

30 Sandspit Road

Preliminary Urban Design Statement

27 October 2022

an holistic approach to urban spaces

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Project address: 30 Sandspit Road

Applicant: BOX PROPERTY INVESTMENTS LIMITED

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27/10/2022	Final	Fasttrack	Nick Rae	

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1. Project Scope

1.1 Introduction and Scope

Transurban has been commissioned by Box Property Investments Limited (“Box”) to provide an initial high-level Urban Design commentary of the proposed 70 unit residential development at 30 & 40 Sandspit Road, and 2 & 4 Reydon Place, Cockle Bay, Auckland (“the Site”) to support the project being referred by the Minister for the Environment to an expert consenting panel for fast tracking under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020.

Should the project be referred by the Minister, a full urban design assessment will be prepared to accompany the resource consent application that would then be determined by the expert consenting panel.

Transurban has been providing urban design advice to Box relating to the previous two proposals¹ and that work has been relied on in this commentary, particularly the previous site and physical context analysis.

Transurban has not been involved with the design process that has resulted in the present drawings and has not undertaken a detailed assessment of how the proposal complies with the relevant district plan standards, the architectural drawings² are relied on in this regard.

Presently the planning framework in Auckland is rapidly changing. The Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 (“EHSA”) introduced the MDRS requirements, which must be incorporated into every relevant residential zone. As a result, the site and the surrounding properties are proposed to be zoned Mixed Housing Urban (as modified by PC78) (“MHU-M”). Also, an “Infrastructure – Water and/or Wastewater Constraints Control” overlay relates to potential constraints in the wider area of Cockle Bay and the surrounding areas. Transurban has been advised that DHC Consulting Group Ltd confirms there is sufficient capacity within the network for the development, as was the case for previous development designs.

Given these complexities (and because this report focuses on urban design matters) Transurban been asked to put the provisions of the Single House Zone to one side and consider the proposal in the context of the MHU-M zone.

The author has suitable experience and qualifications to provide assessment and advice on the proposal. Please refer to Appendix A for details.

¹ Refer to the discussion on the background included in Civix Planning statement

² Architectural drawings prepared by Map Architects dated 12/10/22, being RC0.01 to 0.05, RC1.00 to 1.06, RC2.01, RC3.01 to 3.02, RC4.01 to 4.14.

1.2 Assessment Methodology

The methodology applied for this initial commentary includes the following process:

1. Rely on the previous site and physical context analysis
2. Review planning advice and review the relevant chapters in the proposed Plan Change 78 to the Auckland Unitary Plan.
3. Set out the assumptions and expected outcomes included in the current Unitary Plan and key urban design principles.
4. Provide assessment against the principles with reference to assessment criteria where relevant
5. Conclude the assessment and present recommendations.

2. Physical and Planned Context

2.1 Regional Context Analysis

The site falls within the greater Auckland urban area south east of Howick centre in a traditional suburban context developed since the 1960's. It is serviced by a regular bus route connecting to Auckland City Centre (approximately 23km to the north west) and to Manukau Metropolitan Centre via other centres en-route. No direct rail connections service the site.

Views from the site and surrounding area include to the Tamaki Straight, and islands to the east of Brown's Island, around to Beachlands and the rural environment around Whitford.

2.2 Local Context Analysis

Howick town centre is about 1.7km to the north, Somerville centre a similar distance to the south west and both centres offer larger supermarkets and other services relevant to residential communities. Howick town centre also has a library, cinema, RSA and Community/ Arts Centre and a range of retail.

Approximately 1.6kms to the west at Union Street, an industrial and business area provides employment, another supermarket and further shopping and service opportunities.

The Cockle Bay neighbourhood centre (270m north of the Site) provides for daily needs.

There are two primary schools, one intermediate school and one high school in close proximity to the site (as illustrated on Image 1).



Image 1 – map illustrating the existing main community facilities and relationship to the site.

The site is located along a busy road, extended between two residential streets (Trelawn Place and Reydon Place).

Sandspit Road has two traffic lanes and a painted central median, providing turning pockets into side streets or neighbouring activities.

No stopping lines exist along the frontage of the service station part of the site and two on street parking spaces exist outside the southern part of the site outside the residential dwellings. Just to the south of Reydon Place exists a bus stop in the southern direction.

Opposite the existing residential part of the site exists a bus stop for north bound movement. On street car parking is provided to the south of the bus stop, and no stopping lines exist north of the bus stop along the frontage of Howick College.

Footpaths and varying widths of grass berm exist on both sides of Sandspit Road. Three large conifer trees exist in the front berm outside Howick College opposite the site, and no other street trees exist except south of Reydon Place where recent plantings have occurred.

The location of the footpaths varies from abutting the kerb, to being set back beyond a front berm.

The condition of private property and the school sites provide the current amenity in terms of the street space and there is opportunity to enhance this street with additional tree planting and a better footpath outcome in addition to the redevelopment of the site.

No stopping lines exist at the western end of both Reydon Place and Trelawn Place and on street parking is restricted to 120 minutes Monday to Friday further to the east along these streets.

Large institutional land uses exist to the west (Howick College) and north (Cockle Bay School) on opposite sides of the roads from the site. Cockle Bay School on the northern corner of Sandspit Road and Trelawn Place is a dominant activity covering a large area of land.

Similarly, the Howick College campus on the western side of Sandspit Road is a substantial development characterised by large scale buildings and car parking adjacent to the road. These schools are one and two levels high with a mix of small to large building footprints and are significantly different to the wider residential character.

The immediate character around the intersection of Sandspit Road and Trelawn Place is mixed use and not residential, enhanced by the neighbourhood centre just north of Cockle Bay School.

These elements create a community node within a wider residential context, being the dominant land use south of the intersection of Sandspit Road and Reydon Place.

This site provides scope for an outcome to positively contribute to this node, and that opens the opportunity for a reasonable level of residential activity.

The two dwellings at 6 Reydon Place to the south east of the Site are Single and Two levels located on land with levels contiguous with the Site and transition a slope falling to the east and their main outlook is to the east.

The four dwellings at 3 Trelawn Place are located on excavated land such that they exist lower than the Site with a retaining wall at the boundary. These are a mix of single and two level buildings.

These neighbouring properties have a multi-unit character and provide a transition to the part of the neighbourhood which is more characteristic of the Single House zone beyond.

The amenity values in the immediate part of the neighbourhood are not characteristic of a quiet established residential neighbourhood.

2.3 The Site Analysis

The Sandspit Road and the site is on a ridge where the land falls away to the east more quickly than the land to the west.

The character of Sandspit Road is influenced by an old petrol station and mechanical workshop set within a large open site with a mix of rough lawn and paved areas for parking and minimal vegetation with appearance with a low amenity value. It is not residential in character even though being zoned for residential activities in the AUP. The site is no longer in use, however its most recent use includes servicing and sales of second hand boats. This is part of the existing character of the immediate environment, however it does not contribute in a positive way.

The part of the site at 40 Sandspit Road and 2 and 4 Reydon Place are residential and are consistent with the immediate existing residential neighbourhood character.

The petrol station canopy is the tallest building on the site, however the perceived height of the buildings varies depending on the viewer location due to the change in topography.

From Council's GIS aerial photos, it would appear that the workshop building existed prior to the residential subdivision around it being developed. This activity together with the Primary School to the north, along with some dwellings to the north were the first urban development in the immediate context. This site has had a long history of being different to the surrounding residential area, and is a location where there are opportunities for a different outcome to the surrounding residential.

The site slopes away from Sandspit Road to the east. The different levels are created through standalone retaining walls or basement structures such as part of the workshop building.

The existing buildings on site (both the commercial as well as the residential), do not appear of special value and can be removed.

There is no significant vegetation worthy of retaining, however the Pohutukawa tree and Liquidambar Tree at the south western corner currently assist with the streetscape and would be worth retaining if possible. There are three trees within the Reydon Place road reserve near the Site.

The eastern boundary of the site is the only point at which the land adjoins other residential land in the Single House zone. There are six dwellings in three duplex forms along the eastern boundary of the site. Two have a Reydon Place address on one site, and four have a Trelawn Place address on two sites.

A cellular phone mast and at ground infrastructure exist at the intersection of Sandspit Road and Trelawn Place, in the road reserve but close to the site boundary.

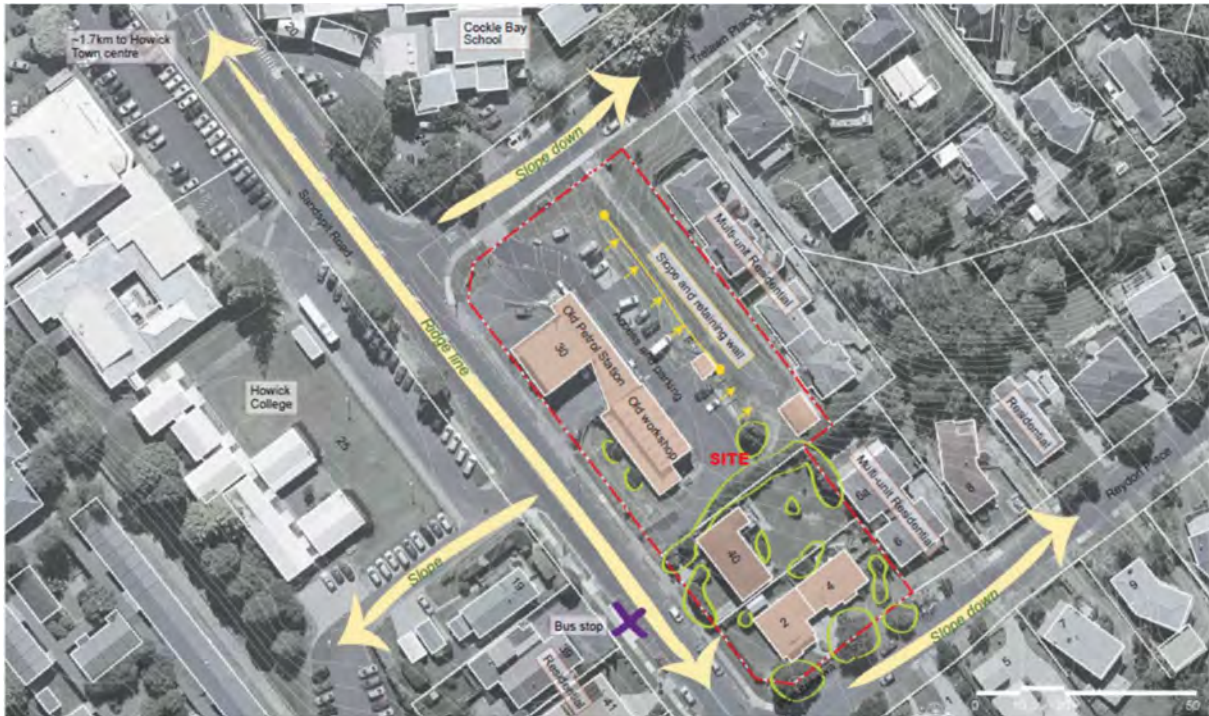


Image 2 – Identification of existing elements on the site and surrounding urban fabric.

Opportunities and Constraints

The three combined lots result in a site with three road frontages, and an excellent opportunity for a more efficient land-use and higher density development. In addition, topography, location, and orientation are favourable for such a proposal.

The landform is ideal to accommodate underground parking with access from Trelawn and/or Reydon Place. A good interface to Sandspit Road can and should result, without any garages adversely impacting streetscape amenity. It also provides opportunity to create dwellings with amazing views over the neighbourhood and towards Cockle Bay by locating height close to Sandspit Road.

Upgrading the street interface (the road berm and the buildings which address the street) along this part of Sandspit Road would create a good synergy with Howick College and Cockle Bay School across the road, and potentially give incentive to upgrade this node, including the neighbourhood centre, further in the future.

Where mature vegetation exists, retention and design solutions should be considered to assist with a sense of established amenity and to strengthen a high quality landscape outcome. Adjacent residential development to the eastern side needs to be respectfully addressed carefully by the proposal, particularly with regard to shading and privacy, but also in consideration of the higher density standards that apply to the site and surrounding residential land.

3. Statutory Context Analysis

3.1 Resource Management Act

The current statutory context requires compliance with the Resource Management Act ("RMA") and particularly the recent changes made by the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021.

3.2 National Policy Statements

Of relevance is the National Policy Statement on Urban Development ("NPSUD") May 2022. This requires authorities to enable greater density within the city centres cascading down to suburban areas where building heights and densities are commensurate with the level of commercial activity and community services.

In this case there is a neighbourhood centre, a primary school and high school all within close proximity of the site. The existing bus route along Sandspit Road provides public transport options to a range of commercial areas, and with the ability to change to other services. These aspects support greater intensification than other areas with the same zoning.

3.3 Auckland Unitary Plan or Regional and District Plans

The Auckland Unitary Plan ("AUP") applies to the site and the pre MDRS zoning is Residential - Single House Zone ("SHZ") and with the provisions as set out in that chapter.

In this commentary I have been asked to only consider the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 and the plan provisions which apply to the site under PC78 because Auckland Council intends that the SHZ no longer apply anywhere within Urban Auckland.³

Auckland Council has notified Plan Change 78 to the AUP as required by the RMA to enable at least three dwellings and three level buildings on each site in Auckland except for where a qualifying matter applies.

PC78 has significantly changed the planning context for this site, where now there is an expected outcome of buildings up to three storeys or 12m with pitched roof forms. PC78 provides a three-storey context, rather than the two storey context provided for by the Single House zone.

The "Infrastructure – Water and/or Wastewater Constraints Control" overlay relates to potential constraints in the wider area of Cockle Bay and the surrounding areas. DHC Consulting Group Ltd has advised that there is sufficient capacity within the

³ See definition of Urban Environment in s77F of the RMA

network for the development, as was the case for previous development designs, so I have not considered the implications of this overlay further.

However, I understand that due to complexities in the application of PC78 the application may not have a restricted discretionary activity status and I have therefore been asked to assess the proposal without any limitations on the scope of my review.

AUP matters of discretion

There is no limitation on the matters of discretion as a non-complying activity. The proposal needs to meet the gateway test, being not contrary to the objectives and policies, or any effects are no more than minor.

The assessment criteria for "Four or more dwellings (H5.8.2(2) in PC78)" provide guidance on the issues for assessment in the proposed Plan. This includes specific matters and also refer to some of the relevant policies.

4. Transurban Design Principles

Transurban has developed a detailed set of Urban Design Principles that are consistent and are used as a gauge against which to assess each unique situation.

Urban design standards are rules. Urban Design criteria are a robust guide providing context for interpretation. They can be viewed as “rules of thumb” and are neither inviolate nor suitable for slavish following. Good design, it is said, is ninety nine percent invisible. Our criteria help to establish a framework for high quality urban design within the context of the statutory frameworks. We believe that by explaining our criteria we create a common basis of understanding for informed discussion around individual site situations.

The outcome of our assessments now maybe different to previous, due to the changes to the zone standards. For example, maintaining a reasonable level of sunlight access to a neighbouring property was determined through understanding the potential bulk and therefore sunlight restriction from permitted standards. The proposed changes and MDRS implementation have resulted in a lower level of sunlight expectation to neighbouring properties. The MDRS standards are not necessarily best practice urban design, however are part of the framework for assessment.

Our principles are listed below along with our initial assessment of the proposal.

5. Design Response

The proposal includes three apartment buildings abutting Sandspit Road and the corners of Trelawn Place and Reydon Place, situated above a semi-basement carparking level running the length of the site with access from Trelawn Place.

The three buildings provide gaps that will enable views from Sandspit Road through the development to the wider coastal context, being an attribute, which is currently achieved with the development on the site and adds to the amenity values of the street. These gaps also provide relief in the building façade to avoid a long continuous building.

The three buildings have been designed using a façade technique that emphasises the three storey form as seen from Sandspit Road with a different and recessive fourth storey. The design rationale for a fourth storey is in the context of the potential for the surrounding context to be three storeys and utilising the size of the site.

Along the eastern boundary, two blocks of two level terrace type dwellings are proposed, plus a communal building associated with the proposed pool.

These have been proposed as way of limiting the direct effect of taller buildings on the neighbours to the east, particularly at number 3 Trelawn place where those existing dwellings are located in cut below an existing retaining wall. Those neighbours may well consider that relocating what would be a compliant three level built form adjacent to them, to a point higher – but further afield, as a positive environmental outcome.

The proposal at this interface is well below the height and height in relation to boundary standards, which should result in no adverse effects on these neighbours. The possible

building floor area and bulk that is not proposed along the eastern boundary has in effect been located on the three apartment buildings along Sandspit Road at a greater offset from the eastern boundary.

The proposed bulk will result in a substantial building being visible from Trelawn Place and Reydon Place.

Internal access paths between the terraces and apartment buildings are proposed to provide connections.

At the south eastern corner of the site, an at grade open air car park is proposed, accessed off Reydon Place.

A landscape proposal is not included at this stage, however Greenwood landscape architects propose that the previous landscape solution would form a good base for this proposal and will be adjusted to suit the changes to the built form. Detailed analysis of these will occur at the next stage.

Compliance with Standards

At this stage, the exact level of compliance for all matters has not been defined, however for the purposes of this assessment, the proposal complies with all of the main bulk and location standards⁴ in the proposed MHU-M, except for height. These standards relate to the expectation of development in the wider neighbourhood. The standards listed in H5.4.1(A4), are more restrictive in some instances than those for up to three dwellings on a site (e.g. H5.6.19 deep soil and canopy trees) and will require a more detailed assessment as part of the resource consent application. Some initial views are outlined below.

The extent to which the proposal is over height is illustrated on the sections and elevations prepared by Map Architects, with greater non-compliance on the eastern side when using the rolling height method due to the falling topography.

PC78 includes specific criteria for assessing non-compliance with standards such as height at H5.8.2(4) which refer to policies, plus additional criteria for consideration of visual dominance, Character and Visual Amenity. These need to be considered in the assessment of the proposal.

It is noted that the drawings do not specifically confirm compliance with H5.6.11(5),(6) & (7), however it appears that the landscaped area (natural grass, trees and plants will be around 28% complying with the minimum 20% of the site area. It is unclear whether the required planting of 50% of the front yards is achieved, however the plan RC0.03 suggests it will comply.

It is expected that H5.6.19 deep soil area can be complied with when viewing drawing RC0.03, however consideration with the long term outcomes will be needed due to the potential conflict with views from proposed apartments. Consideration of deep soil and tree canopies along the street frontages will have the most benefit to the streetscape. It

⁴ H5.6.4, H5.6.5, H5.6.8, H5.6.9, H5.6.10(1), H5.6.11(5), (6) and (7), H5.6.15

appears that some balconies along the frontage to Sandspit Road infringe the front yard standard and this will need to be considered in the resource consent application.

Other standards such as glazing to the street, fencing, dwelling size, private outdoor space, communal outdoor living space, daylight will need to be confirmed in a detailed assessment.

6. Preliminary Transurban Design Assessment

6.1 General

The following headings and bullets set out our standard principles where relevant and slightly adjusted to suit the new planning framework. This is followed by our initial assessment of the proposal taking in consideration of the assessment criteria listed above.

6.1.1 A. Consolidation and dispersal

- The development should wherever possible maximise use of the site, to ensure that existing and future infrastructure provision within the zone is utilised to its best;
- Development should make efficient use of larger sites by providing for comprehensive or integrated residential development.

The important infrastructure from an urban design perspective is the street network, public transport options, schools, parks and community services and facilities. This site has good access to these existing facilities, and it could further support the existing bus network and may assist with increasing services (along with other developments). Others will discuss the servicing of the proposal, but we understand that solutions are available for stormwater, waste water and energy.

This is a comprehensively designed proposal on a very large site, and there is a high density outcome (129d/ha) which makes good use of this site at a location which can support higher density due to the activities around it.

6.1.2 B. Context and Identity

- Development is in keeping with the neighbourhood's planned urban built character and amenity;
- Protect and enhance existing important characteristics of the site wherever practicable. The design of the development should, protect and manage heritage features, protect and enhance distinctive landforms, water bodies, and indigenous plants and animals. Giving preference to native flora and fauna significant to mana whenua (TAIAO, natural environment);

- Development should create locally appropriate and inspiring architecture, spaces and places, giving consideration to Māori narratives and themes;
- Development should reflect and celebrate our unique New Zealand culture and identity and celebrate our multi-cultural society with MANA Rangatiratanga (authority) input.

The MHU-M enables the existing character and amenity of the neighbourhood to change and the amenity values currently enjoyed by some people may not be maintained, for example the permitted development form of 3 storey buildings closer to boundaries will change expectations of privacy and levels of expected shading.

The proposal will be different to the existing character of Sandspit Road surrounding the site (which is largely not residential as noted above), and different to the lower density existing character of the residential neighbourhood in the immediate vicinity. The directive from Government and resulting changes to the AUP, confirms that the existing character is not required to be maintained, rather provides an expectation that the area can transition to a more urban outcome and enables this transition to occur. The actual change in the neighbourhood will be subject to the opportunities of each site and redevelopment of sites is likely to occur in a sporadic nature over a long period of time.

The proposal is likely to be compatible with the planned urban built character of predominantly three storeys and supports the range of activities and built form at the Sandspit node, however the landscape solutions will be a key aspect to achieving this. A rationalisation of the internal paths between the terraces and apartments could result in better planting spaces which might support better planting outcomes, and at detailed design (resource consent) these should be considered along with tall vegetation at the Trelawn Place and Reydon Place frontages to mitigate the potential perceived impact of the taller buildings as seen from the east.

The important characteristics of the site that should be carefully considered are opportunities to maintain some views through the site (even though not required or protected) and opportunities to maintain existing trees at the Reydon Place end of the site, and if not what landscaping response there should be. If this project is fast-tracked, these are some of the matters that I would expect to have detailed discussions with the project team on as part of preparing a resource consent application level of design and reporting.

The proposal is consistent with the direction in the assessment criteria by locating taller buildings on the Sandspit Road frontage and lower buildings adjacent to the direct residential neighbours.

The detailed design and materials selection is anticipated to result in good architectural responses with modulated facades and avoiding long uninspiring walls.

While the proposal complies with the MHU-M HIRB standard, the additional height may result in additional sun access restriction on neighbouring properties, and this will need to be tested and I understand that this is underway.

It is unknown what Iwi influences have been incorporated into the design so far. I understand that the fast-tracking process requires iwi engagement prior to lodging resource consent and that engagement should occur in conjunction with the design refinement process.

6.1.3 C. Connections and Legibility (Character, Creativity)

- The development should provide for safe, attractive, logical and secure connections to surrounding parts of the community, by way of street crossings, pedestrian paths, and public transport stops
- Development should provide for an environment which is easily understood, displays strong local identity and visual character through provision of identifiable and memorable elements. Acknowledge significant sites by enabling views and comprehension in line with TOHU (wider cultural landscape) and WHAKAPAPA, (names and naming) and MAHI TOI, (creative expression).
- A range of transport modes should be supported by the development, including public transport, pedestrian and cycle networks, and the ability to change transport modes
- The development should provide environments that encourage people to be more physically active.
- The development should ensure that public spaces are accessible by all, including those with disabilities;

The development overall largely achieves these outcomes, in that most of the connections are safe and logical, a range of transport modes are (or can be) provided as can disabled access and the development will have a strong sense of identity. While there are a few areas which will require refinement / optimisation as part of the resource consent package (outlined below), these do not relate to the key reason for consent under the provisions of PC78 and / or would not require a substantial redesign of the development concept.

The location of the proposed vehicle access to the site from Reydon Place may not be achievable due to the closeness to the eastern boundary and the existing tree in the street.

The at grade car park is not a very efficient use of space as there is significant manoeuvring space compared to the parks it provides for. An alternative which provides access to the stacked spaces and a larger landscaped area along the eastern boundary could be more efficient and would be worthwhile examining as part of the detailed design process.

There is currently no pedestrian access from Reydon Place into the site, and this opportunity should be considered as part of detailed design.

The connection from Trelawn Place could be improved by providing a more direct and attractive access to the terrace dwellings, and then from those up to the car park basement. Connections from all units to the common pool area should be reviewed to ensure direct safe and attractive connections result.

To support multi-mode transport, a greater consideration for the storage of bikes is recommended along with charging for e-bikes. This might be a matter for detailed design at resource consent, but in any event should be in a secure covered place and the balance of car parking to bike parking should be considered.

The proposal to upgrade the street berms is very positive for the amenity and safety of the public realm. The proposal has good direct connections from the apartment buildings to the street network.

Individual building identification through subtle signage and colour strategies should be developed to ensure a clear legible outcome, again colour and material palettes are a matter for detailed design.

6.1.4 D. Diversity and Adaptability

- Where possible include a variety of housing types to provide for a range of people. Including homes appropriate to cultural needs and whanau in line with AHI Kā, (living presence and placemaking);
- Non-residential activities support the social and economic and cultural well-being of the community, in line with AHI Kā principle of local work and recreation opportunities whilst at the same time ensuring these activities:
 - are in keeping with the scale and intensity of development anticipated in the zone;
 - avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on residential amenity; and
 - do not detract from Business Zones;
- Development should provide designs which are flexible and adaptable and which will remain useful long term.

The proposal provides a range of dwelling types and sizes which supports the policy seeking a variety of housing typologies in the zone. There are no other apartment typologies in the direct neighbourhood and these can provide for people wanting to transition out of older larger homes or may desire a more affordable or easy care solution while remaining in their local community.

Ground floor residential in apartment building is typically tricky. The ability to include non-residential activities is an effective way to address the interface and

potential privacy issues. While there are some communal spaces for residents, this proposal does not include any non-residential activities. Potentially a small café would be beneficial and the provisions of the proposed MHU zone enable some limited non-residential activities such as cafes of up to 100m² so scope for such an activity to be included in the resource consent application should be maintained if possible. This might include units that could be used for either residential or commercial activities.

6.1.5 E. Amenity and Safety

- Development should achieve attractive and safe streets and public open spaces, through:
 - Provision for passive surveillance.
 - Optimising front yard landscaping;
 - Minimal visual dominance of garage doors;
- Development provides for quality on-site amenity for residents and adjoining sites, through:
 - The height, bulk and location of development maintains a reasonable standard of sunlight access to adjoining sites;
 - The height, bulk and location of development maintains a reasonable standard of privacy to adjoining sites;
 - The height, bulk and location of development is designed to minimise visual dominance effects upon adjoining sites;
 - Accommodation provides for privacy and outlook;
 - Accommodation provides for access to daylight and sunlight and provides amenities for residents;
 - Accommodation provides for usable and accessible outdoor living space.

The proposal is likely to achieve a particularly good level of passive surveillance opportunities to the surrounding streets from both communal circulation spaces and from private dwellings.

The three apartment buildings should have clear (identifiable) front doors along with colours and materials chosen to avoid the apartments looking monolithic. The access to the terrace dwellings from the street should be direct and legible and surveillance of these spaces will need to be confirmed to ensure they have a sense of safety.

A real positive benefit of this proposal is the lack of individual or multiple vehicle crossings and garages. The Sandspit Road frontage will have a significantly better

outcome to the existing in terms of amenity and safety which is important given the number of children accessing the schools nearby.

The detailed assessment will consider the appropriateness of the internal spaces and level of amenity, however consideration to the location of bedrooms on street frontages, particularly at street corners should be undertaken to ensure an appropriate relationship to the street.

A detailed landscape solution will assist with the success of the street frontages.

6.1.6 F. Environmental Responsiveness

- The design of buildings and the site should respond to natural features, ecosystems, water quality and quantities, reduce energy usage and waste production, and balance these needs with the need for intensification;
- In line with MAURI TU (environmental health), any development should protect, restore or enhance the natural environment of riparian yards by restricting impervious areas and contributing to the endemic flora and fauna. This should assist with the ecological and human connectivity throughout the area / region.

The site is devoid of natural elements or ecosystems. It is not next to or does not contain a stream or water course and therefore no riparian restoration is proposed or necessary. The landscape solution should respond to the local context and use locally appropriate species.

7. Conclusion

Having undertaken a preliminary urban design commentary of the proposal with the assumptions identified regarding the current planning context, the site provides a good opportunity for a comprehensive residential development with a good level of density.

The main urban design issues will be the consideration of the additional building height over the permitted standards and the level of effect generated. It is considered that the effects could be suitably managed along the Sandspit Road frontage, and a greater level of consideration of the effects of the height proposed along the eastern side of the main apartment buildings could improve the design.

In terms of section 19 of the Fast Track Act and whether there is potential for the project to have significant adverse environmental effects:

- The development is a substantial change to what is presently on site or in the surrounding area and accordingly there will be a range of effects arising from the development;

- The design has yet to be fully refined and optimised and I have made a number of recommendations which will help to avoid, remedy or mitigate effects;
- Notwithstanding the above, I am comfortable that the key urban design issue (height) and the design can be refined so that significant adverse effects do not arise given the context of the MHU zone of PC78;
- In the context of height, the closest neighbours may well feel that the design is an improvement from a development that complied with the height, bulk and location controls of the MHU zone of PC78.

The landscape solutions will be important to achieve a suitable outcome.

There are a number of other recommendations in this initial assessment which should be addressed to ensure an appropriate outcome. A more detailed assessment and developed design process will enable these to be resolved.

8. Appendix A

My name is Nicholas (Nick) Rae. I am the Director of Transurban Limited, consultants on urban development. I have been engaged by the applicant to assist with the development of the design and undertake an urban design assessment of the proposal to assist with the application for resource consent.

I am an Urban Designer and Landscape Architect. I hold a Master of Urban Design from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Honours) degree from Lincoln University. I have approximately 23 years experience in this field in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, France, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and Australia.

I regularly provide advice on urban design and landscape matters, followed by urban design and visual assessments for development proposals requiring resource consent. These include a range of residential, retirement villages, subdivisions for large green field sites, commercial office and retail spaces, and industrial developments. I have also provided advice on a number of plan changes relating to urban development.

Recent projects that I have provided advice and assessments for on behalf a applicants include:

- a) Fast-Track application for a retirement village proposal, "The Botanic Riverhead", in the Future Urban Zone to the west of Riverhead, Auckland.
- b) IRD – 54 unit apartment development at 30 Sandspit Road, Cockle Bay.
- c) IRD - 500 unit (apartments and villas) The Botanic Retirement Village in the Business – General Business zone in Silverdale. Non-complying consent – granted.
- d) IRD - 10 unit apartment proposal at 2 Tizard Road, Birkenhead. Re lodged with Council, following changes and previous hearing. Residential – Single House zone.
- e) IRD – 328 unit (apartments and villas) Pararekau Resort, Pararekau Island, Karaka. Awaiting Iwi consultation assessment for lodgement. Residential – Single House zone.
- f) Masterplan and Subdivision – Preparation of masterplan for 97ha of greenfield land in Hingaia, detailed applications for first stages of development to provide roading and open space reserves. First stages complete and next ongoing. Park Green, Park Estate Road, Hingaia. Residential – Mixed Housing Urban and Suburban, Business – Local centre with Precinct overlay.
- g) Masterplan and Subdivision – Preparation of masterplan and Plan change for a 50ha coastal site at Clarks Beach. First stage complete and dwellings built. Next stage under construction. Mixed Housing Suburban, Business – Local centre with Precinct overlay.
- h) Residential development – 27 terrace, and duplex typologies – two and three level. Pooks Road, Massey Residential – Mixed Housing Urban. Concept development with architect. On hold.
- i) Visitor Accommodation and dwelling – 5 units plus one dwelling. Business – Local Centre with Precinct overlay. Consent granted and construction about to commence.