

ONE TASMAN PUKEAHU PARK PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT



APPLICATION FOR RESOURCE CONSENT

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

Prepared for One Tasman Development Limited Partnership

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1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The proposal is for a new comprehensive residential development comprising 221 residential units at 1 to 23 Tasman Street, Central Wellington. The proposal is comprised of four main building components including two multi-storey apartment buildings and three clusters of terrace houses, which together will provide a range of unit types along with carparking, communal amenity spaces, landscape features and infrastructure.

This report provides an assessment of the urban design outcomes of the proposal against the relevant District Plan provisions and forms part of the AEE accompanying the Resource Consent Application. The assessment is based on a report (30 September 2021) which I prepared for a similar scheme presented in an earlier resource consent application (original application). The original application, which was very similar to the current proposal, was for the construction of:

- Northern Apartments: a 10-storey base-isolated building at the northern end of the site with 104 apartments;
- Southern Apartments: a 9-storey base-isolated building at the southern end of the site with 92 apartments;
- Terrace Houses: 3-storey terrace houses, five fronting Old Buckle Street and four on the corner of Old Buckle Street and Tasman Street; and
- Courtyard Terraces: eight 2-storey terrace houses situated above the central carpark.

The Applicant subsequently modified the original proposal to reduce the height of the Northern and Southern Apartments to 8 and 5-storeys respectively, among other minor amendments. Resource consent for the amended proposal was granted by Council (15 November 2022) and is referred to in this report as the 'consented proposal'. I did not prepare any assessment in relation to the consented proposal. I understand that the consented proposal, although not built, forms part of the existing context/environment for the purpose of the current application.

The current proposal (the 2023 proposal) is largely the same as the original proposal assessed in the (2021) urban design report except for the following amendments: small adjustments to the building footprints of Buildings A and B and the carparking structure at ground level (all approved under the consented proposal), modification to the roof top of Building A at its south/east end, slight modifications to the façade detail on the east façade of Building A, and changes to the carparking arrangements and associated changes to the original internal courtyard area.

My assessment of the current proposal is that the overall urban design outcome of that proposal can be supported on urban design grounds when considered against the environment including the consented 8 and 5-storey development. For completeness, and consistent with my 2021 report, my assessment is that the urban design outcome of the current proposal when considered against the existing physical characteristics of the site can also be supported on urban design grounds.

In addition to the assessment of the urban design outcomes of the proposed development, this report also includes an evaluation of the visual impact of the proposal on the surrounding townscape.

The assessment, which is largely based on my September 2021 report for the original scheme, is based on site visits, discussions with the project team, attendance at meetings and a review of the revised architectural plans and associated up-dated Architectural Design Statement, and other relevant up-dated technical reports. I have read the Council's urban design assessment of the original application and the subsequent addendum assessment for the consented proposal.

2 SITE & CONTEXT

The site - located at the southern end of Wellington's Central Area, the development site sits at the interface between Te Aro and Mt Cook and adjacent to Pukeahu National War Memorial Park to the north

and the New Zealand National War Memorial complex to the west, including the Carillon and the former National Museum.

The site occupies the north-west corner of the city block defined by Old Buckle Street, Tasman Street, Rugby Street and Sussex Street, with the Basin Reserve located immediately to the east of Sussex Street. Situated on the eastern side of Pukeahu Ridge, the site slopes gently down to the east towards the Basin Reserve.

The site sits in an area providing a transition from Te Aro to Mt Cook. This is reflected in the orientation of Tasman Street which changes its alignment to the south of Old Buckle Street. Notwithstanding this, the key buildings around the site are aligned with the Te Aro grid, including the Carillon, the former National Museum, and the Basin Reserve buildings (except for the RA Vance stand), as well as the adjacent buildings to the east and south.

The site has a trapezoid shape with two street/public frontages running along Old Buckle Street to the north and Tasman Street to the west, respectively. Comprising a gently sloping landscape, Old Buckle Street accommodates a generous shared pedestrian/cycle lane and a planted area in the foreground of the Arras Tunnel. The edge of this frontage is currently defined by a tall masonry wall and some vegetation, including an existing large Pohutukawa that will be retained by the development.

The site's second public frontage along Tasman Street is currently defined by a row of terrace houses with individual garages and entrances. The west side of Tasman Street is defined by a heritage brick wall and the established Pohutukawa-clad Pukeahu Ridge landscape above. The former Mount Cook Police Station sits at the north/west corner of the Tasman Street/Old Buckle Street junction. The National War Memorial and Carillon and former National Museum are further to the west.

The site is well connected to the immediate street network, with the yet to be fully defined Wellington Mass Rapid Transport Corridor awaiting to be most likely developed near the site.

Currently the site is occupied by the 'Tasman Gardens' residential complex comprising a row of terrace houses fronting onto Tasman Street and a six-storey apartment building to the east. Due to seismic issues, the existing complex will be demolished as part of the site's redevelopment. While the 'existing to be demolished' residential complex represents the built context currently on the ground, the consented development (2022) defines the site's 'existing' context in resource management terms (RM context). Relative to the RM context, the assessment should technically focus on the impact of the additional height/mass above that of the consented scheme and associated minor amendments. However, for completeness, the assessment evaluates the proposal in its entirety.

Context - the site sits in an area with a diverse building form and land use characteristics. The existing sites immediately to the east and south accommodate buildings of varying scale and character including both residential and non-residential buildings. The buildings to the east around Sussex Street provide residential and travellers accommodation. Their horizontal bulk (3-4 storey high) appearing close to the street boundary creates an almost continuous built edge to the vehicle oriented SH1 frontage. Further to the east are the Basin Reserve and associated buildings.

The buildings to the south, between Rugby and Sussex Streets sit in a less intense street environment with a finer grain and scale of development. Although part of the Central Area, these sites, most of which are occupied by 1-2 storey older dwellings, have not been redeveloped yet, except for the recent 4-storey residential apartments on the corner of Tasman and Rugby Streets.

To the west of the site lies the National War Memorial and associated heritage-listed buildings. The Tasman Street corridor separates the site from the National War Memorial with the tree clad Pukeahu Ridge landscape accentuating the sense of spatial separation. The heritage-listed former Mount Cook Police Station is the closest building neighbour to the west of the site.

Old Buckle Street, the Arras Tunnel structure and the adjacent area of the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park form the immediate setting to the north extended by the buildings at the south/east end of Te Aro. The topography of the site and the openness of the Park enhance the prominence of the Carillon and the former National Museum behind, particularly in views from the north and west.

A comprehensive analytical description of the site's broad urban and historical context is provided in the Architectural Design Statement and is not repeated here.

Summary of key contextual characteristics - the main contextual characteristics, elements, features, and patterns that need to be considered/acknowledged by any development on the site are highlighted below.

- The site's transitional location and its relationship to the Te Aro grid - the site sits at the interface between the Te Aro grid and Mt Cook grid. The transitional location of the site is reflected in the orientation of streets noting that despite the slightly different alignment of Tasman Street (defining the west edge of the site), the predominant alignment of the key buildings and spaces around the site is on the Te Aro grid (National War Memorial, former National Museum, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park and Basin Reserve).
- Historical patterns of development including:
 - the historical pattern of high-density mainly residential buildings on the site extending from and aligned with the Te Aro grid; and
 - the existing old brick buildings, including the former Mount Cook Police Station (corner of Old Buckle and Tasman Streets) and the former Army Headquarters (corner of Karo Drive and Taranaki Street) providing strong 'bookend' corners to the northern frontage of Old Buckle Street.
- The complex and diverse context of the site comprising buildings of varied form, scale and character and a range of land use patterns and public spaces.
- Townscape setting characteristics:
 - the site's rich townscape setting comprising a collection of publicly significant heritage building/elements and open spaces (National War Memorial grounds/Carillon and the former Dominion Museum, the former Mount Cook Police Station, the Home of Compassion Creche and Pukeahu National War Memorial Park; ¹
 - the visual prominence of the Carillon and the National Museum enhancing the Pukeahu Ridge and their townscape/landmark significance;
 - the axial arrangement of the 'in the round' structures of the National War Memorial and the former National Museum and their orientation to the north overlooking Te Aro and the Harbour; and
 - the Pohutukawa trees around the site, and particularly the trees around the National War Memorial, which are distinctive features of this historical and culturally significant setting.
- Visibility - the visibility of the site from a range of directions and distances acknowledging that any new tall building/s on the site will potentially affect existing views of the Carillon and former National Museum.
- The consented scheme which technically sets the 'existing context' in resource management terms.

3 PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a new comprehensive residential development comprising 221 units in a range of unit types along with the associated amenity and landscape features and infrastructure.

The proposal is comprised of five main building components² including two multi-storey apartment buildings (labelled 'Northern Apartments' (Building A) and 'Southern Apartments' (Building E) and three clusters of terrace houses referred to as 'Pukeahu Terrace Houses' (Building B), Buckle Street Terrace

¹ The heritage value of the listed heritage buildings is discussed in detail in the Assessment of Effects on Heritage/Appendix 9 to the AEE.

² Each component is described in detail in the Architectural Design Statement.

Houses (Building C) and 'Courtyard Terraces' (Building D). Refer Fig 1: Site Plan/Urban Structure Diagram. The specific characteristics of each component are summarised below:

Northern Apartments / Building A - a 10 storey (ground + 9) base-isolated building situated around the north-west corner of the site accommodating approximately 106 one-to-three-bedroom apartments with north, east and west outlook. The building is accessed from both Old Buckle Street and Tasman Street and includes ground level landscaped terraces, shared amenity spaces and service infrastructure and a landscaped roof terrace.

The Pukeahu Terrace Houses / Building B - four 3-storey (ground +2) terrace type houses at the north-west corner of the site defining the Old Buckle Street/Tasman Street corner. Three of the houses are accessed from Old Buckle Street and one (the corner unit) has access via a stair from Tasman Street. The ground level of the corner unit will accommodate a ground floor café wrapping around and opening to both Tasman and Old Buckle Streets. Based on a similar layout, the units provide two bedrooms at ground level, living + terrace above with a main bedroom at the top level, except for the corner unit which has only two bedrooms.

Buckle Street Terrace Houses / Building C - five 3-storey (ground +2) terrace houses located at the Old Buckle Street boundary to the east of Building A and accessed from the footpath. The units have similar internal layout including studio/bed at ground level, living +terrace on level 2 and main bedrooms on top. The western-most unit has a different footprint and is setback back from the street edge to allow for the retention of the existing large Pohutukawa tree.

Courtyard Terraces / Building D - eight 2-storey two-bedroom studios with north facing living spaces and associated terraces situated on top of the proposed central carpark. Building D is located around the centre of the site close to the eastern boundary. The units are accessed via steps from the proposed central laneway.

Southern Apartments/Building E - this building is similar to the Building A / Northern Apartments in terms of structural resilience, apartment typology and amenity but has a different orientation and expression. It is a 9-storey (ground+8) base-isolated building accommodating approximately 98 one to three bedroom apartments with predominantly north, west and east aspect. The building address and access is from Tasman Street.

Carparking structure - the proposal offers 138 car parks in total provided within a two-level basement carparking area and at grade. The basement carparks will be accessed along a ramp to the south of Building E. The 'at-grade' car parks and service zone will be accessed directly from Tasman Street along a shared lane situated between Buildings A and E. Bike parks will be provided across the site with dedicated storage areas.

The site between and around the proposed buildings will be comprehensively landscaped. The shared lane to the 'at grade' carpark will be extended to the north and developed as a central laneway connecting Tasman and Old Buckle Streets.



Fig 1: Site Plan / Urban Structure Diagram

4 CENTRAL AREA URBAN DESIGN GUIDE

4.1 RELEVANT DESIGN GUIDES / ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The **Central Area Urban Design Guide** (“Design Guide” or CAUDG) is the relevant District Plan provision for the urban design assessment of the proposal. The intent of the Design Guide is *“to achieve high quality buildings, places and spaces in the Central Area of the City”* by ensuring buildings, places and spaces:

- *are coherently designed;*
- *make a considered response to context;*
- *address heritage values;*
- *establish positive visual effects;*
- *provide good quality living and working environments;*
- *integrate environmental sustainability principles; and*
- *provide conditions of safety and accessibility.*

The Design Guide is structured around six urban design matters with specific objectives and guidelines provided for each matter. The Design Guide acknowledges that good design is both site and programme specific, meaning that the main emphasis is on objectives and guidelines that are most relevant to the context and issues of the specific proposal. It further acknowledges that due to the unique conditions of each location, some objectives are more important than others.

Te Aro Corridor - the Design Guide includes a number of Appendices covering specific areas within the city that require additional site-specific guidance. The development site is not included in any of the Appendices. However, it sits immediately adjacent to the Te Aro Corridor - the area along the Bypass (aka Karo Drive) covered in Appendix 2. The intent of Appendix 2 is: *“to integrate the Bypass into the urban fabric of southern Te Aro as an active street”*.

Appendix 2 covers several ‘sub-areas’ along the Bypass. The National War Memorial Area (pages 4/5 Appendix 2) is identified as the ‘sub-area’ adjacent to the development site. Note that Appendix 2 was introduced into the District Plan prior to the construction of the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park and the objectives and guidelines relating to the National War Memorial area are focused on development to the north and west of the National War Memorial and Carillon (now the established Pukeahu National War Memorial Park). Although the development site sits outside the boundary of Appendix 2, the assessment incorporates comments against the provisions of that Appendix where relevant.

4.2 ASSESSMENT OF URBAN DESIGN OUTCOMES

DESIGN COHERENCE: *“A new building or public space should have its own inherent design integrity and coherence”*.

Objective 01.1 aims: *“to ensure each design solution is coherently designed, demonstrates design integrity, and integrates all relevant design criteria in the best possible way”*.

The relevant **guideline** (G01.1) ‘Internal consistency and integration’) encourages designers to: *“demonstrate in the design and composition of any building an overall coherence that integrates the various design guide requirements”*.

Assessment

Design coherence relies on the successful integration of the outcomes sought under the five design guide matters. In this sense, it is an overarching consideration concerning the proposal as a whole which entails: (a) the overall built form and how it relates to the site and setting (with reference to massing,

building alignments, building height and scale and building and design proportions); (b) façade composition, treatment of street edges and the detailed façade design to create attractive and visually interesting buildings; and (c) any landscape design work.

Design coherence calls for an integrated design approach where the planning, formal composition and visual quality of buildings are considered as a whole, as well as separately as part of an integrated design concept. This has been achieved by the proposal as explained below, noting that, in broad terms, an assessment of ‘design coherence’ provides a summary overview of the proposal against the Design Guide as a whole.

The proposal has been conceived as a comprehensive development relative to its context while addressing the Applicant’s requirements for a high-quality residential space within environmentally sustainable buildings that are seismically resilient. The thorough contextual analysis³ undertaken by the Architects has informed the design concept to the massing, compositional form and design of the individual buildings and spaces. The proposal has evolved through a process of design iterations testing alternative massing scenarios⁴ in search of a balanced response to the site’s unusual setting, on the one hand; and the broader issues of façade expression, seismic resilience, housing typologies, residential amenity and economics on the other.

The underling design concept has been generated in response to the site’s rich townscape setting while optimising development potential and residential amenity through buildings and spaces that relate well to each other and enhance the quality of the development as a whole. This has been accomplished through integrating the following approaches and design attributes:

- The site planning including the distribution of buildings and spaces creates a well-integrated layout which logically relates them together and to the setting in several ways. Setting up the buildings on the Te Aro grid alignment reinforces the existing urban pattern and is also consistent with the alignment of the two most prominent nearby buildings (the Carillon and the former National Museum). At an urban scale this links the development to its setting and consequently contributes a sense of coherence. Aligning all buildings to the Te Aro grid, along with the spatial separation between the two taller buildings, creates a ‘visual channel’ that enables views to the Carillon from the east, thereby reinforcing the relationship of the site’s setting.
- The development comprises several buildings of varied height and form. The arrangement and design of the individual building forms, while responding to the varied street context around the site, help to reduce the visual impact of the taller buildings. Situating the lower Buildings B & C along the street edges, provide transitional volumes moderating the impact of the taller Building A in views from the north, north/east and north/west. Articulating the tallest Building A into two slender volumes, distinguished by variation in height and frontage setback, moderates its bulk and reduces impact on existing visual connections to the Carillon.
- The buildings acknowledge the contextual differences around the site, evident in the placement, form, height and design of Buildings B & C and the treatment of spaces along the street frontages. The ground level corner café, the street entrances and upper-level balconies of Buildings A, B & C will attribute a sense of human scale along the public edges of the site. This will help to both activate and improve the safety of the streets and adjacent park. The proposed garden extending along the Tasman Street boundary and associated landscape work will add further to that effect.
- At a more detailed level, the height and materiality of Building B responds to the lower height/materiality of the nearby former Mt Cook Police Station while reinforcing the definition of the street corner. Incorporating brick elements along both street frontages will help relate the proposal to the Mt Cook Police Station and to the landscape on the west side of Tasman Street.
- Each building has an individual architectural identity and yet all buildings appear as components of a well-integrated built/spatial layout. The design quality of all building facades as shown in the architectural drawings and renders appear consistently high and tailored to their context and/or degree of visual prominence. Such design attributes reinforce the sense of coherence.

³ (Architectural Design Statement pages 4-10).

⁴ Section 4 of the Architectural Design Statement (pages 42-68) documents the process of ‘options’ exploration.

- The site layout is legible with the spaces between and around the buildings and the main entrances to be developed with planting and hard landscape work. The landscape work, based on a well-articulated landscape design concept,⁵ has been developed as an integral part of the proposal. The landscape response provides a unifying theme across the site that enhances the coherence of the design outcome.

Summary - informed by a thorough context analysis, the well-considered overall design concept will help to integrate the various components of the development together and relate the proposal to its setting.

The massing of the built form, the height and compositional form of the taller buildings and the use of lower buildings to step down the height at the street edges, along with the varied design responses to the character of the adjacent streets and the legible spatial layout of the proposal, will contribute to the coherence of the overall design outcome (as sought by G1.1).

The design responses of the proposal in relation to the remaining Design Guide matters are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

4.2.2 RELATIONSHIP TO CONTEXT: *“Relating to context means understanding and responding in a considered way to conditions beyond the site. New developments should not occur in isolation”.*

Objective 0.2.1 aims: *“to recognise the unique qualities and sense of place of every urban setting and respond to and enhance these with new development”.*

Objective 0.2.2 aims: *“to maintain or enhance the quality of the settings of individual heritage buildings, including those in heritage areas”.*

The supporting **guidelines** are grouped under the following headings: *Consistency or contrast (G2.1); Positive precedents (G2.2); Achieving consistency (G2.3); and Developing an authentic sense of place (G2.4).*

The Design Guide also includes specific objectives for new development around the National Memorial War Area included in Appendix 2 to the CAUDG). Although **Appendix 2** does not directly apply to the development site, the general intent and relevant objectives for the National War Memorial Area are relevant to consider:

(TA) 01.1 *To retain the landmark significance of the Carillon and National War Memorial and respect its symbolic status, and*

(TA) 01.2 *To maintain an unobstructed ridge top setting for the National War Memorial and good visual connections to the city.*

Assessment

The proposal occurs in an area with a rich and diverse context and land use patterns comprising buildings of various scales, form, and character, including heritage buildings and spaces of public and cultural significance (refer Section 2 of the report).

Relating the height of the two taller buildings to the contextual setting, and particularly to the Carillon and the former National Museum, is one of the main issues under the ‘relationship to context’ guidelines (as it is under the ‘siting, height, bulk and form’ guidelines). Ensuring appropriate height/spatial transition between the taller buildings and adjacent streets and spaces and reducing the impact on views to the Carillon and National War Memorial are primary considerations. While it is acknowledged that Buildings A and E are taller than what is anticipated for the site, the composition of form and space across the site and the articulation of the tall buildings are the primary aspects of the proposal that help moderate the impact of height and ultimately help to relate the buildings to their setting. The issue is discussed below as part of the broader contextual relationships relevant to the proposal, some of which were already highlighted under ‘design coherence’.

⁵ Refer to Landscape Plan and Design Statement (Appendix 2) to the AEE.

Overall 'massing' responses

The proposed massing has responded to the important patterns and characteristics of the diverse context in several important ways:

- Comprising buildings of varied size the proposal responds to the existing context characterised by a mixture of buildings with both small and very large footprints. Existing buildings around the development site are aligned with the Aro grid (except for the RA Vance stand). Aligning the collective built form of the development with the Te Aro grid reinforces predominant urban patterns, strengthens the relationship to nearby buildings and aids the integration of the development to its setting.
- The arrangement of buildings across the site respects the axial composition of the National War Memorial and enables visual connections across the site towards the Carillon and former National Museum from the east through the spatial gap between the two taller Buildings A and E.



Fig 2: Diagram showing the 'spatial gap' between Buildings A & E enabling a view of the Carillon from the east

- Proving a scale/height transition between the taller apartment buildings and the adjacent streets/spaces by stepping the height of buildings around the street frontages and/or introducing building setbacks with landscaped areas helps to moderate the impact of the taller buildings. It also acknowledges the contextual differences around the site, reinforces historic built edge patterns and helps the scale relationship to the nearby former Mt Cook Police Station. The garden area with trees along Tasman Street provides another layer of spatial transition between Building A and Tasman Street, while relating to the Pukeahu Rode landscape on the western side of the street.



Fig 3: Elevated view looking south/west showing relationship of Building B to the former Mount Cook Police Station and the Carillon

- The split form of Building A with its stepped roof top reduces the perception of bulk/height and moderates the impact on existing visual connections to the Carillon and the former National Museum from vantage points to the north and north/east.
- The two taller buildings sit below the top of the former National Museum, and their height is lower than that of the Carillon. The proposed massing will help to maintain visual connections to the Carillon and former National Museum, albeit in a different and less open setting that will reduce their prominence from some vantage points to the east (refer Townscape Views, Appendix 8 to the AEE).



Fig 4: Elevated view looking south showing the collective building form in relation to the Carillon and former National Museum

Response to the Context (Individual Buildings)

Building A

The north-south alignment of Building A and its placement around the north/west corner of the site recognises the natural gravitation of the site to the city and reinforces its relationship to the city grid. It also helps to link the development to the predominant alignment/orientation of surrounding buildings and spaces (National War Memorial and Carillon, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, the Basin Reserve).

The north-south alignment of Building A creates a setback from the Tasman Street edge that allows for a landscaped garden area accommodating several large trees. This provides a soft transition along the street edge aiding the integration of the building to the street and to the planted bank of Pukeahu Ridge to the west. This is further enhanced by the brick garden wall which makes a clear reference to the historic brick wall on the opposite/west side of the street.

Building A's articulated form in two volumes differentiated by height, positions the lower volume on the western side and sets it back from the Tasman/Old Buckle Street corner. This effectively articulates its bulk aiding its spatial transition to Tasman Street and the wider setting to the west, while reducing the impact on views to the Carillon from the north and north/east. It also creates more graceful building proportions that will enhance the visual quality of Building A.

The top level of the taller/eastern volume of Building A is a bay shorter at its southern end. Reducing the building bulk at its southern end will moderate the impact of height and bulk, but, more importantly, it will create a stepped roof line in views from the east. This will enhance the sense of separation from the adjacent Building E and assist in breaking up the collective bulk of the two taller buildings from vantage points to the east.



Fig 5: View to Building A from Tory Street looking south

Buildings B and C

Placing the 3-storey 'brick-clad' Building B at the north-western end of the site responds positively to the height and materiality of its closest building neighbour - the former Mount Cook Police Station. Wrapping the volume of Building B around Tasman Street corner and aligning its western side with Tasman Street will create a strong built edge along both street frontages, while referencing historic patterns of street edge definition and street corner enhancement. The expressive articulation of Building B into 4 sub-volumes corresponding to the number of dwellings, provides an enhanced vertical façade pattern that reduces its apparent length and helps its relation to the vertical proportions of Building A's northern side.



Fig 6: Building B, view from corner of Old Buckle Street and Tasman Street

Situated at the north-east end of the site, Building C extends the built edge of the development to the east. Like Building B, Building C is also oriented to the north and aligned with the city grid enhancing the continuity of street edge definition along Old Buckle Street. The articulation of its bulk reflects the

individual scale of the dwellings while the setback of the western-most unit is a massing gesture to retain the existing Pohutukawa tree. This, along the frontage setback of Building A eases the relationship of Building A to the street and adjacent park.

Building D

Located along the eastern side of the site Building D will provide a height/scale transition between Building A and the neighbouring buildings to the east. Integrating Building D to the carparking structure will help to downplay the impact of 'at grade' carparking while defining the proposed central laneway. Building D is the least prominent component of the development, and its impact will be limited primarily to views from within the development.

Building E

Located at the southern end of the site, Building E is set on an east-west alignment siting at 90 degrees to Building A. Orienting the two taller buildings (A & E) perpendicular to each other will help to reduce the collective building mass, particularly in views from the east. The articulation of the building's footprint in plan comprising two slightly off-set volumes, will further assist in reducing the impact of bulk and help to relate it to Tasman Street, in views from the north.

Landscape treatment

The relationship of the development to its street context and setting has been assisted by the proposed landscape treatment. This includes planting and hard landscape work that is to occur in the spaces between and around the buildings and their main entrances. Developed as part of the overall design concept, the landscape treatment will complement the compositional form of the individual buildings and strengthen their integration to the site and adjacent spaces (for detail refer to Landscape Plan and Design Statement).

Te Aro Corridor Design Guide (Appendix 2 to the CAUDG)

The Te Aro Corridor Design Guide (Objectives TA1.1 and TA1.2) call for retaining the visual prominence and landmark significance of the Carillon and National War Memorial and respecting their symbolic status. The development of the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park and associated Arras Tunnel, which have been in use since 2015, have greatly enhanced the outcome sought by the objectives.

The main focus of the relevant guideline (TA)G1.1 is on views from the north and west and targets new development to the north and west of the National War Memorial. (TA)G1.1 requires that a significant contrast in height between the National War Memorial and any development to the north and west of this building is maintained within a specified area positioned directly opposite and immediately to the north of the National War Memorial.

Sitting to the east of the National War Memorial, the development site falls outside the area referred to in Appendix 2 of the Design Guide. The townscape views (Appendix 8 to the AEE) show that the proposal will not affect the prominence of or obscure views to the National War Memorial and the Carillon from the north and west.

Summary - the proposed development will relate well to its setting as it acknowledges existing predominant built form and spatial patterns as suggested by G2.1. Contextual relationships to the existing setting will be formed through the distribution of buildings and spaces across the site, the compositional form of the individual buildings and the choice of materials and detailing with reference to G2.3. The proposal will appear as an overall development with a coherent form comprising buildings of consistently high architectural quality arranged to reduce the impact on their setting, recognise historic patterns and maintain visual connections to the National War Memorial and the Carillon. Such design attributes help to enhance the local sense of place - an outcome sought by G2.3.

4.2.3 SITING, HEIGHT, BULK AND FORM: “The siting of buildings should allow for intended activities while also acknowledging neighbouring buildings, reinforcing valued patterns of public space, and creating positive open spaces”.

Objective 03.1: To complement existing patterns of alignment and achieve a positive scale relationship with adjoining buildings and public spaces.

Objective 03.2: To respect the setting of heritage items and identified heritage areas.

Objective 03.3: To create coherent patterns of buildings that contribute to the amenity of neighbouring public spaces.

Objective 03.4: To ensure that reasonable levels of ventilation, daylight and outlook are maintained in a building’s habitable spaces should development on adjacent sites be built to the maximum standard.

Objective 03.5: To enhance the informal pedestrian network within the Central Area, by encouraging the retention and enhancement of existing pedestrian thoroughfares and promoting the creation of new thoroughfares where they would enhance walkability and permeability for pedestrians.

The supporting **guidelines** are grouped under the following headings: Street edge definition and building alignment (G3.1 - G3.4); Height and scale relationship (G3.5 - G3.7); Building bulk (G3.8); Natural light, outlook and ventilation (G3.9); Positive open space (G3.10); Wind effects on public space (G3.11); and Pedestrian block permeability (G3.12).

Assessment

Many of the objectives/guidelines under ‘Siting, Height, Bulk and Form’ overlap with those under ‘Design Coherence’ and ‘Relationship to Context’. To avoid repetition, issues already covered under those heading are re-iterated or cross-referenced, where appropriate.

Street edge definition and building alignment

All buildings on the site are aligned with the historic city grid and reference the alignment of buildings and spaces in their setting, including buildings of heritage and cultural significance.

The edge of Old Buckle Street is well defined by the lower volumes of Buildings B and C and the setback northern frontage of Building A. Extending Building B around onto Tasman Street defines the street corner and echoes the Tasman Street alignment of the nearby former Mount Cook Police Station.

The setback of the western-most unit of Building C from the street edge allows the retention of the existing large Pohutukawa tree and works well with the setback of Building A in creating an intermediate space around the new street entrance to the development from Old Buckle Street.



Fig 7: Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner: looking south/east Fig 8: Looking east down Old Buckle Street

The alignment of Building A to the city grid creates a transitional open space along the Tasman Street boundary. Developed as a garden, it will be defined by a low garden brick wall with intermittent tree planting. Such an approach, while defining the street edge, will create a soft transition between the development, the adjacent street and the Pukeahu Ridge landscape to the west. The space between Buildings A and E, accommodating the shared entrance lane to the development from Tasman Street, is

marked by a large tree. This extends the street edge tree planting to the south and reinforces the sense of spatial definition. Building E sits close to the street edge with a small planted area defining the street boundary at the northern end of the building. These responses collectively will deliver the outcomes sought by (G3.1-G3.3).

The Design Guide reinforces the importance of maintaining consistent height along street edges (G3.4). The proposed building height varies across the site and along the street frontages. In the context of a site with a transitional location in an area of the city awaiting redevelopment, the height differences are appropriately managed. This has been achieved through the well-considered arrangement of buildings across the entire site with sufficient spacing between them, and the use of frontage setbacks and planted areas along the street edge incorporating large trees.

Height and scale relationship & building bulk - the outcomes sought by these guidelines is establishing a positive height and scale relationship between new development and the existing setting and mitigating the potential impact of bulk.

Buildings B, C and D are low-rise and remain below the permitted height limit for the site (which is 18.6m). Buildings A and E, at 10 and 9-storeys respectively, rise above the height limit. The height of the tall buildings above ground (to roof level) is 36m with an additional 1.7m lift over-run for Building A and 33m with an additional 0.7m lift over-run for Building E. The height under the Proposed District Plan is 25.8m.

In light of the relevant guidelines, the main 'height/scale/bulk' issues to be addressed by the proposal include:

- (a) height and scale relationships and impact of bulk on the immediate and wider setting, noting the visibility of the proposal from vantage points around the site and its proximity to significant heritage buildings and public spaces; (G3.5-G3.7 and G3.8);
- (b) massing and building bulk in relation to internal amenity with reference to natural light, outlook and ventilation, noting the importance of these matters in the context of a residential development (G3.9); and
- (c) massing and building bulk in relation to providing positive open space and encouraging pedestrian block permeability (G3.10 and G3.12).

Height relationships and impact of bulk on the immediate and wider setting (G3.5-G3.8)

The 'height and scale relationship' and 'bulk' guidelines (G3.5 - G3.7 and G3.8) are interrelated. Collectively they seek to avoid abrupt height differences between adjacent buildings and ensure the height/bulk of new development does not dominate adjacent public spaces and/or neighbouring buildings.

The proposal has responded well to these guidelines through its integrated approach to massing and building design and by employing many of the design techniques recommended in the Design Guide. The specific responses are highlighted below, noting that many of them also have helped address guidelines under previous headings.

Use of setbacks and large-scale articulation of the building form/Buildings A and E - the setback of Building A from both street frontages and its articulated form, comprising volumes of varied height, reduces the apparent building height and bulk. The lower building volume on the western side creates a stepped roof form that assists the height transition to Tasman Street to the wider setting to the west. This is evident in close-up and medium-range views from the north, north/east and north/west. The modelling of the building top at the southern end of Building A creates a varied silhouette line and is effective in reducing the impact of bulk in longer views from the east. The compositional form of Building E, which like Building A, is also split in two off-set volumes, makes it appear slenderer, moderating the length of its street frontage in views from the street and reducing the impact of bulk in long-distance views from the east.

Use of foreground /transitional volumes - locating the lower Buildings B and C along the Old Buckle Street frontage and around the Tasman Street corner helps to moderate the height of Building A and aid its transition to the adjacent streets, the park and to the landscaped area around the National War Memorial. It

is noted that most of the Old Buckle Street frontage will be defined by low building volumes (Buildings B & C).



Fig 9: View from Tory Street showing the juxtaposition of Buildings A and B and the garden area along Tasman Street and Building E to the south

Use of intermediate spaces along the street edge and landscape work - the garden area along Tasman Street and its landscape treatment, with reference to the large trees and brick garden wall will: (a) help the integration of Building A to the street by landscape means; and (b) provide intermediate space with three-dimensional features along the street edge adding a sense of human scale through texture and detail.

Use of spatial separation and architectural features/ Building E - integrating the bulk of Building E to the street is also assisted by the canopy over the entire building frontage and extending to the southern boundary of the site and over the vehicle ramp to the basement carpark. The footprint of Building E presents its narrow side to the street, which, along with the separation distance from Building A and the proposed 'street edge' trees, will help to moderate the impact of bulk. The large setback of Building E from the southern boundary and the extent of the verandah will provide a sense of separation and transition to the existing buildings to the south, noting that the area to the south is likely to be redeveloped in the future.

G3.6 encourages generous ground-to-first floor level height ground levels to help accommodate a range of different future ground level uses including food and beverage related retail. The ground levels of the proposed buildings are not greater in height than the residential floors above. This is mainly due to the residential use of the development which is unlikely to change in the future. The proposal provides a corner café but does not envisage any other ground level non-residential/retail uses.

Impact of height/bulk on the Carillon and National War Memorial

Many of above responses have helped the relationship of the proposal to the Carillon and National War Memorial by moderating the impact on existing visual connections and reducing the impact of bulk. This has been assisted by the careful distribution of mass across the site ensuring sufficient spaces between adjacent buildings and by the form and modelling of the tall buildings.

The key responses and outcomes are briefly summarised below and discussed in more detail in the Townscape Assessment (Section 5 of the report).

The arrangement of the two taller buildings (Buildings A and E) creates a spatial gap between them aligned on the Carillon's east-west axis. This enables 'framed' views of the Carillon from the east. The impact of the taller buildings in such views is moderated by the collective 'broken'/varied silhouette line of the Buildings A and E and their varied façade treatment, and the spacing between them.

By opening up the north-west corner of the site, the articulated form of Building A will moderate the impact of bulk on views to the National War Memorial and Carillon from the north/north-east and west.



Fig 29. North Context Elevation Diagram



Fig 30. East Context Elevation Diagram

Fig 10: showing the height relationship between the proposal, the Carillon, and former National Museum

The juxtaposition of the lower volumes of Buildings B and C and the articulated bulk of the Building A contribute to a dynamic built form that moderates the impact of height/bulk on views to the National War Memorial and Carillon from the north and from within the park.

The proposal is separated from the National War Memorial, the Carillon and the former National Museum through the Tasman Street spatial corridor with the Pukeahu Ridge landscape to the west enhancing the sense of separation. Although Buildings A and E sit below the top of the former National Museum, and their height is lower than that of the Carillon (refer Fig 10), the proposal will reduce the visibility of those contextual elements in some views from vantage points to the east. Notwithstanding that, the reading of these elements will be retained as part of the overall visual experience of the proposal comprising a sequence of dynamic views obtained when moving towards and/or around the site.

The proposal will not affect any of the District Plan Viewshafts. The two viewshaft corridors which are in close proximity to the site (Vs20 and Vs21) do not traverse the site and will remain unobstructed by the proposal. The site sits to the east of the frame of Vs 20. The height/bulk of Building B, which complements the scale/form of the former Mount Cook Police Station, will provide an appropriate setting to the east of that viewshaft corridor.

Bulk and internal amenity (natural light, outlook and ventilation) (G3.9)

This guideline seeks acceptable levels of natural light, outlook and ventilation for residential and other habitable spaces by providing on-site setbacks from side and/or rear boundaries (or atria and light wells) and without needing to rely on the openness of adjacent sites.

In the context of the proposed development comprising several individual buildings, the outcomes sought are heavily influenced by the overall massing across the site, including building footprint size, orientation and internal building layout. These aspects of the design have been addressed in a manner to deliver a high level of on-site amenity for future residents as outlined below:

- The footprint size and apartment configuration of Buildings A and E are well suited to deliver high quality residential space and ensure direct access to natural light to internal spaces.
- The majority of apartments are north, east or west facing. The orientation of the living areas for most units (to the north, east and west) demonstrates that sunlight access, although not referred to in the Design Guide or in the District Plan’s Central Area provisions, has been considered as part of the overall site planning.
- The proposed separation distance between the individual buildings comprising the development will ensure their outlook is not compromised. Many of the new units will enjoy great views across the city.

- All terrace houses and most of the apartments will be provided with some form of private open space - landscape terrace at ground level or a small balcony. Building A provides a roof top terrace for the top-level apartments. Providing private open space is not referred to in the Design Guide or required under the District Plan for Central Area residential developments.
- The residential amenity of the individual units will be further enhanced by the proposed shared amenity spaces/facilities (residential lounge, community room and cardio gym at the ground level of Building A, a roof top BBQ terrace above waste room/Building D, carparking and bike parking). In addition, the proposal incorporates a landscaped through-site pedestrian laneway linking Tasman Street and Old Buckle Street. The apartment corridors are designed to be open at either end contributing to the quality and internal amenity of the shared space around the apartment entrances.

Positive open space & Pedestrian block permeability (G3.10 and G3.12)

The 'positive open space' guideline (G3.10) encourages any publicly accessible space on site to be appropriately located in a way that complements and/or positively defines it. However, the guideline does not require the provision of publicly accessible open space but rather promotes the qualities it has to deliver should it be included in the development.

The 'pedestrian block permeability' guidelines (G3.12) seek to maintain and enhance existing pedestrian thoroughfares or alternatively consider creating new ones as part of the site redevelopment where a thoroughfare would enhance the walkability and permeability for pedestrians.

The proposal does not provide any publicly accessible open space although it does incorporate a central laneway linking Tasman and Old Buckle Streets that could work as a cross-block connection. The laneway, at the Tasman Street end, will be for shared vehicle/pedestrian use. This is reflected in the proposed landscape treatment comprising primarily hard paving surfaces. The remaining part of the laneway, which runs between Buildings A and D, will be fully pedestrian and attractively landscaped. On the west side, the laneway will be 'activated' by the landscaped terraces of the ground level apartments of Building A. The eastern side of the lane, defined by the ground level carparking structure, will incorporate continuous planted areas punctuated by the entrance steps to Building D.

Although not publicly accessible, the garden area along the Tasman Street edge will contribute positively to and enhance the visual amenity of this public frontage and complement the landscape on the western side of the street. The entrance from Old Buckle Street will be enhanced by the existing distinctive Pohutukawa tree and associated landscaped space around it. The retention of the existing tree, and its integration into the volume of Building C, is a highly positive response to the landscape context of the site. It will enhance the northern frontage of the development and help to link it to the adjacent park.

Wind effects on public space (G3.11)- a wind assessment has been prepared as part of the Application by WSP. The assessment concludes that wind issues arising from the proposal can be adequately addressed through a combination of design changes (which have been incorporated into the proposal) and the installation of a canopy along the Tasman Street frontage of Building E.

The wind report notes that the proposal does produce an improvement in the amenity around the north/west corner of the site, including over a sizeable area of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park.

Summary - overall, the height/bulk of the two tall buildings has been appropriately managed in relation to the immediate context and wider setting. This has been achieved through the massing of the development which: (a) comprises five well-coordinated individual buildings of varied height with sufficient space between and around them to ensure good residential amenity and maintain important visual connections; (b) creates an overall form where the low buildings help to moderate the impact of the taller buildings; and (c) ensures the compositional form of the taller buildings is sufficiently articulated to reduce the perception of height/bulk and create well-proportioned buildings.

4.2.4 **EDGE TREATMENT:** “The buildings that line the edges of streets and other public spaces establish their character, quality and attractiveness. They collectively define the setting for activities that take place there.”

Objective 04.1 aims “to create building edge conditions that support pedestrian activity and enhance the visual interest, legibility, safety and comfort of streets and other public spaces”.

The supporting **guidelines** are grouped under the following headings: *Building fronts*; *Active edges*; *Servicing and car parking*; and *Shelter and building entrance enhancement*.

Assessment

Building fronts & active edges + Shelter and building entrance enhancement (G4.1-G4.5 and G4.8)

The proposal is a residential development on a site with two street frontages, each with a different context and character. The proposal has addressed the relevant guidelines in a manner that will help activate the street frontages, improve safety and contribute a sense of visual interest, while reflecting the residential nature of the proposal. The specific design responses are discussed below, noting that neither of the street frontages are identified by the District Plan as requiring continuous verandahs along their edges.

Old Buckle Street frontage

The Old Buckle Street frontage is defined by Buildings A, B and C. The entrances to the individual units in Buildings B and C and the apartment entrance to Building A, along with the ground level windows and upper level windows and balconies are oriented to the street - an outcome that is consistent with G4.1 and will also help to activate the street. The café at the Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner will provide an interactive street edge generating street activity along both street frontages.

The setbacks of Building A and Building C (west end), along with the frequent recessed entrances of the terrace houses and the transparent frontage of the corner café, will help to articulate the collective street frontage contributing a sense of rhythm and visual interest. This is complemented by the façade composition and design treatment of the respective buildings and is further enhanced by the ‘open’ entrance to the central laneway and associated planted area. The overall impression will be of a street frontage that expresses the residential use of the buildings, while contributing a sense of interest, diversity and street edge activity. The finer grain created by the proposed terrace houses of Buildings B and C will appropriately enhance the pedestrian character of Old Buckle Street and the park beyond. These responses are consistent with the outcomes sought by G4.3 - G4.5.

The individual building entrances to the units in Buildings B and C and the entrance to Building A are well-defined, enhanced by recesses and marked by steps - an outcome consistent with G4.8. The Old Buckle Street entrance to the central laneway is legible and well-signalled by the large Pohutukawa tree and the landscaped area around it.



Fig 11: Old Buckle Street frontage

Tasman Street frontage

Most of the Tasman Street frontage is defined by the proposed garden area defining private spaces and associated brick wall enabled by the setback of Building A.



Fig 12 Tasman Street frontage

In addition to their internal entrances, the ground level apartments of Building A also have individual street entrances. This, along with the landscaped private terraces and ground level living area windows oriented to the street, will help activate the street edge. Deep recesses along the proposed garden brick wall will allow for large tree-planted landscape areas breaking up the wall, providing visual relief and a sense of rhythm.

The Tasman Street entrance to Building A is well marked with and sheltered by a projecting canopy emphasising the south/western corner of the building. Extending the projection of the balconies at Levels 1 and 2 strengthens the interaction of the building with the street adding a further sense of activity and visual interest.

The shared main vehicle/pedestrian entrance to the site (within the space between Buildings A and E) is marked by a planted area, including a large tree. This, along with the proposed hard landscape treatment of the entrance area, will downplay its visual impact in views along the street.

The recessed street entrance to Building E is legible and well-defined. It is marked by and sheltered by an extensive canopy over the full length of the building frontage and extending over the adjacent vehicle ramp to the basement carpark. The building entrance and the intended ground level 'live/work' apartment unit immediately adjacent to the entrance will generate a sense of street activity. The vehicle entrance to the basement carpark is appropriately positioned at the southern end of the site. The proposed responses are overall consistent with the outcomes sought by the relevant guidelines.

Servicing and carparking (G4.6 and G4.7) - the proposed carparking arrangement in terms of location, layout and treatment, where visible, addresses well the relevant guidelines. The specific design response is discussed below.

The proposed vehicle access and carparking arrangement have been considered as an integral part of the overall site layout. The topography of the site has been utilised to create a basement parking area that reduces 'at-grade' carparking needs. The 'at grade' parking spaces will be largely concealed in views from the street. The impact of carparking visible from the street will be softened by the proposed landscape work (planting and hard surface treatments) particularly that around the main Tasman Street entrance.

The entrance to the basement carpark is appropriately located at southern-most end of the site to reduce its street presence and provide separation from the adjacent site to the south.

Summary - the discussed above responses will deliver an overall outcome sought by the 'edge treatment' guidelines.

4.2.5 FAÇADE COMPOSITION AND BUILDING TOPS: “The composition of buildings determines their relation to context, their design coherence, and their suitability for a range of uses”.

Objective 05.1: To ensure the façade and building top design is coherently resolved.

Objective 05.2: To ensure that additions and alterations to heritage buildings maintain the heritage values of those buildings, their setting and any associated heritage area.

Objective 05.3: To facilitate multiple and changing building uses, except where such change adversely affects the heritage values of heritage buildings or areas.

The supporting *relevant guidelines* cover the following matters: *Relationship to neighbouring buildings (G5.1 and G5.2); Shopfronts (G5.4-G5.6), Building tops and roofscapes (G5.7-G5.10); Human scale (G5.11) and Flexibility and adaptability (G5.12).*

Assessment

Relationship to neighbouring buildings and façade composition - G5.1 and G5.2 encourage reinforcement of established patterns of façade subdivision in neighbouring buildings.

Buildings B and C

The immediate neighbour to the east of the site - a 3 storey corner building with unremarkable façade pattern and setback from the street edge, does not represent an established pattern that needs to be followed. In any case, level changes and difference in frontage setback weaken the visual connection between Building C and its eastern neighbour. The horizontal bulk of Building C is modulated vertically by expressing the scale of the individual dwellings. The recessed entrances, upper-level balconies and 3D detail accentuate the vertical façade rhythm and enhance the sense of human scale along the street edge. The recessed balconies create an expressed horizontal band providing shelter over and marking the recessed street entrances. The collective bulk of Building C is effectively articulated by the wider frontage and setback position of the western-most unit and the extended height at the eastern end. This contributes to a varied and more dynamic building composition. The window around the corner of the eastern end unit and its accentuated building top acknowledges the prominence of this building corner in views from the east.



Fig 13: Building C: View from the east

The vertical façade rhythm of Building C, expressing the scale of individual dwelling, is extended to Building B, further along Buckle Street. However, the façade modulation of Building B is more pronounced, expressed in a more ‘sculptural’ manner. The vertical articulation is counterbalanced by the horizontal void of the mid-level recessed balconies providing sheltered outdoor spaces and complemented by punched windows. Street entrances are marked by deep recesses and sit higher above street level than those in Building C in response to the street topography. The western end unit has a wider frontage, and, along with the extensively glazed frontage of the ground level café, appropriately enhances the building corner.

The façade modulation on the Tasman Street frontage reflects the pattern on the Old Buckle Street side but in a slightly varied manner. This, together with the frontage setback of the ground level café along Tasman Street, intensifies the sense of visual complexity around the Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner.



Fig 14: Building B: View form the north/west

While Buildings B and C are of similar scale and typology, their façade composition, detailed treatment and materiality (brick masonry versus metal cladding) are different in response to their place within the development site and associated level of visual prominence. The varied façade composition of the two buildings contributes visual interest and adds complexity to their collective silhouette and streetscape image.

Sitting between Buildings B and C, Building A completes the northern 'streetscape' of the proposal. The use of brick masonry for the base of all three buildings facing the park provide a continuous 'building base' integrating the collective streetscape façade. The extensive use of brick in Building B relates to and acknowledges the materiality of the nearby former Mout Cook Police Station.

Building A

Situated around the north-west corner of the site, Building A is the tallest component of the proposal. Its varied façade composition responds to the different context of the adjacent street while recognising the visibility of its broad-side/eastern elevation in views from the east.

Oriented to the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park and the city beyond, the northern facade has enhanced vertical proportions. This is derived from the massing of the building form into two slender varied in height off-set volumes separated by the glazed recess of the central corridor and further accentuated by variation in façade composition.

The east and west facades have a slightly different architectural expression cognisant of the differences in their orientation, setting and level of prominence. While both facades express the underlying diagrid, the west façade conveys a stronger sense of 'depth' and façade relief. Set up by the expressed floor levels, the modulation on the west side has an enhanced horizontal emphasis expressed by the banded spandrels. This is complemented by the extended projection of the lower-level balconies with solid balustrades (Levels 1 and 2), which introduce a different/bolder pattern to the building 'base' with more clearly defined modules than those on the levels above. The horizontal scale of the 'base' makes visual references to the horizontal volume of Building B and works well with the 'soft' volume of the proposed trees. The façade modulation on the upper levels (Levels 4-9) is more refined set up by the alternating arrangement of the recessed decks with textured soffits and the vertical fins between adjacent apartments.



Fig 15: Northern Apartments / Building A north façade

Compared to the west side, the east façade appears lighter and more transparent. This extensively glazed façade over the dynamic diagrid frame is articulated only by a vertical row of suspended decks. In views from the east, it will appear as a lighter-weight façade with a macro scale diagrid frame that will be legible from a distance. The east façade incorporates soft/green elements extending the green landscape up from the central laneway that will help to soften views from the shared spaces within the development.

The simple design of the building roof top relies on the shift/varied height of two building volumes of Building A to articulate the building form and create a more stylised silhouette in response to the landmark status of the taller, more detailed silhouette of the Carillon. Stepping down the height at the southern end of the building opens up the spatial gap between Buildings A and E and reduces the impact of Building A on visual connections to the Carillon from the east.

Building E

Building E features similar proportions and the same base-isolated diagrid structural system as Building A, but has a different orientation sitting at 90 degrees to Building A. Similar to Building A, its bulk is split into two off-set volumes along a central corridor with the northern volume extending forward from the southern volume at either end. This creates articulated and vertically proportioned slender end-on facades to Tasman Street and to the east, towards the Basin Reserve and Mt Victoria, respectively.



Fig 16: Building E: View along Tasman Street



Fig 17: Building E canopy

The façade composition is similar to but simpler than that on the west side of Building A - a diagrid structure overlaid with apartment module and recessed/projecting decks with expressed floor levels setting up a horizontal rhythm of unifying spandrels wrapping around all sides. Spandrel height has been set to provide a low sill height to apartment windows optimising internal amenity and outlook.

In long views from the east, Building E will appear different to Building A in both proportions, height and façade expression, which will help to moderate the visual impact of the collective building bulk. The approach to creating a simple building top adopted for Building A is carried through to the design of Building E.

The large canopy along the street frontage of Building E references the entrance canopy height of Building A, while the brick masonry on its ground level street façade reflects the materiality of the garden wall along Building A. These approaches are positive and will strengthen the relationship between the two apartment buildings contributing a sense of street edge continuity within the site.

The scale and typology of Building E makes it challenging to relate it to existing patterns of development/façade composition to the south along Tasman Street. Neighbouring buildings to the south are low-rise buildings, several of which older dwellings. However, future development within this area is anticipated and will help to ease the scale differences along the street frontage as signalled by the recently completed apartment block on the corner with Rugby Street.⁶

Building D

Sitting on top of the podium created by the proposed carparking structure, Building D comprises two rows of double-storey terrace housing units. Situated mid-way along the eastern side of the site, Building D has an internal location and will not be seen from the street, neither will it be prominent in long views to the site. However, it will appear in a limited number of views from the north/east as a lower mid-ground building form between the taller Building A to west and the existing built form to the east.

To optimise sun and light, and to minimise impact on the eastern neighbours and Building A, the units in Building D present their living spaces and most open facades, to the north. Building D has a simple 'lightweight' form featuring punched windows, in predominantly profiled metal cladding facades. The simple façade composition is appropriate for the internal location of the building within the development site.

Shopfronts (G5.4)

The proposal is principally a residential development with contemporary design accommodating a ground level corner café in one of its buildings. To optimise the openness of the tenancy along both street frontages, the proposal adopts an approach that differs from that anticipated by the relevant guideline. Nevertheless, the proposed outcome is appropriate in light of the building's contemporary design and fits in well with the overall building design. In this sense, it is consistent with the intent of the guideline which aims to ensure shopfronts are well integrated to the compositional form of the building. In addition, the proposed shopfront design will maximise visual connections with the street and provide an opportunity for extending internal activity outside.

Building Tops and roofscape (G5.7 - G5.8 and G5.10)

The relevant guidelines promote building tops that are well integrated to the overall building composition with particular emphasis on the design appearance of buildings top which are prominent in views across the city. The design of the building tops has been discussed as part of the compositional form of the buildings under previous headings. To avoid repetition, the following key points are reiterated:

- The tops/roofscapes of all buildings have been designed as integral elements of their compositional form, while acknowledging that the taller buildings will be prominent in various views across the city.
- While the rooflines of the two taller buildings (Buildings A and E) are both relatively simple, they reflect the integrated approach to building design and support a coherent outcome.
- In Building A, the roof top is articulated to create a simple and 'quieter' building silhouette recognising the landmark status of the taller more detailed silhouette of the Carillon. Lowering the building height on the west side and stepping down the height at the southern end of the building are large-scale massing responses that appropriately mark the building top, while reducing the visual impact of height/bulk in views from the city.
- The approach to creating a simple building top adopted for Building A is also applied to the design of Building E. The relative position of Buildings A and E creates a spatial gap between the two buildings

⁶ Height limit 28.5m under the Proposed District Plan.

which assists in breaking up the collective building mass and silhouette of the development in views from the east, while allowing visual connections to the Carillon.

- The visibility of the lift over-run in both buildings will be reduced by their relatively small footprints and central location.



Fig 18: Buildings A and E: east facades

Human scale (G5.11) - the proposal expresses its residential character and clearly conveys a sense of human scale at the public edges of the buildings. This is expressed through the design of the lower building levels of the apartment buildings complemented by the ground level terraces and associated street entrances to the ground level units of Building A, and further enhanced by the landscape elements along Tasman Street. The terrace houses along Old Buckle Street, with their lower form and articulated facades, street entrances and the corner café, reflect and enhance the pedestrian character of the street and the adjacent park.

Flexibility and adaptability - the base-isolated building form and internal layout, with a special reference to the amount of natural light to internal spaces and configuration/size of the floor plates, provides a good level of adaptability for possible (but nevertheless unlikely) future change of activity.

Summary - the responses discussed above will lead to outcomes that are consistent with the outcomes sought under ‘façade composition and building tops’ guidelines. The building form, façade composition and building top of each building have been coherently resolved as part of an integrated approach to site planning and architectural design developed in relation to the context of the surrounding setting.

4.2.6 Materials and Detail

“Materials and detail are important in maintaining visual interest and a positive relation to context and heritage value”.

Objective O6.1: To achieve qualities of visual interest and physical robustness consistent with demands arising from the building’s location in the central city.

Objective O6.2: To respect and conserve original heritage fabric.

The supporting **guidelines** are grouped under the following headings: *Compositional coherence; Visual interest; Physical robustness; and Façade transparency.*

Assessment

Compositional coherence/visual interest/physical robustness/façade transparency - these issues have already been addressed throughout the assessment. Here the following points are reiterated:

- the external treatment of the individual buildings has been approached in an integrated manner and in response to the location of the respective buildings on the site while acknowledging the range of distances they will be experienced from; and

- in terms of material and detail, the individual facades have been designed to reflect the residential character of the development, and in relation to the character of the surrounding setting.

The intended design detail and palette of proposed materials, and their application on the building's facades, are illustrated on the architectural drawings and further described in the Architectural Design Statement. Due to the nature of the design process associated with complex developments such as the proposal, facade materials and detailing might need refinement during the next stages of design development, should consent to the proposal be granted.

As with many similar Central Area projects, the challenge at a resource consent stage is providing a level of certainty on design quality (in terms of materials and detailing) while allowing for flexibility in the next stages of design development. This can be addressed via a condition of consent re making final choice of materials and associated detailing subject to Council's approval prior to lodging for building consent. This is an appropriate and well-used mechanism that will be offered by the Applicant.

5 TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

This section of the report assesses the visual impact of the proposal on the townscape setting and on the visual experience of people moving towards and/or around the site. The purpose of the assessment is to illustrate and establish the degree of visual integration between the development and its visual context and the extent to which the development will affect views to the Carillon and National War Memorial and the former National Museum.



Fig 19: Townscape Views / Viewpoint location map

The assessment is carried out in relation to typical views from key viewpoints from which the proposal will be most prominent (refer Fig 19). These have been identified in association with the Council's urban design and heritage advisors. The viewpoint locations are marked on the map in Appendix 8 to the AEE. Views 1-14 are the original views identified by the Applicant. Views A-D are additional views requested by the Council. The selected 18 viewpoints are considered to be representative of the collective visual experience of the proposal and therefore sufficient for assessing its visual impact.

Appendix 8 to the AEE shows the selected views, including both 'existing' and 'proposed'. These are supplemented by images indicating the anticipated height/bulk under the Proposed District Plan. The views are analysed and referred to in the townscape assessment that follows.

ASSESSMENT

While the proposal will be seen from a range of distances, it will be experienced most often in: (a) close-up/short-distance views from viewpoints up to 300m to the north, north-east and north-west of the site; and (b) mid and longer-distance views from viewpoints located up to approximately 750m to the east (from within Mt Victoria and along the SH1 route coming out of the Mt Victoria Tunnel when approaching the site).

Many of the views are sequential - i.e. views taken from various distances along the same line of movement as one approaches the site. This is to acknowledge that most often the collective visual impact of the proposal will be experienced in and shaped by sequential views obtained when moving towards or around the development site. This is reflected in the assessment where often several or all views from the same direction have been analysed together.

VIEWS FROM THE EAST AND NORTH/EAST

The selected views from the east include dynamic views from along SH1 route coming out of Mt Victoria Tunnel and travelling towards the Basin Reserve (**View 1**/viewing distance 550m)⁷ and from Mt Victoria when moving along Ellice Street and across Kent/Cambridge Terrace corridor towards the former Home of Compassion Creche (**Views A, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7** - viewing distances 175m-550m). Views **1, 2 and A**, which are from a longer distance, are 'framed' by the embankment to the east of the Mt Victoria Tunnel (View 1) and the 'street walls' along Ellice Street (Views 2 and A) respectively. Collectively these sequential public views illustrate the changes in the dynamic visual experience when approaching the site from the east.

Views from the east, from within the Basin Reserve are represented by **View 4** (embankment adjacent to Wakefield Memorial/viewing distance 275m) and analysed separately.

Key contextual elements in the existing views include the former National Museum, Pukeahu Ridge line landscape and the Carillon, with the Basin Reserve appearing in the foreground of most of the views. The Town Belt shapes the distant skyline of the views with the top of the Carillon projecting above that skyline in some of the views.

In views from the east the attention will be on the eastern side of the proposal which will appear in the foreground of the National War Memorial and Carillon, Pukeahu Ridge and the former National Museum. The relationship of the proposal to the key contextual elements, with a special reference to the status of the Carillon as a primary visual landmark, is a central issue for the assessment.

Views from Mt Victoria Tunnel Exit / View 1: View 1 illustrates the motorists' experience when travelling from Mt Victoria Tunnel to the Arras Tunnel.⁸

⁷ The recoded viewing distances indicate the approximate distance from the respective viewpoint to the 'centre' of the development site.

⁸ Note that a draft 'fly-over' animation was prepared as part of the original proposal (similar in height to the current proposal). A study of the draft 'fly-over' animation has informed the observations/conclusions of the townscape assessment.

In this view, Buildings A and E will appear as prominent new elements in the middle-ground of the views, introducing a noticeable visual change. While the degree of visual change will be clearly understood, the view of the Carillon, seen within the spatial gap between Buildings A and E, will remain largely unobscured. Similarly, the view to the former National Museum will remain unchanged in this view. This is because Building E, will appear to the north of the former National Museum at a substantial distance from it allowing views to the Pukeahu Ridge landscape. This, along with the view of the green landscape below the Carillon seen between Buildings A and E, will allude to the continuity of the Pukeahu Ridge landscape. View 1 shows that both Buildings A and E will remain below the Town Belt 'skyline' at the distant backdrop to the views.

The relatively long viewing distance from this vantage point will diminish the reading of the more detailed facade elements and instead focus the attention on the collective silhouette of the taller buildings and the large-scale articulation of the building form.

The differentiated façade treatment of Buildings A and E, including the light-weight quality of the Building A's façade along with the projecting decks, will be evident, helping to reduce the collective visual impact of the two buildings. This is further assisted by the articulation of the individual building forms and the separation between them - design attributes that will be clearly read and appreciated in this view. Here reference is made to the split form of Building E with off-set volumes and the step-in height at the southern end of Building A, which accentuates the reading of the spatial gap between the two buildings and provides a sense of height transition to the Carillon. All this contributes to a more varied silhouette line that helps to moderate the visual impact of bulk.



Fig 20: View 1 / Mt Victoria Tunnel

While the proposal will change the visual foreground of the view, the Carillon will continue to read as the tallest vertical marker within the skyline.

Views from Ellice Street across Kent/Cambridge Terrace and from the park / Views A, 2, 3, 5, 6 & 7: these views are sequential views 'describing' the changing visual experience when moving down along Ellice Street towards the Basin Reserve and Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. The key contextual elements in those views are the same as in the views from along the Mt Victoria Tunnel-to-city route (View 1). However, the changes in the viewpoint location increases the prominence of the Basin Reserve while reducing the visibility of the key contextual elements in some of the views (e.g. the former National Museum does not feature in Views 3 and 5, and the Carillon is not present in View 5).

In View 2 (an elevated view longer-distance view) the visual impact of the proposal will be most pronounced as Building A rises slightly above the silhouette of the Town Belt, seen in the distant backdrop of the view. This however changes in View A (from a lower-level viewpoint), where the continuity of the Town Belt's skyline remains unaffected.

In **Views 2 and A** Buildings A and E will affect the existing visual relationship between the former National Museum and the Carillon and reduce the visual prominence of the Carillon, allowing only its top part to be seen. The gap between the Buildings A and E will allow glimpses to the tree-clad Pukeahu Ridge and also allude to the visual continuity the Town Belt ridgeline. The visibility of the former National Museum will be reduced by Building E in View A and to a lesser extent in View 2, where a large part of the building and the associated tree-clad landscape will continue to be seen. The visual presence of the former National Museum will be discernible for most of the journey's duration (up until the vicinity of Kent Terrace).

Views 2 and A represent the highest degree of visual change arising from the proposal. However, views from the upper parts of Ellice Street will be less affected and allow the relationship between key townscape elements to be understood as part of the overall moving experience.



Fig 21: View A / Ellice Street

Views 3, 5, 6, 7 are from viewpoints located closer to the site (175-300m). Currently, the former National Museum does not feature in views 3, 5 and 6 with only a small section of its top part seen in View 7. Therefore, in those views the proposal will have little impact on the visibility of the former National Museum or its relationship to Pukeahu Ridge landscape and the Carillon. The Carillon, while prominent in the existing closer-up Views 6 and 7, is not visible in View 5 and in View 3 only its top part is visible, rising above the roof of the RA Vance Stand.

In Views 3 & 5 the visual exposure of the proposal will be limited to the parts of the north-eastern corner of Building A, with the sequential View 6 widening the visual field to reveal the entire north-eastern part of the proposal. In View 5, where neither the Carillon nor the former National Museum feature in the view, the impact of the proposal will be low. In View 3 the proposal, while largely obscuring the Carillon, will allow its very top to be seen. The Carillon will be obscured fully by the proposal in View 6 but will re-appear fully in the sequential View 7.



Fig 22: View 5 / Basin Reserve Northern Entry

In Views 3, 5, 6 and 7, the 3-storey terrace houses (Buildings B, C and D) will be seen, albeit to a varying degree, as low foreground volumes that ease the height transition towards the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, with the varied/broken roofscape of those buildings assisting further the height/scale transition to the east. Providing a height/scale transition is particularly important in the closer-up views (Views 6 and 7), which allude to the overall scale of the proposal. The benefit of the lower volumes of Buildings C and D and B providing height/scale transition to the park and to the neighbouring buildings to the east, are evident in View 6 and 7.

Views 3, 5, 6 and 7 show the variations in visual change as one moves towards the proposal. The impact in View 6 is the highest, while in the remaining views it is reduced with the degree of visual change being lowest in View 5.

The lower west wing of Building A, which provides a step-in height at either end of the building, will be noticeable in Views 6 and 7 assisting to moderate the visual bulk. The varied orientation and façade treatment of Building A and E, and, the spatial gap between them, accentuate the sense of visual separation which will be more pronounced in View 6.

The low height of Buildings B and C reduces further the impact of the collective bulk of the proposal in both Views 6 and 7. In View 7 the existing trees within the park help to obscure a large part of Building E. The façade articulation and architectural treatment of the various buildings, which will be appreciated in these views, will further aid the scale integration of the proposal to its visual setting. Sitting at the foreground of View 6, the volume of the RA Vance Stand appears as a larger building that aids the integration of the taller buildings to their visual setting.



Fig 23: View 6 / Cambridge Terrace Pedestrian Crossing



Fig 24: View 7 / former Home of Compassion Creche

View 7 (vicinity of Former Home of Compassion Creche) completes the experience from the top of Ellice Street to the eastern end of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. Obtained from a shorter distance than the previous View 6, View 7 reveals more of the northern side of Building A with the bulk of Building E largely obscured by the existing trees in the foreground. The oblique angle of that view reduces the visual length of Building A, while the deeper frontage setback and the lower height of its side, opens up the view to the Carillon and moderates the perceived height relationships. The articulation of the northern end of Building A and its setback from the street edge will be appreciated along with the visual contribution of the articulated bulk of the terrace houses + the retained Pohutukawa, in integrating the proposal to its visual context.

Views from the Basin Reserve / View 4: the viewpoint for View 4 is aligned with that for View 1 but is located much closer to the development site and sits at a lower level.

Similar to View 1, Buildings A and E seen against the foreground of the Basin Reserve will create a noticeable visual change that will be experienced from a shorter distance (300m). While the visual change will be clearly understood, the presence of the existing larger buildings in the foreground (Museum Stand and the RA Vance Stand) will aid the integration of the proposal with its visual setting, moderating the perception of its apparent height. The differentiated and more detailed façade treatment of Buildings A and E and their compositional form will be appreciated in View 4, which also helps in moderating their impact.

The spatial gap between the taller buildings will retain the existing view of the Carillon. Lowering the height of the top level of Building A at its southern end will enhance the spatial separation between the Carillon and Building A and provide a sense of height transition between the two. It is acknowledged, however, that the reading of the Carillon in this view as the tallest free-standing vertical marker will be less pronounced than that in View 1.

The view of the former National Museum and the reading of its silhouette line will remain unchanged with a substantial spatial gap between Building E and the former National Museum.



Fig 25: View 4 / Basin Reserve Embankment (adjacent to Wakefield Memorial)

View 4, along with views from other locations along the eastern side of the Basin Reserve will be experienced primarily during matches by spectators sitting/standing at those locations. As a general observation, the attention of the viewing audience in that case will be focused on the playing field with the proposed buildings seen at the background. For pedestrians using the Basin Reserve as a through-route the impact of the proposal will be less pronounced due to the dynamic nature of their experience in north-south direction.

IEWS FROM THE NORTH

View from the north / Tory Street View 12: obtained from the southern end of Tory Street, View 12 reveals the north-western side of the proposal. Framed by the existing buildings along Tory Street, this view reinforces the alignment of the proposal to the city grid and its relationship to the urban context to the north. The contribution of the proposal to the street edge definition of Old Buckle Street and Tasman Street corner and the visual references provided by Building B to the scale and materiality of the former Mount Cook Police Station will be clearly understood. By defining the Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner, the proposal, along with the former Mount Cook Police Station, will create an enhanced entrance to Tasman Street.

The Carillon and the former National Museum do not feature in this view or in any other view from along Tory Street.

The sense of height transition provided by the lower height and setback of Building A on the west side seen in relation to the lower Building B and the trees along Tasman Street will be evident in this view. The articulated form of Building A and the varied façade treatment on the east and west sides and its contribution to reducing the visual building bulk will be appreciated.

The view illustrates how the juxtaposition of Buildings A and B and the specific modelling of their individual volumes, create a sense of visual interest that will enhance the pedestrian experience and aid the relationship to Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. The existing trees in the foreground of the view and the proposed trees along the Tasman Street edge, seen in relation to the tree-clad escarpment to the west, assist the visual integration of the proposal to its setting.



Fig 26: View 12 / Tory Street

VIEWS FROM THE WEST AND NORTH-WEST

Views C, D, 13, 14 are sequential views with viewing distances varying between 125m-300m, obtained when approaching the proposal from the west.

In all the views, the focus will be primarily on the west and north/west sides of Building A. In the shorter - distance views (Views **C** and **13**) the Carillon remains outside of the viewing frame. The visual context in the remaining views (View **D** and **14**) features the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park landscape and the National War Memorial setting with the Carillon in the foreground. The former National Museum does not feature in any of those views.



Fig 27: View C / Pukeahu National Memorial Park (near Tory Street)

In View **14**, the most distant of the views (viewpoint at 300m to the west), the proposal will be seen in the mid-ground, with the Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, the former Army Headquarters Building and the Carillon sitting in the foreground of the view. The visual impact in that view will be relatively low due to the viewing distance and the existing foreground trees which obscure large parts of the proposal leaving only the upper parts of Building A visible. Appearing in the background of the National War Memorial, the proposal will not affect the current view of the Carillon or its setting.

The sequential View **D** will expose the north/western part of Building A and allude to the presence of Building B. The existing trees in the immediate foreground of Building A will obscure the 'base' of the development and reduce its prominence, while the foreground trees around the National War Memorial, will enhance the visual separation between the proposal and the Carillon. The articulation of Building A and its contribution to easing the height and scale transition to the setting to the west will be appreciated. As shown in View D, the existing view of the Carillon and its immediate setting will remain unchanged.



Fig 28: View D / Pukeahu National Memorial Park (near Taranaki Street)

In View **13** (viewpoint in the vicinity of the Australian Memorial), the visual integration of the proposal to its setting is assisted by the foreground trees around the Carillon. View 13 features both of the taller buildings, although a large part of Building E and the 'base of Building A will be obscured by the existing trees. The articulation and the more detailed façade treatment of Building A and B, and to a lesser extent Building E, will be appreciated in this view assisting the visual integration of the proposal into its setting and contributing a sense of scale and visual interest. The complementary scale relationship between Building B and the former Mount Cook Police Station could also be appreciated in that view. The Carillon remains outside the viewing frame in the view.



Fig 29: View 13 / Australian Memorial

View **C** - a shorter distance view (viewing distance 120m) from the north/west, focuses attention on the north/western corner of Building A and reveals more of its northern side. The foreground trees will obscure the bottom and southern parts of Building A aiding the integration of the proposal to its setting. This is further supported by the appreciation of Building A's compositional form and articulated roofline, allowing it to sit comfortably within its visual setting. The Carillon does not feature in the view.

VIEWS FROM THE SOUTH, SOUTH-EAST AND SOUTH-WEST

Views from the South / Views 8, 9 and 10: these views illustrate the visual impact from the south-east (View 8 / viewing distance 170m) and from the south (sequential Views 9 and 10 / viewing distance 150-375m). These views represent the visual impact of the proposal when approaching the site from the south along Tasman Street and from the south-east when moving towards Rugby Street.

View 8 focuses the attention on the south/east corner of Building E, which will be largely screened by existing foreground buildings on Sussex Street reducing its impact. The articulated form of Building E and the oblique visual angle moderate the impact of visual bulk in this view. Any new development along Sussex Street within the height limit anticipated by the Proposed District Plan will potentially obscure the visible part of the development as seen in this view.



Fig 30: View 8 / Intersection of Sussex Street and Rugby Street

Views 9 and 10 are sequential views when approaching the site from the south along Tasman Street. Both views are focused on the southern side of the Building E. The east frontage of Building A will be seen at an oblique angle and its bulk will be hard to discern in these views. The visual exposure/prominence of Building E will be high in these views. This is mainly because of the low height of existing buildings to the south (lower than the Operative District Plan height limit) which accentuate the height differences.

In View 9 (a short-distance view,) the façade treatment of Building E, including the interplay between the diagrid structure and the expressed spandrel articulation complemented by the projecting decks, will provide a sense of scale and detail. This, along with the soft bulk of the tree-clad escarpment of Pukeahu Ridge to the west, will assist in moderating its visual impact to some extent.

Compared to View 9, in View 10 the proposal will be seen from a longer distance from an elevated viewpoint located further to the south. In addition to the lower height of the existing buildings along Tasman Street, the undulating topography will increase the visual prominence and impact of Building E, which will be seen as rising above the skyline of the distant hills to the north. However, the view to the hills' skyline on either side of the proposed buildings will allow the reading of the distant landscape form. The soft bulk of the tree-clad escarpment of Pukeahu Ridge to the west and the façade treatment of Building E will assist the integration of the building to some extent.

Future development on the sites to the south under the height limit of the Proposed District Plan (28.5m) will help to reconcile the height/scale differences between the proposal and its street context as experienced in views from south, similar to those represented by Views 9 and 10.



Fig 31: View 9 / Corner of Tasman Street and Rugby Street

View from the south/west, former National Museum / View 11 is an elevated view obtained along the former National Museum's entrance route (viewing distance 150m). The elevated location of the site and the soft bulk of the existing foreground trees will reduce the visibility of the proposal by screening most of the tall building volumes. View 11 shows that only the top levels of Building A will be visible with the bulk of Building E largely obscured by the trees. This view is representative of the relatively low visual impact of the proposal when moving along the elevated route on the east side of the former National Museum. Sitting to the east and below the level of the former National Museum and separated by it through the existing trees, Buildings A and E will not impact on views to the former National Museum or affect its relationship to the surrounding setting in any significant way.



Fig 32: View 11 / Former National Museum (eastern access route)

Views from the south-east / View B: View B shows the proposal as seen from Rugby Street in the vicinity of the south-western corner of the Basin Reserve. The existing buildings within the Basin Reserve, which sit at the foreground of Buildings A and E, obscure large parts of their volumes revealing only their uppermost parts. The visual change resulting from the proposal in that view will be relatively low and will not impact on any of the existing contextual elements, as none of them appears in the view.

Summary

The visual impact of the proposal will vary depending on viewpoint characteristics (i.e. location and associated viewing distance) and will be influenced by the character and visual context of individual views.

The proposal will be seen mostly from viewpoints located within up to 750m away from the development site. It will be experienced primarily in dynamic views obtained by motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and bus users moving towards or around the site and by park users. The proposal will also feature in some static views from within the Basin Reserve from viewpoints along the eastern embankment.

The visual impact of the proposal will be most pronounced in views from the east and in some views from north/east where the two taller buildings (Building A and E) will be seen in relation to the former National Museum and/or the Carillon. Although the proposal is lower in height than the Carillon and sits below the rooftop of the former National Museum, it will affect the visibility or reduce the visual prominence of these contextual elements in some views. It will also change the context of the views by reducing the sense of openness across the site. Notwithstanding that, the analysis established that the visual presence of the Carillon and the former National Museum and the understanding of their contextual setting will be retained as part of the collective visual journey when approaching the site from the east.

In views from the south/along Tasman Street, the proposal will be highly prominent, mainly because of the low height of the existing buildings along Tasman Street. The undulating street topography is another factor emphasising the height differences between the proposal and its setting. However, in views from the south, the proposal will not affect the visibility of the former National Museum or the Carillon as they are not present in the views. Future development to the east and south of the proposal, which under the Proposed District Plan can rise up to 28.5m within the city block the development site sits, and up to 40m for the adjacent block further to the south, will potentially help to moderate the height/scale differences between the proposal and its street context in views from the south.

In views from the north/along Tory Street, the proposal will not have any significant or direct impact on the visibility of the Carillon or the former National Museum. This is mainly because of the location of site and its separation from the National War Memorial that limit the ability to see the proposal, the Carillon and the former National Museum together in the same view.

In views from the west and from the north/west the proposal will not affect the visibility of the Carillon or change its immediate setting. Neither will it affect the former National Museum as it does not feature in any of the views. The location of the Carillon in the foreground of the views will retain its visual prominence unaffected, with the bulk of the existing trees obscuring parts of the proposal while increasing the visual separation between the proposal and the Carillon. The Carillon will not appear in closer-up views to the proposal from the west.

In all views the visual impact of the proposed taller buildings on the townscape setting, including the setting and values of the nearby heritage buildings, will be suitably managed. This will be ensured by the well-considered massing of the proposal including the distribution of lower and taller buildings across the site and the spaces between them, and by the form and articulation of the individual buildings and their varied façade composition. These aspects of the design will assist the integration of the proposal to its setting by reducing the visual impact of height and bulk and helping to relate the proposal to its visual context.

The proposal will change the current visual/physical setting around the site. The impact of that change will vary with distance and viewpoint location. However, the 'reading' of the key contextual elements, features and relationships that make up the character of the existing setting, will be retained as part of the overall visual experience of the proposal when moving around and towards the site.

6 DESIGN EXCELLENCE

The District Plan requires design excellence for any building that is higher than the height standard specified for the Central Area (Policy 12.2.5.5). There are no explicit criteria in the District Plan for assessing design excellence. However, the explanation under Policy 12.2.5.5 states that in processing a consent application for an over-height building, Council will consider: *"both the scale of the proposed height increase and the comparative height of the resulting building in relation to its surroundings"*.

While all new buildings (according to the District Plan) are expected to be of sufficient design quality to make a positive contribution to the public environment, delivering design excellence is considered

particularly important for “proposals that will result in a building that is significantly higher to the surrounding built form”.

Assessment overview: the two likely scenarios re over-height buildings discussed in the explanation under the relevant District Plan policy include: “... a building of exceptional height in comparison to every other building in the city (i.e. in excess of 130m in height), and a building that is very tall in relation to the scale of surrounding properties. Both scenarios are likely to result in a building of significant visibility and prominence”.

While the proposal requires a ‘design excellence’ assessment, it does not fall neatly or entirely under either of the above scenarios.

Design excellence criteria - neither the District Plan nor the Central Area Urban Design Guide provide a definition of what constitutes design excellence or identify any specific assessment criteria. However, a set of informal ‘design excellence considerations’, which had emerged from a Council-led workshop several years ago, has been circulated by the Council to guide the assessment.

The Council ‘Design Excellence’ considerations identify the following design attributes:

- i. a coherent and concept driven design, relevant to its context. This will include a thorough site analysis identifying matters of importance to the site and how they influence the design
- ii. a design that enhances the site, the street (including neighbouring buildings), the urban block, the wider city
- iii. a high level of internal and external building functionality and amenity
- iv. three-dimensional articulation of building form and building top to reduce the visual impact of the building, mitigate wind effects, and create a strong architectural identity
- v. detailing and materials that add visual interest to the façades
- vi. a design which goes over and above what would normally be expected to satisfy the Central Area Urban Design Guide provisions.

The above considerations, except for consideration vi, rehearse more or less the content of the Central Area Urban Design Guide (CAUDG) and therefore do not provide any substantially different or additional guidance. In this sense, consideration vi: ‘.. a design which goes over and above what would normally be expected to satisfy the Central Area Urban Design Guide provisions’ seems to be the most useful reference.

Considerations (i - v) have been discussed in the CAUDG assessment, Section 4 of this report. The assessment established that the proposal provides a balanced ‘in-the-round’ response to the Design Guide and satisfies the relevant objectives set by Appendix 2. The key findings of the CAUDG assessment with reference to the ‘design excellence’ considerations (i-v) have been reiterated below, along with an assessment under consideration (vi).

1. Informed by a thorough context analysis, the proposed design is based on a well-considered design concept supported by an integrated landscape work. This helps to link the various components of the development to each other and to their setting, leading to a coherent design outcome. The integrated approach to the planning and design of the proposal clearly demonstrates that the key contextual characteristics have been considered and suitably interpreted. This is expressed through the formal composition of the proposal as a whole and evident in both the massing of the collective building form and the articulation and external design treatment of the individual buildings.
2. The proposal will enhance the location of the site and its setting by reinforcing the alignment of the city grid and acknowledging the alignment and orientation of significant nearby buildings and spaces. The arrangement and massing of buildings across the site and the spaces between them have been approached to reduce the visual impact of building height/bulk and aid the scale

integration of the proposal to its setting, while moderating the impact on existing visual connections to the Carillon and the former National Museum. Designed to fit in with and contribute to the existing spatial structure, the proposal recognises the varied street conditions around the site and responds accordingly. In doing so, the proposal will enhance the quality of adjacent streets and the park by improving the street edge definition, activating the street frontages of the site and reinforcing the Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner. This will contribute to both the quality and vibrancy of the surrounding area, while the proposed mix of high-quality residential units will benefit the city as a whole.

3. The orientation and layout of the residential units within the individual buildings will deliver high-amenity residential space with regard to daylight/sunlight access, outlook and open space, while also providing shared amenity spaces (central lane way and roof top terrace). The proposed site layout will facilitate the successful functioning of the development in terms of vehicle access/carparking and pedestrian circulation.
4. The massing of the proposal comprising several buildings of varied height and form and the form and articulation of the individual buildings have been designed to reduce the visual impact of the building height/bulk, moderate impact on existing views to the Carillon and former National Museum and aid the scale integration of the proposal to its setting. Building tops appear as integral elements of the building form, while contributing to a visually varied collective silhouette line.
5. The façade composition and varied architectural treatment along the individual street frontages, including façade detail and material palette, complemented by the intended landscape work, will provide an enhanced sense of visual interest and human scale - attributes that will enhance the quality of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park and adjacent streets.
6. Design responses and features which go over and above what would normally be expected to satisfy the Central Area Urban Design Guide provisions include:
 - seismic resilience achieved through the base-isolated structure of the two taller buildings;
 - diversity of residential accommodation on a central city site adjacent to a large public open space that is highly suitable for high-density residential development;
 - excellent internal amenity of the residential units (daylight, sunlight, open space) complemented by high-quality shared/communal spaces and facilities, including residential lounge, community and meeting rooms, a small gym and a roof top BBQ terrace, and the provision of through-site pedestrian laneway and secure off-street carparking and bike parking. This will facilitate opportunities for creating an on-site community through shared spaces for social interaction - an opportunity that is further aided by the proposed corner café;
 - robust design approach - the proposal has gone through a number of design iterations in search of a balanced design response to the site's context and conditions, on one hand; and the broader issues of seismic resilience, housing typologies and economics, on the other. This is illustrated by the robust design approach based on exploration of alternative massing scenarios and design refinements - an approach capable of delivering an integrated development with a coherent building form designed to fit with the context at both macro and micro scales;
 - high design quality and visual interest evident in the articulation and façade expression of the individual buildings and their arrangement across the site with a particular reference to:
 - the grain, texture/materiality and expressive façade articulation of Building B and its grounding/horizontal character that complements the 'light' vertical expression of the taller Building A and its well-articulated form;
 - the complementary differentiation between the two taller buildings (A and E) expressed through variation in façade treatment and shift in orientation with the proposed physical separation between the two buildings reducing the collective mass of the development and enabling visual links to key contextual elements;
 - the massing of Building C that allows the retention of the existing Pohutukawa tree in Old Buckle Street as part of an integrated street edge landscape treatment; and

- the intended use of materials of consistently high-quality. A condition of consent requiring Council's approval of the final choice of materials and associated detailing prior to lodging a building consent (offered by the Applicant) will provide a level of certainty on the detailed aspects of the design outcome, should consent to the development be granted.

Based on the above assessment, I consider that the proposal has addressed appropriately the 'design excellence' considerations and can deliver an outcome that goes over and above what would normally be expected to satisfy the Central Area Urban Design Guide provisions. The Architectural Design Statement provides a detailed description of the 'design excellence' attributes of the proposal, which I support and agree with.

7 DESIGN GUIDES/PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The proposed District Plan (PDP) introduces two new design guides applicable to the proposal: (a) the 'Centres & Mixed Use' Design Guide which is to replace the current CAUDG; and (b) the Residential Design Guide, which unlike its current version, covers all new residential development across the city.

While the content of the new design guides is more extensive, they do cover the same design matters as those in the current CAUDG and Residential Design Guide, albeit structured and presented under different headings. They also incorporate a range of additional design considerations.

Under the PDP the proposed development requires an assessment against the two new design guides. Technically, the proposal is for extending the height of the consented scheme (2022) by adding two extra floors on top of Building A and four extra floors on top of Building E. To this end, the assessment against the new guides is focused on design guidelines considered relevant to the proposed additional height/extra floors.

7.2 CENTRES & MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDE

The new design guidelines are grouped under four headings: (i) 'responding to the natural environment', (ii) 'effective public-private interface', (iii) 'well-functioning sites' and (iv) 'high quality buildings'. The guidelines considered most relevant to this assessment fall under headings (ii) and (iv). The responses to those guidelines are discussed below and cross-referenced to the CAUDG assessment where applicable.

Effective Public-Private Interface - "Positive and strong visual connections between buildings and the public realm contribute to vibrant and safe centres and business areas"

Massing and scale (G33 and G34)

The proposed massing into several buildings of varied height and their arrangement across the site will provide sufficient spaces between the buildings ensuring sunlight and daylight to the apartment units. The location of Building A to the south of the park and its setback from the Old Buckle/Tasman Street corner will minimise impact on sunlight and daylight into surrounding open space.

Locating the low buildings (Buildings B and C) along Old Buckle Street and setting back Building A from the adjacent street boundaries will reduce the impact of bulk and help to relate the mass and scale of the proposal to adjacent buildings. This is further assisted by the setback of Building E from the southern boundary and by the intermediate landscaped areas including large trees along both street frontages.

The above responses are overall consistent with outcomes sought under G33 and G34. Refer also to CAUDG assessment, comments under 'siting, height, bulk and form' and 'façade composition and building tops/relationship to neighbouring buildings', where the massing and scale of the tall buildings is discussed in more detail.

Façades (G41- G44) - the relevant guidelines promote quality architecture that contributes to a sense of place and visual amenity.

The new guidelines outline expectations around: (a) contribution of facade design to passive surveillance and the safety of streets (G41); (b) contribution of façade articulation and architectural detail to the amenity and human scale of the public realm where buildings will be experienced at close range by the public (G42); (c) ensuring building facades feature architectural detail of a scale appropriate for the distance they can viewed from (G43); and (d) ensuring that development that is taller than the surrounding buildings is visually attractive from all sides.

The above guidelines overlap with some of the 'edge treatment' and 'façade composition and building tops' guidelines of the CAUDG. A detailed assessment of the proposal as a whole, including the additional floors, against the 'façade composition and building tops' guidelines and the 'edge treatment' guidelines has been carried out in the CAUDG assessment. To avoid repetition, the key findings of that assessment are reiterated below outlining the key responses to the new 'façades' guidelines.

The additional floors are well-integrated into the form and façade composition of Buildings A and E, noting that the height of the original proposal (2021) did include these extra floors.

Recessed entrances, balconies and windows facing the street will increase surveillance of the street while enhancing the visual quality of the street frontages.

The facades of the buildings that face the adjacent street recognise their prominent locations which will allow them to be experienced at close range. This is illustrated by the expressive articulation of Building B that wraps around and enhances the street corner and the slightly different design of Building C to recognise its less prominent place within the site.

Building A is effectively articulated into volumes which help to reduce its overall bulk and make its northern façade appear more elegant in views from the Park. The Tasman Street façade of Building A exhibits an intensified level of articulation within the lower levels that are closest to the street. This provides a sense of scale and visual interest closer to the street edge. The proposed garden with planting and low brick wall elements adds another layer of texture and detail along the street edge contributing a sense of human scale.

The façade treatment on the upper levels of the taller buildings, especially on their east sides, acknowledge they will be viewed from a longer distance. This is responded to in several ways through: (a) differentiating the façade composition of Building E on the east façade from that on the adjacent Building A to enhance the separation between them and reduce the impact of the collective building bulk; and (b) the lighter-weight façade given to Building A with a macro scale diagrid frame that will be legible from a distance.

The design of all visible facades within the development will be of high quality making them appear attractive from all sides.

Roofscape (G45 - G47)

The above guidelines set up expectations for visually interesting roofscapes on buildings that are visually prominent across the city (G45-G46), while promoting attractive and contextually sensitive built form through modulation of parapets and rooflines (G47).

The 'roofscape' guidelines seek outcomes that are very similar to those under 'building tops' in the CAUDG - a matter that was discussed in detail in the CAUDG assessment. To avoid repetition the key findings of that assessment are summarised below outlining the key responses to the new 'roofscape' guidelines.

- The roofscapes of all buildings have been designed as integral elements of the overall building composition, while acknowledging that the two taller buildings will be prominent in views across the city.

- The articulation of the taller buildings' roofscapes contribute to a diverse silhouette while moderating the impact of height and bulk. The roofscape of Building A has been designed to create a more stylised and 'quieter' building silhouette recognising the taller more detailed silhouette of the Carillon and its landmark status. Lowering the building height on the west side and stepping down the height at the southern end are large-scale massing responses that appropriately mark the building top, while reducing the visual impact of height/bulk in views from the city.
- The approach to creating a simple building top adopted for Building A is also applied to the design of Building E. The relative position of Buildings A and E creates a spatial gap between the two buildings which assists in breaking up the collective building roofscape of the development in views from the east, while allowing visual connections to the Carillon.

Quality buildings

Built form context (G80) - 'The context and characteristics of the built environment contribute to a neighbourhood's unique sense of place identity'.

The relevant guideline (G80) seeks to ensure new development integrates within the local context through the recognition of and contribution to any determining features and patterns. In essence, the outcomes sought by G80 overlap with some of the 'relationship to context' guidelines and to some of the 'façade composition and building tops' guidelines in the current CAUDG.

The context of the development site, and the relationship of the proposal to neighbouring buildings and the wider setting were discussed in detail in the CAUDG assessment under the respective headings. The key findings of that assessment are: (a) based on a detailed context analysis, the proposal will integrate well with its local context by reinforcing existing urban patterns of alignment while strengthening the relationship to nearby buildings; and (b) the massing of the development into several buildings of varied height, bulk and façade treatment will aid the relationship to the surrounding diverse built context.

Architectural coherence (G82) - 'Quality architecture contributes to sense of place and visual amenity.'

The relevant guideline seeks to 'establish a coherent composition through integration with: materials and detailing, setbacks, form and volume, facades'.

The proposal has achieved the desired outcome. Architectural coherence is demonstrated through the integrated approach to planning and design where massing, compositional form and the detailed design of the buildings have been considered together and integrated into a coherent composition.

The assessment of 'design coherence' under the relevant CAUDG guidelines, which include the intent of the new 'architectural coherence' guideline, has discussed that matter in detail (refer Section 4 of the report).

City outcomes contribution (G97)

The relevant guideline sets up a methodology for the assessment of 'over height' buildings based on their contribution in relation to identified outcomes. The 'city outcomes contribution' which is assessed in the AEE, concludes that the proposal can achieve the required number of 'points' to off-set the proposed height (pages 35-38).

7.3 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDE

The new Residential Design Guide, which applies to all new residential development across the city, is structured under the same headings as those in the Centres & Mixed-Use Design Guide. Further to this, many of the actual residential guidelines, overlap with those under the Centres & Mixed-Use Design Guide, and, as such, they have already been addressed in the previous section of the assessment. To this end, the key guidelines that are considered most relevant to the assessment are those covering residential amenity. These fall under heading (iii) 'well-functioning sites' and heading (iv) 'high-quality buildings'.

The specific guidelines relate to: (a) communal open space, private open space, balconies and sunrooms (under heading iii); and (b) internal living spaces, circulation, light and sun, natural ventilation, common internal amenity, internal storage (under heading iv). A full assessment against the relevant guidelines is not considered necessary for the following reasons:

- the amenity of the majority of the residential units has been approved under the consented scheme. The units within the additional floors follow the same layout and provide the same level of amenity as those in the consented scheme; and
- the proposed residential units, as discussed in the CAUDG assessment, have been designed to maximise outlook, daylight and sunlight access.

The design guide lays an expectation that wherever possible new residential dwellings will be provided with a private open space. The proposal provides open spaces (decks) for most of the new units in Building A (86%) and for 50% of units in Building E. Although the proposal does not fully follow the design guide expectations for private open space, this is considered an acceptable outcome in the context of apartment development in a central city location and adjacent to a large public open space.

Summary - The proposal responds positively to the relevant PDP guidelines under the Centres & Mixed-Use Design Guide, noting that most of them cover the same design aspects as those in the current CAUDG. The proposal has considered the relevant guidelines under the PDP Residential Design Guide. The level of residential amenity associated with the new units is the same as that in the consented proposal and is generally consistent with the outcomes sought under the relevant guidelines. The shortfall of private open space for some of the units is considered an acceptable outcome in the context of a large-scale central city residential development adjacent to a large public open space.

8 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The proposal is for a large scale comprehensive residential development on a site with a sensitive contextual setting surrounded by publicly important buildings and spaces (Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, National War Memorial, the former National Museum, and the Basin Reserve). The proposal comprises both lower and taller buildings with the taller buildings exceeding the current height limit for the site.

An assessment of the urban design outcomes of the proposal against the relevant District Plan provisions was carried out including: (a) assessment against the relevant design guides - the Central Area Urban Design Guide (CAUDG)/Operative District Plan, and the Centres & Mixed-Use Design Guide and the Residential Design Guide/Proposed District Plan; (b) visual impact assessment of the proposal on its immediate and wider townscape setting; and (c) a 'design excellence' assessment - the extent to which the proposed design is exemplary and capable of delivering 'design excellence'.

The key assessment findings are summarised below.

Design Guide/Operative District Plan

- The urban design outcome of the proposal is overall consistent with the objectives of the Design Guide. Based on a thorough analysis of the existing context, the planning and design of the proposal will deliver an integrated development with a coherent building form designed with reference to its context.
- The massing and the form/design of the individual buildings create a well-integrated site layout which: (a) responds well to the varied conditions along the two street frontages of the site; (b) acknowledges the key contextual elements of the setting including heritage assets; (c) enhances existing urban patterns; and (d) aids the relationship of the development to its setting.
- The arrangement of buildings across the site is well coordinated to moderate the apparent height/bulk of the taller buildings and reduce the impact on existing visual connections to the National War Memorial and the Carillon.
- The formal composition and design treatment of the individual buildings respond well to their location within the site and acknowledge the range of distances they will be viewed from. The façade design will create positive and visually interesting street frontages that will generate street activity and improve the safety of adjacent spaces.
- The proposal will provide a large number of residential units within a mix of residential typologies on a central city site well suited to high-density residential development. The amenity of the individual

units and the shared amenities provided by the proposal demonstrate a commitment to delivering a high-quality residential environment within safe and seismically sound buildings.

- The height of the two taller buildings has been appropriately managed in relation to the immediate context and the setting and values of the nearby heritage buildings - the Carillon and National War Memorial. The composition of form and space across the site with an emphasis on the spaces between buildings and the massing of the taller buildings are the main reasons for that. Visual connections between the city and the Carillon and National War Memorial, will be maintained, albeit in a different and less open setting and with a reduced prominence from some vantage points to the east.
- The proposal has provided a balanced 'in-the-round' response to the Design Guide while creating high amenity/well-functioning residential spaces within a range of housing typologies in an area of the central city highly suitable for new residential development.

Centres and Mixed-Use Design Guide and Residential Design Guide /Proposed District Plan

- The proposal responds positively to the relevant PDP guidelines under the Centres & Mixed-Use Design Guide, noting that most of them cover the same design aspects as those in the current CAUDG. The coordinated massing across the site and the well-considered articulation and façade composition of the individual buildings are the primary design responses that help to achieve the outcomes sought by the relevant guidelines.
- The proposal has considered the relevant guidelines under the PDP Residential Design Guide. The level of residential amenity associated with the new units is the same as that in the consented proposal and is generally consistent with the outcomes sought under the relevant guidelines. The shortfall of private open space for some of the units is considered an acceptable outcome in the context of a large-scale central city residential development adjacent to a large public open space.

Visual impact on the surrounding townscape

- The proposal will change the current visual/physical setting around the site. The impact of that change will vary with distance and viewpoint location. However, the 'reading' of the key contextual elements, features and relationships that make up the character of the existing setting, will be retained as part of the dynamic visual experience of the proposal when moving around and towards the site.
- The distribution of building mass across the site, the composition and articulation of the building forms and their specific façade treatments are the primary design attributes that help to moderate the visual impact of height/bulk and relate the proposal to its setting.

Design Excellence

- The assessment of 'design excellence' established that the proposal has addressed the Council 'design excellence' considerations in an exemplary way and has, therefore, passed the 'design excellence' test.
- The proposal is an integrated development that is coherently resolved - it is both site-specific and concept driven. This is illustrated in the coordinated way it balances massing, building form and façade composition with contextual considerations and residential amenity requirements.

The proposal demonstrates a high level of professionalism and a commitment to building design quality that clearly can deliver an outcome that goes over and above what would normally be expected to satisfy the Central Area Urban Design Guide provisions.

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