

Memorandum

9th August 2021

Memo to : Gemma-Rose Brooke

Memo From : Nick Rae

Re: 201-203 Browns Bay Road, Auckland. Fast Track Resource Consent Application

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 of applicants include:

- a) IRD – 500 unit (apartments and villas) The Botanic Retirement Village in the Business – General Business zone in Silverdale. Non-complying consent – granted.
- b) IRD – 10 unit apartment proposal at 2 Tizard Road, Birkenhead. Re lodged with Council following changes and previous hearing. Residential – Single House zone.
- c) RD – 328 unit (apartments and villas) Pararekau Resort, Pararekau Island, Karaka. Awaiting Iwi consultation assessment for lodgement. Residential – Single House zone.
- d) 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

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an holistic approach to urban spaces

Green, Park Estate Road, Hingaia. Residential – Mixed Housing Urban and Suburban, Business – Local centre with Precinct overlay.

- e) 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.
- f) Residential development – 27 terrace, and duplex typologies – two and three level. Pooks Road, Massey Residential – Mixed Housing Urban. Concept development with architect. On hold.
- g) Visitor Accommodation and dwelling – 5 units plus one dwelling. Business – Local Centre with Precinct overlay. Consent granted and construction about to commence.

Site Characteristics

Physical context

The site is known as having two titles and two street addresses, being 201 and 203 Browns Bay Road, Auckland. One has direct access from the street and the other is accessed via a shared driveway. Each lot has one existing dwelling surrounded by a mix of exotic and native vegetation, including some large trees. A Morton Bay Fig tree exists approximately halfway along the southern boundary, close to the road, and is of a scale that adds to the character and amenity value of the street and the site. Whilst not protected, the intention is to retain this tree and the design response needs to accommodate it.

The Site has a relatively flat area near the road on 201 Browns Bay Road, before falling steeply to the north such that the Site is generally considered to exist below the level of Browns Bay Road. Part of the steep bank exists within the road reserve and there is opportunity to improve the street edge. The Site aspect provides for good on-site sunlight access and good views, including views to the Hauraki Gulf and Rangitoto Island.

The shared driveway continues to descend to provide access to nine other properties. These are highlighted in the following image.

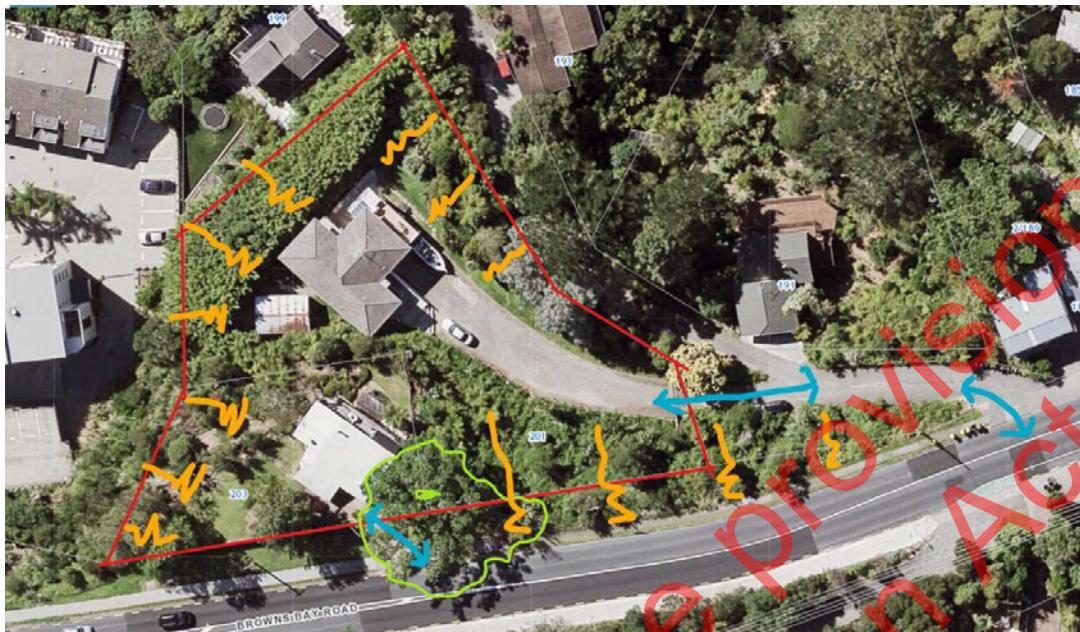


Image 1 – Aerial of the Site (marked red), access blue, steep slopes in orange Fig tree in green.

Browns Bay Road has two lanes and provides a direct connection from its intersection with East Coast Road (just to the west of the site) down to Browns Bay town centre and beach, at a distance of approximately 2km to the northeast. A cycle lane exists on the southern side of the road providing a separated cycle network for those travelling in a westerly direction. This transitions near the Site to a off road shared path. On the northern side of the street exists a footpath which has partly been upgraded, and the eastern part is showing signs of some subsidence requiring repair. Bus services exist along East Coast Road providing direct connections to Constellation Busway Station to the south for access to Auckland central and beyond, and to Browns Bay via Northcross to the north. Other bus routes are available within 700m and 900m to enable access to other destinations.

To the west of the Site an apartment development exists together with some low height commercial buildings providing for the needs of the community. The commercial interacts with the street while the apartments are set back and on land much lower than the street level such that the four levels do not add significant scale to the context.

To the south of Browns Bay Road, the road reserve is relatively wide and provides for a wide ascending sloping vegetated berm. This also provides for some access driveways due to the level change with single dwellings existing above. The trees along this interface significantly restrict a visual connection between the street and the dwellings beyond.

Refer to Attachment A for a series of photos illustrating the existing physical context.

Planning Context

The Site is zoned Mixed Housing Urban within the Auckland Unitary Plan, with the northern and eastern boundaries being at the boundary with the Mixed Housing Suburban zone. The Site is seen as part of the area of land along the East Coast Road ridge line zoned for higher density making use of the available public transport along East Coast Road. The zone expects an urban built character of predominantly three storey buildings in a variety of forms surrounded by open space.



Screen snip of Auckland Unitary Plan Maps with Site in cyan and Mixed Housing Urban in Orange and Mixed Housing Suburban in yellow.

Development needs to respectively address the street to ensure passive surveillance opportunities, landscape interface and minimising adverse effects from garage doors. The Site provides a very good opportunity to enhance the safety and amenity of this part of Browns Bay Road.

The development also is required to appropriately respond to existing neighbours to ensure a reasonable level of sunlight and daylight is maintained to those neighbours, and ensure the scale is not too visually dominant. A good level of on site amenity is also required for future residents.

Activity table H5.4.1 (A4) provides for four or more dwellings per site compliant with the listed standards as a restricted discretionary activity. C1.9(2) provides for activities that do not comply with the standards will also be a restricted discretionary activity. There maybe other matters that trigger a higher activity status, but this is unlikely going to cause concern with regard urban design matters.

Methodology

We will assess the proposal using our standard urban design methodology which addresses the specific matters for assessment as listed in the zone. The process is to identify issues early and work with the design team to resolve these such that our final assessment is such that it can support the proposal. This iterative process generally works well and the team involved are used to this process.

Design Response

Gel Architect have prepared a detailed concept for the Site as illustrated in the drawing set with project number 21017, dated 09/07/2021, stamped preliminary. A list of the drawings is included in attachment B.

The proposal is for 51 units, predominantly 2 bedrooms each, but with 10 single bedroom units contained in four buildings using an apartment typology with semi basement and deck parking.

From Browns Bay Road the proposal has been designed to appear as a three storey development, where the third level is approximately half a level lower than the street as illustrated below (noting these images are relatively preliminary but provide a good sense of scale and form).



Image 2 - View of proposed buildings as seen from Browns Bay Road looking West.



Image 3 - View from Browns Bay Road looking Northeast.

From the access driveway and potentially from some neighbours to the east and north (depending on screening from vegetation) the proposal could be appreciated as having 6 storeys for buildings close to the Browns Bay Road frontage, and three and four levels for the building adjacent to the shared access driveway as illustrated below



Image 4 - View from location to northeast of the site from an elevated viewpoint and without existing foreground trees. Browns Bay Road is behind the buildings to the left of the image.

Issues for resolution

The following sets out a few identified issues or elements that require further consideration or resolution. This is not necessarily an exhaustive list.

1. Exceeding height standard - Due to the topography of the Site, various parts of the top level of the proposed buildings will exist higher than the maximum height standard using the rolling height method. This requires further assessment with regard to effects on neighbouring properties, however, is unlikely going to cause adverse effects on Browns Bay Road. The proposal will achieve the anticipated number of storeys when viewed from Browns Bay Road and will likely achieve the intended character.
2. Exceeding Height in relation to Boundary standard – There are two locations where the proposed bulk will exceed the HIRB standard along the northern and western boundaries. We will undertake further analysis to determine whether this will cause adverse effects on neighbouring properties, however our preliminary view is that it is unlikely.
3. The development of the landscape solution will need to assist with visually integrating the proposal into this landscape and minimise the potential for the height and number of storeys to contribute to adverse character effects, mainly on immediate neighbours.
4. Once the constraints of the Morton Bay Fig tree are finalised, the building layout and access solutions from Browns Bay Road can be refined. Each building should have an individual access from the street and clear building identification to assist with wayfinding, especially for access to the building within the site that will be accessed via others.
5. The internal layout of the apartments needs further work to enable them to better respond to the street and the views.
6. The materials and colours for the proposal will be advanced to enable a clear outcome to be consented, but allowing for flexibility as normal for the detailed design process.
7. Works within the road reserve are recommended to improve the footpath and replace the weeds with a suitable landscape solution. This will need Auckland Transport approval as asset owner.
8. Assessment of the on site amenity and quality of living space will also be undertaken.
9. Consideration of privacy to existing neighbours.

Initial conclusion

The proposed concept is a great response to the challenging Site. Something that the applicant is well suited to with their experience in concrete construction and sloping sites. The issues to work through as outlined above are typical of refining a design in response to a steep slope.

The existing apartment buildings to the west and the relatively undeveloped Browns Bay Road edges provides a good context for this proposal.

Consideration at a policy level is required as to whether the proposal contributes to achieving a predominantly three storey urban character. The degree to which people will appreciate 4 and 6 storeys and the potential for this to cause adverse effects is yet to be determined. This is expected to potentially relate to a small number of immediate neighbours.

Transurban Limited

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Attachment A – Photos of existing context.



Image 5 – existing apartments to west of Site as viewed from the street. Existing house on the site can be seen to the right amongst the trees.



Image 6 – View along East Coast Road to north illustrating existing commercial to west of the site.

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Attachment B – Drawing List

00 OVERVIEW	
00-01	COVERSHEET
10 SITE	
10-01	EXISTING SITE PLAN
10-02	PROPOSED SITE PLAN
20 OVERALL PLANS	
20-01	LEVEL 0 - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-02	LEVEL 1 (LOWER CARPARK) - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-03	LEVEL 2 - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-04	LEVEL 3 - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-05	LEVEL 4 (STREET LEVEL) - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-06	LEVEL 5 - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
20-07	LEVEL 6 - OVERALL FLOOR PLAN
21 ENLARGED PLANS	
21-01	LEVEL 0 - FLOOR PLAN
21-02	LEVEL 1 (LOWER CARPARK) - FLOOR PLAN
21-03	LEVEL 2 - FLOOR PLAN
21-04	LEVEL 3 - FLOOR PLAN
21-05	LEVEL 4 (STREET LEVEL) - FLOOR PLAN
21-06	LEVEL 5 - FLOOR PLAN
21-07	LEVEL 6 - FLOOR PLAN
21-08	ROOF PLAN
21-09	TYPICAL UNIT TYPE PLANS
21-10	G.F.A SUMMARY
30 ELEVATIONS & SECTIONS	
30-01	ELEVATIONS
30-02	ELEVATIONS
30-03	SECTIONS
80 TOWN PLANNING	
80-01	TOWN PLANNING ASSESSMENT
80-02	BUILDING ENVELOPE
90 PERSPECTIVES	
90-01	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 1
90-02	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 2
90-03	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 3
90-04	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 4
90-05	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 5
90-06	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 6
90-07	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 7
90-08	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 8
90-09	PERSPECTIVE VIEW 9