

6 May 2021

Hon David Parker
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Wellington

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ref:15311.epm

Dear Sir

RE: COVID-19 RECOVERY (FAST TRACK CONSENTING) ACT - ORUKU LANDING – NPS-UD

We are in receipt of your letter of 29 April 2021 requesting further information with respect to this application. This letter responds to the first request explaining how the proposal aligns with the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD).

As a general observation, the implementation of the NPS is directed at local authorities. Nevertheless, Part 2 of the NPS sets out its objectives and policies and an assessment of Oruku Landing against these can be undertaken to assist with making a planning decision as to the appropriateness of the development.

Broadly, the NPS-UD aims to ensure that New Zealand's towns and cities are well-functioning urban environments that meet the changing needs of our diverse communities.

Objective 1: New Zealand has well-functioning urban environments that enable all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future.

"Well-functioning urban environments" are defined in Policy 1:

Policy 1: *Planning decisions contribute to well-functioning urban environments, which are urban environments that, as a minimum:*

- (a) *have or enable a variety of homes that:*
 - i. *meet the needs, in terms of type, price, and location, of different households; and*
 - ii. *enable Māori to express their cultural traditions and norms; and*
- (b) *have or enable a variety of sites that are suitable for different business sectors in terms of location and site size; and*
- (c) *have good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public or active transport; and*
- (d) *support, and limit as much as possible adverse impacts on, the competitive operation of land and development markets; and*
- (e) *support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and*
- (f) *are resilient to the likely current and future effects of climate change.*

Oruku Landing incorporates a variety of uses that will encourage different business sectors to establish in this location. It will provide facilities that have been identified in the Council's strategic planning documents¹ that are essential for meeting the needs of a growing city. Providing for the arts, culture, and civic amenities contributes to the wellbeing of the city and district. The growth of Whangarei needs to be supported by modern, fit for purpose public and private spaces that will cater for both the local population and visitors to the area.

The Town Basin and surrounding public land is the cultural and tourism hub of the city, and its historical heart. The Oruku Landing development is appropriate and will contribute positively to the special amenity values in this location. The buildings will contribute to the sense of place in this area and it will be an important strategic asset that will add to the diverse range of land use, recreation and tourism opportunities along the Hatea River. It will make a significant contribution to the community's cultural and economic wellbeing.

Oruku Landing incorporates 17 residential apartments in the mixed-use building. These residential units provide a style of accommodation that is relatively uncommon in Whangarei. The proposed apartments will increase the variety of living accommodation in the city. They will also assist in making the central city area more diverse and affordable in line with the direction set out by the Council in various strategic planning documents.²

The accessibility of the site and the uses proposed by Oruku Landing are two of the many strengths of this project. The Urban Design report prepared by 4Sight explores these matters in significant detail. The location of the site is within close proximity to the CBD, residential zones, community services, and natural and open spaces.

The establishment of Oruku Landing will make Whangarei a serious contender for conferences, performance arts events and concerts. Currently, Northlanders regularly travel to Auckland and other centres to attend events that could otherwise be held and accommodated by Oruku Landing. Accordingly, the development of Oruku Landing will reduce travel, supporting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, green roofs are proposed on both the hotel and the mixed-use building that will also contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The buildings and site development will be undertaken with due consideration having been given to the potential effects of climate change. The engineering assessments have taken account of this and the recommendations reflect this.

¹ 30/50 Whangarei District Growth Strategy, Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy, Whangarei Arts Culture Heritage Strategy, Whangarei City Centre Plan, Whangarei Momentum 20/20

² 30/50 Whangarei District Growth Strategy, Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy, Whangarei Arts Culture Heritage Strategy, Whangarei City Centre Plan, Whangarei Momentum 20/20

Oruku Landing will make a positive and significant contribution to making Whangarei City a 'well-functioning urban environment' and in that regard the proposal is fully aligned with Objective 1 and Policy 1 of the NPS.

Other relevant objectives and policies that Oruku Landing aligns with are as follows:

Objective 4: *New Zealand's urban environments, including their amenity values, develop and change over time in response to the diverse and changing needs of people, communities, and future generations.*

Objective 5: *Planning decisions relating to urban environments, and FDSs, take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).*

Objective 6: *Local authority decisions on urban development that affect urban environments are:*

- (a) integrated with infrastructure planning and funding decisions; and*
- (b) strategic over the medium term and long term; and*
- (c) responsive, particularly in relation to proposals that would supply significant development capacity.*

Policy 6: *When making planning decisions that affect urban environments, decision-makers have particular regard to the following matters:*

- (a) the planned urban built form anticipated by those RMA planning documents that have given effect to this National Policy Statement*
- (b) that the planned urban built form in those RMA planning documents may involve significant changes to an area, and those changes:
 - i. may detract from amenity values appreciated by some people but improve amenity values appreciated by other people, communities, and future generations, including by providing increased and varied housing densities and types; and*
 - ii. are not, of themselves, an adverse effect**
- (c) the benefits of urban development that are consistent with well-functioning urban environments (as described in Policy 1)*
- (d) any relevant contribution that will be made to meeting the requirements of this National Policy Statement to provide or realise development capacity the likely current and future effects of climate change.*

Policy 8: *Local authority decisions affecting urban environments are responsive to plan changes that would add significantly to development capacity and contribute to well-functioning urban environments, even if the development capacity is:*

- (a) unanticipated by RMA planning documents; or*
- (b) out-of-sequence with planned land release.*

Policy 9: *Local authorities, in taking account of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) in relation to urban environments, must:*

- (a) involve hapū and iwi in the preparation of RMA planning documents and any FDSs by undertaking effective consultation that is early, meaningful and, as far as practicable, in accordance with tikanga Māori; and*
- (b) when preparing RMA planning documents and FDSs, take into account the values and aspirations of hapū and iwi for urban development; and*
- (c) provide opportunities in appropriate circumstances for Māori involvement in decision-making on resource consents, designations, heritage orders, and water conservation orders, including in relation to sites of significance to Māori and issues of cultural significance; and*
- (d) operate in a way that is consistent with iwi participation legislation*

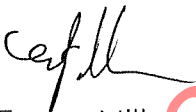
When making a decision about Oruku Landing Policy 6 instructs the decision maker to have regard to urban built form anticipated by this NPS and the benefit that such urban development will have with respect to the well-functioning urban environment. It has been established that Oruku Landing will contribute to a well-functioning urban environment and that it will improve and add to the sense of place and associated amenity values in this part of Whangarei.

Throughout the preparation and feasibility stages of developing the Oruku Landing proposal extensive consultation has been undertaken with hapu and iwi.³ The design of the development has taken into account the values and aspirations of Maori and these cultural narratives have been incorporated into the building design. The cultural narratives are extensive and through the consultation process they have been interpreted in the urban design, landscape design and architecture of Oruku Landing. The Cultural Design report included in the application sets this out in detail.

Extensive consideration has been given to infrastructure and how Oruku Landing will be serviced. In that regard, proposal is consistent with objective 6.

Overall, the Oruku Landing is entirely consistent with the type of urban development anticipated under the NPS-UD. Importantly and relevantly, it will contribute to the well-functioning urban area in Whangarei, setting the city up for its residents and visitors now and into the future.

Yours faithfully



Emma Miller
Associate

³ Objective 5 and Policy 9