

Before the Hearings Commissioners at Wellington City Council

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: an application by Ryman Healthcare Limited for resource consent to construct, operate and maintain a comprehensive care retirement village at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street, Karori, Wellington

between: **Ryman Healthcare Limited**
Applicant

and: **Wellington City Council**
Consent Authority

Statement of evidence of **Rebecca Anne Skidmore** on behalf of Ryman Healthcare Limited

Dated: 29 August 2022

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF REBECCA ANNE SKIDMORE ON
BEHALF OF RYMAN HEALTHCARE LIMITED**

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Rebecca Anne Skidmore.
- 2 I am an Urban Designer and Landscape Architect. I am a director of the consultancy R. A. Skidmore Urban Design Limited and have held this position for approximately nineteen years.
- 3 I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from Canterbury University (1987), a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Hons) degree from Lincoln University (1990), and a Master of Built Environment (Urban Design) degree from Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane (1995).
- 4 I have approximately 27 years' professional experience, practising in both local government and the private sector. In these positions I have assisted with district plan preparation and I have assessed and reviewed a wide range of resource consent applications throughout the country. These assessments relate to a range of rural, residential and commercial proposals.
- 5 I regularly assist councils with character assessments and the development of frameworks for the protection and management of identified special character areas. I also regularly assist local authorities with policy and district plan development in relation to growth management, urban design, landscape, character and amenity matters.
- 6 I am an accredited independent hearing commissioner. I also regularly provide expert evidence in the Environment Court and I have appeared as the Court's witness in the past.
- 7 I am familiar with Ryman Healthcare Limited's (*Ryman*) resource consent application to construct and operate a comprehensive care retirement village (*Proposed Village*) at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street, Karori, Wellington (*Site*).
- 8 I prepared the Landscape and Visual Assessment dated August 2020 (*LVA*) contained in Appendix L of the AEE. I have attended a number of meetings with the Council both in the pre-application phase as the proposed scheme was being developed and following the lodgement of the resource consent application.
- 9 Matters raised by the Council's urban design and landscape and visual effects reviewers following the lodgement of the application and design were carefully considered with some design amendments being made in response, primarily to Buildings B01, B02 and B07. My original report was updated to respond to these design changes

(dated July 2021) (*LVA (Rev. 1)*). It is not my intention to repeat in detail the contents of that report in this statement of evidence. Rather, I will provide an overview of my assessment and focus on the key issues that have been raised by various parties.

- 10 I have visited the Site and its surroundings on a number of occasions, including on 24th October 2018, 16th March 2021 and 28th and 29th June 2022. The visit in June this year included viewing the Site from the properties at 20 Scapa Terrace and 42 Donald Street.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- 11 Although these proceedings are not before the Environment Court, I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note (2014), and I agree to comply with it as if these proceedings were before the Court. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 12 My evidence sets out the following:
- 12.1 A summary of the Site and the planning context that has informed my assessment;
 - 12.2 A brief description of the Proposed Village design;
 - 12.3 My opinion in relation to landscape and visual effects;
 - 12.4 My response to the landscape and visual issues raised in submissions;
 - 12.5 My response to the landscape and visual matters addressed in the Council Officer's Report (*Officer's Report*), and particularly the evidence of Ms Angela McArthur dated 28 July 2022;
 - 12.6 My comments on the draft conditions;
 - 12.7 My conclusions.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

The Site and its context

- 13 The Site is located within a well-established neighbourhood that, while predominantly residential, contains a diverse mix of activities. The former Teachers' College created a distinctive built environment within the neighbourhood. In particular, the Malcolm Block was a

prominent feature, visible from a range of locations. The scale of the Site, its former use, urban structure, and collection of built elements has established the Site as a landmark within the predominantly residential neighbourhood. While the majority of former Teachers' College buildings have now been removed, the Site retains its landmark qualities.

- 14 Using the terminology contained in the District Plan, the Site can be described as a 'windfall' site that provides particular opportunity to take a comprehensive approach to development and achieve residential intensification through establishing a comprehensive care retirement village.

Assessment Methodology

- 15 The assessment of landscape and visual effects has been carried out from: analysing the architectural drawings, landscape concept plans and visual simulations, including updates following lodgement of the application; carrying out site visits; and reviewing relevant planning provisions. The methodology used is in accordance with the NZ Institute of Landscape Architect's 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management Best Practice Guide (10.1)' and is broadly aligned with the newly updated 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'.

- 16 I note that the Proposed Village requires consent as a non-complying activity so my assessment considered the full range of potential landscape and visual effects. However, the assessment has been guided by the relevant provisions contained in the operative Wellington District Plan (*Operative Plan*). My evidence also addresses relevant provisions contained in the Proposed District Plan (*Proposed Plan*).

Landscape Effects

- 17 I consider that the Proposed Village will reinforce the distinctive character and landmark qualities of the Site. Retention of the former Teachers' College buildings adjacent to the Donald Street frontage, together with the retention of a large portion and restoration of the Lopdell Gardens, will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character and distinctive sense of place.
- 18 The Proposed Village will result in an increased scale and density of buildings on the Site. However, unlike the former collection of buildings, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character. While referencing the former 'brutalist' style, the overall collection of buildings will appear more domestic in character. Extensive planting with a range of ornamental trees will further enhance this residential character. The extensive planting will also mitigate the loss of some vegetation. The typology of apartment buildings will differ from the surrounding predominant pattern of stand-alone dwellings. However, the location, scale and

design of the buildings has been carefully considered so that they will, in my opinion, integrate well with the surrounding environment.

- 19 Together with a range of non-residential activities in the wider neighbourhood, and in the context of the character established by the former Teachers' College, I consider the Proposed Village will make a positive contribution to the evolution of the neighbourhood character.
- 20 In my opinion, the policy framework of the Proposed Plan lends additional support to the change in landscape character that will result from the Proposed Village.

Visual Effects

- 21 My assessment identifies the primary viewing audience for the Proposed Village as comprising four groups:
- 21.1 Users of the surrounding street network;
 - 21.2 Users of surrounding open spaces and public recreation facilities;
 - 21.3 Users of schools in the vicinity; and
 - 21.4 Residents of surrounding properties.
- 22 The assessment finds that the magnitude of visual change will vary considerably for the various groups. In the context of the landmark qualities of the Site established by the Teachers' College and the relevant planning provisions, including the identification of 'windfall sites' within residential environments being suitable for intensification, the assessment finds that the resulting effects will vary from moderate adverse to positive. From some locations, as proposed planting, particularly around the perimeter of the Site, becomes established, adverse visual effects will be reduced. For a limited number of residential properties adverse visual effects will be reduced to, or remain, low following the establishment of planting. For all other properties, effects will be very low to positive.
- 23 When considered in relation to the Proposed Plan framework, I consider the magnitude of adverse visual effects experienced by those viewing the Proposed Village from proximate viewpoints will be the same or less than that assessed in the LVA.

Submissions

- 24 A number of submissions address issues related to landscape and visual effects. The submissions express a range of opinions about the suitability of the Site to accommodate the Proposed Village and its effects on the character and amenity of the immediate and wider

context. My evidence considers and comments on the landscape and visual issues raised under the following topic headings:

24.1 Neighbourhood character;

24.2 Scale of buildings;

24.3 Open space and landscaping;

24.4 Residential Design Guide; and

24.5 Effects on surrounding residential properties.

Having considered the points raised in submissions, I continue to hold the opinion that the Proposed Village is appropriate in its context and will result in positive effects in relation to the established urban landscape. Adverse visual effects will be at most low when viewed from a limited number of surrounding properties. Amendments to the Landscape Concept Plan address concerns raised by submitters about planting along the southern boundary of the Site.

Council Officer's Report

25 The review carried out by Ms McArthur and set out in her evidence is in general agreement with my LVA. I respond to a number of detailed matters raised, particularly in relation to recommended amendments to planting.

26 In relation to other matters addressed in the Officer's Report, I also draw attention to the relationship between a consideration of methods used to mitigate wind effects and the impact of such mitigation on public realm amenity.

27 Overall, Ms McArthur and I are in agreement that the Site is suitable to accommodate the Proposed Village and the limited adverse landscape and visual effects can be effectively mitigated.

Draft Conditions

28 I recommend minor changes to Condition 57, which addresses the elements of the Landscape and Pavement Plan.

THE SITE AND ITS CONTEXT

29 The large Site (approximately 3.05 hectares) is located within an established and mixed urban environment. It has an irregular shape and has frontage to both Donald Street and Campbell Street. The topography of the Site generally falls from the northeast down to the southwest with an overall fall of approximately 10m across the Site.

- 30 The former Teachers' College established a distinctive character that contributed to the diversity and richness of the neighbourhood over many years. The educational use on a large Site with a collection of larger buildings (both in terms of footprint and vertical scale and bulk), and a Brutalist architectural form and the associated gardens, particularly the Lopdell Gardens, established a feature in the neighbourhood that contrasted with the pattern of predominantly stand-alone dwellings in the surrounding context. This legacy established a landmark quality to the Site. The Site has been valued in the past and continues to be today, both for its heritage value and the associations it provides with the former use of the Site. While many of the former buildings have been removed, I consider the legacy of the former Teachers' College continues to define the Site as a landmark in the urban landscape.
- 31 The collection of former Teachers' College buildings were clustered in the northern portion of the Site. A native garden, known as the Lopdell Garden was established in the northern area within a deeply incised gully area. Deconstruction of the former Waghorn Block and Panckhurst Block have necessitated removal of a larger proportion of the area of gardens between the two buildings. However, the northern area of garden remains undisturbed and both areas will be protected during construction and restored as part of the landscaping works.
- 32 The Site is embedded in a predominantly residential context. A modified grid street network results in a pattern of regular, rectangular sections containing stand-alone single and two storey dwellings. In the wider neighbourhood this pattern is punctuated by more intensive attached dwellings (such as along Karori Road).
- 33 While predominantly a residential neighbourhood, the surrounding area also contains a diverse mix of activities. In terms of a consideration of landscape and visual effects, I consider the key non-residential features in the surrounding context are:
- 33.1 The commercial centre focussed along the Karori Road corridor (approximately 270m from the Site);
 - 33.2 A number of schools, including Karori Normal School immediately to the north of the Site, and the Samuel Marsden Collegiate School further away to the east, and smaller scale pre-schools; and
 - 33.3 Open spaces and recreation facilities, including the Karori Pool immediately to the north of the Site, Ben Burn Park to the southwest of the Site, and the Karori Bowling Club to the northwest.
- 34 The three streets in the immediate vicinity of the Site, Donald Street, Campbell Street, and Scapa Terrace have differing

characters that reflect the underlying topography, their scale, function and the pattern of adjoining development.

- 35 Donald Street is an undulating street with a single lane of traffic in each direction and on-street carparking. Between the Site and Karori Road, the character of the western side of the street is influenced by the educational facilities of both the former Teachers' College and the primary school. On the eastern side of the street, dwellings are generally raised above street level. To the south of the Site, the street has a residential character on both sides of the street and rises relatively steeply to the south.
- 36 Campbell Street also provides a single traffic lane in each direction with on-street parking. Just to the south of the Site, Ben Burn Park fronts the western side of the street. The Park contains a number of playing fields raised slightly above the street level. Dwellings along Campbell Street are typified by stand-alone single and two-storey dwellings set in established gardens. Some properties have solid screening to the street created variously by fences, vegetation, and garaging.
- 37 Scapa Terrace is a relatively narrow, local street that connects Donald Street with Campbell Street to the south of the Site. The residential subdivision pattern creates regularly shaped rectangular sites, containing stand-alone dwellings fronting and directly accessed from the street.
- 38 To the north of the Site, a pedestrian path connects between the swimming pool carpark and a small lane that connects to Campbell Street. The walkway extends into the northern area of the Site for a short length. In this area, the swimming pool building is in close proximity to the Site boundary. A boundary adjustment is proposed that will result in the entire walkway being located within the Council's property.
- 39 The characteristics of the Site, including its large scale, established buildings, and vegetation, and its place in relation to its established context, present a number of opportunities and constraints to accommodating a comprehensive care retirement village. These opportunities and constraints have informed the design process for the Proposed Village.

THE PLANNING CONTEXT

- 40 The evidence of Mr Richard Turner sets of a full description of the relevant statutory considerations in relation to the Proposed Village.
- 41 Section 5 of the LVA sets out a summary of the key provisions contained in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (*NPSUD*) and the Wellington District Plan that guided my assessment.

- 42 I note that the Proposed Village requires consent as a non-complying activity so my assessment considered the full range of potential landscape and visual effects.
- 43 Since preparing my assessment report the Wellington City Proposed District Plan has been notified. As well as generally updating the planning framework for Wellington City, the Proposed Plan seeks to give effect to the NPSUD and respond to the directives of the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021 (*Enabling Housing Act*). The Site and immediately surrounding area are zoned Medium Density Residential in the Proposed Plan.
- 44 Mr Turner addresses the new planning context and the appropriate weighting to be given to the various provisions in more detail in his evidence. The differences between the built form standards of the Operative Plan and Proposed Plan are also set out in the evidence of Mr Turner. I rely on that to inform my evidence. I note below some aspects of the new planning regime that I consider are particularly relevant to the main landscape and visual topics in this evidence, noting that I have also considered other relevant provisions.
- 45 As noted by Mr Turner, the introduction to the Medium Density Residential Zone in the Proposed Plan describes it as comprising predominantly residential activities with a moderate concentration and bulk of buildings, such as detached, semi-detached and terraced housing, low-rise apartments and other compatible activities. The introduction also notes that the efficient use of land within the Medium Density Residential Zone is important to meet the strategic objectives of maintaining a compact urban form and providing new housing to help address the housing needs of Wellington.
- 46 The Medium Density Residential Zone adopts the medium density residential standards from the Enabling Housing Act, and I note that it allows for three residential units of up to three storeys on a site as a permitted activity. Multi-unit housing of four or more units and retirement villages are also anticipated through a restricted discretionary resource consent process, with applicable standards and design guidance.
- 47 The Medium Density Residential Zone objectives includes the mandatory objective from Schedule 3A of the Enabling Housing Act. This objective identifies that the zone predominantly provides for residential activities and a variety of housing types (including a planned urban character that includes three storey buildings).¹ Other

¹ MRZ-O1 of the Proposed Plan.

objectives seek the efficient use of land for residential development² and ensuring healthy, safe, accessible and attractive environments.³

- 48 The policies for the Medium Density Residential Zone also address those from Schedule 3A of the Enabling Housing Act and relate to providing for residential activities, including a variety of building typologies. They emphasise, among other things, the need to enable housing to be designed to meet the day-to-day needs of residents, and encourage a variety of housing types, sizes and tenures to cater for people of all ages, lifestyles and abilities. The policies include providing for developments not meeting the permitted activity standards, while encouraging high-quality developments.⁴
- 49 The Proposed Plan includes a specific policy relating to the establishment of retirement villages in the Medium Density Residential zone (Policy MRZ-P7), which is detailed further in the planning evidence of Mr Turner. Policy MRZ-P10 provides guidance in relation to vegetation and landscaping, encouraging the retention of existing vegetation, particularly native vegetation. Also of relevance is Policy MRZ-P11, which relates to the creation of attractive and safe streets and public open spaces.
- 50 Overall, the Medium Density Residential Zone provisions, including the Medium Density Residential standards provide for residential development to have greater height and much greater density than the Operative Plan.
- 51 Throughout my evidence, I consider whether the Proposed Plan has any impact on my assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Village.

PROPOSED VILLAGE DESIGN

- 52 A full description of the Proposed Village is set out in Section 2.0 of the AEE. The evidence of Mr Andrew Burns (urban design) and Mr Isaac Bright (architecture) set out the design process and rationale for the Proposed Village layout and architectural response.
- 53 The proposed Site layout is shown in Figure 1 below. In terms of a consideration of landscape and visual effects, I consider the key aspects of the Proposed Village are:

² MRZ-O2 of the Proposed Plan.

³ MRZ-O3 of the Proposed Plan.

⁴ MRZ-P1, P2, P3 and P5 of the Proposed Plan.

- 53.1 A comprehensive care retirement village accommodated in a series of buildings, both repurposed and new;
- 53.2 Communal amenities located in the repurposed Allen Ward VC Hall and new sections of Building B01A;
- 53.3 A main site entrance off Donald Street, vehicular access to undercroft parking from Campbell Street and additional pedestrian access points off Campbell Street and Donald Street;
- 53.4 Carparking located in a series of basements and undercroft areas;
- 53.5 Retention and alterations to enable re-purposing of the Allen Ward VC Hall, Tennant Block, and Oldershaw Music Octagonal Building;
- 53.6 Retention of a portion of the Lopdell Gardens;
- 53.7 Creation of a small 'pocket' park adjacent to the Donald Street frontage;
- 53.8 Creation of a number of communal courtyard spaces; and
- 53.9 Landscaping across the Site. An Indicative Tree Planting Plan / Landscape Concept Plan shows the structural planting that will complement the existing Site vegetation, with lower-level planting to complement the structural planting to be determined during the detailed design phase. In response to matters raised in submissions, an amended plan (Drawing L0-010_P, Amendment U, dated 26/07/22) includes changes to the species selection along the southern boundary.



Figure 1: Proposed Village Site Plan

ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

- 54 In Section 6 of the LVA I set out the methodology used for carrying out my assessment and noted that it was in accordance with the NZ Institute of Landscape Architects' 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management Best Practice Guide' (10.1)(*Best Practice Guide*).
- 55 Since the LVA was prepared, the Institute has released an updated guideline, 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines' (*Te Tangi a te Manu*). In my opinion, the methodology used in the LVA is consistent with the updated guidelines. However, I note that where the Best Practice Guide did not provide a standard rating scale for assessing effects, Te Tangi a te Manu does set out a recommended rating scale. This rating scale differs slightly from the rating scale used in my assessment. I note that Te Tangi a te Manu provides a caveat against placing too much weight on using the rating scale in isolation, noting the importance of the substantive assessment. As the identified landscape and visual effects identified in my assessment all fall in the range of low adverse to positive, I do not consider the use of the rating scale in

Te Tangi a te Manu would change my overall conclusions about the appropriateness of the Proposed Village.

Landscape Effects

- 56 The Site is not identified in any statutory or non-statutory document as being within, or in proximity to, an outstanding natural landscape or feature. I also note that it is not within any protected viewshafts. Therefore, further consideration of Operative Plan and Proposed Plan provisions relating to these landscape features is not required.
- 57 The landscape character of a place is determined by the way a range of natural and cultural elements and layers come together. These elements and layers include landform patterns, vegetation patterns, subdivision patterns and street layouts, land uses and building forms.
- 58 While many of the former Teachers' College buildings have now been removed, I consider the former use and character of the development on the Site contributes to the 'landmark' qualities of the Site. I have not considered the former buildings as part of the 'existing environment' or 'permitted baseline' for the purpose of my assessment. Rather, I have referred to them in order to provide a description and understanding of the landscape context (which includes a temporal aspect, particularly an understanding of the morphology of place which evolves over time) that exists. As noted in Te Tangi a te Manu, "*history is more than a landscape's past and its 'heritage' features – it is the past/present/future story that helps to understand and interpret the landscape*".⁵

Building Elements

- 59 The Proposed Village retains a number of key elements of the Site's built fabric adjacent to the Donald Street frontage. The retention of the Allen Ward VC Hall and Tennant Block buildings in the north-eastern area of the Site and the use of the Allen Ward VC Hall for the village centre communal facilities will create a distinctive environment and provide a link to the past. As noted in the evidence of Mr Dave Pearson, some later additions, which are obtrusive elements, will be removed. These include the student lounge below the link between the Allen Ward VC Hall and the Tennant Block, and the later entrance portico facing Donald Street. The eastern elevation link will be restored to its original configuration, including reconstruction of the original entrance portico. In my opinion, the retention and restoration of the Allen Ward VC Hall and Tenant Block will maintain a strong visual

⁵ Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, July 2022 paragraph 4.35.

presence in relation to the Donald Street frontage and provide a clear link to the Site's heritage.

- 60 The highest portion of Building B01B extends to six levels of occupied space above a basement carpark level. The maximum height of the building ridgeline is RL187.94. From this northern wing, the height steps down to the southern wing. For context, it is noted that the maximum height of Building B01B's main ridgeline is lower than the former Malcolm Block which extended to RL191.4, although Building B01B has a greater mass extending along a north-south axis.
- 61 In my opinion, proposed Building B01B will create a prominent built feature that will reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site with a well-resolved building form that has strong articulation. Physical stepping of the façade, and the use of recessed balconies and variations in materials and colours, provides visual interest that breaks down the overall visual mass of the building form. The building is terminated with strong roof forms that have generous eaves that extend beyond the primary façades. Rooftop services are integrated and screened from public view. I consider that Building B01B will provide an appropriate 'landmark feature' in the wider, varied urban landscape of Karori.
- 62 Building B01A is of a similar scale to the former Waghorn Block. The building form complements Building B01B and suitably references the character established by the former Teachers' College. The scale of Building B01A is subservient to B01B but extends closer to the Site's northern boundary.
- 63 The Proposed Village will result in an overall increase in building mass on the Site from the earlier pattern of development. This will reinforce the Site as a feature within the urban landscape. The southern area of the Site previously accommodated sports fields and currently has an open character. The introduction of the series of apartment buildings in this area will result in a change in character. In particular, Building B02 will have a strong address to Campbell Street, creating a built presence in relation to the street. While the apartment typology and building scale will differ from the existing pattern of stand-alone dwellings along Campbell Street, it will reinforce the differing character of the Site as an established feature within the neighbourhood, albeit extending buildings into an area of the Site that is currently open. The apartment building is designed to create a positive address to the street with covered balconies, extensive areas of glazing, and the use of varied materials, colours and decorative screens to provide visual interest and to visually break down the building form. This creates a positive and visually interesting frontage.
- 64 In my opinion, the visual scale of Building B02, in terms of both horizontal and vertical extent, is successfully broken into a cohesive

collection of components that respond to the scale and grain of dwellings in the surrounding context. In my opinion, the apartment building design has a domestic character that will complement the surrounding pattern of development in the residential environment.

- 65 It is proposed to retain the open space area in the south eastern corner of the Site. This area contains mature vegetation that contributes to the amenity of the neighbourhood, particularly the Donald Street streetscape. In this area, a small pocket park will be defined adjacent to the street edge. This park will make a positive contribution to the amenity of the street. While the existing vehicular entrance will be retained, it will require widening with some resulting loss in vegetation.
- 66 The introduction of Building B07 will also result in the removal of vegetation and the creation of a built edge to the street. This vegetation removal will result in a change to the existing character with some reduction in the amenity of the street created by the vegetated open space. The proposed tree planting along the Donald Street frontage will partially mitigate the loss of vegetation along the frontage.
- 67 The setback of Building B07 from the street front and the stepped two to three-level building form of the building will complement the bold Allen Ward VC Hall frontage that extends right to the street edge. Unlike the solid façade of the Allen Ward VC Hall, the proposed building will have an engaging frontage that makes a positive contribution to the street environment and wraps around to create a well-articulated edge to the main Site entrance. In my opinion, Building B07 strikes an appropriate balance between responding to and being compatible with the bold form of the adjacent Alan Ward VC Hall and providing a residential character that is compatible with the pattern of residential development in the surrounding context. In particular, the use of the vertically stepped brick framing elements, the variations in the colour palette, and the punctuation of the roofline breaks down the overall building form to create a granularity that is compatible with its context.

Vegetation

- 68 The Lopdell Gardens are located in the northern area of the Site and contain a mix of mature native and exotic vegetation extending through a deep gully area. The qualities of the Gardens are mostly appreciated from within the Site, however, they do interface with the carpark and swimming pool to the north. The portion of garden to the north and east of the retained Oldershaw Music Octagonal building will be retained.
- 69 As shown on the Indicative Landscape Plan by Sullivan + Wall and the Arboricultural Report by Tree 3 Ltd, construction will require the removal of vegetation within a perimeter of approximately 4m around the building footprints. Replacement planting is proposed.

The Arboricultural Report and Indicative Landscape Plan identifies two Kauri and one Pohutukawa tree within this area that should be retained. In addition to that recommendation, I recommend that a detailed planting plan is prepared for this area at the detailed design phase of the project, to provide a mix of planting that effectively mitigates the loss of established vegetation to ensure the garden continues to contribute to the character of the neighbourhood.

- 70 Extensive planting throughout the Site with a range of ornamental trees will further enhance the residential character of the Site.

Boundary Treatments

- 71 The Proposed Site Fencing Plan (Sheet RC12 of the Resource Consent package of drawings) depicts the various boundary treatments proposed. I understand that fencing is important to ensure that the Proposed Village provides a secure environment for residents. Nevertheless, where the Site interfaces with the public realm, an open fencing type is proposed. This will enable a visual connection and positive street interface. Along the street interfaces, the fencing will be lowered to 1.6m high. Along the Campbell Street frontage, individual access gates will be provided to ground floor units that front the street. Fencing is proposed around the back edge of the small pocket park fronting Donald Street. This enables an open interface with the adjacent street creating an invitation for public use of the space.
- 72 Where the Site adjoins private properties, a 1.8m high timber solid timber fence is proposed. It is proposed to retain the Council's publicly accessible walkway to the north of the Site (with a future boundary adjustment resulting in the existing alignment being outside the Site), with the fence diverted inside the path alignment. It is proposed to fence on the inside of the open space in the south eastern corner of the site. This will result in this area appearing as a continuation of the streetscape. In my opinion, the proposed boundary treatments suitably respond to the different Site interfaces.

Landscape Effects Summary

- 73 In summary, I consider that the Proposed Village will reinforce the distinctive character and landmark qualities of the Site. Retention of the former Teachers' College buildings adjacent to the Donald Street frontage, together with the retention of a large portion and restoration of the Lopdell Gardens, will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character and distinctive sense of place. The Proposed Village will result in an increased scale and density of buildings on the Site. However, unlike the former collection of buildings, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character. While referencing the former 'brutalist' style, the overall collection of buildings will appear more domestic in character. Extensive planting with a range of ornamental trees will

further enhance this residential character. The extensive planting will also mitigate the loss of some vegetation. The typology of apartment buildings will differ from the surrounding predominant pattern of stand-alone dwellings. However, the location, scale and design of the buildings has been carefully considered so that they will integrate well with the surrounding environment.

- 74 Together with a range of non-residential activities in the wider neighbourhood, and in the context of the character established by the former Teachers' College, I consider the Proposed Village will make a positive contribution to the evolution of the neighbourhood character.

Proposed Plan

- 75 I have considered whether the Proposed Plan would alter my assessment of landscape effects that was originally informed by the Operative Plan.

- 76 As noted earlier, the change in the policy framework set out in the Proposed Plan seeks to achieve a compact and well-functioning urban environment through the use of land in an efficient manner that accommodates a variety of housing types through enabling a greater scale and intensity of residential development. In my opinion, this policy framework lends additional support to the change in landscape character that will result from the Proposed Village.

- 77 When considering the change in the pattern of development enabled on the Site and surrounding environment under the Proposed Plan, the Proposed Village (and particularly the scale of Building B01B) will still provide a landmark feature in the urban landscape. However, the pattern of built development at the Donald Street and Campbell Street frontages and interfacing with the southern Site boundary will provide a diminished contrast from the scale of buildings enabled as a permitted activity under the Proposed Plan. I note that the Proposed Plan seeks to provide for developments not meeting permitted activity status, while encouraging high-quality development (MRZ-P5). Having considered the Proposed Plan, I remain of the opinion that the Proposed Village will make a positive contribution to the evolution of the neighbourhood character.

Visual Effects

- 78 The primary viewing audience for the Proposed Village will comprise four groups:

78.1 Users of the surrounding street network;

78.2 Users of surrounding open spaces and public recreation facilities;

78.3 Users of schools in the vicinity; and

78.4 Residents of surrounding properties.

79 My assessment in relation to each of these groups is set out below.

80 My assessment has been assisted by a set of visual simulations from a range of representative viewpoints. From each viewpoint, four images are provided:

80.1 The existing view in 2018 (containing the former Teachers' College buildings);

80.2 The existing view in 2021 (containing the retained former Teachers' College buildings only);

80.3 The 2018 view with the Proposed Village modelled; and

80.4 The 2018 view with the Proposed Village modelled and an outline of the former Teachers' College buildings.

Users of the surrounding street network

81 Users of the street network, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, comprise a large viewing audience. However, given the moving nature of the view they experience, their sensitivity to change is less than other groups that experience static views. In addition, with distance from the Site, intervening buildings and vegetation will variously obscure the Proposed Village and the prominence of the proposed buildings as part of the wider environment will reduce. Accordingly, the Proposed Village will primarily be experienced from the immediately surrounding streets.

Donald Street users

82 Viewpoints 01 – 05 of the visual simulations depict the Proposed Village from a number of locations along Donald Street. The buildings located along this frontage are (north to south): Tennant Block, Allen Ward VC Hall and Building B07. Buildings B06 and B01A and B will also be visible from some parts of Donald Street.

83 For street users, primarily those travelling along Donald Street from the north, I consider the restoration of the north-eastern buildings, being the Tennant Block and Allen Ward VC Hall and the courtyard between the two, will maintain and enhance the landmark quality of the Site.

84 The introduction of the Building B07 to the south of the Allen Ward Hall will result in an increased built presence along the Donald Street frontage. The change in character will be particularly evident when travelling past the Site from the south to the north (see Viewpoints 3 and 4). While some street users may perceive the loss of openness of the street frontage and associated vegetation as adverse, in my opinion, the proposed Building B07 and adjacent pocket park provides a suitable transition from the Allen Ward VC

Hall to the residential environment to the south. The scale and form of the building achieves this transition function better than replicating the pattern of stand-alone dwellings in the surrounding area. Planting along the street edge will mitigate the loss of vegetation to a certain extent. The open space area to the south of the main entrance will be retained and provide a visual break between Building B07 and the lower-density residential environment to the south. This open space area will include a publicly accessible pocket park adjacent to the street edge, which will make a positive contribution to the streetscape, visually reading as part of the public realm.

85 Building B06 is located adjacent to the southern boundary and is set back from the Donald Street frontage. I consider the established and proposed vegetation in the open space area between Building B06 and the street will provide an effective visual foil to the buildings.

86 It is only as Donald Street rises more steeply some distance to the south of the Site that Building B01B becomes readily apparent to street users (see Visual Simulation Viewpoint 5). I consider Building B01B has a strong horizontal character that complements the pattern of rooflines in the foreground and is visually contained by the more distant hills behind. The dark colour finish of the upper levels reduces its visual prominence. For context, I note that with its finer grain articulation that reflects its residential use and character, the proposed building will be less prominent than the former Malcolm Block together with its associated telecommunications aerials.

87 Overall, for Donald Street users, it is my opinion that the configuration and form of the Proposed Village will largely result in positive visual effects, reinforcing the landmark qualities of the Site. For a limited street length immediately south of the Allen Ward VC Hall, the change in character resulting from the loss of open space and the introduction of Building B07 may be perceived as a low adverse effect by some viewers. However, in my opinion, this change in character creates a suitable transition from the existing buildings that will be retained, particularly the Allen Ward VC Hall, to the adjacent standalone homes. As the street front planting in front of Building B07 matures, I consider it will provide some mitigation for the loss of vegetation in this area with the low adverse visual effect reducing to very low for those viewers over time.

Campbell Street users

88 Visual simulations from Viewpoints 9 and 10 depict the Proposed Village when viewed from Campbell Street in the immediate vicinity of the Site. For a short length of the street, the existing character of the Site contrasts with the established pattern of stand-alone dwellings along the street. The playing fields and carparking create an open aspect that provides clear views into the Site. For context,

this viewpoint formerly revealed the large, somewhat institutional former Teachers' College buildings, including the Malcolm Block, Panckhurst Block and Theatre Block. At the moment, a security fence is located within the Site.

89 The Site currently has a poor visual quality when viewed from Campbell Street. While the currently undeveloped nature of area of the Site adjacent to Campbell Street provides an open aspect in relation to the street, it provides little containment to the street and clear views are provided to the security fence within the Site and the currently disused buildings beyond. The Proposed Village will see the introduction of a residential character along the street edge, with proposed Building B02 directly addressing the street with a strong street presence and engagement. The change to a residential built character is expected given the zoning of the Site. I consider the high architectural quality of the proposed Building B02, complemented by planting between the building and the street, will provide a positive street address.

90 While the apartment typology differs from the predominant surrounding pattern of stand-alone dwellings, as described above, I consider the design of Building B02 is well-articulated to break down the visual mass of the building (including its length). The three levels step down to two levels at either end to complement the scale of surrounding dwellings. The design of proposed Building B02 expresses a high architectural quality that responds to the finer grain of residential development in the street. Elements of the building design that assist to integrate it with its surrounding context include:

90.1 A clear distinction between the primary 2-level lower building form and a more visually recessive upper level;

90.2 A series of brick framing elements are used to break the horizontal emphasis of the building;

90.3 Subtle stepping of the various façade and roof elements to emphasise the visual richness of the facades and roof line; and

90.4 Colour variation is used to break down the façade composition both horizontally and vertically.

91 Individual entrances to ground floor units, together with specimen tree planting with ornamental gardens underneath will further contribute to the creation of a domestic character. As the trees mature, they will also make a positive contribution to the amenity of the adjacent street and filter views to proposed Building B02. In my opinion, the scale and form of the proposed Building B02 will reinforce the different use and character of the Site in a manner

that complements the character of the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

92 From the street immediately in front of Building B02, the larger Building B01B will not be visible. As seen in visual simulations from Viewpoints 11, 12, and 13, as one moves away from the immediate vicinity of the Building B02 on Campbell Street, Building B01B becomes more readily apparent. For context, the view from Lower Street (Viewpoint 11) shows how the former Site development contrasted markedly with the pattern of residential development along Campbell Street. The Proposed Village will also provide visual contrast particularly due to the horizontal mass of Building B01B. However, for the reasons set out above, I consider the Proposed Village will have a residential character that complements the surrounding residential neighbourhood. The form of building B01B will continue to reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site.

93 Overall, from Campbell Street, I consider that the magnitude of change will be very high with the perception of visual effects ranging from very low adverse to positive depending on the location and attitude of those travelling along the streets. The planting along the street will reduce any potential adverse visual effects from very low to negligible when viewed in the immediate vicinity of Building B02 along Campbell Street but will not impact on the wider views towards Building B01B.

Karori Road users

94 Karori Road is a busy street. Only glimpses of the Proposed Village (Building B01B) will be obtained from this street (see Viewpoints 12 and 13). I note that Viewpoint 12 is across a vacant site fronting Karori Road. When this site is developed, views to the Site will be obscured. I also note that since the original photography was taken, additional growth of vegetation within the Karori School grounds obstructs views to the Site from Viewpoint 13 (see visual simulations showing the 2018 and 2021 photography).

95 Given the limited opportunities for viewing the Proposed Village, the magnitude of visual change for Karori Road users will be low. In my opinion, for the reasons set out in relation to Campbell and Donald Streets above, the character of Proposed Building B01B will reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site, while complementing the pattern of surrounding residential development. In my opinion, the visual effects resulting from the Proposed Village will be positive for Karori Road users.

Scapa Terrace users

96 The visual simulations from Viewpoints 6, 14 and 15 demonstrate various visual connections from Scapa Terrace to the Site. These views are taken at right angles to the street, which runs parallel to the Site's southern boundary. Accordingly, when travelling along the street, glimpses will be obtained between dwellings and

vegetation along the northern side of Scapa Terrace to the Proposed Village apartment buildings along the southern boundary with Building B01 viewed behind. However, given the angle of view and the scale and separation, they will not be prominent or obtrusive. Overall, I consider that the magnitude of visual change will be low. For the reasons set out in relation to Campbell and Donald Streets above, I consider the character of the Proposed Village will reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site, while complementing the pattern of surrounding residential development, and the adverse visual effects on Scapa Terrace users will be negligible.

Wider street network users

97 From the wider street network, glimpses of the Proposed Village will be obtained, primarily Building B01. From elevated street locations on Johnston Hill to the north and Wrights Hill to the south, views to the Site are limited by intervening topography, buildings and vegetation. The magnitude of visual change will be low.

98 From the limited locations where it is visible (see visual simulation from Viewpoint 7), the Proposed Village will appear varied and articulated, and will integrate well with the surrounding context. The dark colour finish proposed for the upper levels of the southern wing of Building B01B and the varied alignment of the roofs together with their dark colour finish will reduce the visual prominence of the buildings. Overall, I consider that the visual effects on wider street network users will be negligibly adverse to positive.

Summary of Effects on Street Users

99 Overall, I conclude that the Proposed Village will be visible and, in some instances, prominent from a range of locations in the surrounding street network. The magnitude of visual change will vary from low to very high. The Proposed Village will have a different character from the surrounding predominantly low-density residential neighbourhood, reinforcing the Site's landmark qualities. It will have a domestic character, being well articulated, of high architectural quality and accompanied by planting. This residential character will be distinct from the collection of buildings that reflected the former education institution use. From many locations, this residential character will result in positive visual effects. From a limited distance along Donald Street in the immediate vicinity of Building B07, adverse visual effects may be perceived by some as low adverse, reducing to very low as planting matures.

Users of open spaces and recreational facilities

Ben Burn Park users

100 Ben Burn Park is located on the western side of Campbell Street, to the south of the Site. The visual simulation from Viewpoint 8 is from a seat on the western side of the park. For context, the collection of former Teachers' College buildings were previously clearly visible from this location. From here, the Proposed Village

will be viewed with a layering of different building elements. Building B01 will be prominent. Even at this distance, the articulation of the various buildings is legible and, in particular, the white framing elements are successful in breaking down the forms into a series of complementary elements. The darker colour finish of the upper levels of the southern wing of Building B01B will reduce its visual prominence. The projection of the central circulation core above the primary roofline, together with other feature roof elements projecting above the primary rooflines of the different wings of Building B01, will contribute to the visual complexity and interest of the roofscape.

- 101 From this location, I consider the magnitude of visual change will be moderate. In my opinion, the Proposed Village will reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site, while complementing the lower and finer-grained pattern of surrounding residential development. In my opinion, the Proposed Village design will have a residential appearance that is well suited to its context, especially when compared with the institutional nature of the former site development. Overall, I consider the Proposed Village will have positive visual effects when viewed from Ben Burn Park.

Karori Swimming Pool users

- 102 The Karori Swimming Pool is located immediately to the north of the Site. It is an indoor pool without any windows overlooking the Site. The pool is accessed from Donald Street and a carpark is located adjacent to the east of the Site's northern boundary.

- 103 From the Pool carpark, the Lopdell Gardens and Building B01 will be visible. However, it will be viewed with the foreground of dense vegetation. While the Proposed Village will necessitate some vegetation removal in the Lopdell Gardens within the construction perimeter, the area adjacent to the carpark will not be disturbed. A vegetated quality to the interface will be maintained. In my opinion, the magnitude of visual change will be low. In the context of the vegetated interface and use of the Pool carpark, I do not consider Building B01 will appear incongruous or obtrusive.

- 104 I conclude that adverse visual effects on Pool users will be very low, reducing to negligible as planting becomes established.

Users of the walkway along the northern boundary

- 105 As the pathway from the swimming pool carpark descends down the hill to the west, it extends into the Site. However, the proposed future boundary adjustment will bring this portion of the walkway into the adjacent Council site.

- 106 From the part of the walkway currently within the Site, users will be located in close proximity to the northern wall of Building B01A, with the Pool building close to the path on its northern side. In this constrained location, vegetation removal to enable construction will

result in a more open aspect to the pathway. The proposed fencing type within the Site along the edge of the path will maintain a visual connection into the Site. For a short length, Building B01A will appear prominent to users of the walkway.

107 Further to the west, the pathway is flanked by vegetation which will filter views to the Proposed Village. For those using the walkway in this location, views will be transient.

108 The Proposed Village will result in moderate visual change for users of the walkway in the vicinity of the Karori Pool. In my opinion, the visual change will result in very low adverse visual effects.

Summary of effects on open spaces and recreation facilities users

109 In my opinion, the magnitude of visual change resulting from the Proposed Village when viewed from surrounding public open spaces and recreation facilities will be moderate to low, and the resulting visual effects will be very low adverse when viewed from the walkway, very low adverse reducing to negligible as mitigation planting becomes established when viewed from the Karori Swimming Pool carpark, and positive when viewed from Ben Burn Park.

Users of Karori Normal School

110 Karori Normal School is located to the north of the Karori swimming pool carpark. The school buildings have a primary orientation towards Donald Street.

111 The character of the Site will be maintained as it is viewed from the school, with the retention of existing buildings in the eastern area of the Site adjacent to Donald Street and the retention of the vegetated quality of the Lopdell Gardens.

112 From the school playground that fronts Karori Road, Building B01 will be visible. However, given its orientation, the horizontal extent of Building B01 will not be readily apparent. For context, the former Malcolm Block was visible from this location and was a prominent and imposing built feature before its removal.

113 In relation to the various views obtained from the School, I conclude that, overall, the magnitude of visual change will be moderate, and in the context of the landmark quality of the Site visual effects resulting from the change will be positive.

Residents of surrounding properties

114 In this section, I summarise the assessment of visual effects on neighbouring properties provided in my report. In the following section, I provide additional comment in relation to specific issues raised by submitters living in surrounding properties. The urban design evidence of Mr Burns also addresses amenity effects on neighbouring properties.

Scapa Terrace properties

- 115 The properties on the northern side of Scapa Terrace directly adjoin the Site's southern boundary and will most directly experience visual change resulting from the Proposed Village. Many of these properties have solid fences and vegetation that effectively screen views towards the Site from the ground level of dwellings and their gardens. Most dwellings along the northern side of the street are single-level. The Site's existing ground level adjacent to these properties varies along the boundary length, so that some neighbouring properties are higher and others are lower than the Site. The relationship between the Proposed Village and neighbouring properties is shown in the cross sections on Sheet RCA14-16.
- 116 In response to a Section 92 request for further information, three dimensional perspective drawings were provided depicting the view towards the Site obtained from the back gardens of 16 and 24 Scapa Terrace.
- 117 The Proposed Village includes a series of five apartment buildings in the southern area of the Site near the boundary with the Scapa Terrace properties. Buildings B02-B06 are located and configured to respect the Site's relationship with the neighbouring properties. The buildings have a set-back of between 4.2 and 5.5m and extend to two levels, stepping up to three levels further away from the boundary (with Buildings B02 – B04 between 16.5 and 17.7m away from the boundary and Buildings B05 and B06 between 15.3 and 16.5m away from the boundary). The apartment buildings are oriented to present the short end of the rectangular buildings to their southern neighbours, to reduce visual dominance. At ground level, the apartment buildings are connected to accommodate a single-level, contiguous undercroft parking area. At the upper level, the apartment buildings are separated by landscaped terraces. Hedge planting is proposed to define the southern edge of these terraces. The separation between the building faces is between 15 and 17m creating visual gaps. From the neighbouring properties to the south, the higher Building B01 will be variously viewed behind these lower apartment buildings. In my opinion, the Proposed Village will result in moderate - high visual change when viewed from these properties.
- 118 The proposed apartment buildings will differ in appearance from other housing typologies in the area when viewed from the adjacent properties. However, as noted above, the Operative Plan identifies 'windfall sites' as being suitable to accommodate increased residential density. Therefore, a different residential typology could be reasonably anticipated on this Site.
- 119 A co-ordinated approach to landscaping of the boundary and spaces between the buildings is proposed with specimen trees located to complement the building forms. As the trees mature (between five

to ten years), I consider they will successfully filter views into the Site. However, for an area between Buildings B03 and B05, planting along the boundary is restricted by stormwater management requirements. While some planting can be accommodated, in this area a more open visual aspect will be maintained from neighbouring properties. I note that following the close of submissions, the species mix along the southern boundary has been reviewed. An amended plan has been prepared that proposes specimen trees that will establish more rapidly and then remain of a more modest scale at maturity.

120 Given the solid boundary treatment proposed along the Site's southern boundary and the low profile of most dwellings, I consider that the Proposed Village will not appear obtrusive from the ground level of the Scapa Terrace properties. From the upper levels of the small number of two-storey properties, the Proposed Village will appear as more prominent. In my opinion, the scale and design of the southern apartment buildings, while prominent, will not result in an overdominance of the adjacent properties.

121 In the context of the residential zoning of the Site and the planning framework that recognises the opportunities presented by 'windfall sites', I consider that the adverse visual effects will be low from most properties, reducing to very low as planting between the apartment buildings and Site boundary becomes established. For a limited number of properties (16, 18, and 24 Scapa Terrace) adjacent to the areas where planting will be restricted, I consider that the adverse visual effects will remain low after planting is established.

Donald Street properties

122 The dwellings on the eastern side of Donald Street are generally elevated above street level. They are generally oriented to the west, with private gardens located to the rear of dwellings. For those dwellings directly opposite Building B07, the proposed new apartment building will result in high visual change.

123 However, the street provides visual separation, avoiding visual dominance. The relationship of Building B07 to dwellings on these properties (33, 35 and 37 Donald Street) is shown in the cross sections on Sheet RCA14. As set out in the assessment of landscape effects above, Building B07 has been designed to respect the character of the surrounding residential neighbourhood. The building will be viewed in the context of the Allen Ward VC Hall, which has established a bold and somewhat harsh built edge to the street. The new aspects of the Proposed Village, including the higher parts of Building B01 that sit behind the Hall, will be visually subservient to this foreground building form.

124 In the context of the Site character that has been established by the former Teachers' College buildings along this road boundary, the

residential zoning of the Site and the planning framework that recognises the potential for a different form of development presented by 'windfall sites', I consider that adverse visual effects resulting from the Proposed Village, and particularly the loss of open space and removal of vegetation along the street front, will be low. The adverse visual effects will reduce to very low as the planting becomes established.

Campbell Street properties

- 125 Similarly, dwellings on the western side of Campbell Street directly opposite proposed Building B02 will experience high visual change, with the apartment building located in an area that is currently open space.
- 126 Dwellings on these Campbell Street properties are set back from their front boundary with various solid walls, garages and planting screening views towards the Site. The relationship between the Proposed Village and these properties (34, 36, 38, 40, 42 Campbell Street) is shown in the cross sections contained in sheets RCA-16 and 17.
- 127 While the Proposed Village will appear as different from the pattern of residential activity in the wider area, I consider the scale and domestic form of Building B02 will not appear incongruous in its residential setting. The street provides suitable separation to avoid over-dominance or overlooking of properties on the western side of the street. Overall, I consider that the adverse visual effects will be low, reducing to very low as the street boundary planting becomes established.
- 128 The property at 49 Campbell Street adjoins the Site's southern boundary adjacent to Building B02. This property contains a two-storey dwelling. The relationship between Building B02 and this dwelling is depicted in the cross section contained in Sheet RCA-16. Building B02 has been designed to step down to this boundary, respecting the HIRB standard in the Operative Plan, and planting along the boundary will provide a visual buffer. However, from the upper level of this dwelling views to the wider Proposed Village will be obtained. I consider the magnitude of visual change experienced from this property will be high.
- 129 In the context of the landmark quality of the Site established by the former Teachers' College, which included the somewhat institutional former Panckhurst and Waghorn Blocks, the residential zoning of the Site, and the planning framework that recognises the potential of 'windfall sites' to accommodate a different form of development, I consider the adverse visual effect on this property will be moderate, reducing to low as the planting along the southern boundary becomes established.

- 130 To the north of the Site, the property at 33 Campbell Street is owned by Ryman and written approval has been provided. Therefore, I have not assessed visual effects on this property.
- 131 Further to the north, views towards the Proposed Village from residential properties on the eastern side of Campbell Street are variously obscured by other buildings and vegetation. Although the Proposed Village has a large building mass, it will have a residential character for the reasons described earlier. This character will contrast to the former Teachers' College buildings. In the context of the landmark quality of the Site and the planning framework that recognises the potential of 'windfall sites' to accommodate a different form of development, I consider that the magnitude of visual change will be moderate, and the adverse visual effects will be very low when viewed from these properties.

Other properties

- 132 For a range of dwellings to the south and west of the Site, clear views will be obtained towards Building B01. As with the assessment from surrounding streets, I consider that the Proposed Village will reinforce the Site as a visual focus within the wider neighbourhood. The magnitude of visual change from these properties will vary from very low to moderate. For context, while the collection of proposed buildings has a greater horizontal mass than the collection of former Teachers' College buildings, the overall height will be lower than the Malcolm Block, and the architectural form will be more finely articulated and residential in character. In the context of the landmark quality of the Site, I consider that adverse visual effects will vary from very low adverse to positive.

Summary of Visual Effects from Residential Properties

- 133 Overall, I conclude that the visual change resulting from the Proposed Village when viewed from residential properties in the immediately surrounding environment will range from high to very low, and the resulting adverse visual effects will range from moderate adverse (for just one property temporarily as planting establishes) to positive. As planting becomes established, adverse visual effects will reduce to between low and very low. Once planting is established, low adverse visual effects will still be experienced from the residential properties at 16, 18 and 24 Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street.

Proposed Plan

- 134 As set out above, the Proposed Village will result in considerable visual change when viewed from a number of surrounding locations. However, the policy framework of the Proposed Plan and the scale of buildings enabled by the built form standards (particularly the height, height in relation to boundary and site coverage standards), encourages a more efficient development pattern that enables a range of housing typologies at a greater intensity and scale than the Operative Plan.

135 As shown in Figure 2 below, other than Building B01, only very small roof elements of Buildings B02, B03, B04 and B07 exceed the 11m height standard. I also note that the extent of buildings is within the site coverage standard of 50%.

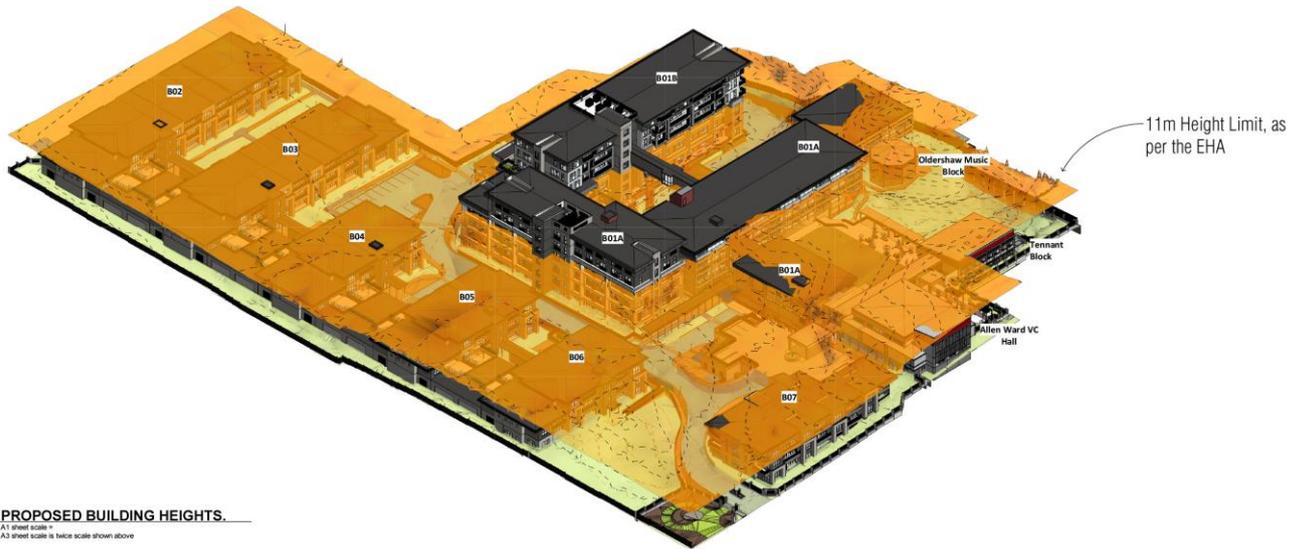


Figure 2: Diagram depicting Proposed Plan 11m height standard in relation to Proposed Village

136 When considered in relation to this framework, I consider the magnitude of adverse visual effects experienced by those viewing the Proposed Village from proximate viewpoints will be the same or less than that assessed in the LVA (and set out above).

137 The property at 49 Campbell Street is the only private property viewing location where moderate adverse visual effects (reducing to low as planting becomes established) were identified in my assessment. When considered in the context of the framework of the Proposed Plan, and particularly the building envelope enabled by the built form standards, I consider the adverse visual effects will be considerably lower. I note that only a very small portion of the roof of Building B02 exceeds the 11m height control and the building sits comfortably within the recession plane off the property at 49 Campbell Street.

138 Having considered the Proposed Plan, I remain of the opinion that the Proposed Village will result in low adverse to positive visual effects. Further comment in relation to points raised in submissions is set out below.

RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

139 I have reviewed the submissions lodged on the Proposed Village. A number of submissions address issues related to landscape and

visual effects. The submissions express a range of opinions about the suitability of the Site to accommodate the Proposed Village and its effects on the character and amenity of the immediate and wider context. I consider the landscape and visual issues raised in submissions can be grouped into the following themes:

139.1 Neighbourhood character;

139.2 Scale of buildings;

139.3 Open space and landscaping;

139.4 Residential Design Guide; and

139.5 Effects on surrounding residential properties.

Neighbourhood Character

- 140 A number of submissions support the use of the Site to accommodate the Proposed Village as they consider the Site to be suitably located.⁶ Some submissions identify the Site as a valuable windfall site.⁷ Other submissions note that the Site has been underutilised for a number of years⁸ resulting in deterioration and vandalism.⁹
- 141 As I have set out in my assessment above, I agree with these submissions. In particular, the large scale of the Site and its qualities, including the established site structure, buildings and gardens providing links to the past and proximity and access to a range of amenities, embedded within an established neighbourhood make it particularly suitable to accommodate a comprehensively designed retirement village. The proposed use as a comprehensive care retirement village represents an improvement on the underutilised Site that is currently vacant. Occupation of the Site with a residential character will contribute positively to the neighbourhood.
- 142 In my opinion, the policy framework of the Proposed Plan together with the built form standards lends additional support to my view that the Proposed Village will have positive effects on neighbourhood character.

⁶ Submission 5 (Heynes), 9 (Lamb), 18 (Ho), 26 (Stoops), 29 (Werren), 30 (Rutledge), 32 (Karori Residents Association), 33 (Lane), 35 (Evans), 37 (Meo), 61 (Walton).

⁷ Submission 20 (Marshall) and 75 (King & McKinnon-King).

⁸ Submission 24 (Sarfati) and 34 (Fitzgibbon).

⁹ Submission 31 (Hercus) and 32 (Karori Residents Association).

Scale of Buildings

- 143 Some submitters consider the Site can appropriately accommodate the Proposed Village without being obtrusive in relation to the surrounding neighbourhood.¹⁰ Other submitters raise concerns about the scale of development proposed. In particular, a number of submissions consider the height and bulk of Building B01 is inappropriate in its context and the Proposed Village will be incompatible with the surrounding setting.¹¹ Other submissions comment on the density of development proposed, in comparison to the former Teachers' College.¹²
- 144 I have set out in detail above why I consider the Proposed Village represents an appropriate pattern of development for this Site and how it will integrate with its established context. I agree that the scale of Building B01 will be readily apparent when viewed from various locations in the surrounding neighbourhood and will provide a landmark, reinforcing the Site as a feature within the urban landscape. In my opinion, the scale of the central building as a focus for the Proposed Village will be complemented by the lower-scale apartment buildings in the southern area of the Site. Careful consideration has been given to the form and design of the various buildings across the Site to both reference the architectural style of the former Teachers' College buildings and respect the qualities of the pattern of built development in the surrounding context. Collectively, I consider the various buildings will reinforce the distinctive character and landmark qualities of the Site while achieving a residential form of development.
- 145 When considering the change in neighbourhood character enabled by the Proposed Plan, I remain of the opinion that the Proposed Village represents an appropriate pattern of development for this Site and will successfully integrate with its surrounding and evolving context. I note that the built form standards enable an increased scale of development in the Medium Density Residential Zone as a permitted activity without any design control. In contrast, the Proposed Village has been designed in response to a careful analysis of the Site's location, characteristics and relationship to surrounding context. In my opinion, this comprehensive design will result in a built environment and associated open space and landscape framework that will contribute positively to the amenity and character of the neighbourhood.

¹⁰ Submission 14 (Jansen).

¹¹ Submission 50 (van Amelsfort), 54 (Brandon), 56 (Cooper) and 73 (King).

¹² Submission 65 (Responsible Development Karori).

Open Space and Landscaping

- 146 A number of supporting submissions highlight the quality of the landscape design in association with the building design.¹³ However, other submissions consider there is inadequate green spaces and criticise the loss of a portion of the Lopdell Gardens.¹⁴
- 147 The proposed landscape design has been determined as an integral part of the overall Proposed Village design. The proposed buildings are configured around a number of open spaces. The design of these spaces, including planting, will also contribute to the residential character of the Site and the way it relates to its context. The proposed landscape design will also contribute positively to the amenity of residents. In my opinion, tree planting, complemented by lower level gardens along the Campbell Road and Donald Street frontages will make a positive contribution to the streetscapes. As noted in my assessment above, the open space at the southern end of the Donald Street frontage will be accessible to the public and will make a particular contribution to the neighbourhood amenity. In my opinion, the Proposed Village design provides adequate green and open spaces and a high quality landscape design.
- 148 I note that there is no District Plan (operative or proposed) protection over the Lopdell Gardens. However, in the development of the concept design for the Proposed Village, the gardens were identified as an important character feature within the Site. Unfortunately, the demolition of former Teachers' College buildings has resulted in the loss of a portion of the Lopdell Gardens and they have incurred some weather damage. However, the configuration of the wings of the proposed Building B01A and B01B will enable the restoration of the gardens in this area and this is to be addressed in the proposed suite of conditions (Mr Turner will address these). In my opinion, the landscape and visual effects of a loss of a portion of the Lopdell Gardens will be suitably mitigated by the proposed replacement planting. The portion of the Gardens to the east of the Oldershaw block, which contains dense native planting, will be retained.

Residential Design Guide

- 149 A number of submissions consider the Proposed Village is not consistent with the Wellington City Council Residential Design Guide.¹⁵

¹³ Submission 2 (Halton), 3 (Prescott), 28 (Y Ho), 28 (Elliot), 35 (Evans) and 61 (Walton).

¹⁴ Submission 15 (O'Hagan) and 41 (Fraser).

¹⁵ Submission 46 (Mattlin), 49 (Gestro) and 54 (Brandon).

- 150 In carrying out my assessment, I have considered the Residential Design Guide contained in the Operative Plan.
- 151 In relation to Section 1 of the Guide addressing character, I consider the Proposed Village design has identified and responded positively to the unique qualities and sense of place of the Site and its setting. In particular, I consider the Site is suitable to accommodate visual contrast in relation to the surrounding context, while being sensitive to the interfaces created with its surrounding environment. While some existing vegetation will be removed, established garden areas will be maintained and continue to make a positive contribution to the Site and surrounding environs. In addition, there will be extensive tree and complementary shrub planting throughout the Site.
- 152 In relation to Section 2 of the Guide addressing site planning, I consider careful consideration has been given to the site planning to ensure good on-site amenity. The Proposed Village is specifically designed to meet the needs and preferences of elderly residents, while also ensuring a positive interface with adjoining streets.
- 153 In relation to Section 3 of the Guide addressing building design, I consider the Proposed Village draws on the retention of a number of the former Teachers' College buildings, to create a cohesive and distinctive character, and a tangible link to the Site's past. Buildings that interface with adjacent streets have been designed to present a public and engaging interface with the adjacent public realm.
- 154 In relation to Section 4 of the Guide addressing open space design, I consider the network of open spaces the Proposed Village will provide builds on key spaces created by the former Teachers' College site development and complements these with a range of communal spaces that are suitable for the retirement village environment and maintain a positive interface with the surrounding public realm.
- 155 Overall, I consider the Proposed Village is consistent with the Residential Design Guide contained in the Operative Plan as it relates to landscape and visual effects considerations.
- 156 The Proposed Plan also proposes a Design Guide: Residential. Proposed Policy MRZ – P7 seeks to ensure retirement villages fulfil the intent of the Proposed Design Guide. The Proposed Design Guide proposes guidance in relation to the following matters:
- 156.1 Responding to the natural environment;
 - 156.2 Achieving effective public-private interfaces;
 - 156.3 Designing well-functioning sites; and

156.4 Designing high quality buildings.

- 157 I have reviewed the Proposed Design Guidelines in relation to relevant landscape considerations. In my opinion, the Proposed Village layout has been determined in response to the natural topography of the Site (as modified by its former use) and the location of established native vegetation within Lopdell Gardens. As set out in detail in my assessment above, I consider the Proposed Village achieves an effective and positive public-private interface with both Donald and Campbell Streets. In my opinion, careful consideration has been given to ensure the buildings within the Proposed Village respond to the architectural character established by the former Teachers' College buildings while meeting the needs and reflecting the character of a contemporary retirement living environment. Overall, in terms of relevant landscape and visual effects considerations, in my opinion, the design of the Proposed Village fulfils the intent of the Proposed Design Guide, and particularly the outcomes identified for the four topics listed above.

Effects on Surrounding Residential Properties

- 158 A number of residents of surrounding properties raise concerns about the effects on the amenity they enjoy. I have considered the points raised in relation to visual effects in the sections below. The urban design evidence of Mr Burns addresses the amenity effects of shading and overlooking.
- 159 Following the close of submissions, Ryman contacted submitters who reside at properties adjoining the Site and offered for myself and Mr Burns to visit their properties to better understand the issues raised in their submissions. We visited 20 Scapa Terrace¹⁶ on 28 June 2022 and 42 Donald Street¹⁷ on 29 June 2022.
- 160 The assessment drawing set included in the application contains a series of cross sections that show the relationship of immediately surrounding properties to the Proposed Village. Sheet RCA13 is a useful reference that shows the location of surrounding properties in relation to the proposed site layout and the location of cross sections provided (refer **Appendix 1**).

21A Campbell Street

- 161 The submission by Mr Taylor¹⁸ raises concerns about the effect of Building B01B on the visual amenity experienced from the property at 21A Campbell Street.

¹⁶ Submission 57 (Leikis & Porter).

¹⁷ Submission 17 (Healy).

¹⁸ Submission 68 (Taylor).

- 162 This property contains a two-storey dwelling. The property does not directly adjoin the Site boundary and is separated from the Site by the RSA Hall at 27A Campbell Street. The dwelling is located approximately 45.5m from the Site boundary and 58m from the closest portion of Building B01B. Dense planting is located along the rear boundary of both properties (21A and 27A Campbell Street) and screens views towards the Site from the ground level. The upper level of the dwelling is contained within the roofline with no windows oriented to the east and only a small window oriented to the south.
- 163 In my opinion, the Proposed Village will not appear dominant or obtrusive when viewed from this property.

32 Campbell Street

- 164 The submission by Mr and Ms Sprott¹⁹ raises concerns about the loss of enjoyment of their property at 32 Campbell Street. In particular, they describe the site-wide buildings as being “*unreasonably over-bearing*”.
- 165 The property is located on the western side of Campbell Street opposite the northern corner of the Site. It contains a two-storey dwelling. The primary outdoor living space is located to the rear (west) of the dwelling.
- 166 From this property, oblique views will be obtained towards Building B02 with the two storey portion of the building in the foreground, stepping up to three storeys behind.
- 167 In my opinion, the scale and form of the building, together with the comprehensive planting within the front yard, including specimen trees, means that Building B02 will not appear as visually obtrusive. I note that the planting is not proposed to screen the building, as suggested in the submission, but to complement the residential character of the neighbourhood and provide a vegetated element to the street interface.
- 168 While Building B01B will be visible from this property, it will have a generous setback (over 100m).
- 169 Overall, while the Proposed Village will be viewed as a change in the environment, I do not consider its visual qualities will be over-bearing or diminish the amenity of this property.

¹⁹ Submission 60 (Sprott).

38 Campbell Street

- 170 The submission by Mr Eyles²⁰ raises concerns about the effect of the Proposed Village on the outlook from this property. He suggests reducing building height, increasing setback from the boundary and increasing landscaping opportunities along the Campbell Street boundary.
- 171 This property is located on the western side of Campbell Street opposite the Site. It contains a single-level dwelling with a solid brick wall, planting and carport interfacing with the street.
- 172 The submission describes the current outlook from the property as being over the 'Teachers College park'. I note that, while this proportion of the Site is currently undeveloped, it is not a park and it is zoned for residential development.
- 173 The visual simulation from Viewpoint 10 is taken from the footpath in the area adjacent to this property. From this location, only Building B02 will be visible. As set out in the assessment above, I consider that, while of a different scale and form from the surrounding pattern of residential development, the visual scale of Building B02 is successfully broken into a cohesive collection of visual components that are aligned with the scale and grain of dwellings in the surrounding context. In my opinion, the Proposed Village design has a domestic character that will complement the surrounding pattern of development in the residential environment.
- 174 Direct access to Campbell Street from the ground floor apartments, together with ornamental planting within the front yards, including specimen trees, will contribute to the residential character and amenity of the adjacent street. The separation created by Campbell Street also ensures there will be no visual dominance effects.
- 175 Overall, I consider the Proposed Village will maintain a suitable outlook for this property consistent with the residential environment.

49 Campbell Street

- 176 The submission by Mr and Ms Cooper²¹ raises concerns about the visual effects that will be experienced from this property.
- 177 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. The property contains a two-storey dwelling with the primary outdoor living space located to the rear of the dwelling (the eastern side).

²⁰ Submission 55 (Eyles).

²¹ Submission 56 (Cooper).

The submission includes a description of the way the property is used, including photographs.

- 178 As set out in my assessment above, as the Site is currently undeveloped in the area adjacent to this property, the introduction of buildings in this area will result in considerable visual change. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.
- 179 The shorter end of Building B02 faces this property as well as the connecting element between Buildings B02 and B03. Building B02 extends to 2 storeys, stepping up to three storeys away from the boundary. The configuration of the buildings adjacent to this property complies with the bulk and location requirements for the zone under the Operative Plan, including sitting comfortably within the recession plane (as shown in Figure 3 below). The third storey of Building B02 projects 1.7m above the 8m height standard for the zone. However it is separated by a distance of 22.5m from the dwelling at 49 Campbell Street. The ground floor level of Building B02 will sit below the ground level of the adjacent property, such that the finished maximum height of Building B02 will only be 0.72m higher than the dwelling at 49 Campbell Street. The connecting element between Buildings B02 and B03 is a single level (maximum height of 3.6m).



Figure 3: Cross Section showing the relationship between Building B02 and property at 49 Campbell Street

- 180 The submission questions the selection of species to be planted along the southern boundary, noting the time it would take for planting to mitigate adverse visual effects and the shading effects that would result. Ryman has considered the point raised in this and other submissions and amendments have been made to the proposed landscape plan to include species that will establish more rapidly but remain at a more modest scale in relation to adjacent properties.

181 From the ground level spaces at 49 Campbell Street, both internal and outdoor, I consider the scale of the adjacent Proposed Village building forms will not appear visually prominent or obtrusive. From the upper level bedrooms, a more direct visual connection will be made. In my opinion, a reasonable separation between buildings is provided, particularly for the third level of Building B02 which extends above the height standard for the zone. I note that unlike primary living spaces, people generally spend less time in bedrooms. Bedrooms are therefore considered to be less sensitive to visual change.

182 For the reasons set out above, I remain of the opinion that, while the magnitude of visual change experienced from this property will be high, the adverse visual effect will be moderate, reducing to low as the planting along the southern boundary becomes established.

11 Scapa Terrace

183 The submission by Mr Dunstan²² raises concerns about the scale of the Proposed Village buildings and the effect on views from this property and therefore on wellbeing. The submission seeks a reduction to the height of the buildings.

184 The property at 11 Scapa Terrace is located on the southern side of the street, so it is separated from the Site by 12 Scapa Terrace and the street. It contains a two-storey dwelling with the second level contained within the roofline. The dwelling is elevated slightly above street level.

185 The visual simulation from Viewpoint 14 is taken from the footpath in front of this property. While slightly more elevated views towards the Site will be obtained from within the dwelling, particularly at the upper level, I consider the visual simulation provides a useful indication of the visual change that will be experienced at this property. There will be glimpses of the Proposed Village including elements of Buildings B02 - B06 and Building B01B behind other houses visible from this property.

186 I consider that, with the separation from the Proposed Village (particularly Building B01) and the foreground of dwellings on the northern side of Scapa Terrace, collectively the Proposed Village buildings will not appear visually prominent or obtrusive from this property. The glimpses of various built elements within the Proposed Village will be viewed as part of a wider environment.

²² Submission 62 (Dunstan).

24 Scapa Terrace

- 187 The submission by Mr King and Ms McKinnon-King²³ raises concerns about the visual effects experienced from this property. In particular the submission raises concerns about the effects experienced from the ground floor living space and outdoor living space, together with the upstairs primary bedroom. The submission is also critical of the planting proposed along the southern boundary of the Site and says the proposed species will take too long to establish and become too high as the trees mature.
- 188 The submission describes the outlook from their property as being *“upon two barracks-like buildings (mitigation notwithstanding) with limited space between them”*. With respect, I don't agree with the characterisation of the Proposed Village buildings as being 'barrack-like'. The Proposed Village buildings are well designed and articulated, and will have a domestic character. Further, in my opinion, the separation between Building B02 and B03 is generous at 17.5m.
- 189 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. It contains a two-storey dwelling. The dwelling layout locates living spaces (family room and dining room) to the north, opening out to an outdoor deck and terrace area. A bedroom is located on the northern side of the upper level.
- 190 As set out in my assessment above, as the Site is currently undeveloped in the area adjacent to this property, the introduction of buildings in this area will result in considerable visual change. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.
- 191 In response to a request for further information from the Council, a 3D perspective image was prepared representing the view obtained from the rear garden of this property. This render has been updated to reflect the amendments to the planting now proposed along the southern Site boundary (see Figure 4 below).

²³ Submission 75 (King and McKinnon-King).



Figure 4: Render depicting Proposed Village viewed from rear garden of 24 Scapa Terrace

- 192 The submission is critical of the viewpoint location of the render. 3D renders are a useful tool to understand the configuration and scale of the buildings and associated planting. They should be viewed together with the other plans and drawings submitted. In my opinion, the viewpoint location provides a useful representation of the configuration and scale of the Proposed Village in relation to this property.
- 193 From the ground level of this property, the horizontal extent of Buildings B02 and B03 and the upper level portion of the buildings will not be prominent.
- 194 From the upper level of the dwelling, I agree that the extent of the proposed buildings will be more readily apparent. However, the upper level of Building B02 and B03 will be generously setback from the neighbouring dwelling (27.5m from Building B02 and 25.5m from Building B03). Further, there is a generous separation between Buildings B02 and B03 (17.5m), albeit connected by a single-level building form. Building B01 will have an even greater separation from the dwelling (approximately 87m). In my opinion, when viewed from the upper-level bedroom, while the Proposed Village buildings will appear prominent, they will not be overly

dominant. As noted above, bedrooms are generally considered to be less sensitive to visual change than primary living spaces.

- 195 For the reasons set out above, I remain of the opinion that the adverse visual effects on this property will be low.

18 Scapa Terrace

- 196 The submission by Mr Hamilton²⁴ outlines a number of general concerns about the design of the Proposed Village and its relationship to Scapa Terrace properties in general. In relation to his property at 18 Scapa Terrace he identifies concerns about the site coverage proposed, the arrangement and design of Buildings B02 – B06 and the resulting visual effects when viewed from his property. He also identifies the constraints to providing planting along the boundary in the vicinity of his property due to stormwater management requirements. The submission requests an additional setback of Buildings B02 – B06 from the boundary and that Buildings B02 – B06 be reduced in height to 2 levels.
- 197 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. It contains a single level dwelling with the primary outdoor living area to the north of the dwelling towards the Site boundary. Dense planting is located along the northern boundary of the property.
- 198 As set out in my assessment above, as the Site is currently undeveloped in the area adjacent to this property, the introduction of buildings in this area will result in considerable visual change. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.
- 199 This property interfaces with the Site in the vicinity of Building B04. The separation distance from the dwelling to Building B04 is 17.5m and the separation distance to the recessed upper level is 28.9m. Building B01B will be visible in the background behind. While the third level of Building B04 exceeds the height standard for the zone (to a maximum of 2.19m), I consider it will not be visually prominent from this property due to the setback from the primary façade.
- 200 Oblique views to the upper levels of Buildings B03 and B05 may be obtained, but will be largely obscured by vegetation within the property.
- 201 For the reasons set out above, I consider the scale and form of the Proposed Village buildings will result in low adverse visual effects when viewed from this property.

²⁴ Submission 45 (Hamilton).

202 The submission is correct in noting the limitation on accommodating substantial planting between Building B04 and the Site boundary due to stormwater management constraints. Accordingly, there will be limited mitigation of visual effects from the planting adjacent to this property. In any event, given the low level of effect in this location, I do not consider more substantial mitigation planting is necessary.

16 Scapa Terrace

203 The submission by Mr Moran²⁵ raises concerns about the scale of the proposed buildings dominating the view from the back yard of this property. He notes that the lounge, kitchen dining area and outdoor deck face the Site and says these areas will experience over-dominance. The submission also notes the lack of mitigation planting in the vicinity of their property due to stormwater management constraints.

204 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. It contains a single-level dwelling. Dense planting is located adjacent to the Site boundary.

205 As set out in my assessment above, as the Site is currently undeveloped in the area adjacent to this property, the introduction of buildings in this area will result in considerable visual change. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.

206 This property will directly interface with a single-level portion of building connecting Buildings B04 and B05. The separation distance between the dwelling and the proposed single-level building is 19.5m.

207 In response to a request for further information from the Council, a 3D perspective image was prepared representing the view obtained from the rear garden of this property. This render has been updated to reflect the amendments to the planting now proposed along the southern Site boundary (see Figure 5 below). As shown in the render, the connection between Buildings B04 and B05 will not be visible. The oblique views to Building B04 and B05 will not be expansive and only glimpses of the upper level of Building B01B will be obtained over the top of vegetation within the property. In my opinion, the Proposed Village building forms will not appear overly dominant.

²⁵ Submission 58 (Moran).



Figure 5: Render depicting Proposed Village viewed from rear garden of 16 Scapa Terrace

208 As noted in the submission, there is only limited opportunity for planting between the Proposed Village buildings and the boundary due to stormwater management constraints. However, given the low level of effect in this location, I do not consider mitigation planting is necessary.

12 Scapa Terrace

209 The submission by Mr and Ms van Amelsfort²⁶ raises concerns about the scale of Buildings B01B and B02 – B06 as viewed from their property. The submission notes that the key living areas and open spaces of this property face the southern boundary of the Site and includes a number of photographs to demonstrate the way the Amelsfort’s use their property. Like others, the submission questions the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation planting and the time it would take to establish and the effects that would result from the planting.

²⁶ Submission 50 (van Amelsfort).

- 210 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. It contains a single-level dwelling.
- 211 As set out in my assessment above, as the Site is currently undeveloped in the area adjacent to this property, the introduction of buildings in this area will result in considerable visual change. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.
- 212 This property will directly interface with a single-level portion of building connecting Building B05 and B06. The separation distance between the dwelling and the proposed single-level building is 15m.
- 213 As shown in cross section 2 on Sheet RCA15 (see Figure 6 below), the floor level of the connecting building is approximately 1.55m below the ground level of the dwelling at 12 Scapa Terrace. With the separation from the boundary, its low profile, the location of planting between the building and the boundary and the solid boundary fence, the connecting building will not be visible from the dwelling and open spaces at 12 Scapa Terrace.
- 214 In my opinion, the oblique views towards Buildings B05 and B06 and the more distant Building B01B will not be viewed as visually prominent or obtrusive.

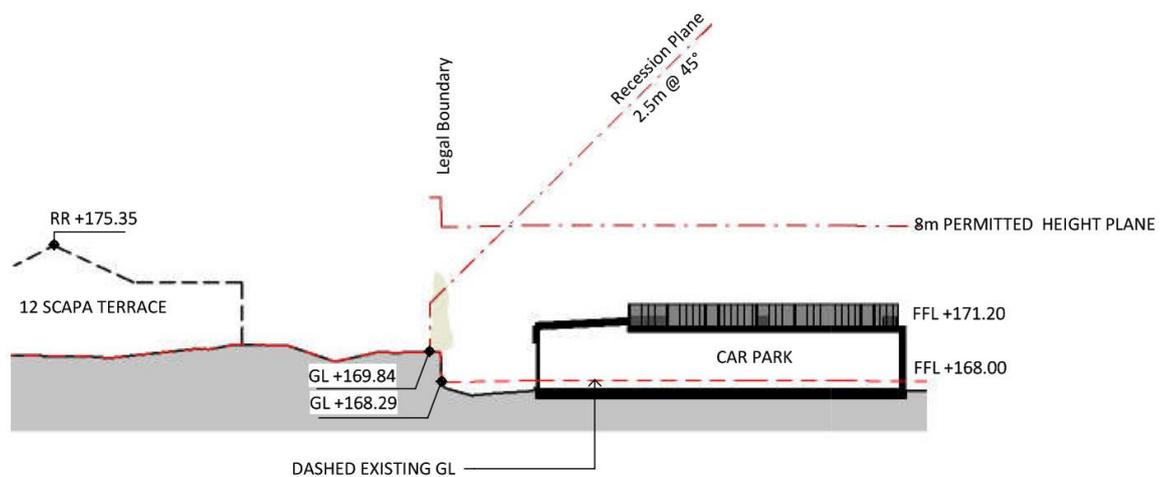


Figure 6: Cross Section depicting relationship between Proposed Village building and property at 12 Scapa Terrace

- 215 As previously noted, the proposed mix of species along the southern boundary has been revised in response to submissions to enable more rapid establishment and to ensure the mature scale will not become overly dominant in relation to neighbouring properties.
- 216 In addition, careful consideration has been given to the landscape treatment between the Proposed Village buildings and the southern

Site boundary, providing an additional buffer between the buildings and the neighbouring property.

6 Scapa Terrace

- 217 The submission by Ms Gestro²⁷ raises concerns about the dominance effects of the Proposed Village buildings on this property. In particular, the submission raises concerns about the loss of views currently enjoyed to Makara Peak and the hills towards the south-west.
- 218 This property adjoins the southern boundary of the Site. It contains a single-level dwelling.
- 219 This property is located adjacent to an area of the Site that contains dense vegetation. There are no buildings proposed in this area and the vegetated quality of this area will be retained. The Indicative Landscape Plan includes an annotation for this area that the *"majority of existing vegetation to remain. Some exotic species will be removed and replanted with appropriate native species to complement remaining vegetation. Decision based on heath/size/species of which trees to remove and replant will be made at time of construction"*.
- 220 Due to this existing vegetation, oblique views to Building B06 will be obscured and the more distant Buildings B01A, B01B and B07 will be screened. Accordingly, I consider the Proposed Village will not cause visual dominance effects on this property. The Proposed Village will also not impact views to Makara Peak and the hills towards the south-west.

37 Donald Street

- 221 The submission by Mr and Ms Major²⁸ raises concerns about the size of the Proposed Village buildings and the change in outlook from this property, including their front yard, the pre-school located at the ground level and upper-level bedrooms.
- 222 The property is on the eastern side of Donald Street, across the street from Building B07. The property contains a two-storey dwelling that is slightly elevated above street level (see cross section 3 on Sheet RCA14 and Figure 7 below). The primary outdoor living space is at the rear of the property on the eastern side of the dwelling.

²⁷ Submission 49 (Gestro).

²⁸ Submission 74 (Major).

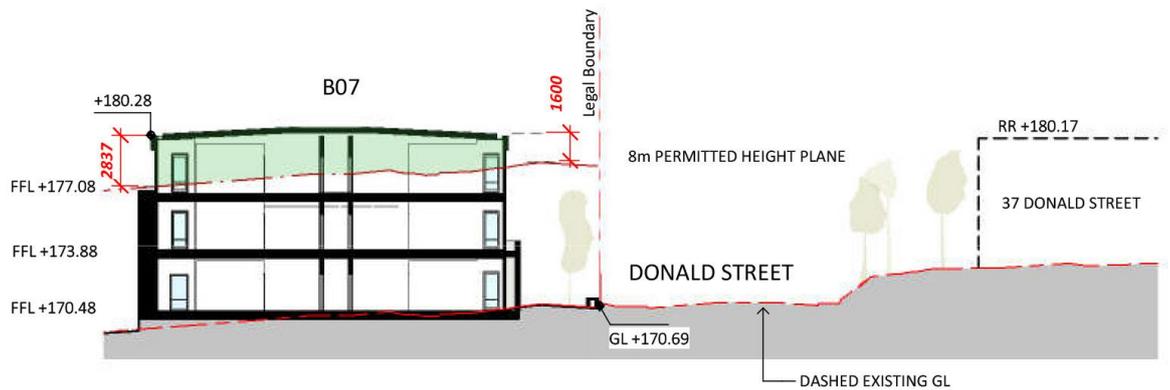


Figure 7: Cross Section depicting relationship between Building B07 and property at 37 Donald Street

- 223 As noted in the submission, Building B07 will replace an area of the Site that is currently vegetated so I agree that it will result in high visual change when viewed from this property. However, I note that the Site is zoned for residential development.
- 224 There is a 25.5m separation between the dwelling and Building B07, including the intervening street. In my opinion, this separation will avoid visual dominance effects.
- 225 Building B07 has been carefully designed to complement the retained Allen Ward VC Hall and respect the pattern of development in the surrounding neighbourhood. The building will present a well-articulated and positive address to Donald Street.
- 226 I consider the adverse visual effects experienced from this property will be low. The removal of vegetation along this portion of the Site frontage will be mitigated to a certain extent by the new planting proposed along the street front. In my opinion, as this planting establishes the adverse visual effects will reduce to very low.

Proposed Plan

- 227 When considering the above submissions in relation to the Proposed Plan provisions, I note that Buildings B02-B06 (and the single level connecting buildings between them) sit comfortably within the building envelope enabled by the built form standards. A full three storeys could be accommodated closer to the boundary with the Scapa Terrace properties within the building envelope enabled by the Proposed Plan. Building B07 results in a small infringement to the height standard in the south western corner of the building, but sits within the building envelope enabled by the built form standards in relation to the Campbell Street frontage.
- 228 In my opinion, the building scale, form and design of Buildings B02-B07 is consistent with the outcomes sought by the Proposed Plan

provisions, and in particular the amenity values anticipated for the Medium Density Residential Zone.

RESPONSE TO OFFICER'S REPORT

- 229 I have reviewed the Officer's Report and the supporting evidence of Ms McArthur. Ms McArthur has provided a peer review of the LVA report. There are no significant outstanding issues identified in Ms McArthur's review. There are a number of minor differences in magnitude of visual effect assessed as being experienced by some viewing audiences. However, these are all at the low to very low end of the effects scale and do not materially change the assessment of the Proposed Village as suitable in this location. Ms McArthur concludes that "I am supportive of the retirement village proposal within the Site". She confirms that overall, she agrees with the findings and conclusions made in the LVA report.²⁹
- 230 In this section I will address a number of detailed matters, primarily around the proposed planting and amendments recommended by Ms McArthur.
- 231 At Paragraph 41, Ms McArthur identifies the issue raised by submitters about the suitability of species proposed along the southern boundary and makes recommendations about changes that could be required through a condition of consent. As I have set out above, an updated landscape plan has been prepared to address the concerns raised by submitters. I consider this suitably addresses the concerns raised and the extent of planting and range of species proposed will strike a suitable balance between creating a timely vegetated buffer between the Proposed Village buildings and neighbouring properties, and maintaining the amenity of those properties. I do not think it is necessary to specify that planning should be maintained at 4m in height.
- 232 At Paragraph 70, Ms McArthur refers to the 'Level 1 courtyard terraces between B02, B03, B04, B05 and B06'. She recommends that planting along the southern edge of this level should be a minimum height of 1.5 – 2m at the time of planting to ensure immediate privacy screening. For clarity, I note that it is only private terraces that open directly from the adjacent units that extend into this space. These are separated by roof space. In my opinion, the treatment depicted on the Indicative Landscape Plan that notes the planter boxes will be planted with species that will have a finished height (pot and plant) of 1.5m is suitable to provide containment to the elevated balconies/terraces.

²⁹ Council Officer's Report, Appendix 3 – Landscape and Visual Effects – Angela McArthur, paragraph 94.

- 233 At Paragraph 83, Ms McArthur recommends that all specimen trees at the street edges should be at least 2.5 – 3m when planted to provide immediate impact. The Details Schedule accompanying the Indicative Landscape Plan can be amended to reflect that recommendation.
- 234 The Officer's Report addresses wind effects from paragraph 309 to 336 and refers to the review of the Wind Assessment carried out by Dr. M. Donn (contained in Appendix 4). The review makes recommendations regarding the requirement for aerodynamic fencing and planting along the Campbell Street and Donald Street frontages. I note that considerations of wind effects need to be balanced against the streetscape amenity and safety effects that would result from locating solid walls along the street fronts. The Proposed Village has been designed to achieve a visually open and engaging frontage to adjacent streets (both in relation to adjacent apartment buildings and for the pocket park at the southern end of the Donald Street frontage). In my opinion, providing solid walls along these frontages would result in a reduced visual quality and amenity of adjacent spaces.

COMMENTS ON DRAFT CONDITIONS

- 235 I have reviewed the recommended draft conditions contained in Appendix 1 to the Officer's report. Proposed Condition 57 relates to the requirement for a final set of landscape and pavement plans to be submitted to the Council for certification. In my opinion, the plan referenced in this condition should be updated to refer to the updated Indicative landscape plan now proposed. As set out above, I consider this Plan shows a suitable interface with adjacent properties to the south. Therefore, I consider the second bullet point can be removed. I also recommend that reference to the minimum height of planting on the roof top terraces (fifth bullet point) is removed.

CONCLUSION

- 236 The Proposed Village has been designed in response to a careful analysis of the characteristics and values of the Site and its surrounding environment. I conclude that the proposal will reinforce the prominent and distinctive character of the Site. Retention of a number of the former Teachers' College buildings will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character. The proposal will result in an increased scale and intensity of use; however, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character. In my opinion, overall, the Proposed Village will appropriately reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site and result in positive effects on the landscape character of the neighbourhood.

- 237 Views to the Proposed Village will vary considerably from different locations, with the greatest visual change being apparent from the immediately surrounding environment. While the magnitude of visual change will be high from some locations, the resulting visual effects have been assessed as being positive from some locations. From a limited number of residential properties adjacent to the Site, adverse visual effects may be perceived as moderate to low. However, these will reduce to low to very low as the proposed tree planting around the perimeter of the Site establishes and matures.
- 238 Having considered points raised in submissions and after reviewing the Officer's Report and accompanying specialist advice, I maintain the opinion that the Proposed Village will be appropriate in its context.

Rebecca Anne Skidmore
29 August 2022

APPENDIX 1

