

Visual Assessment Report

01 February 2008



Summary

The Pacific Pines Estate site has a number of key landform, vegetation and water elements which contribute to its overall character. When developing the design for the estate, these elements have been identified so that they might be maintained and enhanced as features of the final development. In particular, larger buildings have been located at lower elevations of the site where they will be less visually prominent and where large trees and vegetation can be accommodated to link their form to the surrounding precincts and provide a human scale. Parks have been located so that prominent trees and stands of vegetation may be retained as features of the development. Views from key vantage points and to key elements (eg: the pond) have been considered when locating roadways and blocks of built form.

Visual Assessment

The site is rural in character consisting of paddocks, where cattle graze, and some scattered trees (Photo 1). The trees include some large remnant figs (*Ficus obliqua* and *F. macrophylla*), some remnant palms (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*) and dense groves of rainforest trees which have grown up along former and existing fence lines.



Photo 1. View looking north to paddocks with remnant trees

The landform forms an amphitheatre with slopes to the north, east and south and a central lower area where the detention pond is located. The northern area of the site consists of a ridge line with slopes to the north and south.

Views from the site, particularly from within the elevated parts of the land, are generally to the south and west. A focus of these views is the detention pond and the Ballina Wetlands beyond (Photo 2 and Visual Analysis Plan). The pond is located in the lowermost part of the site, in the south west corner. A spring towards the centre of the site provides a small but constant flow of water to the detention pond. The areas around this flow are deep green and include sedges, ferns and patches of hairy joint grass (*Arthraxon hispidus*). Some regrowth (*Allocasuarina torulosa*, *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and *Cinnamomum camphora*) also occurs along this seepage area (Photo 3).



Photo 2. View looking east to the pond. Earlier stages of Pacific Pines estate and Norfolk Island pines visible in background



Photo 3. Remnant vegetation and brook

Site Context

To the south of the site are earlier residential stages of the Pacific Pines subdivision (see Visual Analysis Plan). To the west of the site is further farmland and the Ballina Wetlands - a low lying area dominated by low growing mangrove trees (Photo 4). A stand of Norfolk Island pines is a prominent feature of the ridge line to the west (Henderson Farm).



Photo 4. View looking west to the pond with Ballina wetlands beyond

To the east of the site are a number of large residential properties. One of these, the Pidcock Property is visually prominent on the skyline due to the stand of Norfolk Island pines (Photo 5).



Photo 5. Historic Norfolk Island Pines on Pidcock property

To the north of the site is the residential subdivision, Lennox Meadows (Photo 6).



Photo 6. View looking north west to Pacific Meadows estate

The site falls within two visual catchments. The Pacific Pines visual catchment is bounded by Henderson Road to the west; a ridge line within the site to the north; and a ridge line running along North Creek Road to the east; and a ridge line within the existing residential estate to the south (see Visual Analysis Plan).

Most of the site therefore is not visible outside the immediate area, nor to the broader urban area of Lennox Head located to the east. It is, however, visible from some of the previous stages of the Pacific Pines Estate (located directly to the south), and to a short section of North Creek Road (located directly to the east).

The ridge line to the north of this site is an exception. It is the only area of the site that can be seen outside this visual catchment. It falls within the Lennox Heads visual catchment and is visible from parts of the Lennox Meadows Estate and adjacent areas to the north. The large hill behind Lennox head (Condon land), generally screens it from views further to the north (Photo 7).



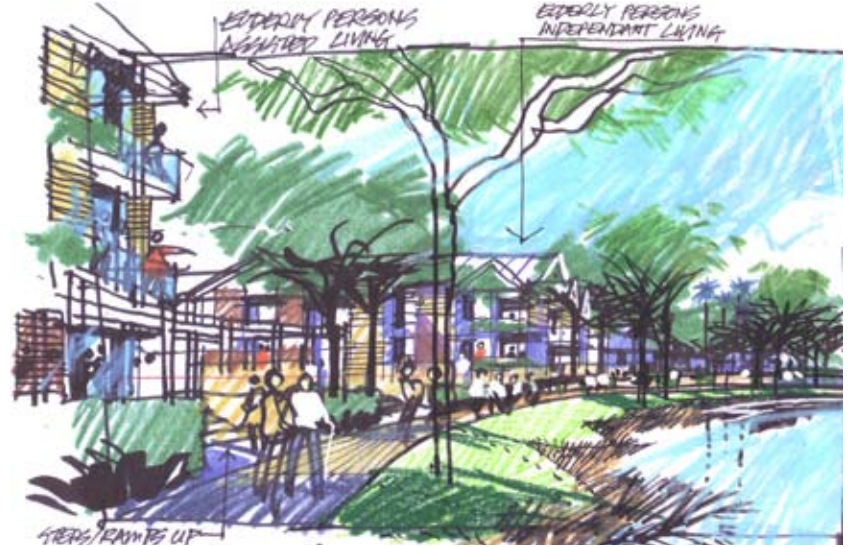
Photo 7. View looking south to the hill behind Lennox Head (Condon land) which screens views to the south

Proposed Development

The proposed development will result in much of the site becoming urbanised. In general land uses will resemble those residential areas to the south and to the north. Much of the site will be composed of residential roads and housing however, the streets will include broad footpath areas which will be planted with avenues of shade trees. They will resemble traditional north coast avenues rather than conventional streets and the built form will also have more of a coastal response.

The proposed neighbourhood centre and retirement community adjacent to the pond will include taller buildings to three storeys in height and therefore act as an urban focus. Proposed building heights allow for articulated pitched roofs rather than a sea of flat roofs, which enhances views from above.

Street setbacks vary so as to visually define each area - zero setbacks for the retail core, three metre setbacks for rear lane lots (a more urban character and transition from urban core) and six metre setbacks for residential areas.



Stonyhurst Drive along the ridgeline also has three metre setbacks, however this is compensated by the wide road reserve. Plantings of trees and fingers of vegetation around these buildings, extending out from the open space around the pond (Sketch 1 and Views 1 - 3) will set these buildings visually in the surrounding urban landscape and provide a human scale to these areas. Taller buildings have purposely been located in the lower areas of the estate where they are less visually prominent..

Sketch 1. Proposed boardwalk along pond frontage



As part of the project, much of the existing tree cover on site will be retained - in a number of parks scattered through the development and in a large ribbon of parkland which will run in a east to west orientation between the detention pond and the spring; and in a north to south direction on either side of the spring.

The area along the watercourse, between the spring and pond, known as the brook, will be landscaped with additional plantings, walkways and bridges to provide an attractive community parkland (Sketch 2).

Sketch 2. Proposed brook with landscaping and path network

Further areas of green space will surround the sports fields and club house. A strip of planting associated with the waterway will extend up along the western side of Hutley Road joining buffer vegetation along the northern boundary.

Larger lots are located on the slopes of the site so that plantings of trees can be accommodated around the proposed houses. These plantings will provide a treed backdrop to the estate when viewed from the lower areas of the site.

The northern face of the prominent ridge line, towards the north of the site, will be slightly regraded to provide a less steep gradient. A wide road corridor (approximately 24 metres in width) will be planted with an avenue of Norfolk Island pines to match the character of the surrounding ridge lines (Photos 6 and 8). The vegetation on the ridge line will act as a visual backdrop to views within and outside of the site.



Photo 8. Existing wide road reserve with Norfolk Island Pines

Development in this area will also include vegetated buffers, which will be implemented early as part of a forward tree planting scheme. These buffers will help to minimise the visual impact of dwelling sites on the hillside when viewed from the Silkwood Road locality within the adjacent Lennox Meadows Estate.

Conclusion

The urban design of the estate has been based on identifying some of the key landscape character elements, in particular landform, vegetation and water elements and maintaining them as features of the proposed development . Existing views both within and from outside the site have been considered when planning the locations of the roads, housing precincts, various built elements and parks to ensure that the highest quality environment is provided for residents and visitors.

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View Position Plan

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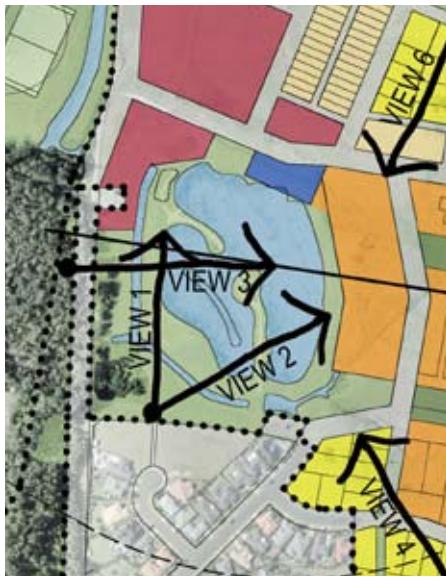


- VIEW DIRECTION
- SECTION LINE
- SITE BOUNDARY



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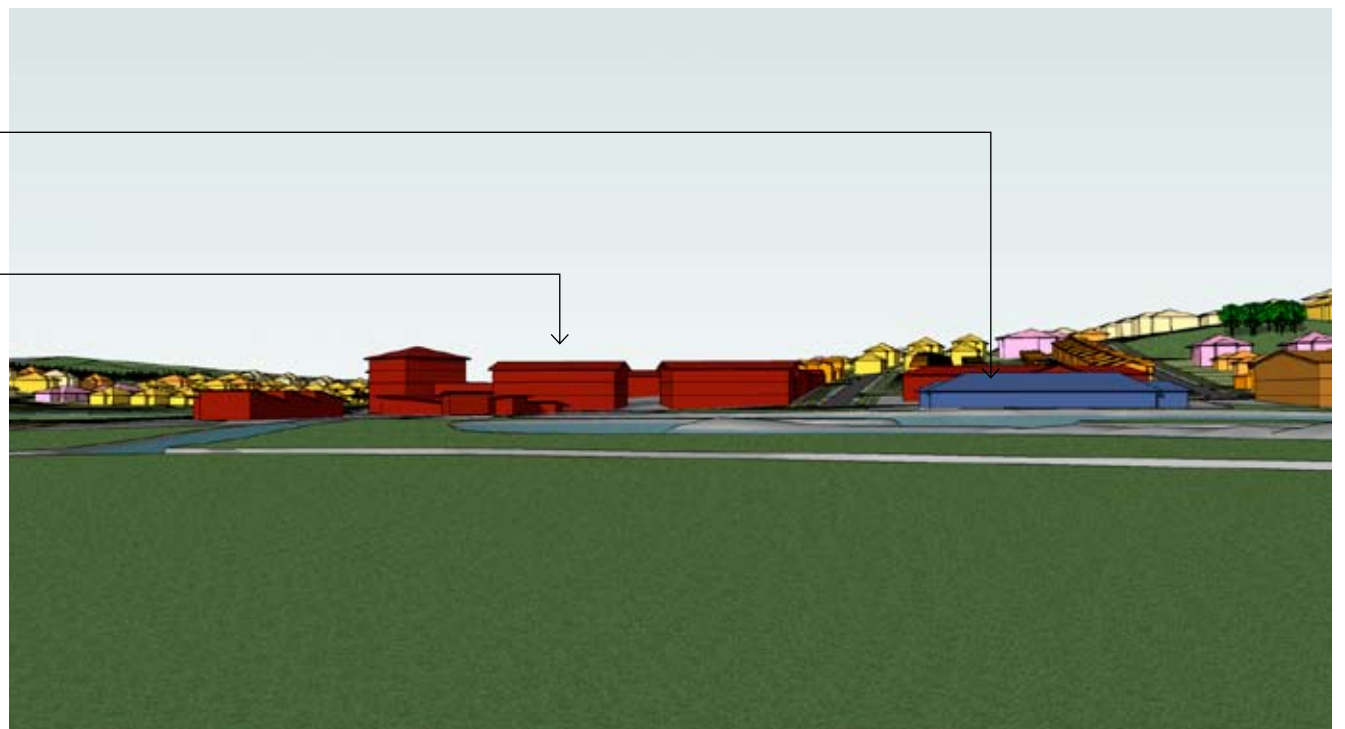
VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT



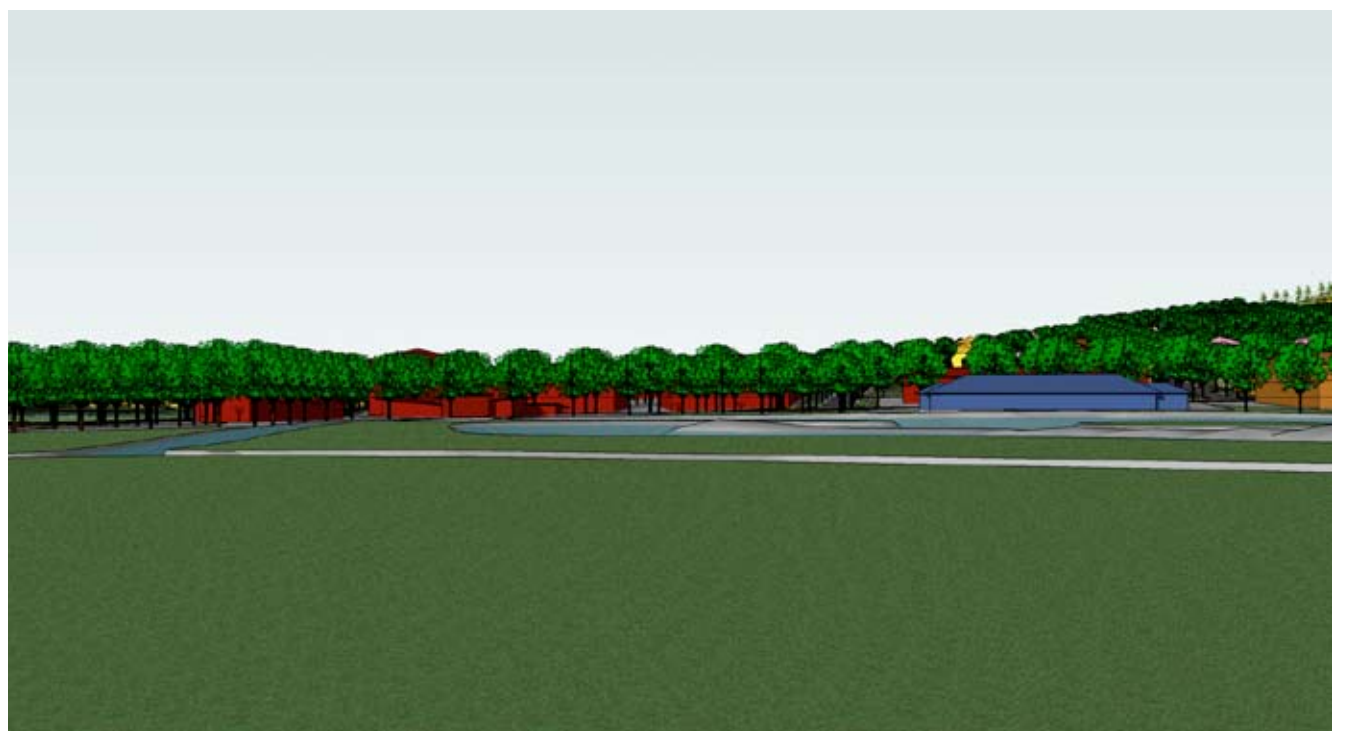
View 1. Existing view

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

MAIN STREET
MIXED USE BUILDING

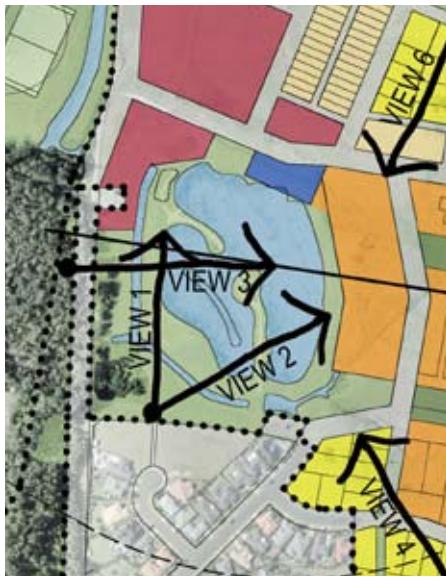


View 1. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 1. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 1: View across Pond looking north



View 2. Existing view

ASSISTED
LIVING FACILITY

RETIREMENT
CENTRAL FACILITIES

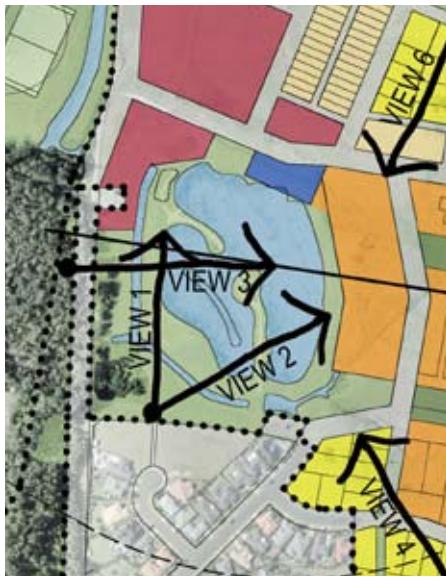


View 2. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 2. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 2: View across Pond to bridgeline looking northeast



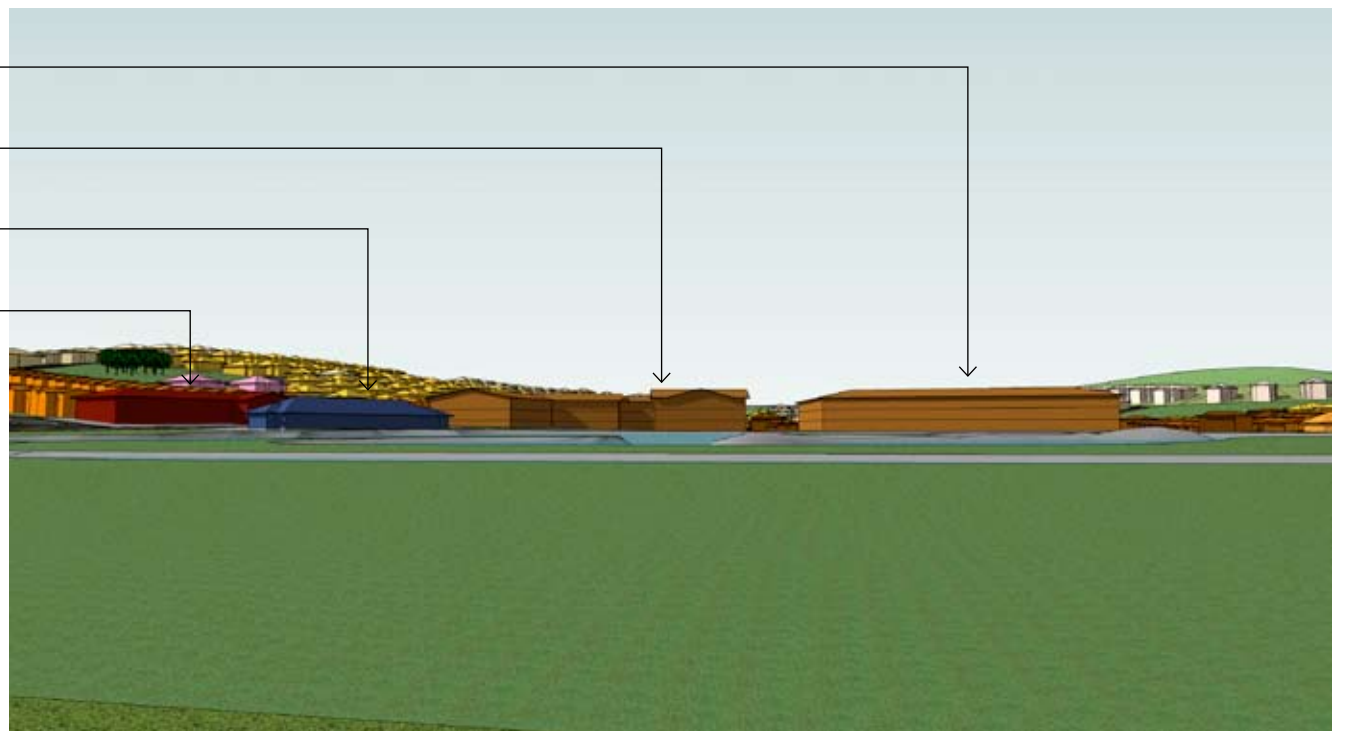
View 3. Existing view

ASSISTED
LIVING FACILITY

RETIREMENT
CENTRAL FACILITIES

COMMUNITY FACILITY

MIXED USE BUILDINGS



View 3. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



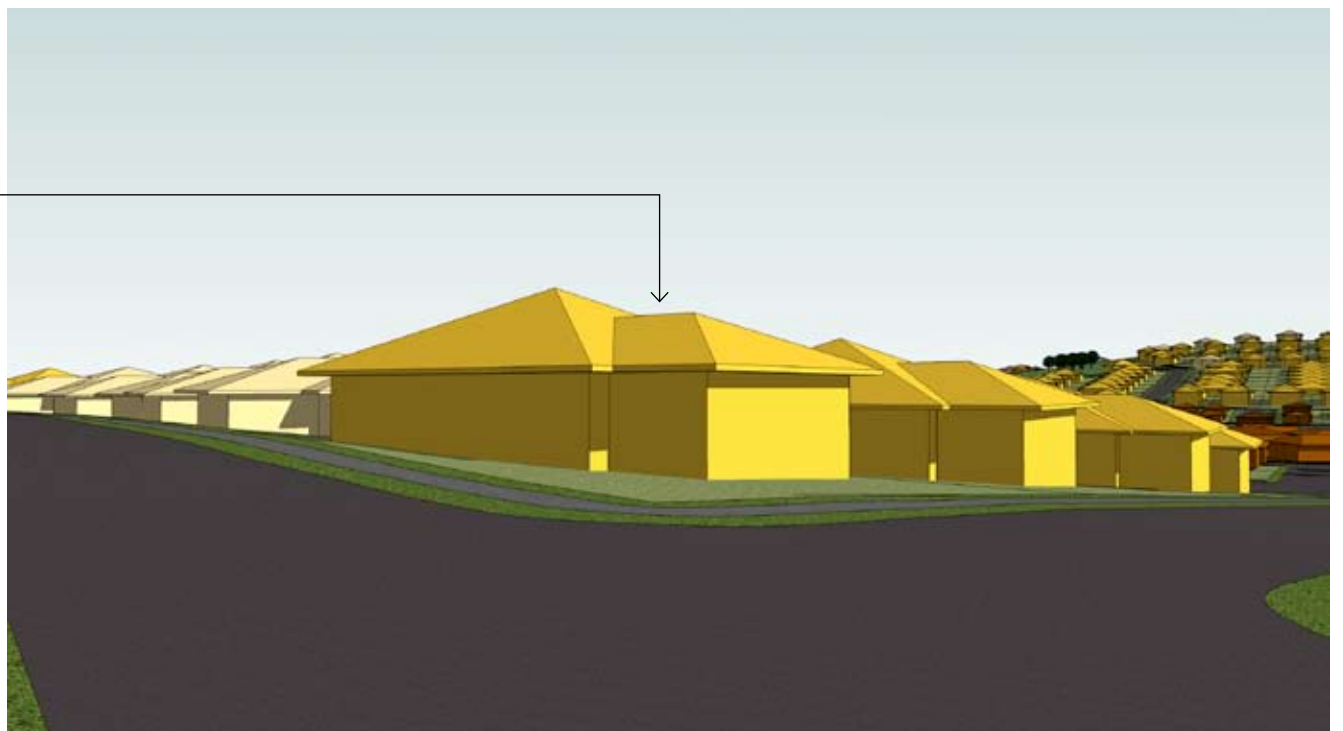
View 3. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 3: View across Pond from Hutley Drive looking east



View 4. Existing view

DETACHED HOUSING



View 4. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 4. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

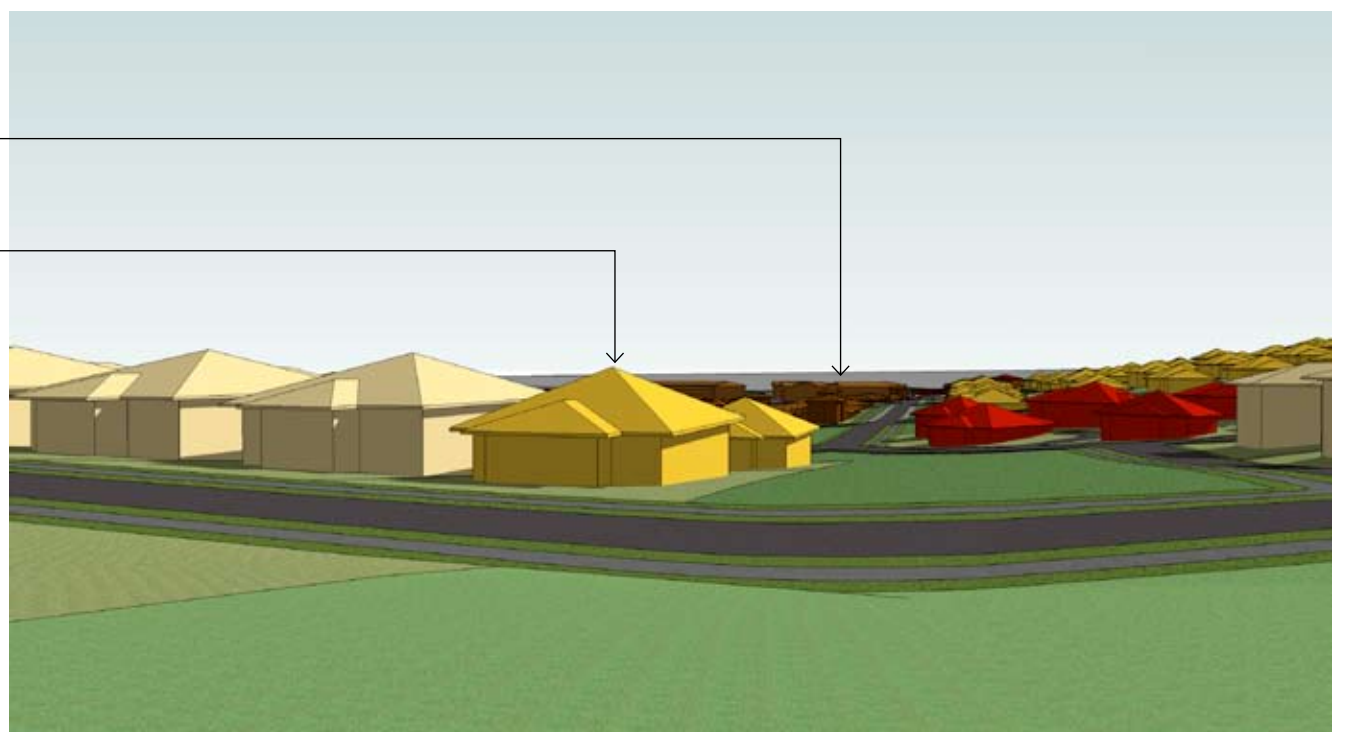
View 4: View from neighbouring suburb looking northwest



View 5. Existing view

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

DETACHED HOUSING



View 5. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 5. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 5: View down to Pond from eastern slope looking west

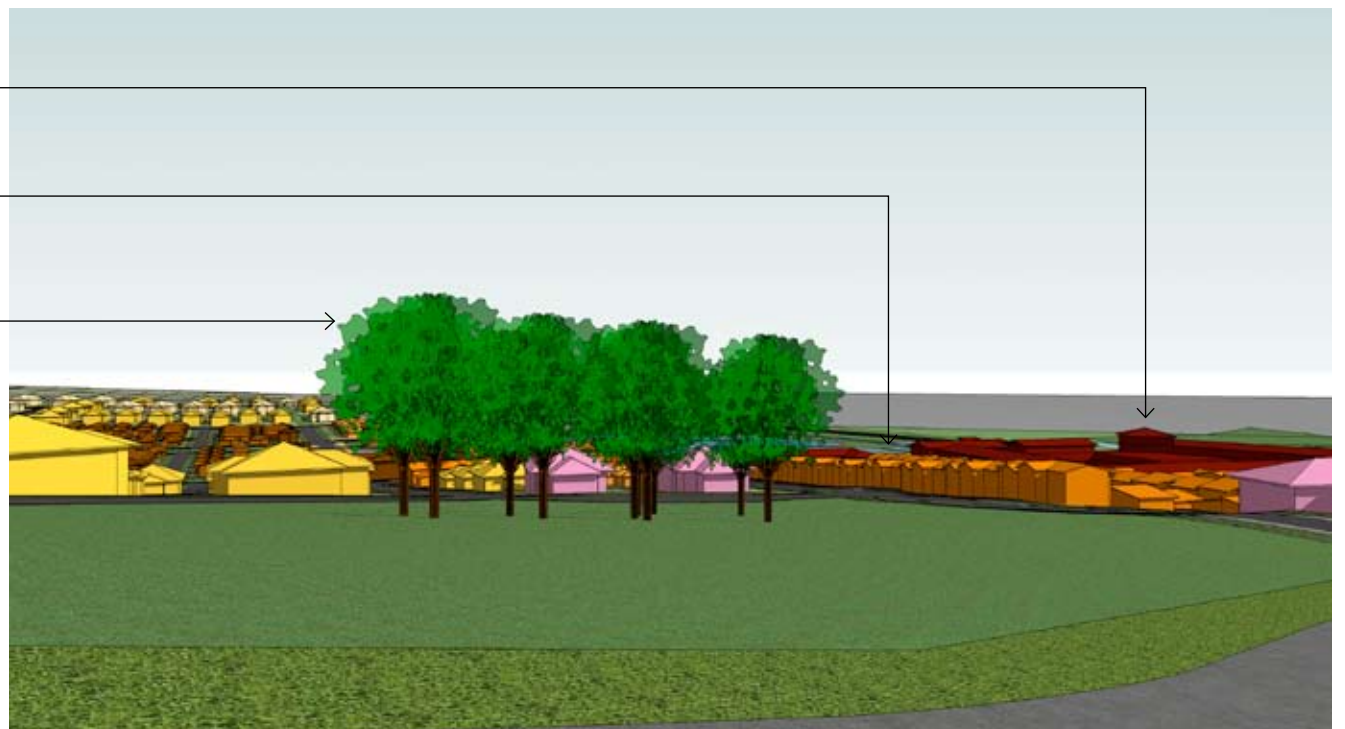


View 6. Existing view

MIXED USE BUILDINGS

REAR LANE HOUSES

EXISTING VEGETATION



View 6. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 6. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 6: View to Pond from ridgeline looking south/southwest



View 7. Existing view

DETACHED HOUSING



View 7. Buildings shown without proposed street trees



View 7. Buildings shown with proposed street trees

View 7: View from existing residential subdivision from south, looking north



View 8. Existing view

DETACHED HOUSING



View 8. Buildings shown without proposed street trees and without existing buildings & vegetation in foreground



View 8. Buildings shown with proposed street trees and without existing buildings & vegetation in foreground

View 8: View from Silkwood Road looking south



Aerial view of site from north



Aerial view of site from east



Aerial view of site from south



Aerial view of site from west