



Visual Impact Assessment

For the Eden Park Redevelopment Board

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ENVIRONMENTS™

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1. Introduction

This report supplements the two reports which have preceded it: “*Eden Park South Stand Redevelopment Rugby World Cup 2011 – Visual Impact Assessment*” (January 2008); and the subsequent “*Eden Park East Stand Redevelopment Rugby World Cup 2011 – Visual Impact Assessment*” (July 2008). It specifically addresses visual effects in relation to:

- the two Temporary Stands to be erected at the eastern and western ends of Eden Park for the Rugby World Cup (RWC) tournament; and
- revised proposals for the Park’s grounds, together with pedestrian and vehicle accessways around the stadium – in particular, the revised concept for the No.2 Ground abutting Sandringham Rd.

Because this report supplements the two preceding South and East Stand reports, it adopts the introductory sections of both of those reports which address:

- Eden Park’s existing landscape / streetscape / residential Setting
- The local topography
- The current streetscape character of those residential roads and commercial precincts that surround Eden Park
- The existing stadium’s character and appearance

This report also adopts the description of Eden Park’s overall visual catchment and related viewing audiences, together with its explanation of the visual impact assessment methodology.

In addition, the South and East Stand reports already address revised pedestrian concourse proposals for Eden Park and changes to the main planting regime to be adopted along the Reimers Ave and Cricket Ave boundaries – emphasising the use of pohutukawas that will help to reinforce the ‘volcanic crater’ theme evoked by JASMAX and HOK in relation to the stadium site and its periphery. This structure planting would also flank a revised parking area next to the new South Stand: this is to remain at grade – much as at present – but would be more solidly contained and screened by the proposed tree and understorey planting.

Assessment of the two new **RWC temporary stands** starts from the point of view of a completely fresh application and does not reference the previously consented proposal and

draw comparisons about the proposal in relation to either that earlier Eden Park scheme or modifications to the consented development since that time.

However, the Eden Park's **Legacy Grounds proposals** involves a number of 'variations' from the consented Eden Park proposal. As a result, the effects of the current Legacy Grounds concept are assessed in light of that consented scheme and are weighed up against those of the consented proposal.

2. The Temporary Stands Proposal

The parts of Eden Park's redevelopment which are appraised in this report comprise:

- A. Temporary seating and accessways, underpinned by a skeletal framework of scaffolding atop both the West and new East Stands.
- B. Large fabric / tensile screens behind both temporary structures, possibly with images that relate to the Rugby World Cup facing Sandringham Rd (West Stand) and Cricket Ave (East Stand). These screens would be framed by metal stanchions and would effectively block the actual seating, scaffolding, other structural paraphernalia and spectators associated with both temporary stands from external views.

The East Stand would appear the more elevated of the two structures, with the top of the associated panel screen appearing to reach much the same level as the 'inward' (field side) edge of the new South Stand roof. The temporary stand atop the West Stand would sit lower than both the existing North (ASB) and new South Stands, rising to approximately 70% of the overall height of the South Stand when viewed from the vicinity of Sandringham Rd. directly opposite the stadium.

Both temporary stands would be erected in March 2011, used in the course of the Rugby World Cup and dismantled in December of that same year. Thus, they would both have an effective duration of some 8 months although would not be at their full height for this entire duration.

3. Visual Effects

This assessment has been assisted by montages prepared by HOK and JASMAX which show:

- existing views of Eden Park;
- photomontages which show the permanent 'Legacy' proposals for the western and eastern ends of the stadium; and
- the Legacy proposals combined with the temporary stands.

The viewpoints for which the 'before and after' images have been prepared are again drawn from the original range of original 2006 / 7 application viewpoints – located at:

Viewpoint 5. Raleigh St (facing the East Stand)

Viewpoint 10. Sandringham Rd (facing the West Stand)

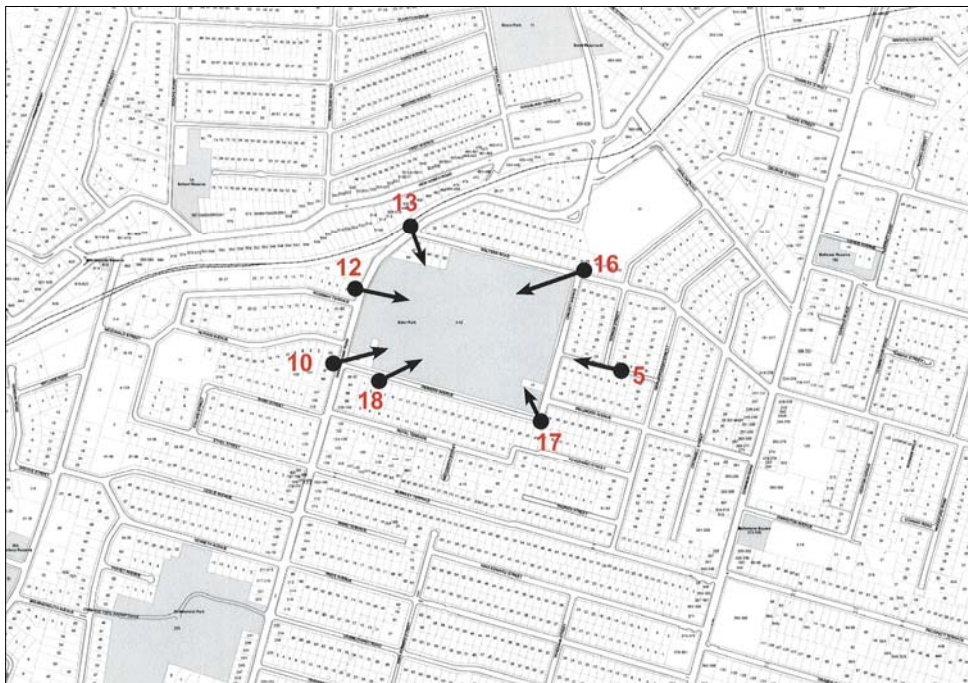
Viewpoint 12. Sandringham Rd (facing the West Stand)

Viewpoint 13. Sandringham Rd (facing the West Stand)

Viewpoint 16. Walters Rd (facing the East Stand)

Viewpoint 17. Reimers Ave (facing the East Stand)

Viewpoint 18. Reimers Ave (facing the West Stand)



This report specifically addresses the temporary stand proposal behind the existing West Stand and atop a new East Stand in the context of both the existing North (ASB) Stand and re-consented South Stand, together with associated landscape treatment.

Revisions to the No.2 ground area and Sandringham Rd frontage as well as site landscaping are (as already indicated) addressed later in this report.

Visual effects are typically assessed in terms of the degree of congruence or compatibility between an existing environment and a development proposal. While the visibility of any proposal is a key consideration at the outset of such assessment, it is the qualitative effects associated with a development proposal and the changes that it will impart to its landscape setting that are ultimately much more important and meaningful. Very broadly, this leads to presumption in favour of development proposals that are relatively innocuous and will visually integrate, or meld in, with their surrounds.

In this instance, it is acknowledged from the outset that neither temporary stand would be likely to meld with the rest of the proposed stadium or be compatible with its wider, predominantly residential, surrounds. Viewed from outside Eden Park both stands would have the profile of large, blocky screens, without any of the structural detail, architectural forms, varied materials or translucency that are central to other components of the legacy stadium's wider redevelopment, most notably the South Stand.

Previously, evaluation of the new (revised) South and East Stands has addressed a variety of matters in determining the extent and nature of their effects, including:

- assessment of the character and values of the existing landscape that fall within the visual compass of Eden Park;
- the extent of interaction between its stands and the catchment potentially exposed to it, as well as the scale and nature of audiences that would be affected by the development; and
- the level and type of impact in relation to Mt Eden's current amenity / landscape values in respect of section 7(c) of the RMA.

This has involved detailed description of:

- the proposal's visual catchment;

- the range of affected audiences; and
- the degree, nature and quality of change associated with Eden Park's redevelopment.

The nature of the existing environs, catchments and audiences around Eden Park is thoroughly traversed in the preceding 2006 / 7 Eden Park application, then the revised South Stand and East Stand (2008) assessments. These assessments provided detailed, matrix based, analysis of effects on specific viewpoints and audiences, with much of that fine grained assessment necessary because the need to carefully weigh up both positive and negative effects associated with the South and East Stands.

In this instance, however, the lack of congruence between both temporary stand proposals and their setting is more apparent. Bearing this in mind, and the temporary nature of the stands, a detailed investigation of the temporary stands' effects is considered unnecessary. Instead, having re-visited the viewpoints already described and having reviewed the photomontages prepared by HOK / JASMAX, the following findings have been reached:

- The eastern temporary stand would a significant adverse impact on the relatively intimate residential catchment that faces towards Eden Park from around Raleigh St, Bellwood Avenue, Walters Rd, Kowhai Street and Marlborough Terrace.
- Impacts on Sandringham Rd would be less immediate and dramatic due to the additional spatial separation and related buffering afforded by the No.2 Ground. The Reimers Ave and Sandringham Rd road corridors would isolate the temporary stand relative to the residential catchments south of Reimers Ave and around Rossmay Tce and Altham Ave. Even so, the rather incongruous profile of the new temporary stand at that end of the stadium would remain apparent from closer to the intersection of Rossmay Tce with Sandringham Rd, near the Mobil station on the latter road, as well as from the western end of Reimers Ave.
- The panel screens on 'the outside' of both temporary stands would prevent their more functional structural components – essentially seating and scaffolding – from remaining exposed to surrounding areas during the Rugby World Cup. However, neither temporary stand would display any architectural affinity to the traditionally styled North (ASB) Stand or much more modern South Stand that will directly flank and visually frame both temporary structures. The resulting screen 'walls' at both ends of Eden Park would be large and devoid of any detailing or other elements that might relate to the wider stadium.

As a result, they would diminish some of Eden Park's visual cohesion and the eastern temporary stand, in particular, would both dominate and 'shut out' its more immediate residential catchment.

Although no final decisions have been made about the use of images on both screens to perhaps invigorate them or otherwise reduce their utilitarian qualities, it is clear that darker colours spread over large parts of the 'canvas' at the back of both stands could exacerbate their visual dominance and mass. Consequently, careful consideration needs to be given to the final choice of colour, graphics and lighting employed on the back of both stands to enhance interest without imposing additional effects on neighbouring and nearby properties. It may indeed be that careful use of all of these tools could create a feeling of greater integration with the ETFE clad façade of the new South Stand, while lighting could help to judiciously enhance both stands at night time. For this reason it is strongly recommended that such measures be incorporated into the design and appropriately reflected in consent conditions.

The key 'positive' in relation to both stands' effects is their temporary, 8 month, duration. Beyond December 2011, Eden Park would revert to its Legacy profile and its more permanent effects would be as already outlined in the South and East Stand assessments. The construction and use of the temporary stands would also generate a range of other beneficial social and economic effects, however it is beyond the scope of this report to address such matters or weigh them up at a more strategic level.

4. The Legacy Grounds Proposal

In the original June 2006 Visual Impact Assessment for Eden Park, the following redevelopment proposals were identified:

- D. *“Replacement of the current No. 2 ground by a more truncated training ground, flanked by parking bay and a one-way accessway that will provide access to the under-croft car parking near Reimers Ave and cater for up to 18 buses on event days. The training area will be available for public / community sue when not being used for training purposes. This part of the stadium redevelopment also involves removal of the current security fence and relocation of the current cricket nets (presently abutting Sandringham Rd) to a location framed by the south-western concourse and planting, thus opening up - both visually and physically - the new training area. Pohutukawas will be planted near Sandringham Rd and around other parts of the ground perimeter. The two, gently sloping, pedestrian concourses off Sandringham Rd will wrap around the sides and back of the new training area, partly covering the vehicle accessway and parking, and also helping to hide the lower half of the current West Stand that is to remain.*

- E. *Location of a lay-by next to Sandringham Rd that can accommodate up to 10 coaches for the off-loading of passengers on event days and private short term car parking for coaches during small games / events.*

- F. *Provision for approximately 245 - 265 car parks on the Reimers Ave side of Eden Park, including the development of an elevated second level of parking next to the new South Stand, and provision of 75 additional under-croft car parks beneath the new East Stand*

- G. *Development of sloping amenity strips of lawn, scoria and tree planting next to Reimers Ave. These will tie in with both of the pedestrian concourses next to that road corridor and help to hide the proposed car parking. The exact nature of the ‘landscaping’ proposed is addressed in JASMAX’s landscape drawings and report Although most of the proposed planting will utilise pohutukawa species, Gleditsias will be employed within Cricket Ave*

- H.** *Realignment and narrowing of the Cricket Ave carriageway to accommodate pedestrian circulation around the stadium and into the two new corner entrances at each end of Cricket Ave.”*

In addition, the 2006 report addressed the proposed pedestrian concourses into Eden Park off Reimers Ave, Cricket Ave and Walters Rd.

Changes to the South and East Stands have been comprehensively addressed in the 2008 assessments referred to previously. However, the following revisions to the original Legacy Grounds scheme have yet to be assessed:

- A.** Retention of the current No.2 Ground together with:
- The existing cricket nets
 - The Old Members Stand and HPC Building
 - Casuarinas (she-oaks), a large plane tree and Gingko tree near the Sandringham Rd boundary and Old Members Stand
 - An existing service road at the northern end of the No.2 Ground
 - A fence along Sandringham Road – the current board and wire fencing will be replaced by a visually permeable iron / steel railing fence.
- B.** A new area of at-grade bus accessway and turning area would replace the current dairy and car parking near the corner of Sandringham Rd and Reimers Ave, and extend to the margins of the new South-west Entry Plaza. This would be flanked by trees to create a defined ‘avenue’ within a wider area of paving extending towards the stadium from Sandringham Rd.
- C.** Development of a new at-grade car park between the revised South Stand and Reimers Ave, accessed via Reimers Ave. This would occupy much the same location as the main parking area behind the previous South Stand (being demolished at present), but would extend to the edge of the South-east Entry Plaza at the eastern end of Reimers Ave near Bellwood Ave.
- D.** Changes to the site’s planting and related landscaping. This will include structural planters containing a mixture of pohutukawas, puriri, nikaus, cabbage trees and other native understorey species running along most of the Reimers Ave boundary

'in front of' both the new car park and bus accessway / turning head that would be occupied by. This planting would frame a single vehicular point of entry on Reimers Ave to the car park and four pedestrian entryways. Similar planting would also front Cricket Ave wrapping around the North-east Entry Plaza. The combined planting is designed to suggest the feeling of a Volcanic Crater.

Although the proposed mass planting involves some change from that originally proposed, and would be reconfigured in response to the reorganisation of the four new Entry Plazas, the main area of change under the current revisions relates to the No.2 Ground. In particular, while the new fencing regime down the Sandringham Rd boundary would create a more visually open and permeable 'front door' to Eden Park than currently exists, there would be reduced public access to this part of the stadium's curtelage compared to the consented redevelopment and vehicle movements would be concentrated closer to Reimers Ave.

In addition, the large pedestrian concourse on the western side of the stadium – from Walters Rd to Reimers Ave – has been reduced in scale along with the South-west and North-west Entry Plazas. This later plaza would be flanked by trees and shrubs (pohutukawas, etc) located so as to physically buffer and separate it from the remaining residential properties between the North (ASB) Stand and Sandringham Rd.

5. Effects

The original proposals for the No.2 ground involved a major transformation of that end of Eden Park, with the current wicket / ground and Sandringham Rd frontage merged into an open space that had all the connotations of a public green. The main disadvantages of the proposal were the ringing of the remaining grassed area by a bus circuit and set-down area near the West Stand – effectively limiting the practical use of the ‘green’ for training and recreational purposes. Nevertheless, removal of the current fencing, dairy, practice nets, Old Members Stand, HPC building and some of the car parking near Reimers Ave, would all have contributed to the re-modelling of the no.2 Ground and its periphery as a community asset. In my 2006 statement as part of the resource consent application I stated (para. 30) that:

“..... the opening up of Eden Park’s Sandringham Road frontage, and the change from a full-size No.2 ground to much more truncated training area flanked by vehicle accessways and parking, new concourses and planting, has the potential to make it a more tangible part of the public domain and lend it a quality more akin to a local ‘green’. The related removal of the current security fencing and its more wider-spread ‘retreat’ of the security perimeter back to the edge of the new stadium would get rid of a current eyesore and major impediment to interaction between Eden Park and the public / residential environs that frame it.”

The revised Legacy Ground proposals roll back most of this transformation, although replacement of the current, visually utilitarian array of timber batten and wire fencing down the Sandringham Rd frontage would lend the No.2 Ground, and Eden Park as a whole, a feeling of greater accessibility to, and community connection with, the stadium and its surrounds. Retention of the large plane opposite the Mobil Station on Sandringham Rd, albeit with the more modest array of She-oaks also found down that boundary, would also retain a signature feature of the Parks’ western frontage, supported in part by the historic faced of the Old members Stand when viewed from Sandringham Rd.

Overall, adoption of the revised Legacy proposal would result in a No.2 Ground that is functionally similar to that on-site at present with aesthetic improvements associated with the revised boundary fencing. However the bulk of changes originally anticipated in relation to the fundamental character and use of the No.2 Ground would not eventuate.

More positively, the landscape proposals for the Reimers Ave and Cricket Ave frontage of Eden Park, as well as – to a lesser degree – part of Walters Rd would be much more consistent with

the original proposals for those boundaries. Indeed, if anything, the planting facing Reimers Ave and Cricket Ave especially looks likely to be stronger, with more robust tree and understorey species than was originally the case. Consequently, even though the proposed bus accessway and turning head has moved closer to Reimers Ave, and the car park near the new South Stand would be more akin to that which has existed for decades on site, it appears that the level of screening and visual filtering apparent when looking towards the stadium from both the adjoining road corridors and neighbouring properties has actually increased.

In particular, the lower levels of the South and East Stands, together with the West Stand when viewed from Reimers Ave and Sandringham Rd when approaching from the south, would be buffered to a greater degree than was previously the case.

The new North-west Entry Plaza would be filtered from neighbouring properties to the west in a similar manner. The concourse originally proposed for this part of the stadium has been reduced in size and this, combined with the proposed planting, would help to visually recess the North-west Entry Plaza. As a result, the revised Entry Plaza would merge more obviously with the western end of the North (ASB) Stand and the visual effects of development within this part of Eden Park would be appreciably reduced relative to those associated with the original concourse.

Looking therefore at the proposed Legacy Grounds proposal as a whole, it appears that the overall level of buffering and general mitigation of building redevelopment by the revised proposals would be greater than was originally anticipated in the redevelopment consent - at least in relation to Reimers Ave, Cricket Ave and Walters Rd, especially for neighbouring residents. Conversely, while the revisions to the No.2 Ground are an improvement over the existing situation, compared to the redevelopment consent these revisions would be adverse and appreciable.

4.0 Conclusions

In conclusion the two temporary stands, particularly atop the East Stand, engender significant adverse visual effects – for the local residential community especially. However, such effects would be short-lived, with Eden Park reverting to its more benign Legacy profile and configuration after a maximum period of 8 months. Careful use of colour, graphics and lighting employed on the back of both stands could create a feeling of greater integration with the ETFE clad façade of the new South Stand, while lighting could help to judiciously enhance both stands at night time. For this reason it is strongly recommended that such measures be incorporated into the design.

Adoption of the revised Legacy proposal would result in a No.2 Ground that is functionally similar to that on-site at present, with aesthetic improvements associated with the revised boundary fencing. However the bulk of changes originally anticipated in relation to the fundamental character and use of the No.2 Ground would not eventuate. While the revisions to the No.2 Ground therefore represent an improvement relative to the existing situation, they are adverse when compared with what was proposed in relation to the redevelopment consent.

The landscape proposals for the Reimers Ave and Cricket Ave frontage of Eden Park, as well as – to a lesser degree – part of Walters Rd would be much more consistent with the original proposals for those boundaries. Indeed, the overall level of buffering and general mitigation of building redevelopment by the revised proposals would be slightly greater than was originally anticipated in the redevelopment consent, especially in relation to Cricket Ave and Walters Rd, and their residential environs.

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