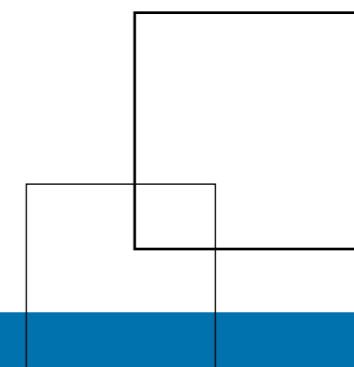
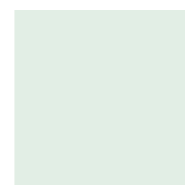
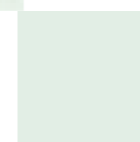
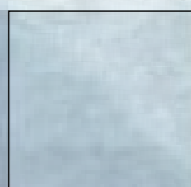
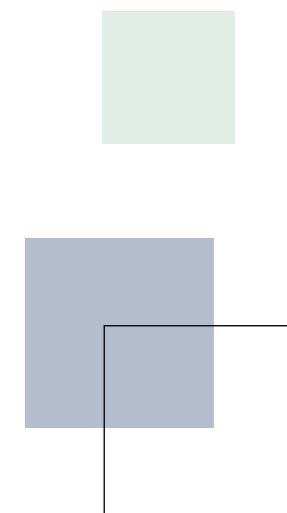
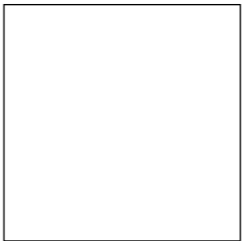


Taupo Commercial -Industrial Structure Plan **Landscape Assessment and Capacity Study**





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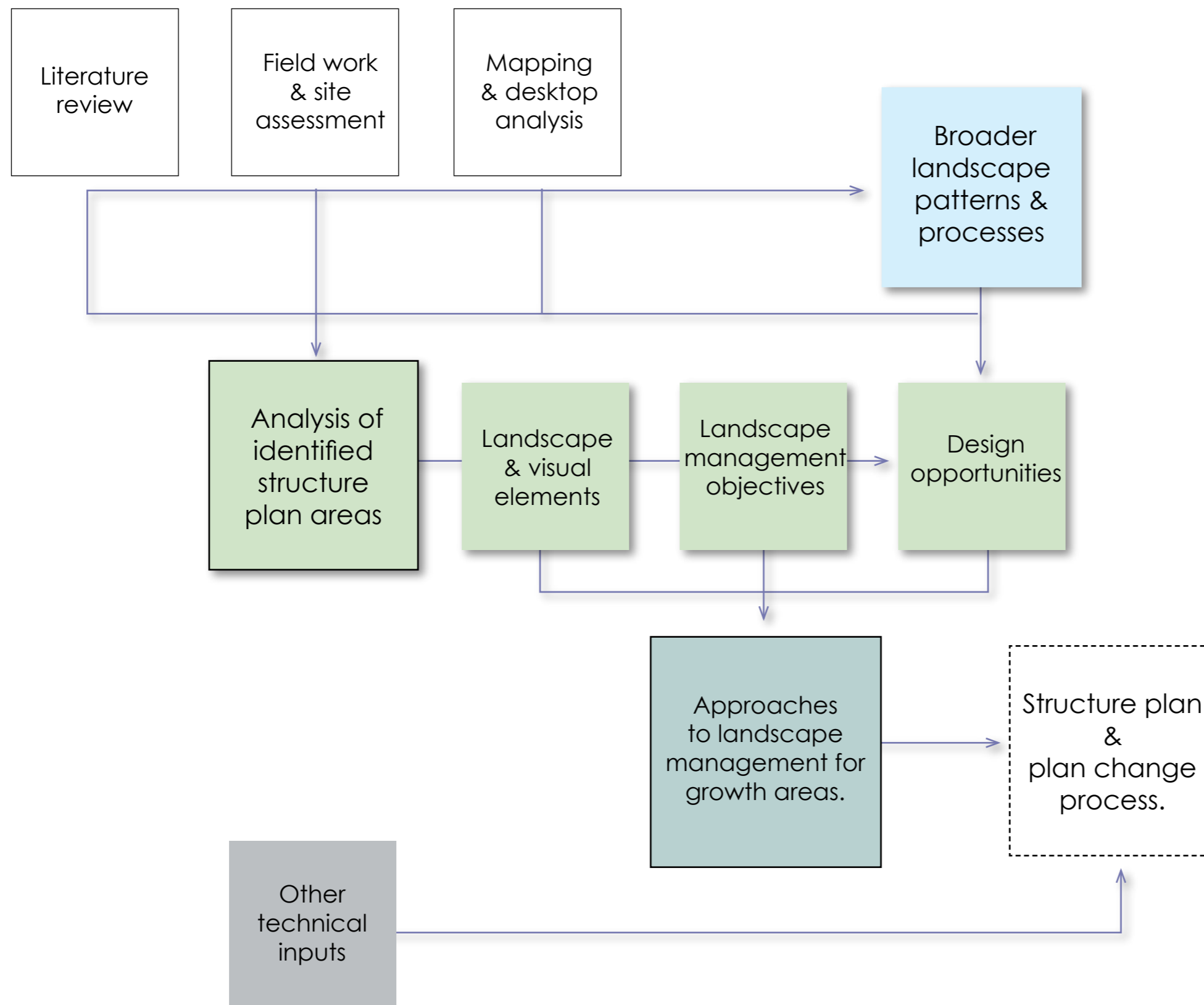
The diverse and dramatic landscape of Taupo underlies the town's unique character and sense of place. The crater lake, volcanic landforms and the broader rural setting contribute not only to amenity values but also provide the basis for recreation and lifestyle, farming and forestry, geothermal potential and the thriving tourism industry. In many ways, the landscape is the life-blood of the town. As such, it is essential that the future growth of Taupo takes place in a manner that protects and enhances the intrinsic landscape values of the area.

For the purpose of providing guidance on landscape matters into the Structure Plan process, Boffa Miskell Ltd (BML) have been engaged by Taupo District Council to complete a study of the land identified for commercial and industrial uses in the Growth Management Strategy TD2050.

This study has been carried out in accordance with the briefing documents provided by Taupo District Council in June 2008. Based on the Inception Report, the primary purpose of the landscape study is to;

'..look at land identified within TD2050 as potential commercial and industrial land and identify any areas of significance'

In order to achieve best practice outcomes for the structure plan, BML have expanded upon the scope of work to provide further guidance in terms of opportunities and management approaches that will protect and enhance the landscape values within and around identified commercial and industrial growth areas.



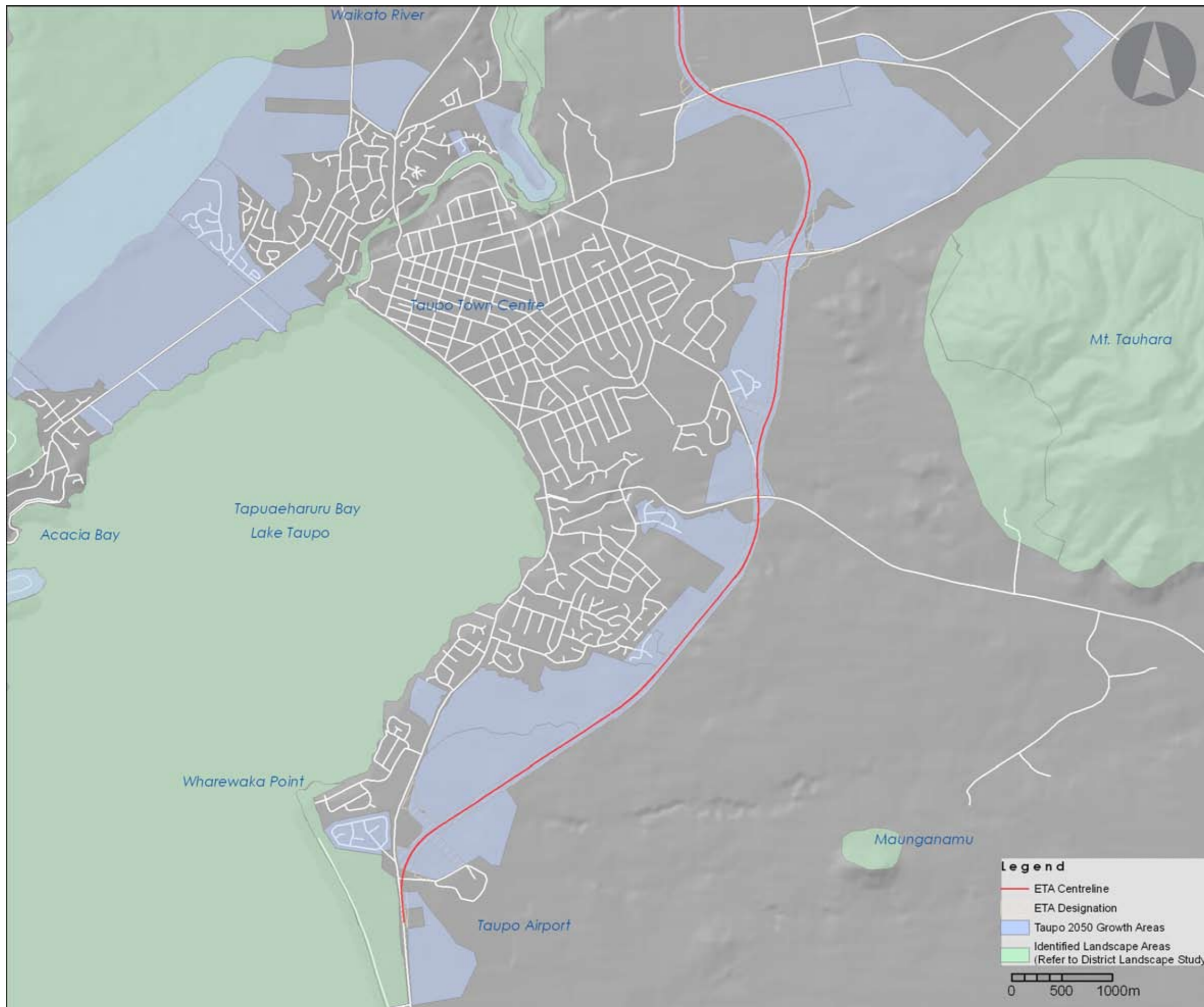
The landscape assessment process is outlined in the adjoining diagram. The process moves from broad contextual analysis through to site-specific assessment.

Section 1 (following page) provides a brief overview of the existing statutory and strategic documents providing guidance on landscape matters in the structure plan area.

Section 2 uses desktop GIS analysis and mapping to identify key landscape elements, patterns and processes occurring within the broader structure plan area.

Section 3 then looks in detail at the landscape and visual characteristics of the individual structure plan areas combining site assessment and observations with the underlying maps to identify opportunities and constraints to development.

Section 4 provides a summary of the entire structure planning area to clarify the overall capacity of the structure plan area to absorb commercial and industrial growth. This section also provides guidance for the structure plan and plan change process, discussing the future design and management of structure plan areas.



A review of all policy deemed (in discussions with TDC) to be relevant to the structure plan areas was completed to gain a full understanding of the project and background to the proposed plan change. A summary of this literature review is provided in Appendix A to this report. The key points arising from the review are as follows;

District Landscape Study

The District Landscape Study identified OLMAs (Outstanding Landscape Management Areas) and Amenity Landscapes throughout the district. These areas are shown in green in the adjoining plan. The identified areas that lie in close proximity to the structure plan area are Mount Tauhara, Maunganamu, Lake Taupo and the Waitahanui Bay Lake terraces. While none of these identified areas lie within the Taupo Urban Commercial and Industrial structure plan areas, inappropriate development adjacent to these features has the potential to detract from their presence in the landscape.

Taupo District 2050 - Growth Strategy

The broader northern growth area was identified through the Growth Management Strategy Taupo 2050 as the primary growth cell the district, accommodating up to 80% of total growth. The commercial, industrial and residential growth areas are highlighted in blue on the adjoining map.

With the exception of a small area in Acacia Bay, all of the potential commercial and industrial areas are located along the designated Eastern Taupo Arterial (ETA) corridor. These areas extend from the airport to the south of the town center through to a large block at the foot of Mount Tauhara. Given the scale and spread of the identified sites, landscape patterns and characteristics vary considerably.

The following section of the report explores the key landscape elements, patterns and processes occurring within the broader structure plan area.



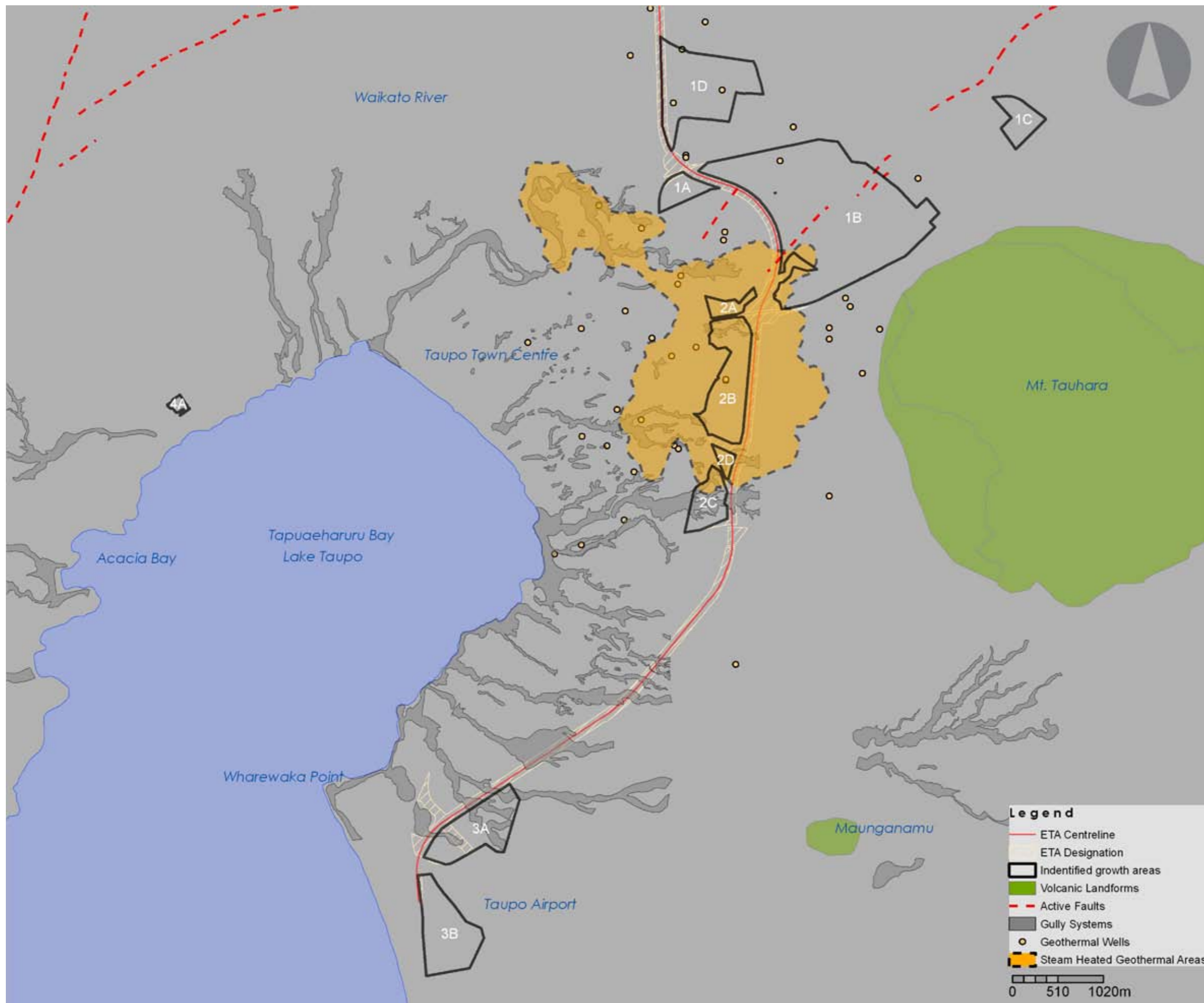
As well as providing a transport corridor of strategic importance, the Eastern Taupo Arterial Road will serve as a catalyst for changing land use patterns on the eastern edge of Taupo. In terms of future growth and the take-up of green-field sites, the ETA is significant in that it will essentially form an urban growth boundary between the urban core and the rural landscape. With the exception of the existing Centennial Drive Industrial area, the airport and several of the blocks associated with this study, vehicles moving along the ETA will generally be viewing the open rural landscape to the east and the built up urban core to the west. As such, the ETA will become a clearly defined edge to the town.

At present, the arrival into Taupo from the north and south provides for a distinct and memorable experience. The connection to the river, lake edge and expansive views of the broader landscape are relatively strong. The existing arrival sequence also brings people past key spaces in the town, brushing past the Tongariro Domain and the urban core.

The new route along the ETA will offer an entirely new perspective of the Taupo landscape. Those arriving into the town will be exposed to a diverse mix of land uses - from rural through to recreational, industrial, commercial and residential.

It is emphasised that the tourist experience (which is of such importance to the economy and viability) of Taupo is often a fleeting one. As such, first impressions are paramount. The experience or sequence of experiences for those travelling along the highway must draw out and emphasise landscape features and retain the overall sense that the town is nestled within and dominated by the landscape.

Viewshaffs to landscape features visible from the ETA such as Mount Tauhara should be identified and enhanced through the layout and design of commercial and industrial areas. The way that adjoining land uses relate or interface with the ETA is a critical factor.



Taupo's present day landscape has been shaped by volcanic processes. These processes have brought about the creation of the volcanic mountains, crater lakes, plateaus and river valleys which characterise the landscapes of the district.

Mount Tauhara (shaded green)

The volcanic cone of Tauhara is recognised as an outstanding landscape. The following extract from the District Landscape Study (Isthmus Group) testifies to its significance;

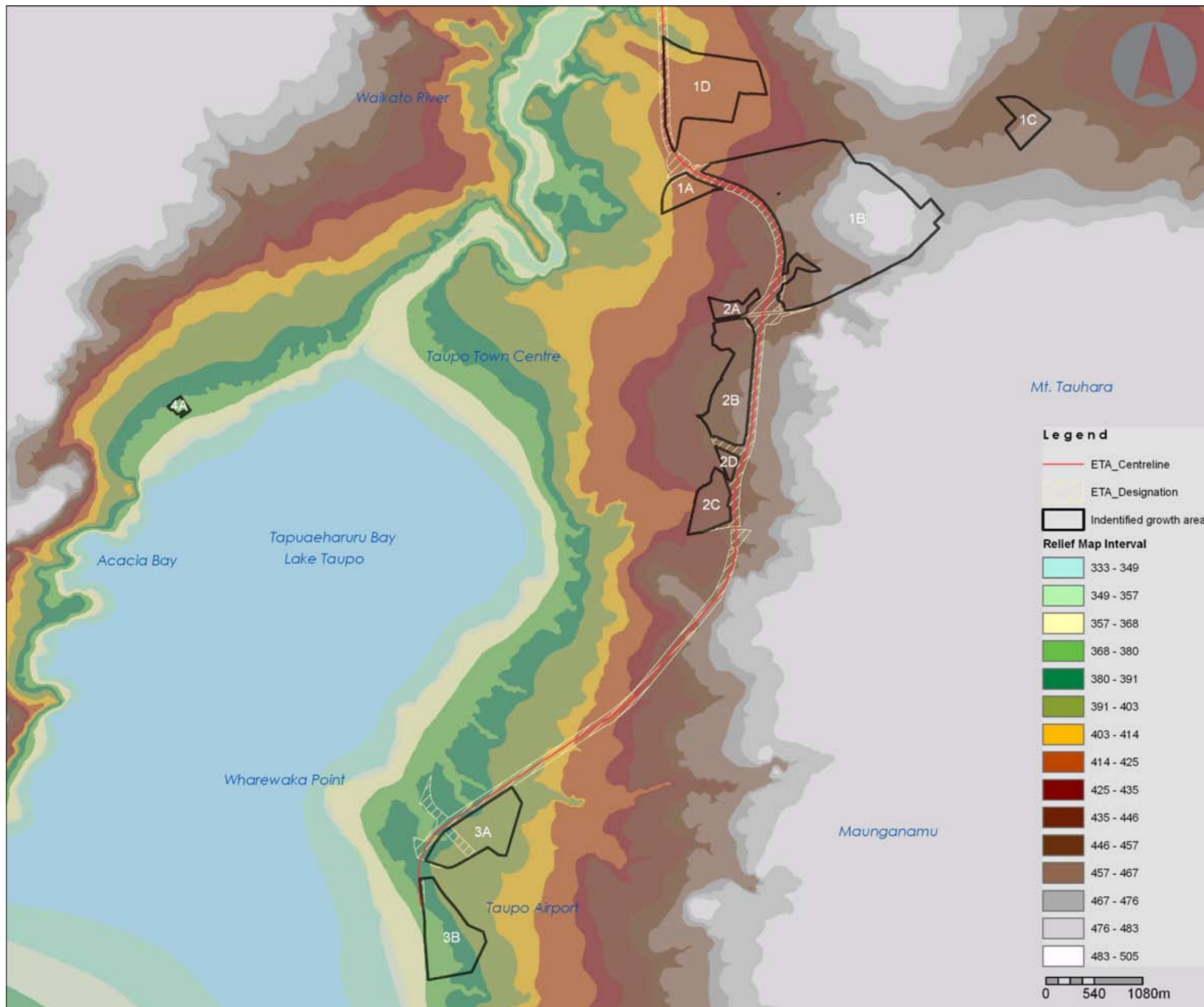
Mount Tauhara ... is outstanding for its physical dominance over the Taupo Township, with its volcanic character and sheer rise from a relatively flat plain. The presence of the township in close proximity adds to its outstanding nature, because it is experienced in close proximity to a wider community. Its meaning associated with the local community along with its historical associations reinforces its importance as being outstanding.

Lake Taupo (shaded blue)

Lake Taupo is the heart of the district and is the outcome of the largest pyroclastic eruption in recorded history. The lake is also an outstanding landscape as well as being a recreational and spiritual centre.

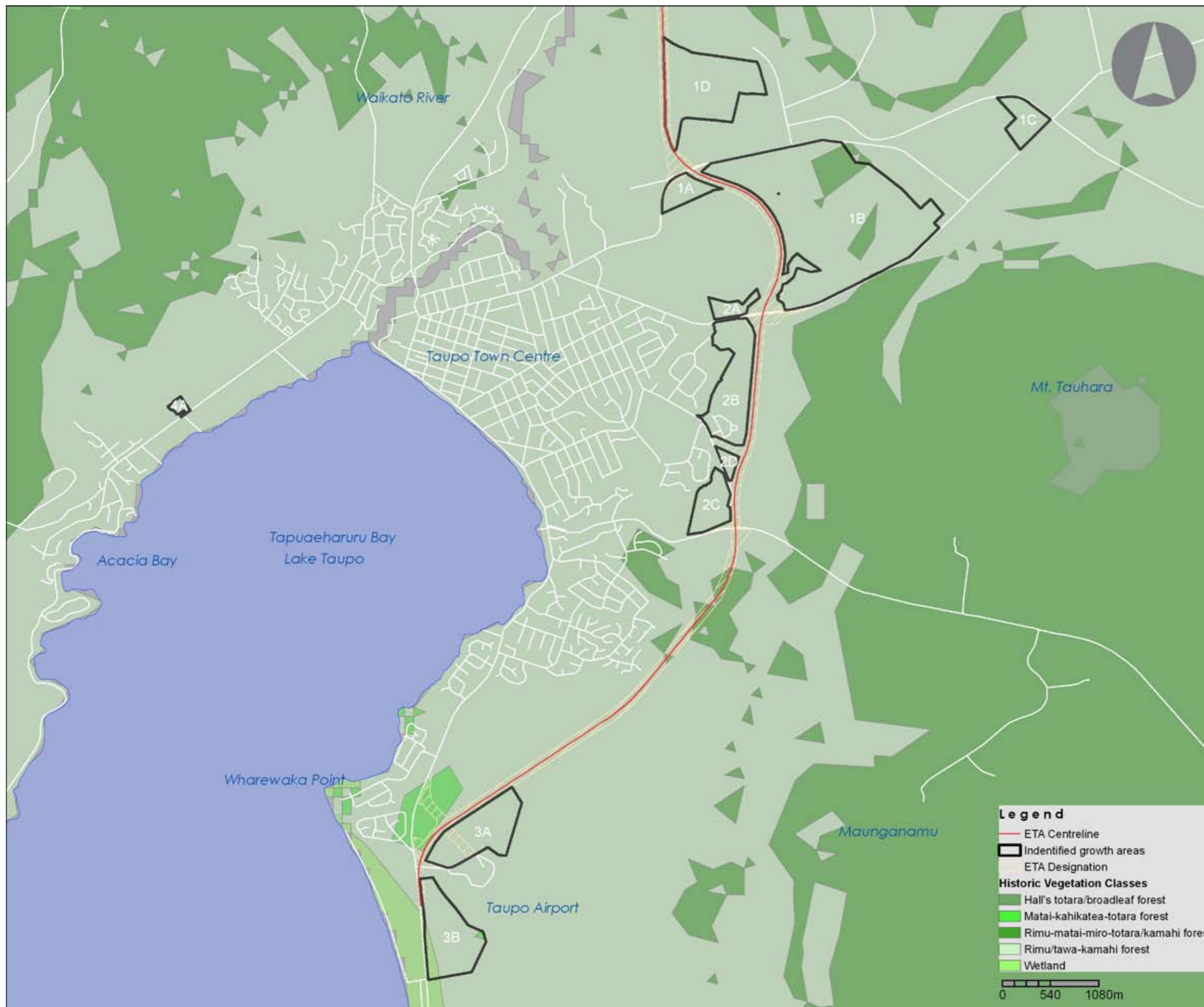
Geothermal Areas (shaded orange)

The sight of white steam billowing from the ground creates an awareness of the 'living and breathing' landscape of Taupo. The high levels of geothermal activity in the Structure Plan Area present unique challenges for future development. As well as an energy resource, the geothermal fields are an important reminder of the dynamic volcanic processes and a significant tourist attraction in their own right, to the district each year.



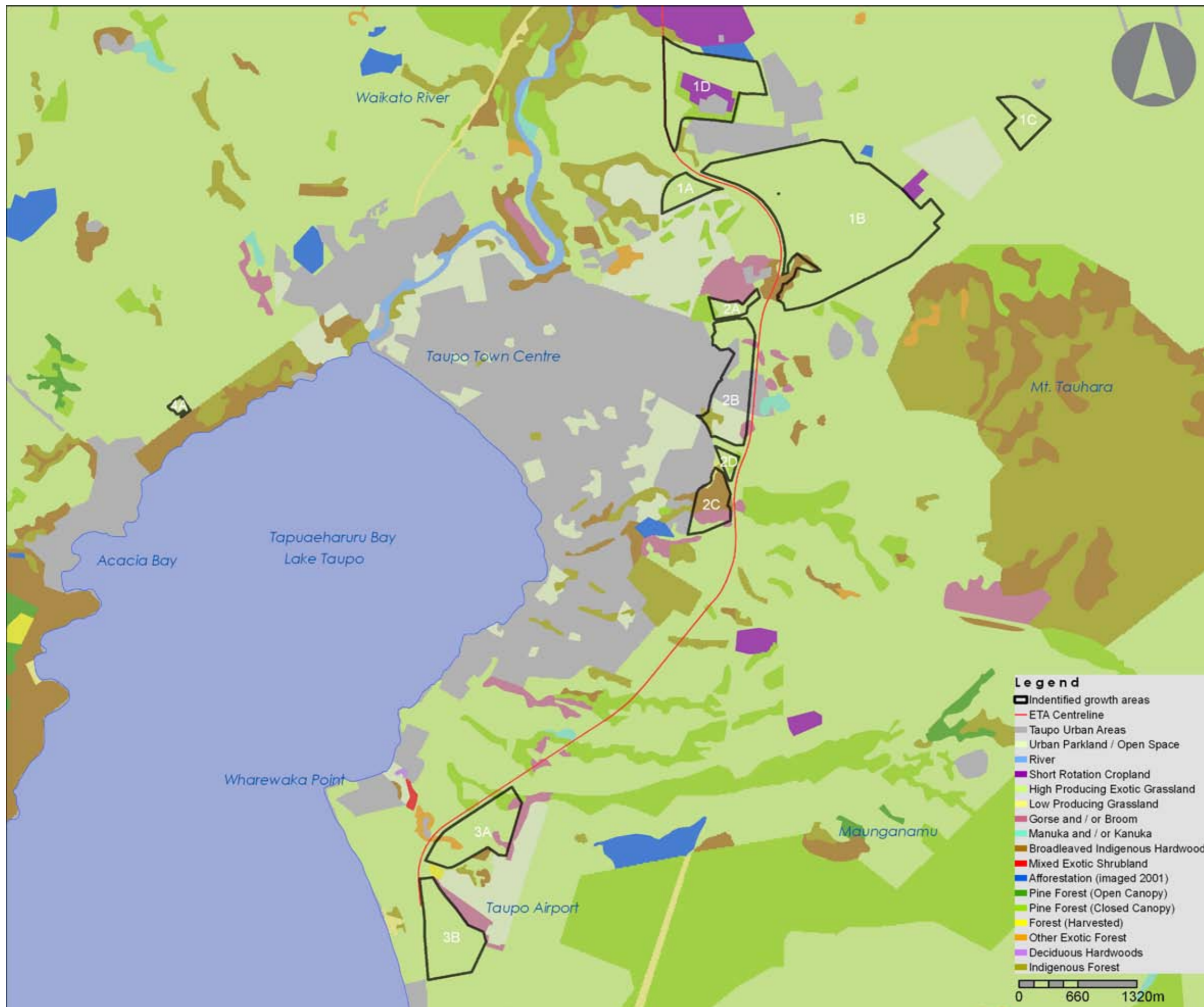
The adjoining map highlights the key characteristics of the surrounding landform. Rising from ~RL 350 at the edge of the lake through to RL 1090 at the summit of Mount Tauhara, the elevated areas provide a strong sense of visual containment to the town.

The volcanic and hydrological processes that have shaped the landform are still highly visible. Mount Tauhara and Maunganamu are dominant in scale but other features such as remnant lake terraces and deeply incised gullies also provide a valuable reference and reminder of the natural processes.



The adjoining map shows the historic vegetation classes that would have once covered the broader structure plan area. While the vast majority of these areas were long ago cleared to provide for rural and urban land use (refer following page), the map provides a cue to guide future planting and restoration opportunities.

The predominant vegetation class within the structure plan areas would have been Rimu/tawa-kamahi forest with small areas of Halls totara/ Broadleaf forest. It is recommended that planting and environmental restoration be based where practical on the historic vegetation classes.

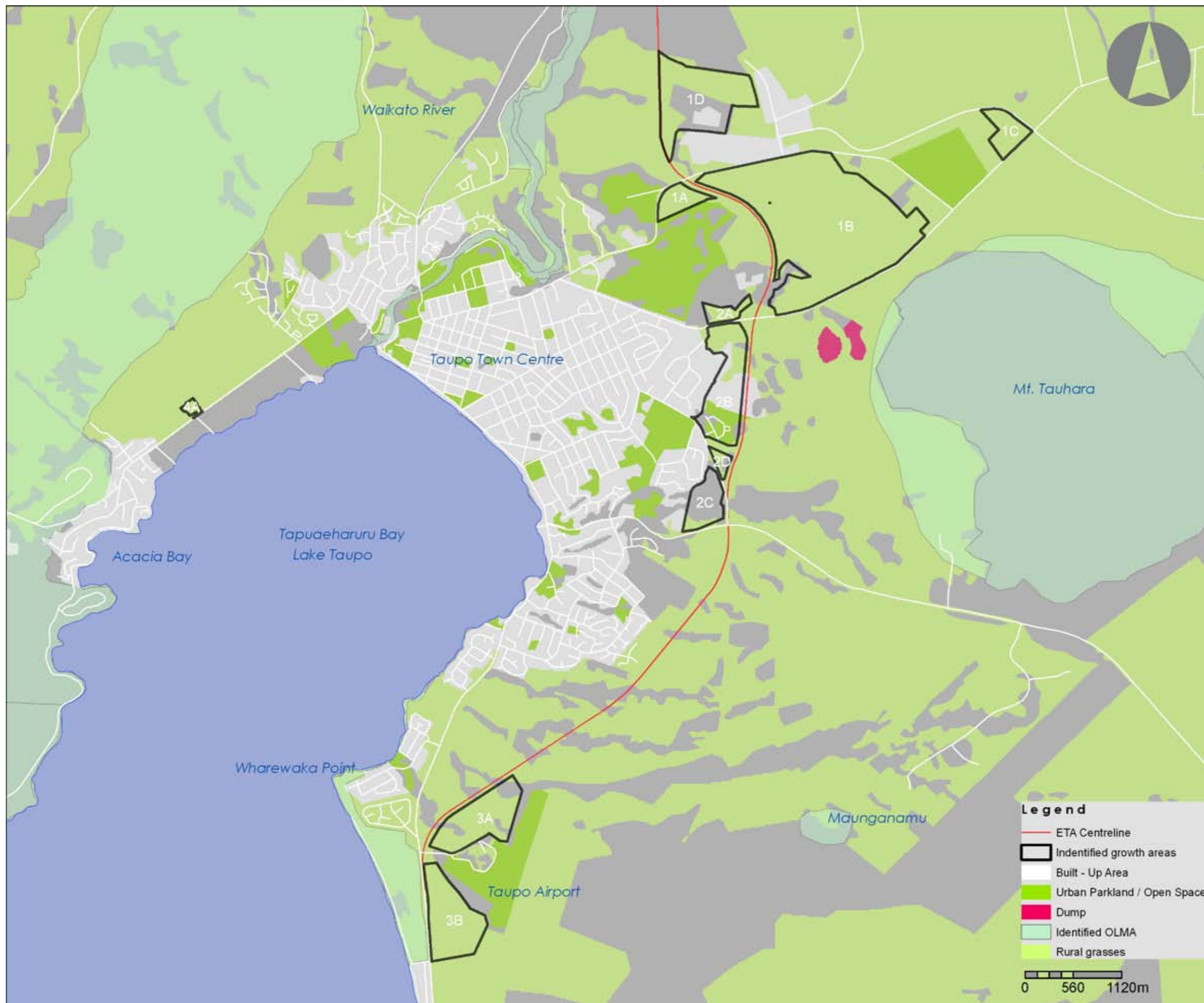


Highlighting the vegetation patterns of the present day, the adjoining map indicates the extensive vegetation clearance that has taken place to allow for the introduction of agriculture and horticulture. The remaining patterns are dominated by pine plantations and the remnant gully systems and elevated areas that were overly constrained for rural use.

Viewed from above, the lake margins and catchment are criss-crossed with large numbers of gullies and stream tributaries all feeding into the lake. Remnant vegetation highlights these gully landforms and emphasises the visual and geomorphological relationship between the lake and the surrounding high country.

There is an opportunity to protect and enhance remnant indigenous patches such as the broadleaved indigenous hardwoods related to the geothermal areas. Significant Natural Areas need to be protected for their intrinsic landscape value as well as their ecological value.

Section Two: Landscape Context



Timber milling, plantation forestry and sheep/dairy farming have historically been the most significant human factors influencing the character of the Taupo landscape. These activities brought about extensive vegetation clearance and resulted in the rural landscape which still dominates today. The rural character consists of the familiar elements of broad open pasture, rolling hills, vegetated slopes / gullies and exotic shelter belts along boundaries.

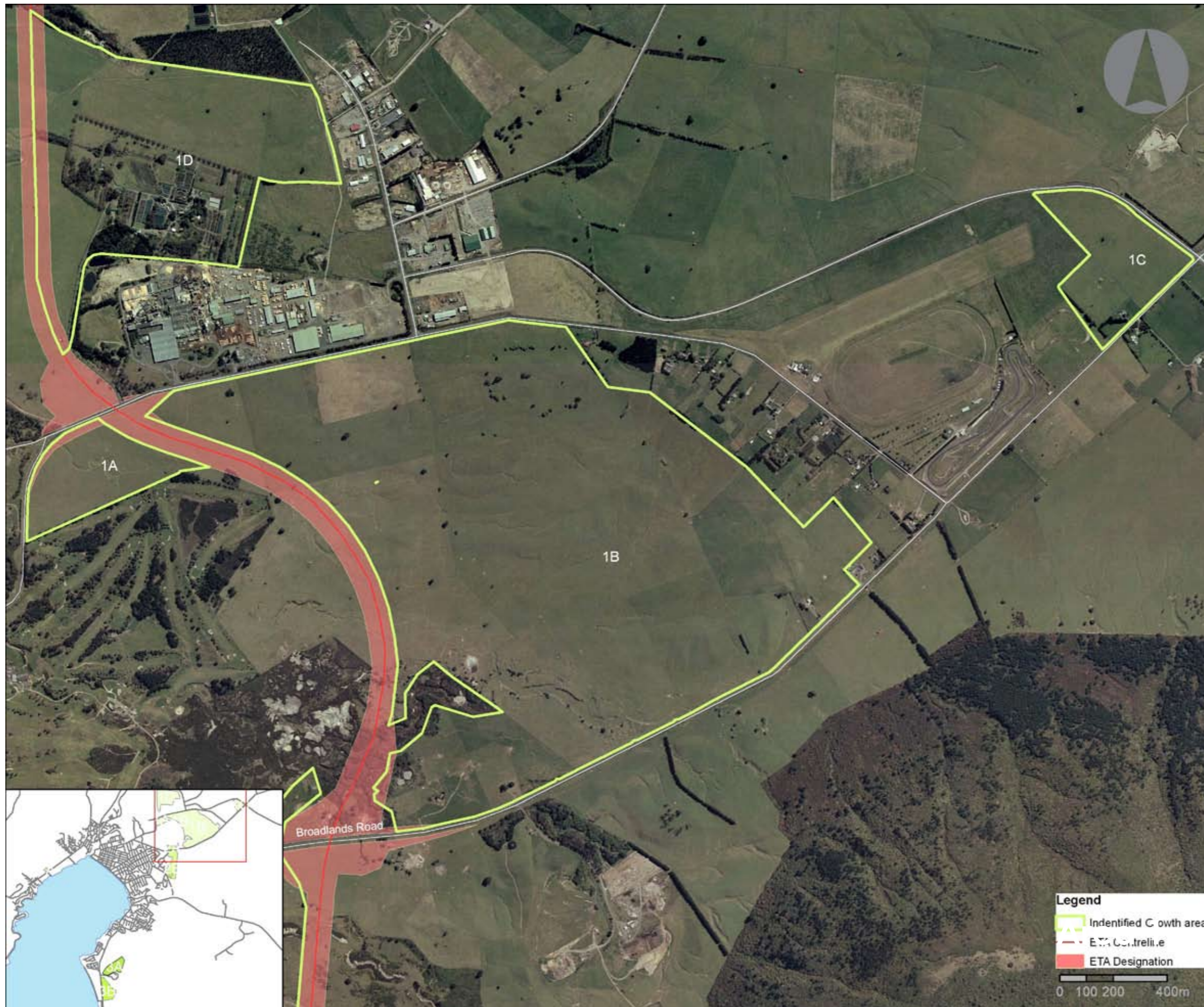
Urbanisation is the latest vehicle for landscape change. At present, the urban area of Taupo is visibly contained by the rural and natural landscape. Development is clustered around the lake edge and while there are increasing examples of sprawl or fringe development, the settlement is relatively well defined and the rural land mass is dominant. As noted earlier, the designated ETA corridor will introduce an unofficial urban growth boundary which will play an important function in the visual containment of the urban area.

The setting of '...clear limits to the outward development of all urban areas' is a key direction of Taupo 2050. This direction emphasises the need to restrict the inappropriate spread of urban development into rural areas. As such it that the site selection process for commercial and industrial growth areas considers the issue of rural character .



Due to the diverse characteristics of identified commercial and industrial growth areas, it is necessary to look individually at each structure plan area. Each of these potential sites is a landscape management area with unique opportunities and constraints to future development.

The following section of the report takes each of the identified Growth Areas and provides an assessment of the existing landscape and visual characteristics. Guidance is then given in terms of landscape features to be protected, the capacity for the absorption of commercial and industrial land uses and further opportunities for the protection and enhancement of landscape values through the structure plan.



Location:

Bound by Centennial Drive to the north and Broadlands Road to the south.

Description:

The 281Ha area to north-west of Mount Tauhara is the largest of the areas identified within Taupo 2050 for potential commercial and industrial activities. Due to the size, elevation and the range of land use activities surrounding the block, the capacity for commercial and industrial use varies.

The site is currently used for grazing and horticultural purposes and rural land use is the predominant activity in the adjoining areas. There is some evidence of erosion within gullies and on steeper slopes. The existing Rakaunui Road Industrial area is located to the north of the site, opposite Centennial Drive.

The ETA will form the western boundary of Area 1B with geothermal areas and the Centennial Golf Course located on the western side of the proposed alignment. The eastern boundary of the site adjoins a linear run of 10-12 rural-residential allotments along Centennial Drive. Further to the northeast is the racetrack and the Formula 1 course and growth area 1C. Beyond Broadlands Road to the south, the primary land use of rural grazing to the base of Mount Tauhara.

Area 1D was added for consideration in the Structure Plan in October 2008. This 76 Ha site includes the Taupo Native Plant Nursery and is bound by existing Industrial zones as well as the future ETA.



Photo i Area 1B View from Broadlands Road (opposite Rakanui Road area) looking eastwards towards Mount Tauhara. Note the line of specimen trees along the horizon line between RL 445 and 460.



Photo ii Area 1B A closer view of the Broadlands Road edge of Area 1B. The constant background presence of Mount Tauhara would be reduced if development was inappropriately located along the ridgeline.

Landform:

Starting at an elevation of ~425m nearest the Rakanui Road Industrial area, Area 1B lifts towards a high point of over 500m near Mount Tauhara and the intersection of Broadlands Road and Centennial Drive.

The broader landform is generally intact, however vegetation clearance and farming use have caused erosion on steeper slopes.

Geothermal fields in the southern areas of 1B the site are also a notable characteristic.

Area 1D slopes gradually away from Centennial Drive towards a broad gully which drains to the Waikato River, approximately 1.4 km to the west.

Land Cover:

Areas 1A to C are primarily cleared pasture with horticultural blocks closest to Centennial Drive. Mature specimen trees of various sizes are scattered sparsely through the site with the main concentration being to the north of Area 1B near Centennial Drive. Windbreaks and small woodlots within the adjoining Rural-Residential areas are typical of the land cover and pattern found in the broader rural context.

Area 1D has a considerable amount of vegetation cover with a large number of sizeable, mature specimen trees along the western and southern boundaries. Windbreaks along all property boundaries also provide a significant asset that should be protected for both amenity and mitigation purposes. While the central gully in Area 1D has been modified, native grasses and plants remain in wetter, lower-lying areas.



Photo iii Area 1 Gently rolling pasture surrounds the Centennial- Broadlands Block on all sides. Maintaining a positive visual relationship with the surrounding rural areas will be achieved through sensitive treatment of interfaces.



Photo iv Area 1B Panoramic views from the higher elevations of Area 1B. The rural areas to the east of Taupo are seen in the foreground with Lake Taupo, the western shores of the lake and the Tongariro Plateau in the background. The visual exposure of the site to a broad area makes it sensitive to change.

Structures:

Electricity Pylons run through the north-western corner of Area 1B. Other than a number of small rural sheds, there are very few permanent structures within the areas 1A, B and C. Area 1D contains variety of single storey structures ranging from small sheds through to large green houses. External views into Area 1D however, reveal very few of the structures due to the extensive intervening vegetation.

Visual Features:

The elevated areas of the site are identifiable as a visual feature. Viewed from numerous locations around Taupo, the rising landform is viewed as the immediate foreground to Mount Tauhara.

Visual Horizon:

From locations along Centennial Drive and Broadlands Road, the elevated contour between RL 460 and 500 forms the horizon line for Area 1B.

Views:

From the elevated areas of the site, broad panoramic views are available towards the urban areas of Taupo, the lake and Tongariro. Looking back from other areas towards the site (i.e. the Huka Falls Road lookout) the elevated areas of Area 1B are visible. From the western side of Taupo and the Lake, many views towards Mount Tauhara also include the elevated slopes of area 1B. When viewing Area 1D, the vegetation itself provides the primary backdrop and horizon line.

Landscape Management Objectives:

- Concentrate heavier industrial and commercial development at lower elevations nearest to the ETA.
- The existing landform profile presents a significant constraint to site redevelopment given the rise in elevation towards Mount



Photo v Area 1D View from existing nursery entry into area 1D showing the gently sloping landform and remnant native groundcover in the southernmost area giving way to open pasture in the northern area. Specimen trees line property boundaries.



Photo vi Area 1D A significant quantity of mature specimen trees and vegetation around the property substantially

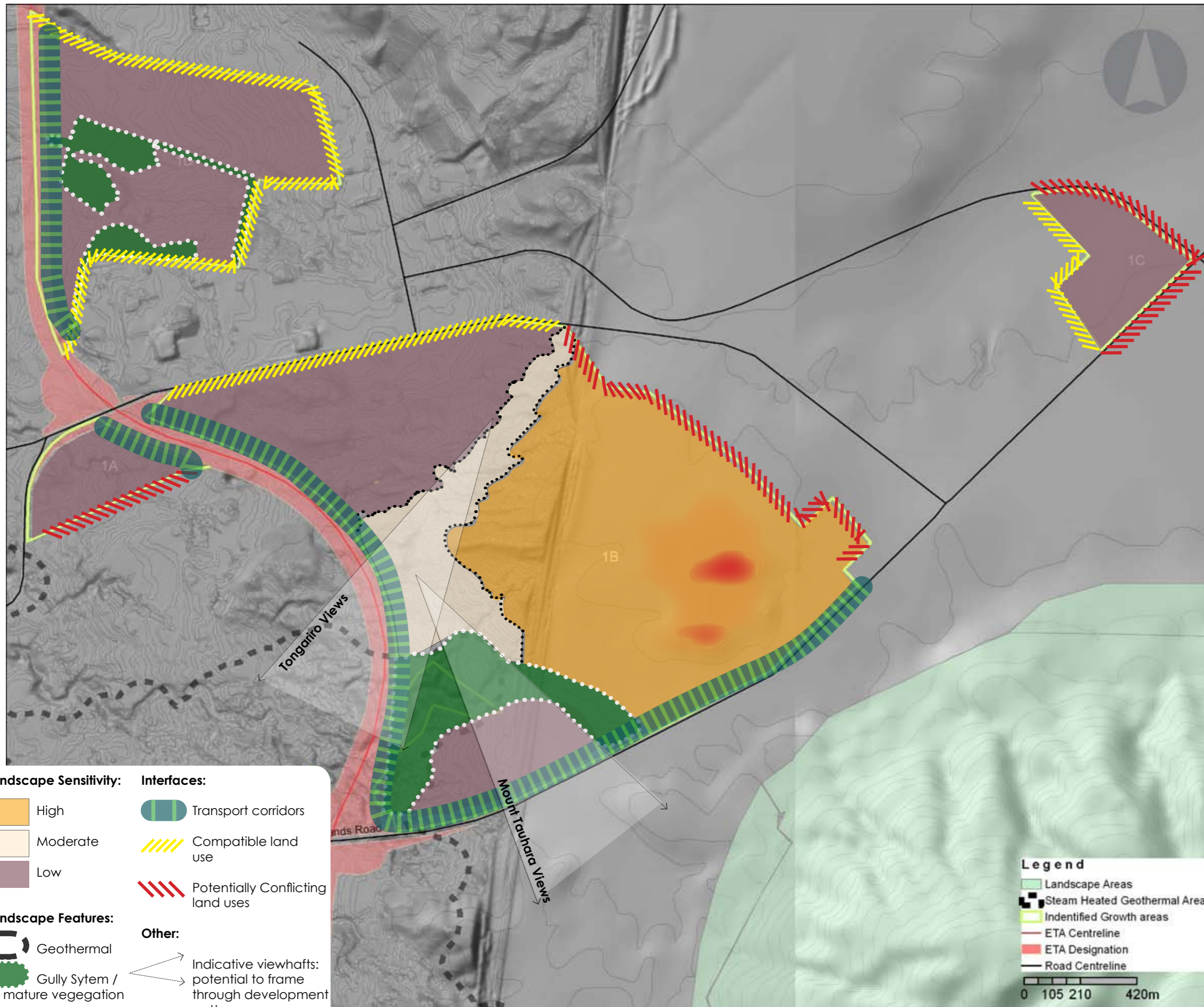
Tauhara in the east. The composition of broader views to Mount Tauhara are to be protected to ensure that developed areas are not visually dominant.

- Any impacts of future development on the visual horizon formed by the elevated areas are to be avoided or mitigated.
- Minimise landform modifications at higher elevations.
- Protect and enhance the existing geothermal area and associated gully system as an amenity feature and provide buffers to developed areas.
- Maximise the retention of existing mature vegetation around Area 1D to provide ongoing mitigation of existing industrial activities and future mitigation of extensions to industrial activity.

Landscape Sensitivity / Absorption Capacity.

Sensitivity varies according to elevation. Lower areas nearest to Centennial Drive and the ETA have LOW sensitivity while upper elevations have HIGH sensitivity. The basis for this sensitivity is the visibility of elevated areas from a broad viewing catchment and the potential for built form to break the horizon line. The low sensitivity values of Area 1D assumes the retention of the majority of the native and mature vegetation on site.

The identified high sensitivity areas are of a gradient that would make significant landform modifications necessary to accommodate development. Large areas of Commercial and Industrial activity could be located at lower elevations. The ability to absorb development within the areas of moderate sensitivity will require more rigorous design controls than the existing commercial and industrial zone rules allow for. Controls on building height, scale, colour and mitigation and backdrop planting are recommended for the moderate sensitivity area.



Opportunities:

External relationships:

Enhance ETA interface through amenity landscaping and screening and through the protection of existing vegetation. Amenity planting along Broadland Road and Centennial Drive should also be promoted to ensure that any adverse visual and amenity effects of the land use change are balanced by enhanced road corridors.

Create an amenity or open space corridor connecting the geothermal area to the base of Mount Tauhara. This would maintain the gully system and provide a visual buffer and separation from Broadlands Road. An open space system centred around the geothermal areas in Area 1B would also serve as a recreational asset. Walkways could potentially connect through to the golf course via an underpass thus improving broader open space networks. The gully system running through Area 1D also present an opportunity for an open space or amenity corridor.

Internal site opportunities:

Create buffers around geothermal areas to protect these from being crowded out by built form and development. These areas could provide valuable amenity and passive recreational nodes.

There is strong potential to orient development along axial roads terminating with vistas towards Mount Tauhara, Lake Taupo and Tongariro.

Protect existing mature specimen trees where practical and promote native amenity planting including Rimu, Tawa and Broadleaf forest.



Location:

Extending north from the intersection of State Highway 5 and Crown Road through to Broadlands Road.

Description:

This linear strip of land of 80 Ha is essentially an extension of the existing Miro Street commercial area. For assessment purposes, the site is broken into two distinct areas by Crown Road and the future intersection with the ETA.

Area 2A is located to the north of Broadlands Road. The area is bound by the ETA and Broadlands Road to the south and east with geothermal areas and scrubland to the north and west. The area consists primarily of open pasture.

Area 2B wraps around the eastern boundary of the existing Miro Street Commercial Area. The southern half of this area is already partially developed as a Commercial and Industrial Park and incorporates the Taupo Motorcycle Club (Motorcross Park).

Area 2C to the south of Crown Road extends to State Highway 5 where it is visible when arriving into Taupo from Napier. The area adjoins an existing residential area (along Arthur Crescent) to the northwest.

Area 2D to the east of Crown Road is a triangular parcel and lies opposite the Arthur Crescent residential area. The site will eventually be enclosed on all side by roading once the ETA has been constructed.



Photo vii Area 2C View from State Highway 5 (Napier Road) with Mount Tauhara in the background. The cleared southern edge of Area 2C gives way to a vegetated gully. (See below)



Photo viii Area 2C Gully running through 2C. Although degraded and overgrown with weeds, there is potential to protect this area as a feature and buffer.



Photo ix Area 2D Crown Road edge of Area 2D showing 2m height separation between road and site which limits views from the road.

Landform:

The key landform features are deeply incised gullies running through areas 2B and 2D. The majority of the site is at a flat to gently rolling contour with a number of gullies running through. The area lies largely within a geothermal field although extensive earthworks in area 2A have removed visual cues to these processes. The formation of Crown Road involved earthworks which have left a ~2m height difference between the road and Area 2D.

Land Cover:

The northernmost areas closest to Broadlands Road are predominantly open pasture and exotic scrub. Areas of geothermal vegetation (primarily kanuka) survive in some gully areas

The southern area (2B) and gullies are primarily covered in pines, blackwood and broom/blackberry. (Refer Ecological Report for detail).

Structures:

Built form is an established element of the landscape, both in terms of older residential dwellings (2A) and new commercial premises (2B). Areas 2C and 2D are currently free of structures.




Visual Features:

The incised gullies in Areas 2C and 2D and the geothermal areas to the north of Area 2B are the key remaining features of note. The remaining area is modified to a large degree.

Visual Horizon:

Given the elevated backdrop to the east and the future alignment of the ETA, development will not impact upon the broader horizon line.




Landscape Sensitivity:

-  High
-  Moderate
-  Low

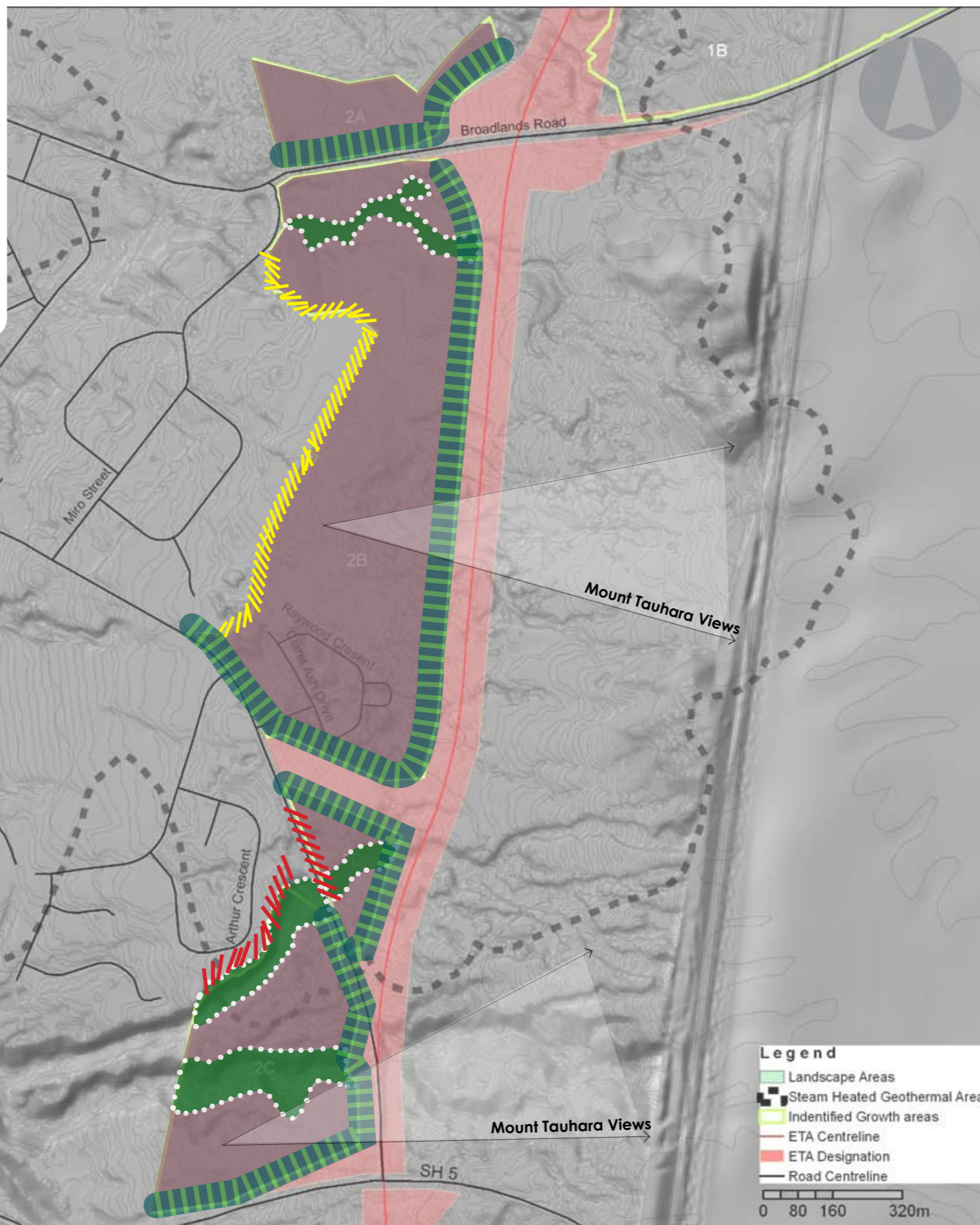
Landscape Features:

-  Geothermal
-  Gully System

Interfaces:

-  Transport corridors
-  Compatible land use
-  Potentially Conflicting land uses

Other:



Views:

Views eastwards to Mount Tauhara available from most areas of the site.

Landscape Management Objectives:

- Allow for appropriate buffers with adjoining geothermal areas, the ETA and along the interface with existing residential areas.
- Protect and enhance the gully systems running through Area 2C and Area 2D.
- Retain and regenerate areas of remnant geothermal vegetation..

Landscape Sensitivity / Absorption Capacity.

Area 2 generally has a LOW overall landscape sensitivity and is a logical extension of commercial and industrial activities along the ETA corridor.

Allowing for buffers along sensitive interfaces will ensure that a high capacity for absorbing the effects of development is maintained.

Opportunities:

External relationships:

- The experience of arrival into Taupo from Napier could be greatly enhanced by the treatment of the intersection between SH5 and the ETA. The way that built form and landscape buffers relate to the highway will be important in realizing the potential of this gateway point into town.

Internal Relationships:

- The remnant gully systems running through Areas 2C and 2D present significant resoration and passive recreation opportunities. Although the gully is degraded and will be further modified through the construction of the ETA, there is some potential to protect and enhance this gully as a visual link to the natural processes that have formed the landscape.



Location:

Bound by future ETA to north and west, Anzac Memorial Drive and Airport.

Description :

North:

The 48 Ha area to the north of the airport comprises a number of open paddocks separated by a series of vegetated gully systems. While only partially visible from the existing public road network at present, the majority of the site will be opened up to view from the ETA.

South:

The 47 Ha area to the south of the airport has a westerly aspect, sloping down towards the State Highway and lake at a gentle gradient. A key influencing factor for site development is that the full face of the slope presents towards the lake and the highway, meaning that the site is exposed to a large viewing audience. The lake margin area to the immediate west of the site is the identified Amenity Landscape feature the Waitahanui Bay Lake Terraces. Lake Taupo is an Outstanding Landscape Management Feature.



Photo vii Area 3A Typical view from SHWY eastwards into Area 3A. Pockets of flat, developable land are contained by vegetated gullies and windbreaks. The existing vegetation should be retained where feasible to provide an immediate buffer.



Photo viii Area 3A Gully systems running through the site are a focus for weed growth and some regeneration of natives.

Landform:

- Gradual slope from east to west from elevated areas near airport towards the lake edge.
- Four distinct gully systems cross through the site, generally running east to west. All gullies viewed were dry at the time of the site visit with clear signs of erosion through the removal of native cover and farming activity.
- Land Cover:
 - Pockets of cleared pasture between gully corridors vegetated primarily with exotic species.
 - Large exotic specimen trees including radiate pine. Weed species abundant.

Structures:

No visible structures on site

Visual Features:

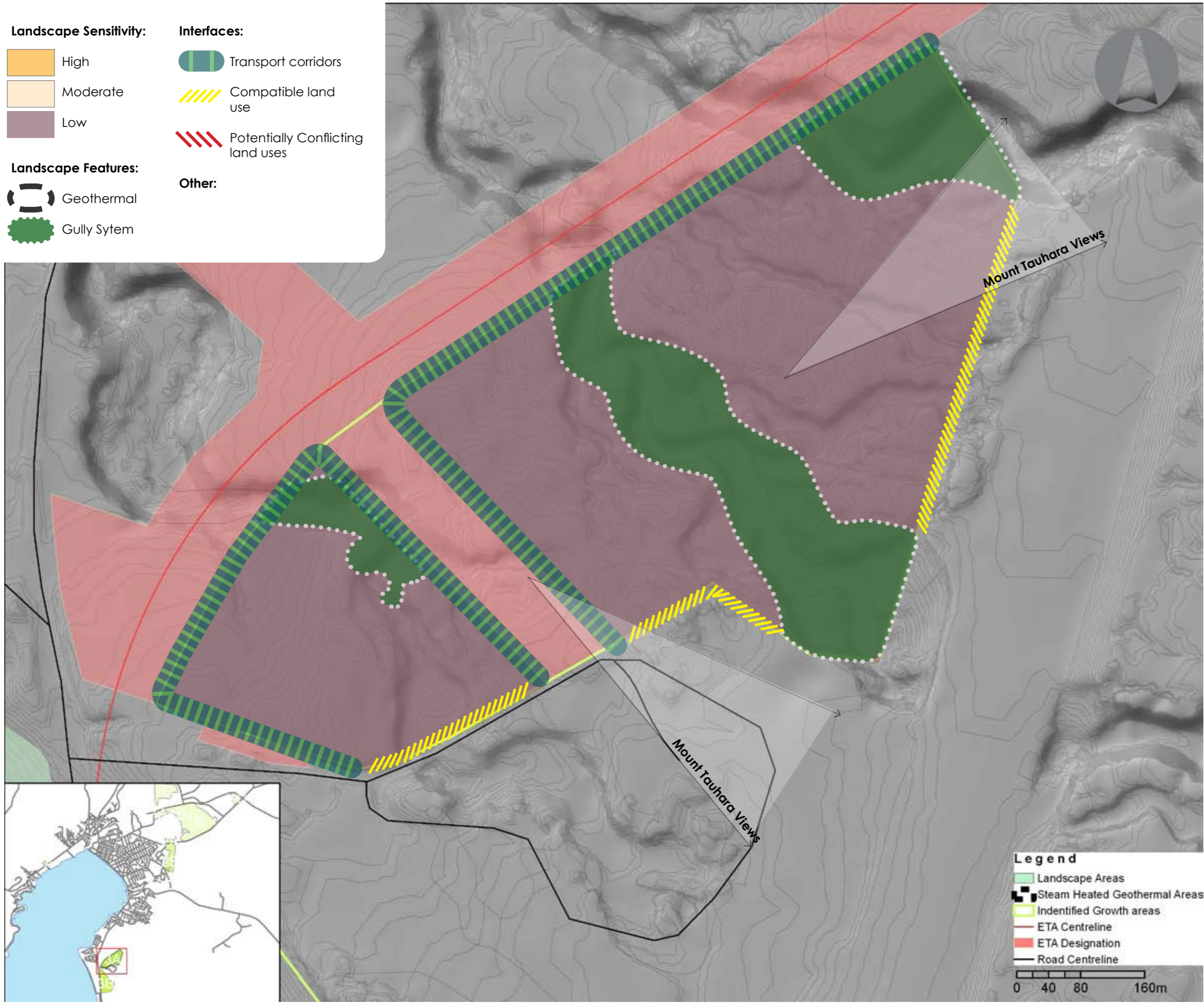
The gully landforms, while in a variable state at present, have significant potential as a landscape and amenity feature. If gullies were protected through future development, they would enhance the landscape and amenity values.

Visual Horizon:

The horizon line is dominated by the gully corridors however glimpses of Mount Tauhara to the north-east and elevated areas to the east are available from the highway.

Views:

Views to Mount Tauhara, Lake Taupo and beyond are available from points within the site however the bands of vegetation do block visibility. Views will be available through to the future residential area to the west of the ETA.



Landscape Management Objectives:

- The specific site is of low landscape quality however the protection of gullies and associated vegetation is an important factor.

Landscape Sensitivity / Absorption Capacity.

LOW sensitivity due to screening afforded by existing vegetation.

Relatively discrete pockets of Commercial and Industrial activity could be located within the site with few adverse effects on the landscape or visual amenity values. The ability to absorb development is greatly increased by the existing gullies and vegetation.

Opportunities:

External relationships:

The interface with the ETA could be enhanced through amenity landscaping which could also provide an additional layer of mitigation and screening.

The vegetated gullies break the site up into smaller pockets. There would be considerable advantage in protecting these corridors due to the role they will play in screening and visually mitigating future commercial and industrial activities.

Internal site opportunities:

Gully systems could continue to serve as stormwater channels. Enhancement of these gullies through ecological restoration, could provide erosion control. There is also the potential for walkways and cycleways to be provided alongside gullies.

Landform:

Gently sloping from east to west from existing airport down towards Lake Taupo. Low remnant scarp (old lake terrace) still visible from State Highway although highly modified



Photo ix Area 3B View from upper slopes of Area 3B towards the lake. The westerly aspect of the slope means that it is visually exposed to the highway and large areas of the lake.



Photo x Area 3B View from the edge of the State Highway looking back towards the site. The remnant scarp is visible in the middle ground. The potential impact of any built form on the horizon line is a key issue for the development of this site.

and subject to ongoing erosion. This scarp line runs through to Wharewaka Point and is an important characteristic reinforced by identification as an Amenity Landscape Feature.

Land Cover:

The land parcel is primarily pasture with no apparent native vegetation. There are large areas of Gorse in the southern part of the block and ~6 large macrocarpa in the south-eastern corner.

Structures:

Boundary fences are the only structures.

Visual Features:

The sloping landform and remnant scarp/lake terrace are the key visual features when viewed from the lake and the highway. Scattered boulders are also a characteristic element - these have been made a feature of in a small reserve on the opposite side of the highway –(Ernst Kemp Rise).

Visual Horizon:

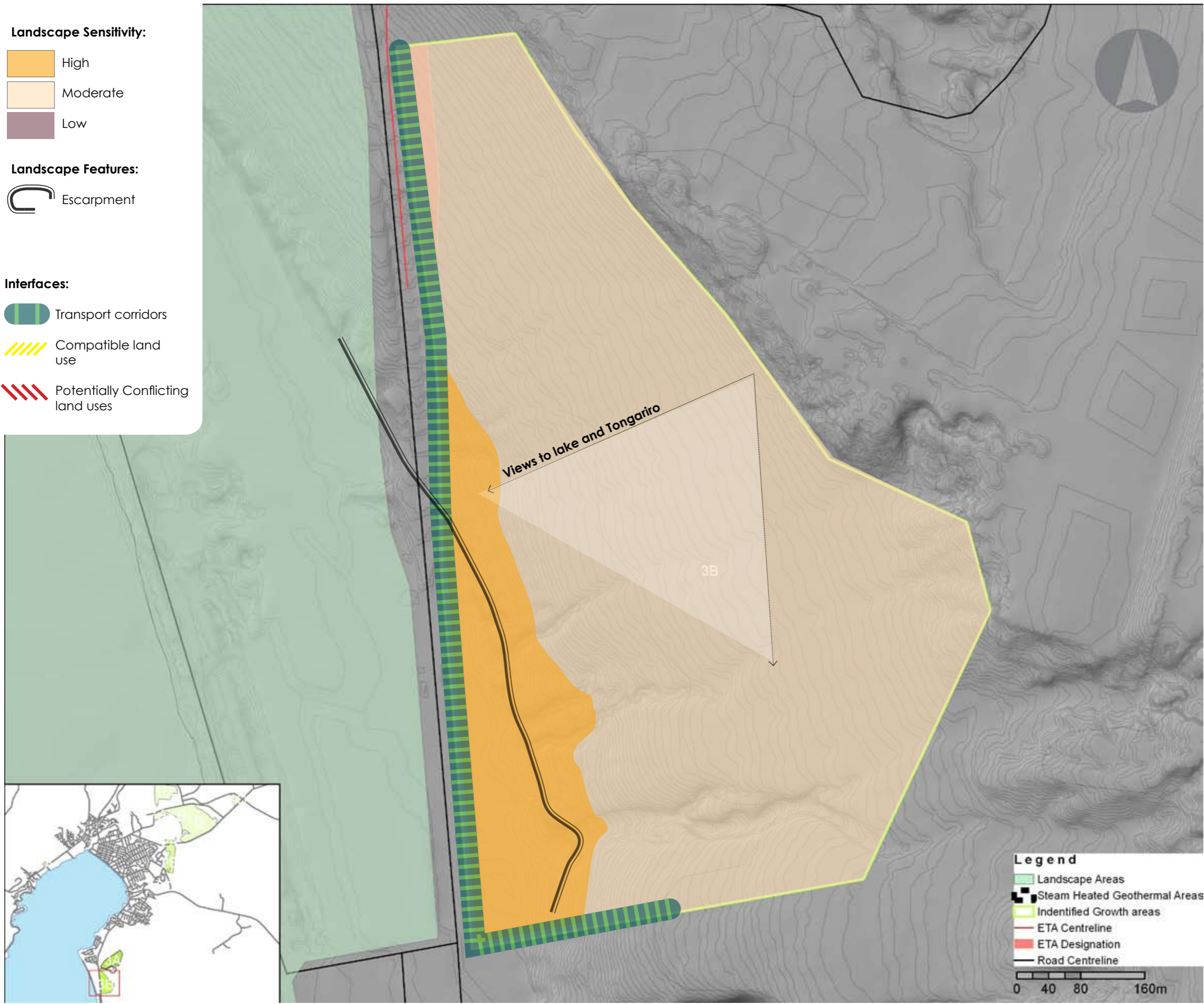
The elevated eastern edge of the site forms the horizon line when viewed from highway if arriving from the south. When arriving from the south, the visible eastern horizon is almost entirely formed by rural or vegetated cover until this point.

Views:

Due to the westerly aspect of the site, extensive panoramic views to the Lake and Tongariro are available. The site is thus visible in the distance from a broad area. Intermediate to close views are also available from the Highway and the Mahuta Road residential area to the west.

Landscape Management Objectives:

- *The site is highly visible from the highway and lake presenting a gateway into the Taupo*



urban area. The experience of arrival needs to be carefully considered, managed and protected. Manage development so that built form does not impact significantly on the horizon line when viewed from the highway and lake.

- Protect the scarp and Waitahanui lake terraces landforms as a buffer separating the highway from the site and look to enhance through planting.

Landscape Sensitivity / Absorption Capacity.

MODERATE - HIGH sensitivity due to aspect and large viewing audience.

When arriving from the south, development of the site will become the first visible parcel of built-up land on the landward side of the highway. To achieve a high amenity entry into town, development would need to be buffered from view to reduce the impact. The sloping landform and western aspect however would make the highway and lake interface difficult to mitigate effectively.

Opportunities:

External relationships:

There is an opportunity to retain the remnant scarp and enhance through landscape planting which would also provide a visual buffer to built form. The interface with the State Highway could be enhanced through landscaping which could double as mitigation/screening.

Built form scale to reflect underlying gradient of site with potential to drop down in scale towards the highway.

Road alignments to consider viewshafts and axes between Tongariro and Tauhara.

Location:



Landscape Sensitivity:

- High
- Moderate
- Low

Landscape Features:

- Geothermal
- Gully System

Interfaces:

- Transport corridors
- Compatible land use
- Potentially Conflicting land uses

Other:

- Existing pasture/ rural land.

To the north of Acacia Bay Road.

Description:

The 2.6 Ha site is located within a large expanse of clear and open pasture. The site identified for commercial use is directly opposite Korukomoana Road; a dirt track leading to the edge of the lake. The Taupo Urban Structure Plan 2004 (TUSP), identifies the urban growth area as being suitable for residential development within the next 20 years. The identified commercial hub is centrally located in the larger urban growth area.

The specific site has relatively low landscape value given that it is clear of vegetation and devoid of any unique or identifying features.

Landform:

The surrounding rural area has a gentle upward slope to the west and has an easterly aspect towards the lake. The land rises to an elevation of over 500m to the west providing spatial containment to the identified growth area.

Land Cover:

Site and surrounding rural block largely cleared. A number of specimen trees are located to the west of the site.

The 200-250m wide strip between Acacia Bay Road and the lakefront is covered with scrub

Structures:

Existing rural house and shed 100m to northwest of site. Closest built-up residential areas 500m to northeast and 450m to southwest.



Photo xi Area 4 This typical view of the Acacia Bay growth area shows the predominant character to be the flat to rolling pasture. Planned residential growth will change this character and a commercial node would be an anticipated component of the new growth cell.

Visual Features:

The defining feature of the site is the expansive open pasture which will be gradually replaced with residential infill.

Visual Horizon:

Formed by the backing ridgeline to the west.

Views:

Expansive views to the east- to the lake and beyond.

Landscape Management Objectives:

- *Ensure that the commercial node takes advantage of its landscape setting, orientied towards lake views and adding to the Acacia Bay Road streetscape.*

Landscape Sensitivity / Absorption Capacity.

LOW sensitivity given broader land use change. A pocket of Commercial activity would be appropriate to service the future residential catchment.

Opportunities:





External relationships:

Opportunity for high amenity interface with future residential;

Potential to contribute strongly to Acacia Bay Road streetscape and to provide specimen tree plantings.

Internal site opportunities:

Design in a manner that takes advantage of views outwards to lake and beyond.

FIELD	TYPE	AREAS	RECOMMENDED APPLICATION	
			Structure Plan Framework	District Plan Provisions
LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	LOW Sensitivity	Parts of all growth areas except 3B	Heavier Industrial activities and other activities with high visual amenity impacts should be located in the low sensitivity areas.	Development in general accordance with Commercial and Industrial Activity Provisions.
	MODERATE Sensitivity	Parts of Area 1B and Area 3B	Light Commercial activities with lesser bulk, scale and site coverage requirements. Promote strong amenity and mitigation planting framework.	Consider activities with lower site coverage and ability to respond to landform through building form. The ability to protect and enhance existing landscape features should be balanced against introduced adverse effects.
	HIGH Sensitivity	Parts of Area 1B and Area 3B	It is recommended that commercial and industrial activities within high sensitivity areas are restricted. If demand is not met through low and moderate sensitivity areas, specific activities that are capable of low-impact development may be considered. Alternatively, more intensive use of low sensitivity areas could be allowed for.	Development and landscape change should be restricted in these areas with a preference for continued rural use. Proposed development demonstrating overall landscape benefits (net gain) to be considered as a discretionary activity. Provisions should require rigorous assessment of effects for any proposed activity.
LAND USE INTERFACES	Transport Corridor 	All growth areas	Give priority to landscaping along road corridors where streetscape amenity and mitigation of new development can be achieved.	Require minimum yard setbacks with landscaping standards. Particular planting palettes and design responses to be promoted to ensure continuity.
	Conflicting Land Use Activity. 	Areas 1A, 1B, 2C and 2D	Allow for adequate setbacks and landscaping buffers.	Each interface to be looked at individually to identify appropriate treatment. Setback treatments, building and activity controls to be explored.
LANDSCAPE FEATURES	Gully System 	Areas 1B, 1D 2C, 2D & 3A	Promote as multi-purpose open space areas achieving amenity, passive recreational, visual mitigation and stormwater management functions.	Development and landscape change should be avoided in these areas with opportunities for enhancement through development contributions.
	Geothermal Area 	Areas 1B & 2C	Promote as multi-purpose open space areas achieving amenity, passive recreational and visual mitigation functions.	Development and landscape change should be avoided in these areas with opportunities for enhancement through development contributions.

Far from being a static entity, the landscape is constantly changing. Growth pressures in Taupo will continue to influence the need for greenfield development in fringe and rural areas. However landscape character values can be maintained and even enhanced through appropriate management.

This assessment has defined the broader landscape elements, patterns and processes as well as identifying the specific opportunities and constraints for each growth area. The remaining challenge is to take this information and apply it to the structure plan design framework and plan change process.

Landscape Sensitivity:

In terms of eventual District Plan provisions it is recommended that different levels of control apply to areas based on sensitivity to landscape change. The adjoining table summarises the level of control that would be anticipated for each sensitivity type.

Design Framework:

Many of the landscape protection and enhancement opportunities will be most effectively secured through the structure plan design framework. Refer adjoining table.

Staging:

From a landscape management perspective, the areas that are the least constrained and have the lowest sensitivity to change would be developed in the short to medium term. If the demand for commercial and industrial land continues, areas with moderate capacity for change might then be developed in an appropriate manner. It is acknowledged that there are other factors that will influence the take up of commercial and industrial land however staging should take into account landscape character effects.

