Memorandum

To:	Hinsan Li – Development Manager – Fletcher Development Ltd
From:	Stuart Barton - Arbor Connect Ltd
Subject:	The Hill Private Plan Change – Notable Tree Assessment
Date:	21/02/2024 – Final

Introduction

1. Auckland Council has requested further information on the trees implicated by the proposed private plan change for 79 Ladies Mile, known as The Hill. Specifically, they have requested:

   "The assessment at page 96 of the AEE in relation to B4.5 Notable trees suggests that no identified notable trees or groups of trees are located within or nearby the site. In relation to the trees that are proposed to be retained, the AEE assessment states that "[t]he trees are not considered to be appropriate for scheduling as the [Arbor Connect Report] assessment concludes they are not high-quality specimens."

   The Arbor Connect Report has not assessed the suitability of Tree 5 to 15 being included in the AUP Notable Tree schedule under the factors listed at B4.5. Notable trees. Please provide this assessment."

2. The following appendices are attached to this memo:
   - Appendix A – Potential Notable Tree Evaluation Table
   - Appendix B – Potential Notable Tree Location
   - Appendix C- - Auckland Council Guidelines for Nominating a Notable Tree for Evaluation – Scoring of Tree-Specific Factors

3. The site has 11 pōhutukawa trees along the Ladies Mile boundary that have been assessed to ascertain if they meet the Auckland Council Notable Tree criteria and potentially be considered notable trees.

Methodology

4. I have been involved with the development of this site since 2021 and have made several visits to inspect these trees over this time. I am familiar with the tree cover in the local area as I regularly visit it to socialise and work. Aerial photographs from 1940

to 2017 were viewed to understand the age of the trees and the tree cover in the local area. I have read the archaeological assessment for The Hill by Clough and Associates.[1]

5.   The trees were scored following Auckland Council's Guidelines for Nominating a Notable Tree for Evaluation (the guidelines). These guidelines have been derived from the Auckland Unitary Plan Chapter B4 Te tiaki taonga tuku iho – Natural heritage - B4.5.2 Notable trees policies.

6.   The tree-specific factors were scored on-site with follow-up research into the age of trees completed at the office. The scoring for those trees is attached as Appendix A, and the plan showing the location of those trees is attached as Appendix B.

Notable Tree Assessment

7.   The guidelines for assessing the potential for trees to be notable have two sets of factors to be considered. The first is tree-specific factors, and the second is special factors.

8.   The tree-specific factors use a scoring system to assess age and health, character and form, size and visual contribution. The scoring of the tree-specific factors is attached as Appendix C. If a tree scores 20 or more (out of a possible 40), it is deemed to be considered suitable for scheduling as a notable tree. Negative effects on human health or property can be considered against the tree if it scores 20 or more.

9.   The trees were scored individually. No group assessment was done as there were no groups that met the group criteria, which is

   "When applying tree-specific factors to groups of trees an average assessment for all trees in the group should be used. At least one individual in a group must be scheduled independently as notable and all trees in the group must be physically close to each other or form a collective or functional unit through meeting at least one of the following criteria: 1. Canopies touch; 2. Canopies overlap; 3. Canopies are not further than 5 metres apart."[2]

10.   Paragraphs 11 – 19 summarise the scoring for the trees.

   Age and health

11.   I considered that the trees were less than 80 years old. There was no evidence in historical aerial photographs that trees were growing in this location before 1945. The trees' health (vigour and vitality) was generally mid-range, with some in poor health.

12.   The trees scored between 2 and 6 for tree age and health.

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[1] The Hill, Ellerslie Racecourse, Auckland: Archaeological Assessment By Clough& Ass dated August 2022
[2] Auckland Council Guidelines for Nominating a Notable Tree for Evaluation Page 5 by Auckland Council

Character or form

13. The trees have been growing in a row with other small trees around them. They all exhibited normal or below-normal character or form.

14. All trees scored 0 under this category.

Size

15. Most of the trees were average or below average in size.

16. Trees 10 and 13 scored 5 in this category, all others scored 0.

Visual contribution

17. The trees can all be viewed from Ladies Mile and beyond. This equates to more than 5,000 people viewing the trees daily.

18. All of the trees scored 10 in this category.

Negative effects

19. No trees scored 20 or higher and then were disregarded by negative effects.

20. The special factors are five stand-alone criteria that a tree is assessed against. If a tree satisfies one or more of these criteria, it can be considered for inclusion in the notable tree schedule. The stand-alone criteria are Heritage, scientific, ecosystem service, cultural and intrinsic. Paragraphs 21 – 25 summarise the special factor assessments.

Heritage

21. In the comprehensive archaeological assessment by Clough and Associates, no trees could be identified as being associated with heritage or historical events or figures and have no strong public association with a local historic feature. There is nothing to suggest that they are linked to māori history.

Scientific

22. The pōhutukawa trees are not rare or have any outstanding scientific value.

Ecosystem service

23. The pōhutukawa do not provide critical habitat.

Cultural

24. I am unaware of any trees within the site having any cultural significance.

Intrinsic

25. No trees within the site were judged as having intrinsic value.

Potential Trees for the Notable Tree Schedule

26. The details and scoring of these trees are attached as Appendix A. One tree (Tree 13) scored over 20 points under the tree-specific evaluation.

Conclusion

27. An assessment of the site has identified one tree as a potential candidate for inclusion into Schedule 10: Notable Tree Schedule of the Auckland Unitary Plan.

I trust this is of assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

For **Arbor Connect Ltd**

Stuart Barton
Managing Director
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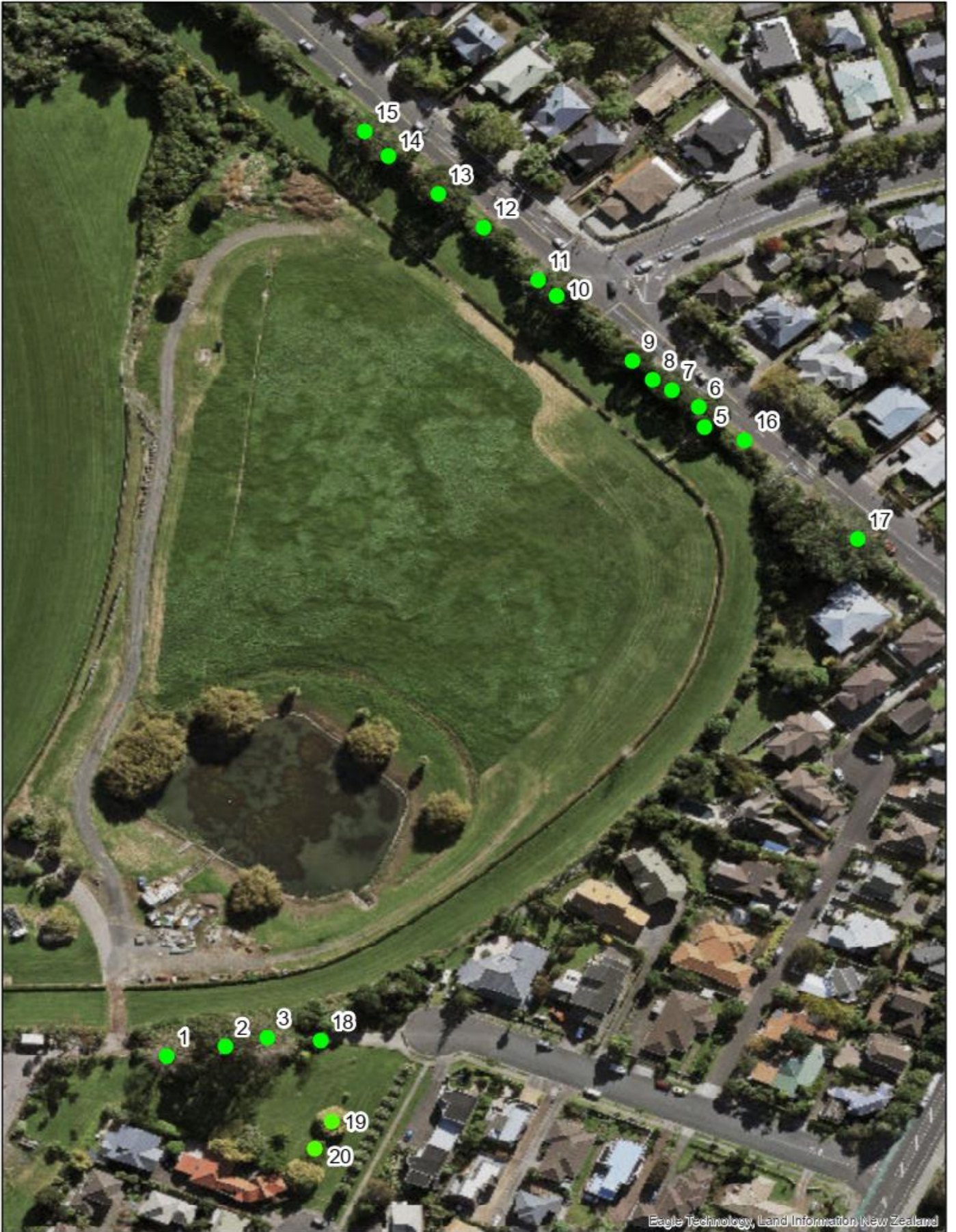Dip.P&G. Tech., NCH (Amenity)

APPENDIX A

POTENTIAL NOTABLE TREE EVALUATION TABLE

Tree Number	Species	Height (m)	Canopy Spread (m)	Trunk Girth @ 1.4 (m)	Age	Vigour and Vitality	Age and Health Score	Character or Form	Character & Form Score	Size	Size score	Visual	Visual Contribution Score	Total Score	Comments
5	Pōhutukawa	7.3	8.0	1.3	41 – 60	Fair	4	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	14	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
6	Pōhutukawa	9.0	12.0	3.0 (3 stems)	61 - 80	Good	6	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	16	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
7	Pōhutukawa	9.5	13.0	2.7 (3 stems	61 - 80	Fair	4	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	14	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
8	Pōhutukawa	8.8	13	1.9 (4 stems)	41 - 60	Good	4	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	14	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
9	Pōhutukawa	10.2	13	2.7 (2 stems)	61 - 80	Good	6	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	16	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
10	Pōhutukawa	12.8	15	4.5 (5 stems)	61 - 80	Fair	4	Not Exceptional	0	Greater than 25 %	5	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	19	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
11	Pōhutukawa	9.2	15	2.2 (2 stems)	41 - 60	Fair	4	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	14	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
12	Pōhutukawa	9.8	6	0.7	< 40	Good	2	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	12	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold
13	Pōhutukawa	14.6	17	3.9 (2 stems)	61 – 80	Good	6	Exceptional locally	0	Greater than average size (up to 25 % larger)	5	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	21	Meets the tree-specific factor threshold
14	Pōhutukawa	10.7	7	1.8	61 – 80	Poor	2	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	12	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold

Tree Number	Species	Height (m)	Canopy Spread (m)	Trunk Girth @ 1.4 (m)	Age	Vigour and Vitality	Age and Health Score	Character or Form	Character & Form Score	Size	Size score	Visual	Visual Contribution Score	Total Score	Comments
15	Pōhutukawa	10.4	15	2.6 (2 stems)	61 – 80	Fair	4	Not Exceptional	0	Average size for the species in this location	0	Main road/motorway highly visible	10	14	Does not reach the tree-specific factor threshold

APPENDIX B

POTENTIAL NOTABLE TREE LOCATION

Tree Positions
Remuera Precinct Plan Change

ARBOR CONNECT

APPENDIX C

AUCKLAND COUNCIL GUIDELINES FOR NOMINATING A NOTABLE TREE FOR EVALUATION – SCORING OF TREE-SPECIFIC FACTORS

Scoring of tree specific factors

These scoring systems are to be used when evaluating a tree against the tree-specific factors in Section 6 (see page 10).

Age and health

Vigour and vitality	High	3	5	6	8	10
	↑	2	4	6	8	8
		2	4	6	6	7
		2	4	4	5	5
	Low	2	2	2	3	3
	Age in Years	<40	41-60	61-80	81-100	>100

This scoring system should be used when assessing the age and health of a tree. It allows for trees that are old and healthy to score much more highly than trees that are either unhealthy or young. The degree of vigour and vitality for any tree is assessed given the age of the tree. Therefore, a tree that is over 100 years old and showing high vigour and vitality, for a tree that age, will score a 10.

Character or form

Not exceptional	0
Exceptional example locally	5
Exceptional example in Auckland	10

This scoring system should be used when assessing the character or form of a tree. It allows for trees that are exceptional examples at two spatial scales (from local to Auckland-wide) to score more highly than trees that are regarded as normal.

Size

Average size for the species in this location	0
Greater than average size (up to 25% larger)	5
Substantially greater than average size (>25% larger)	10

This scoring system should be used when assessing the size of a tree (including height, girth and lateral spread). It allows for trees that are larger than would be expected (on average) for a particular location to be scored more highly than trees that are at, or close to (or below), their average height.

Visual contribution

In backyard or gully	2	e.g. fewer than 100 people see the tree daily
Local park/community/ beside minor road or feeder road/catchment	5	e.g. between 100 and 5000 people see the tree daily
Main Road/motorway or higly visible landform	10	e.g. more than 5000 people see the tree daily

This scoring system should be used when assessing the visual contribution of a tree. It allows for trees that are seen by more people on a daily basis to score more highly than trees that are rarely seen.