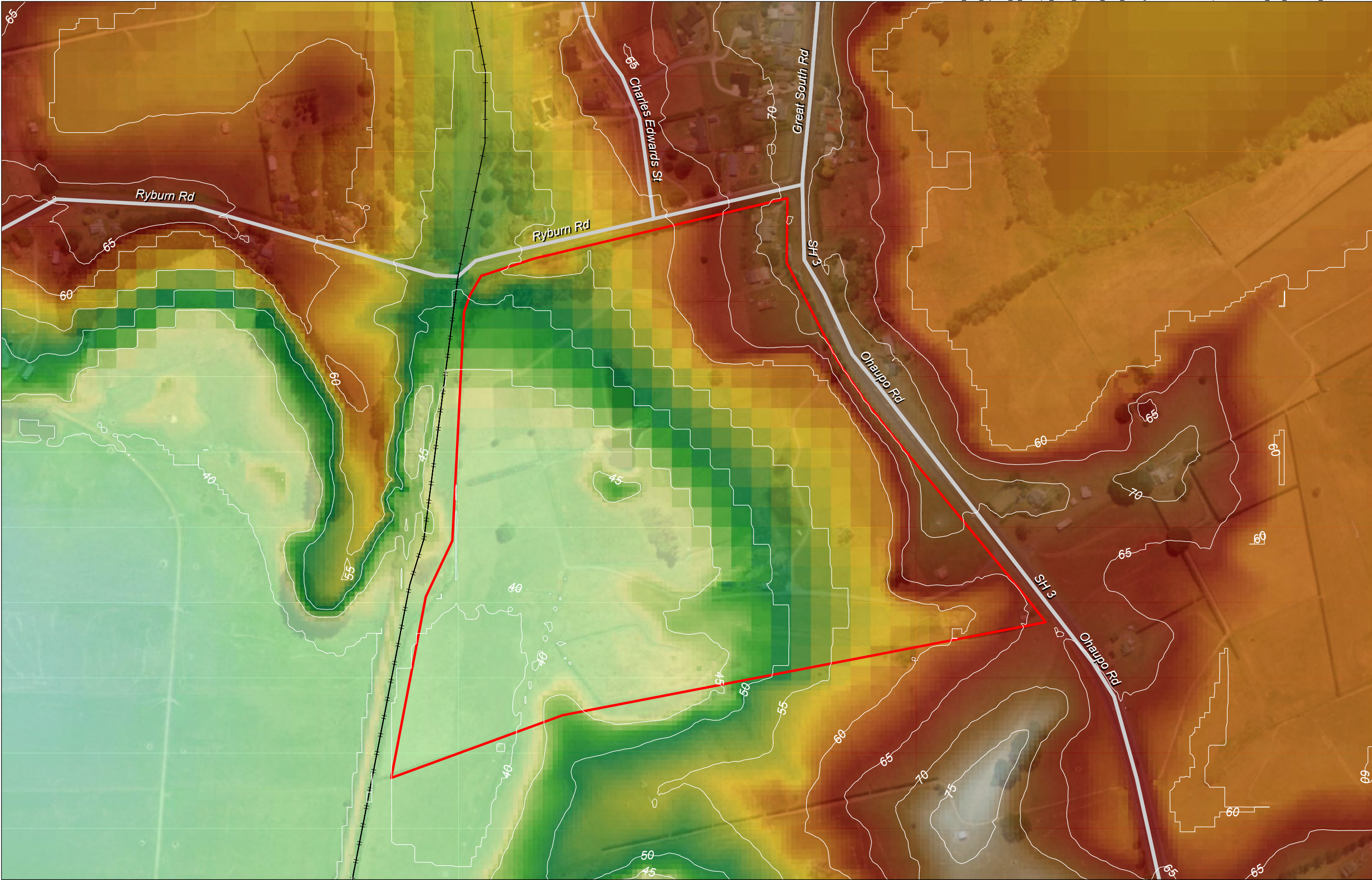
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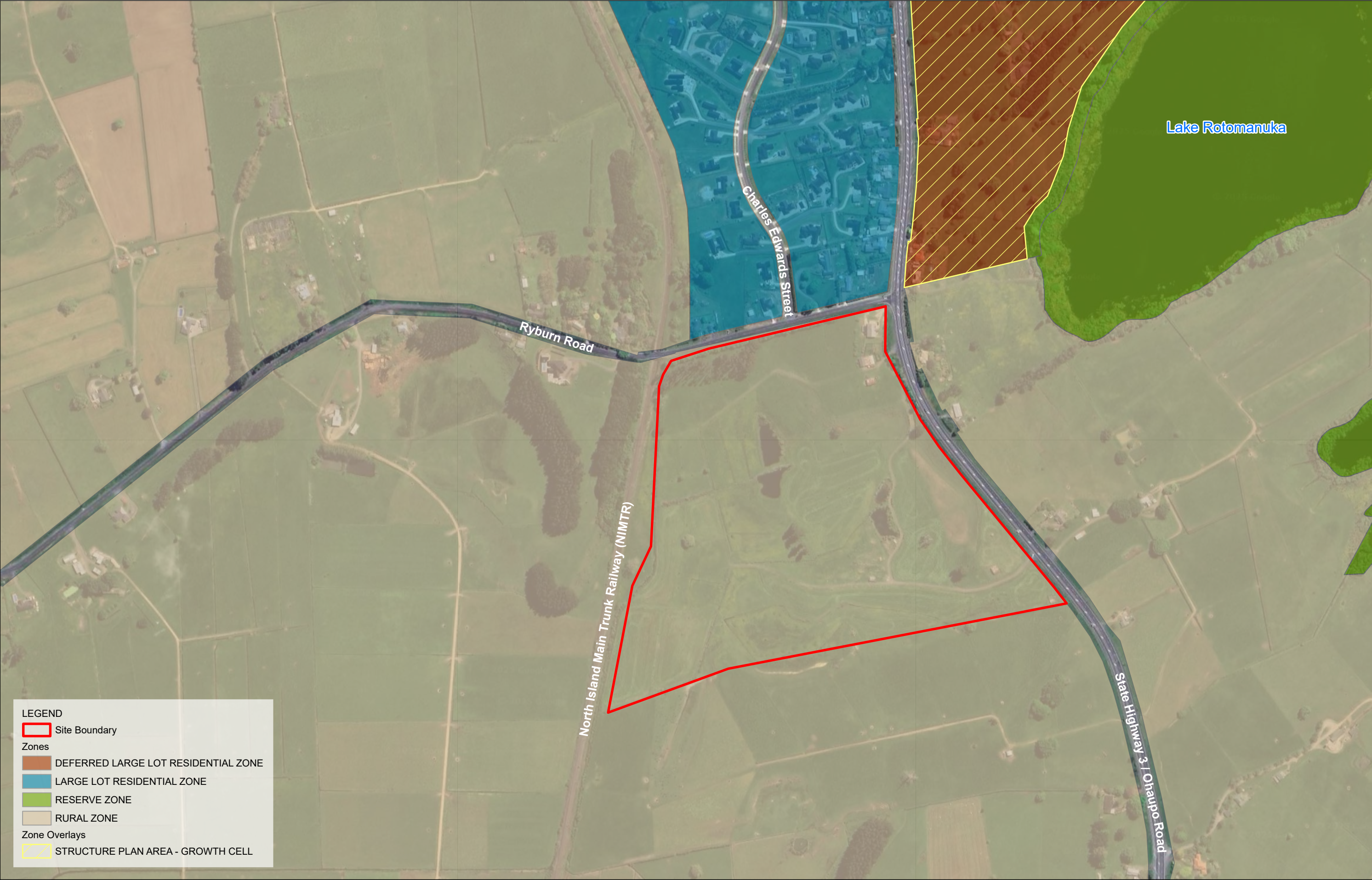
FIGURE 1: Landscape Context Plan	1
FIGURE 2: Site Context Plan	2
FIGURE 3: Viewshed Plan	3
FIGURE 4: Elevation Plan	4
FIGURE 5: Planning Context Plan	5
FIGURE 6: Viewpoint Location Plan	6
Viewpoint Photographs 1 - 12	7 - 18















Viewpoint Photograph 1: Photograph taken on State Highway 3/Ohaupo Road, approximately 115 metres northeast of the Site, looking in a southwesterly direction towards the Site.



Viewpoint Photograph 2: Photograph taken on State Highway 3/Ohaupo Road, approximately 20 metres east of the Site, looking in a southwesterly direction towards the Site.



Viewpoint Photograph 3: Photograph taken on State Highway 3/Ohaupo Road, approximately 60 metres southeast of the Site, looking in a northwesterly direction towards the Site.



Viewpoint Photograph 4: Photograph taken at the Site entrance on State Highway 3/Ohaupo Road, looking in a southeasterly direction.

North Island Main Trunk Railway (NIMTR)

Ryburn Road

Existing shelterbelt along northern boundary of the Site

File Ref: BM240839_GraphicSupplement_A3L.indd



Viewpoint Photograph 5: Photograph taken on Site access road, looking in a northwesterly direction.



Viewpoint Photograph 6: Photograph taken at the southwestern part of the Site, looking in an easterly direction.

Fenceline along northern boundary of the Site

Existing pond within the Site

Existing shed within the Site

File Ref: BM240839_GraphicSupplement_A3L.indd



Viewpoint Photograph 7: Photograph taken at the central part of the Site close to an existing pond, looking in a northeasterly direction.



Viewpoint Photograph 8: Photograph taken at the central part of the Site close to an existing pond, looking in a southwesterly direction.

Fenceline along northern boundary of the Site

North Island Main Trunk Railway (NIMTR)

File Ref: BM240839_GraphicSupplement_A3L.indd



Viewpoint Photograph 9: Photograph taken on Ryburn Road, approximately 35 metres north of the Site, looking in a southwesterly direction towards the Site.



Viewpoint Photograph 10: Photograph taken on Ryburn Road, approximately 30 metres northwest of the Site, looking in a southeasterly direction towards the Site.



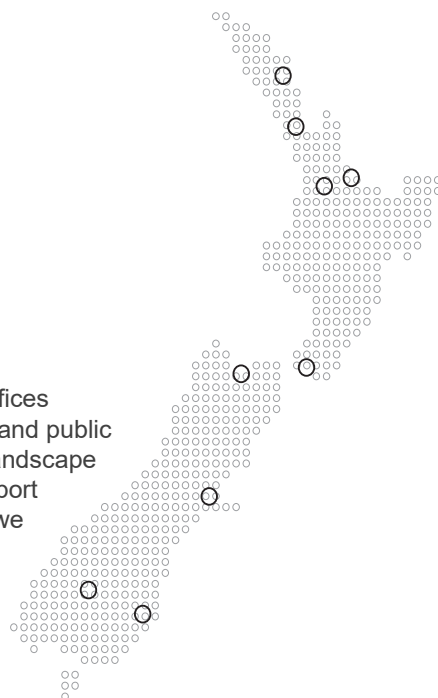
Viewpoint Photograph 11: Photograph taken on Ryburn Road, approximately 450 metres northwest of the Site, looking in a southeasterly direction. The Site is obscured by built structure to the left of the photograph.



Viewpoint Photograph 12: Photograph taken on Ryburn Road, approximately 800 metres west of the Site, looking in an easterly direction towards the Site.

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Boffa Miskell is a leading New Zealand environmental consultancy with nine offices throughout Aotearoa. We work with a wide range of local, international private and public sector clients in the areas of planning, urban design, landscape architecture, landscape planning, ecology, biosecurity, Te Hīhiri (cultural advisory), engagement, transport advisory, climate change, graphics, and mapping. Over the past five decades we have built a reputation for creativity, professionalism, innovation, and excellence by understanding each project's interconnections with the wider environmental, social, cultural, and economic context.



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