

27 October 2021

Nick Mattison
Civix

Via email: s 9(2)(a)

Boffa Miskell

Dear Nick

45 Waimarie Street and 819 Riddell Road, St Heliers – Initial urban design memo

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an overview of the key urban design aspects of the proposed development at 45 Waimarie Street and 819 Riddell Road, St Heliers ('the Site').

My review is based on the architectural concept plans for the Site by BDG Architects. Below, I briefly summarise characteristics of the Site, key aspects of the development concept, and then provide a preliminary urban design review of the proposal.

The Site and surrounding area

The Site is towards the corner of Waimarie Street and Riddell Road in St Heliers. The major portion of the Site is located away from its two street frontages behind street adjoining lots. The Site has an 18m boundary to Riddell Road and an approximately 3m wide frontage to Waimarie Street, comprising an existing driveway. The Site slopes south down from Waimarie Street and west down from Riddell Road. Existing dwellings in the area comprise predominantly single, detached houses.

The Site has Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban ('MHS') zoning in the Auckland Unitary Plan - Operative in Part.

The development concept

The proposal is for multi-unit housing, comprising largely terraced units, with some detached and duplex units. Houses range from two to three storeys in height. Vehicle access is from Riddell Road and pedestrian access is from both Riddell Road and Waimarie Street.

Preliminary urban design review

Below, I provide a preliminary review of the urban design elements of the concept. This review is based on both good urban design practice and from my understanding of the built form and amenity expectations of development within the MHS zone.

- Visually legible and safe pedestrian movement is provided from both street frontages to a footpath network within the Site. This is via a 1.5m wide footpath, which is

visually demarcated and separated from vehicular movement areas. There are some areas where resolution of possible vehicle/pedestrian conflict is needed, but I consider this easily resolvable.

- Dwellings within the Site are oriented to face towards the Joint Owned Access Lot ('JOAL'), with front doors to the JOAL and floor plans which indicate the potential for good levels of glazing and (for some dwellings) balconies overlooking the JOAL. These elements form the basis, as the concept continues to develop, for positive passive surveillance of the JOAL and high legibility or a 'sense of address' for individual units.
- Car parking is accommodated either within grouped parking areas or ground floor garaging. This combination of approaches and the manner in which it is employed within the concept scheme is likely to achieve a JOAL environment where car parking is not visually dominant, providing room for landscape amenity planting (including specimen trees). It furthermore assists with achieving safe pedestrian movement paths.
- Two 3 storey terrace blocks are grouped centrally within the Site, some distance away from external boundaries and both street frontages, such that they are unlikely to have an adverse effect on the suburban residential character of the surrounding area.
- Towards the Site's Riddell Road frontage, where houses will be visible from the street, dwellings of a smaller scale (two storeys) and form (a duplex and detached dwellings) are proposed. This is a positive response to the existing suburban character of the area.
- The proposed dwelling adjoining Riddell Road (Lot 1) has a front yard infringement. In my view, any potential streetscape and residential character effects of this can be satisfactorily addressed by refining the approach to the street elevation of the dwelling, including optimising glazing, consideration of the roof profile and façade articulation, and a considered approach to front yard landscaping.
- Terraces are grouped in blocks from three to eight units. Indicative imagery within the drawing set indicates the proposed architectural approach is to introduce a strong vertical patterning to blocks and varied roof profiles. This will assist in reinforcing the legibility of individual terraces and, in my experience, is consistent with good practice in terms of visually 'breaking down' building bulk.
- The Site plan and terrace typology floor plans show outdoor living spaces for units in the form of ground floor patios or first floor balconies, in all cases being directly accessible from principal living rooms. Patios and balconies are well-sized for the placement of outdoor tables and chairs and generally avoid a southerly orientation. Lots 1 and 2 have outdoor spaces on both their northern and southern sides adjoining the principal living room of their units. The larger outdoor living space is on their southern side. A simple refinement of the floorplan would enable the larger outdoor living area to be 'flipped' to the northern side.
- Terrace typology floor plans show habitable rooms are of a shape and size that allows convenient movement around furniture. Dedicated storage cupboards are shown in the floorplan, allowing for storage of items needed for day-to-day living.

- There is a 7m separation between the two 3 storey terrace blocks at the centre of the Site. The site plan shows that the MHS zone outlook spaces between these blocks do not overlap. However, any potential privacy effects between these blocks, beyond the level anticipated by the zone of complying with the outlook space standard requirements, can in my view be addressed by privacy screening and considered placement of windows.
- The northerly aspect to the space between the two 3 storey terrace blocks will be adequate, in my view, to achieve reasonable sunlight access for the outdoor living areas of the eastern of the two blocks (Lots 43-50). Consideration of the bulk of the top level of the western block (Lots 37-42) towards its eastern end would further optimise sunlight access to Lots 43-50.
- The site plan indicates some areas of infringement of the Height in Relation to Boundary ('HIRB') standard and the outlook space standard to external boundaries. From a preliminary review, I consider the scale of the infringements to be small and, when considering the position of the areas of infringement relative to adjoining sites, that likely adverse dominance, shading and privacy effects on neighbours would be less than minor. Concept development is likely to allow refinement of building bulk and design mitigation techniques to further minimise any potential adverse effects on neighbours.

Concluding comments

In my view, the concept design shows a proposed development that is a positive and considered response to the characteristics of the Site, neighbouring sites, and the wider residential area.

Based on the BDG Architects concept drawings, I am of the preliminary view that the development is consistent with the planned suburban built character of the area, will positively integrate into the surrounding residential environment, appropriately manages any potential adverse effects on neighbours, and would achieve a high quality living environment for future residents. Additionally, I note that the development would positively contribute to housing variety in an area that is currently largely single homes.

Yours faithfully

BOFFA MISKELL LTD



Matt Riley

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