

**BEFORE THE WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL**

UNDER The Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER OF Resource Consent Application  
SR 471670  
For the Retirement Village at 26 Donald Street,  
and 37 Campbell Street, Karori

BETWEEN RYMAN HEALTHCARE LTD  
Applicant

AND

BETWEEN Wellington City Council before  
Independent Commissioners  
Helen Atkins, David McMahon, Angela Jones

---

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANGELA MARY MCARTHUR

Date 28 July 2022

---

## **Qualifications and Experience**

1. My name is Angela Mary McArthur. I am a landscape architect and principal of my own practice, Eco-Landscapes & Design Ltd. I have been practicing in the field of landscape assessment and design for over 25 years. I am a registered member of Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects and have held roles on the Wellington Branch Committee and the New Zealand Registration interview panel of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects
2. I hold a Bachelor of Science (Victoria University, Botany & Genetics) and a post graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (Lincoln College, Canterbury University).
3. I have provided specialist advice in relation to landscape and visual effects, landscape character, and visual amenity for a range of resource consent applications including medium density housing and have provided evidence at resource consent hearings before Consent Authorities and the Environment Court, including in Wellington and the lower North Island. Previous clients I have provided consultancy services for include Wellington City Council, Wairarapa District Council and Porirua City Council.

## **Project Involvement**

4. I have been engaged by Wellington City Council to provide an independent review of landscape and visual effects, and effects on landscape character and visual amenity that may arise from the proposed Ryman Healthcare Retirement Village at 26 Donald Street Karori. I am familiar with this part of Karori. I have visited the application site in May 2020 and September 2020.
5. I have reviewed the original application lodged in March 2020 which was withdrawn and resubmitted in September 2020. This review is based on the updated package of application reports and drawings received July 2021.

## **Code of Conduct**

6. I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014 and I agree to comply with it as if this hearing was before the Environment Court. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

## Scope of Evidence

7. My evidence is primarily a peer review of the Landscape & Visual Assessment Report dated July 2021 prepared by Ms R.A.Skidmore Urban Design Ltd ( LVE Report) submitted with by the Applicant. I have also relied on other supporting documents referred to in the LVE Report to determine my judgement of potential landscape character and visual amenity effects, which is within my expertise. Unless I state otherwise, the information I discuss has not relied on anyone else's input.
8. My evidence will address the following:
  - (a) Proposal
  - (b) Assessment Methodology
  - (c) Existing Environment - Landscape and Visual Character
  - (d) Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects
  - (e) Response to Submissions
  - (f) Recommended Landscaping Conditions
  - (g) Summary and Conclusion.

## Proposal

9. Documents reviewed for the proposed Ryman Healthcare Retirement Village at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street include:
  - Landscape & Visual Effects Assessment Report dated July 2021 prepared by R.A.Skidmore Urban Design Ltd (LVE Report)
  - Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S, dated 14 July 2021 prepared by Sullivan & Wall Landscapes
  - Urban Design Report dated 16 July prepared by McIndoe Urban (UD Report)
  - Visual Simulations Revision 8 Viewpoints 01 – 15 dated 4 June 2021
  - Set of RC drawings dated 18 June 2021 & Ryman Architectural Design Statement
  - AEE dated September 2020 prepared by Mitchell Daysh
  - Final Arboriculturists Report dated 26 May 2020 prepared by Tree Management Solutions
  - Submissions relevant to landscape and visual effects and site landscaping (May 2022)
10. The proposal is shown on drawing RC04. A0-021 (A), 'Proposed Site Plan with Aerial' and includes buildings B01A, B01B, B02, B03, B04, B05 B06; three existing buildings on the site to be repurposed, vehicle and pedestrian entries from Donald Street and Campbell Street, roading and carparking, and site landscaping.

11. The retirement village will provide facilities for independent apartment living, assisted living, rest home and dementia care.

### **Assessment Methodology**

12. Landscape effects are measured against the existing landscape values and character attributed to the existing environment. Landscape values relate to the physical conditions of the landscape and their aesthetic qualities. Landscapes are experienced visually.
13. Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects and relate to the change in landscape character or loss of landscape values as experienced in views by the viewer. Change itself does not necessarily constitute an adverse landscape or visual effect. The effects of this proposal are primarily visual effects on the receptor(s) within view. For this proposal, viewers include residents and road users.
14. The magnitude and importance of the visual effect(s) will depend on factors such as: the elevation, orientation, separation distance, background and foreground context, number of viewers, frequency of view and likely future character anticipated for the site. The degree or scale of an effect will be determined in consideration with design measures proposed to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects and the outcomes sought in the statutory planning provisions.
15. In assessing the level of landscape and visual effects the nature of effects can be assessed in terms of whether this will be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) or neutral where landscape and visual change is benign.
16. Cumulative effects should also be considered in the overall assessment of landscape and visual effects. Additional landscape and visual effects on the wider character area and change over time is considered in helping the determine the overall level of effects.
17. The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) provides guidance in the Te Tangi a Te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines dated 5 May 2021 and includes a 7 point scale to determine scale of effects and scale of effects generally equating to 'minor' in RMA terminology:

18. For consistency of I have adopted the same terminology used to assess visual effects by Ms Skidmore, the assessor for the Applicant, in the LVE Report (Refer to Section 6.67).
- **Magnitude of change:** extreme, very high, high, moderate, low, very low, negligible.
  - **Effect of change:** very high adverse, high adverse, moderate adverse, low adverse (minor in terms of RMA test), very low adverse (less than minor in terms of RMA test), negligible, positive
19. No description of scale of effects of change has been provided by the assessor in determining low (minor), however my description of scale of adverse effects as **low** (minor) would determine that an effect of the proposal *will result in a partial to minor loss or modification to one or more key elements/features/characteristics; new elements may be prominent within views but are not necessarily uncharacteristic or incompatible within the receiving landscape.*

## Existing Environment

### *Site Location and Landscape Character*

20. The site is well appointed having two street frontages with a total site area of 3 Ha. Previously the site of Wellington Teacher's College, all buildings have now been removed apart from The Allen Ward Hall and Tennant Block located adjacent to the Donald Street frontage, and Oldershaw Building located within Lopdell Gardens close to the northern boundary.
21. The site is zoned Outer Residential in the Wellington City District Plan and is largely undeveloped apart from the now redundant Teachers College buildings which will be repurposed. The site has mature vegetation and paths within Lopdell Gardens located within the north and northeast, tall trees fronting the southern edge of Donald Street with an open garden area of grass and trees at the southeast corner of the site.
22. The site is undulating the highest point in the northeast adjacent to Donald Street falling to the southern boundary approximately 10 metres over the site. The southern part of the site and Campbell Street frontage is open and flat and was previously used for sports and games.

### *Neighbourhood Character*

23. Existing neighbourhood character in the area is suburban. The housing stock is primarily standalone early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century houses. Larger scale community facilities including Karori Normal School campus and Karori Pool are located directly north of the site. Ben Burn Park, a large open space facility, is located close by off Campbell Street southwest of the site. The local area has a high level of residential amenity and walkability with connecting walkways and parks, established trees, and education facilities.
24. Karori Road and Karori Shopping centre are located within 5 -10 minutes walking distance of the site.

### *Landscape Values*

25. The site is located within the Outer Residential Area and has not been identified as having any Outstanding Natural Feature(s) or as within a Special Amenity Landscape in the District Plan. The site has special qualities due to size and location and therefore opportunity for development.
26. Landscape values contributing to site character include established trees and gardens areas, a sense of openness and the presence existing buildings have to Donald Street frontage.

### *Site Visibility and Context*

27. Visual Simulations Revision 8 Viewpoints 01 – 15 dated 4 June 2021 provided by the Applicant show existing visibility and proposed development from a range of viewpoints at varying distances from the site.
28. At close range, views into the site are currently restricted from Donald Street for road users and residents opposite due to existing buildings at the road frontage and tall trees (Refer to Viewpoints 01,02,03). At close range there are open views into the southern end of the site from Campbell Street for road users and Campbell Street residents located opposite (Refer to Viewpoints 10,11).
29. Residents adjoining the southern site boundary along the northern side of Scapa Terrace and at 49 Campbell Street (Refer to Viewpoints 06,14,15); and sites adjoining the northwest boundary including 33A, 29, 27A Campbell Street, currently have restricted or partial views into the site. Adjoining sites generally have solid boundary fencing and mixed height foreground vegetation.

30. From users of the council walkway, entrance to Karori Pool and Karori Normal School campus to the north, currently restricted views due to existing trees and fencing along the walkway boundary (Refer to Viewpoints 12,13). From Ben Burn Park views of the site vary from the Campbell Street frontage to more distance views across the site to Donald Street (Refer to Viewpoints 08,09).
31. Wider and open views over the site are available from more distant and elevated locations around the area. These locations include the street network and residential neighbourhood to the south rising to Messines Road ridgeline and towards Wright's Hill where residents have views overlooking the site towards Te Wharangi Ridge in the north (Refer to Viewpoints 04,05,07).

## Assessment of Landscape & Visual Effects

### Relevant Planning Matters

32. Wellington City District Plan Chapter 4 Residential Objectives and Policies:
- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Urban Form</i>      |   |
| <i>Objective 4.2.3</i> | <i>Ensure that new development within the Residential Areas is of a character and scale that is appropriate for the neighbourhood in which It is located.</i>                                     |
| <i>Policy 4.2.1.5</i>  | <i>Enable residential intensification with the Inner and Outer Residential Areas provided that it does not detract from the character and amenity of the neighbourhood in which it is located</i> |
| <i>Policy 4.2.4.1</i>  | <i>Manage adverse effects on residential amenity values by ensuring that the siting, scale and intensity of new residential development is compatible with surrounding development patterns</i>   |

### Review & Summary - Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Effects

33. The proposed retirement village will change the landscape character of the site and neighbourhood due to the intensification of buildings within the site.
34. In this proposal the sensitivity to change and magnitude of change in character will vary depending on the distance, orientation and elevation of the viewer. I agree with Ms Skidmore that the degree of the visual effects will also depend on the perceptions of the viewer and may vary (Refer LVE Report 6.6).
35. Previous Teachers' College buildings are of little relevance when assessing character and visual amenity effects of future development of the site and I understand that from a planning perspective the former existing environment cannot be relied upon in determining effects of this proposal. The retirement

village proposal is for buildings of greater mass and intensity. These are large scale changes and have the potential to introduce new and potentially more intrusive elements into views.

36. While Ms Skidmore (LVE Report) has not provided an assessment directly relating to relevant district plan policies and objective or the Residential Design Guide she has provided a detailed assessment of landscape character and visual amenity effects and visual effects for road users, recreational users and residents in Items 6.31- 6.66. The following is a peer review of the LVE Report findings drawing to conclusions that generally align with relevant Wellington City District Plan Objectives and Policies and the Residential Design Guide.

*Wider Street network users including Scapa Terrace*

37. Ms Skidmore states that while glimpses of tall buildings, primarily building B01B will be likely from the wider road network (Viewpoints 05,07,08,11,12,13) visual effects will be negligible to positive (less than minor) due to the transient nature of the viewer. I suggest there will be many vantage points where the southern and western façades of building B01B will be visible around the wider area. In my opinion the effect of the building will change outlooks, however not necessarily in the negative way. I generally agree with Ms Skidmore.

*Residents at the northern side of Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street*

38. For some residents located within the northern side of Scapa Terrace the top of the building B01B will be noticeable (Viewpoints 06, 14,15). In my opinion with the recessive building colours proposed, location within the centre of the site and distance from the boundary visual intrusion effects will be moderated. Overall, adverse visual impact of building B01B for these residents will be low to very low (less than minor).
39. Residents within the northern side of Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street have northern outlooks into the site and will have variable views into buildings B02- B06 located close to the southern boundary. Potentially there will be adverse visual amenity effects relating to the visual impact of the buildings which in my view can be moderated by the transition in building heights, setback from boundary and landscaping.
40. A summary of visual amenity effects is made for Scapa Terrace properties (Items 6.57 – 6.59) and 49 Campbell Street (Item 6.62) in the LVE Report.



Overall, I concur with the assessment made by Ms Skidmore that due to existing fencing and foreground vegetation, design of buildings B02 – B06 and boundary setbacks adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity will be low (minor) reducing to very low (less than minor) once revised yet to be approved buffer boundary planting establishes and first floor terrace gardens are landscaped with screening shrubs along the southern edge.

41. A number of submitters were concerned that several tree species proposed (Pohutukawa, Silver Tree Fern, Rimu) were inappropriate and would create additional shading effects for these properties along the northern side of Scapa Terrace. I agree and will require the landscape plans to be revised accordingly to include smaller tree species that can be kept to a maximum height of approximately 4m. Submitters were also unhappy that no planting is shown between buildings B03 and B05 and the boundary. The current version of the Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S does in fact show native trees and ground cover plants within this area. I note in Item 6.58 the inclusion of planting has not been updated in the LVE Report. I agree that landscaping is required along this section of the boundary between buildings B03 and B05 and is referred to in the recommended landscaping conditions on page 18 of this evidence.
42. The combination of setback distance, transition in building height and single level landscaped terraces between apartment buildings will reduce visual intrusion effects. While the outlook for these residents will change the building heights and setbacks proposed are overall compliant with District Plan requirements.
43. I concur with Ms Skidmore that initially there may be greater visual intrusion effects for residents within 24 Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell with upper-level windows overlooking the site. Landscaping will in time filter and soften views into buildings. Overall adverse visual amenity effects will be low reducing to very low (less than minor).

*Campbell Street Road Users (6.38- 6.42) & Residents Opposite the Site (6.61-6.64)*

44. The design changes (June 2021) to buildings B02 include a reduction in height at the northern end, variation in colour and composition, and individual entries from the street. I agree with the assessor that appearance of the building is more residential in character. Overtime, foreground trees will establish for

building integration and will create a more contemporary but acceptable streetscape character to Campbell Street frontage (Viewpoints 09,10).

45. Views into taller buildings B01B will be largely blocked by building B02 for residents opposite the site along Campbell Street.
46. In my opinion the appearance of building B02 while different in form will be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and will not necessarily detract from the character and amenity of local residents.
47. Houses located opposite along Campbell Street are generally set back between 30-35m, (including the road width) from the building façade. For residents, the local street scape and landscape character of the site will change, however what is proposed complements the existing neighbourhood character.
48. From the street view and for Campbell Street residents opposite the site, adverse visual effects and loss of visual amenity will be low to very low.

*Residents adjoining the site to the west (6.65 Other properties)*

49. Ms Skidmore has determined that for a few dwellings within view to the west, adverse visual effects will be very low to positive (less than minor) due to the separation distance and landmark quality of the site. I generally concur with Ms Skidmore. Presumably these include residents adjacent to the western boundary at 221A, 221B, 31A, 33A, 29 Campbell Street where outlooks are generally orientated to the north away from the site.

*Lewer Street (6.41-6.42) and Residents along Campbell Street towards Karori Road*

50. Lewer Street users and potentially residents along the western side of Campbell Street closer to Karori Road (Viewpoints 11) will have views into the west facing façade of Building B01B. For some of these residents the upper levels of the building will be noticeable, however the separation distance and foreground buildings will help reduce the visual impact.
51. I generally agree with Ms Skidmore in her findings in Item 6.41, that because of building B10B the proposal '*will have a residential character that complements the surrounding residential neighbourhood, particularly when compared to the Teachers' College buildings*'.

*Karori Road Users (6.43-6.44)*

52. Ms Skidmore considers effects of building B01B within view from Karori Road (Viewpoints 12,13) will be positive. I generally agree and consider due to the distance, angles of view and mixed urban form in the foreground view adverse visual effect from this viewpoint to be low to very low (less than minor).

*Donald Street Users (Items 6.34-6.37) & Donald Street Residents (6.60)*

53. The design changes (June 2021) to building B07 including the variation in building composition and colours, brick elements, and changes to the southern building edge and reduced roof line which are all positive. I agree with the assessor that the building appearance is now more in keeping with residential style apartments (Viewpoints 01-03).
54. From higher Donald Street locations (Viewpoints 04, 05) Building B01B will be prominent in the wider view. Building B01B will be seen at distance and in the wider context of the surrounding area and more distant views. While different in scale and form the building is located within a large site of special character where new development of this intensity could be anticipated for the future.
55. I agree with Ms Skidmore that the dark colours proposed for the upper levels of building B01B will reduce the building's impact. Other mitigating factors such as the building placement within the centre of the site, set back from street frontages and adjoining residential properties will reduce visual intrusion effects and loss of visual amenity from surrounding viewpoints.
56. In my opinion the scale and visual appearance of the Building B07 at the Donald Street frontage will not detract from existing neighbourhood character. Overall, the building will complement the existing street character with planting at the street frontage and driveway edge to assist integration. Adverse landscape and visual effects for residents within view will be low to very low where the apartment building will be seen in context with existing buildings retained along Donald Street, new planting and existing trees within the proposed public space garden. Overall, I concur with Ms Skidmore.
57. For Donald Street users adverse character effects and loss of visual amenity will be low to very low due to the changing vantage points and transient nature of the view.

*Ben Burn Park Users - Viewpoint 08*

58. Ms Skidmore determines that from Ben Burn Park effects of B01B magnitude of change will be moderate and the building will appear prominent however effects will be positive due to the design changes and 'landmark qualities' of the site. Overall, I agree. Building B01B will be partially obscured and seen in wider context with the road and other residential buildings in the foreground. Park users are considered recreational and transient viewers and will be located some distance from the site. For users of Ben Burn Park adverse character and visual amenity effects will be low to very low (less than minor).

*Karori Swimming Pool; Walkway northern boundary; Karori Normal School Users*

59. Ms Skidmore has determined adverse visual effects will be very low to positive (less than minor) due to the nature of activity for people moving through the area and the existing vegetation and separation distance. I generally agree and determine that any adverse visual effects will be low to very low (less than minor).

Review and Summary - Site Character and Landscape Effects

*Policy 4.2.3.6*

*Minimise hard surfaces by encouraging residential development that increases opportunities for permeable open space areas.*

60. Buildings and paved surfacing will be intensified over the site, however some gardens and lawns areas retained. Further ground surface treatment details will be submitted as a requirement of the landscaping conditions.
61. Loss of landscape character could be enhanced by the use of rain gardens to reduce ponding and help manage stormwater runoff from roads and carparking areas. Rain gardens are strongly recommended in the final landscape plans to reduce stormwater runoff and potential flooding effects.

*Policy 4.2.3.7*

*Encourage the retention of mature, visually prominent trees and bush in association with site redevelopment*

62. Established trees and paths within Lopdell Gardens, open lawns area within the southeast corner of the site will be retained and protected. Supplementary planting will be undertaken on completion of construction to replace any protected trees removed or damaged. A Tree Management Plan will be required as a condition of consent detailing protection methodology for areas identified

(G1, G2, G3, G4) in the Final Arboriculturists Report dated 26 May 2020, and also shown on the Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S.

### Review and Summary – Residential Design Guide

*Policy 4.2.4.2                      Manage the design and layout of new infill and multi-unit developments to ensure that they provide high quality living environments and avoid or mitigate any adverse effects on neighbouring properties.*

#### *Character*

*New development should generally recognise and complement the visual characteristics of the local neighbourhood and streetscape*

#### *Objectives*

*G1.1 Existing neighbouring patterns, Significant vegetation*

63. Site and neighbourhood character has been reviewed in points 23, 24 page 7 of this evidence.

*G1.3 Landform*

64. Buildings generally follow existing landform where the site falls from the northeast corner towards the south and west dropping approximately 10 metres overall. The layout of buildings B01A, B01B generally reflects the previous Training College campus buildings. Ground levels will be reduced to accommodate basement levels for building B01B.

*G1.4 Vegetation*

65. Retaining Lopdell Gardens as much intact as practicable is proposed. Existing steps and pathways through the gardens will be protected. Gardens areas retained will make a positive contribution to site character together with new planting. Tree retention areas shown in the Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S are consistent with recommendations made in the Arboriculturists Report dated 26/05/20.

66. Arboriculturist's Report refers to existing vegetation in Lopdell Gardens between buildings B01A and B01B and recommends retention of vegetation which excludes the 4 metres wide construction strip adjacent to buildings, would be feasible. This area is also identified in the Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S. Replacement planting of appropriate native and exotic tree species is also proposed.

67. Tree Management Plan - I concur with the recommendations made in the Arboriculturist Report, that a 'Tree Management Plan' (TMP) must be submitted and approved by council prior to any work commencing on the site. Avoiding

damage and loss of trees during construction will be crucial to maintaining the site character. The TMP must identify and make a photographic record of the retention areas G1, G2, G3, G4 including the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) prior to work commencing and provide details for the protection methodology proposed during construction. The Works Arborist must prepare a Tree Protection Methodology and must supervise all works within the root protection area as defined in AS 4970 - 2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites. This report is to be provided to Council's Arboriculturist Officer for review and acceptance.

*G1.5 Use species that extend the planting and landscape patterns that characterise the wider*

68. Species proposed are generally suitable for the site, however a higher level of wind tolerant species would be appropriate. Removing large scale trees proposed in the Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S such as Pohutukawa, Rimu, Silver Tree Fern and Puriri from the planting proposed at the southern boundary adjacent to buildings B02 – B06 is recommended to reduce future shading effects on rear gardens along the northern side of Scapa Terrace.
69. The planting shown in the Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S prepared by Sullivan and Wall Landscapes shows a conceptual layout for garden areas and framework specimen trees only. Further detailed landscape plans will be required as a condition of consent for all planting areas.
70. Further detailed planting plans will be required showing suitable species within level one courtyard terraces between apartment buildings B02, B03, B04, B05 and B06. Planting should be a minimum height of 1.5 – 2m at the time to ensure immediate privacy screening.
71. The applicant has provided a set of landscaping conditions which are acceptable in principle with recommendations added. Refer to the recommended landscaping conditions on page 18 of this evidence.

*Site Planning*

*Guidelines Positive open spaces*

72. While the Residential Design Guide may not specifically refer to apartment style living many of the apartments have private balconies. Review of site planning and internal amenity has been covered in depth in the WCC Urban Design

Assessment prepared by the council's Urban Designer, Ms Sarah Duffell. My comments below relate specifically to landscaping proposed.

73. Potential effects relevant to neighbourhood character, visual amenity and visual character have previously been assessed in Points 33-59 of this evidence (WCC District Plan Urban Form Objectives and Policies).

*G2.2 Create positive open spaces between and around buildings, for visual separation,*

74. Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S shows the general layout of framework trees, communal garden areas and planting for screening and integration at Campbell and Donald streets and the southern boundary. Further planting details will be required to provide adequate shelter and screening shrubs and low planting area for all garden and pedestrian areas around the site.

*G2.4 Provide active edges to any shared areas of open space.*

75. The retirement village proposal is for apartment style living and rest home care. Some apartments have balconies, however active open space areas will be reliant on walkways and communal open space areas between buildings including landscaped terraces between buildings B02-B06, Lopdell Gardens and the area within the southeast corner of the site adjacent to Donald Street.

*Open Space Design*

*G4.6 Privacy for open spaces - Accessway design*

76. Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S shows the general layout of framework trees, communal garden areas and planting for screening and integration at Campbell and Donald streets and the southern boundary. Further planting details will be required to provide adequate shelter and screening shrubs and low planting area for all garden and pedestrian areas around the site.
77. No specific paving details have been proposed. The applicant wishes to provide an annotated pavement plan and related specifications, detailing proposed site levels and the materials and colour of all proposed hard surfacing as a condition of consent.
78. Further landscaping conditions will be required relating to tree protection, planting, wind protection screens, paving and communal garden areas (Refer to the recommended landscaping conditions on Page 18)

*G4.12 Planting Design*

79. Proposed landscaping is shown on Indicative Landscape Plan, Revision S and Tree Schedule, dated 14/07/21 prepared by Sullivan and Wall Landscapes, Sheets 1-3.
80. Overall, tree species are appropriate for the site and purpose, and in some measure reflect species found in the local neighbourhood or already established within the site. (Refer to recommended landscaping conditions on Page 18)
- Street Edge Planting in front of buildings*
81. Planting shown in Visual Simulations Viewpoints 02,03, Donald Street edge in front of building B07 if related to the Indicative Landscape Plan Revision s, includes 9 x *Pyrus calleryana* 'candelabra', a deciduous tree; 4 x *Magnolia* 'Teddy Bear' an evergreen small tree and 6 x *Cordyline australis*. Planting proposed is appropriate in this situation.
82. Planting shown in Visual Simulations Viewpoints 09,10 for Campbell Street edge in front of building B02 includes 6 x *Sophora chathamica*; 4 x *Magnolia* 'Teddy Bear' and 6 x 1.2m Standards of *Michelia gracipes*. Overall large-scale trees planting proposed is appropriate for the situation.
83. Large trees shown as 5-6m specimens in Visual Simulations may not be realistic representation of initial effects of the planting. Trees are likely to reach the size shown in 3-5 years. It is recommended that all specimen trees proposed at the street edges are at least 2.5 - 3m in height when planted to provide some immediate impact. Detailed planting plans will be required showing suitable species within level one courtyard terraces between apartment buildings B02, B03, B04, B05 and B06 and all other amenity areas around the Planting within this southern edge of level one terraces must be a minimum height of 1.5- 2m at the time of planting to ensure privacy.

## **Response to Submissions**

Submitter concerns relevant to landscape and visual effects, and site landscaping proposed related to the following:

- (a) Shading effects due to inappropriate sized trees proposed close to southern boundary in particular the use of Pohutukawa, Rimu, Silver Tree Fern that will be slow to grow but in time will produce even more shade than buildings. I agree these tree species are not suitable in this situation. Planting close to this boundary should be kept to a maximum height 4m to help filter views and reduce



visual impact of buildings rather than obscure buildings entirely. Native species such as *Dodonaea viscosa*; *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Hoheria* varieties and *Pseudonpanax* varieties would be suitable if planted at 1- 2m heights initially. In 2-3 years trees should reach approximately 4m and should be regularly trimmed to maintain this height. Any taller specimen trees should be deciduous in nature. The final landscape plan submitted must reflect these changes for planting along this boundary. These requirements have been included in the recommended landscaping conditions.

- (b) Mitigation of buildings using large scale trees that will take a long time to grow was found as insulting by submitters. In reply I agree that for residents within properties adjoining the site within Scape Terrace the effects of buildings B02-B06 can't be disguised by trees. However, trees can create a foreground component to anchor and filter views into buildings. Proposed apartment buildings will be set back between 4.2m and 5.5m from the boundary with recession planes that comply with District Plan requirements and the upper building level set well back from the building edge.
- (c) The lack of 'green space for residents to walk' was raised. I understand that although no dedicated walkway around the perimeter of the site is proposed there will be plenty of connecting pedestrian accessways around communal gardens and buildings, including access into Lopdell Gardens. Further details for paving treatments and garden areas will be provided by the Applicant as a requirement of the landscaping conditions if consent is granted.
- (d) The impact on bird life was raised by one submitter. Vegetation within the northeast corner of the site (Lopdell Gardens) and the southeast corner will be protected and retained. New planting proposed around the site will include native species within amenity and rain gardens that will encourage birds to the site. I see no significant loss of bird life in the area due to the retirement village development.
- (e) Concerns raised by a number of submitters related to the visual impact of buildings and change to outlook for residents along northern side of Scapa Terrace and at 49 Campbell Street in particular. In response, buildings B02,B03 and B04 will be set back 5.5m; and for B05 and B06 the set back will be 4.2m from the boundary with planting proposed for integration. The combination of setback distance, transition in building height and landscaped terraces between apartment buildings will help reduce any visual intrusion effects.

- (f) Concerns were also raised relating to the visual impact of buildings B02 and change in street character and outlook for Campbell Street residents opposite the site. I agree the street character will be change however intensification of the site could occur at any time due to the residential zoning. Building B02 is well modulated and contemporary in design with appropriate landscaping at the frontage. Overall, the outcome will be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood character.
- (g) Concerns raised by a number of submitters related to the lack of planting proposed at the rear of buildings B03 - B05 between rear and the boundary with Scapa Terrace properties due to stormwater management restrictions. The latest revision of the Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S does show native trees and ground cover plants along the areas.

### **Recommendations for Landscaping Conditions**

84. I recommend the following landscaping conditions are a requirement of consent, if granted.
- (a) Prior to any building construction activities on site and prior to the implementation of any landscaping, the consent holder shall provide to the council's Urban Designer and/or Landscape Advisor (for Compliance and Monitoring) a finalised set of Landscape and Pavement Plans for approval. The Landscape and Pavement Plans shall be generally consistent with the consented Indicative Landscape Plan Revision S prepared by Sullivan and Wall Landscape Architects, dated 14 July 2021 and, at a minimum shall include:
  - (b) A Tree Management Plan (TMP) in accordance with the Final Arboriculturists Report dated 26 May 2020 prepared by Tree Management Solutions must identify and make a photographic record of the retention areas G1, G2, G3, G4 including the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) including the individual trees identified for protection and provide details for the protection methodology proposed during construction. The Works Arborist must prepare a Tree Protection Methodology and must supervise all works within the root protection area as defined in AS 4970 - 2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites. This report is to be provided to Council's Arboricultural Officer for review and acceptance prior to any site works commencing.
  - (c) The final landscape plan, detailed planting plans and specifications (inclusive of existing areas of planting that are to be retained); must include all garden areas

including street frontages, first level terraces, rain gardens, planting for privacy and wind protection and walkways/pedestrian connections around the site.

- (d) Planting close to the south boundary with adjoining properties along Scapa Terrace must avoid Pohutukawa, Silver Tree Fern, Rimu, Puriri. Trees species must be restricted to small – medium evergreen trees with light textured foliage that will reach a maximum height of 4m. Trees must be maintained at this height to avoid future shading within adjoining properties. Suggested native trees to plant at a minimum grade of 12L and 1.5-2m in height are:
  - (i) Dodonaea; Olearia, Pittosporum, Hoheria, and Pseudonpanax
  - (ii) Any taller trees proposed must be deciduous;
- (e) A planting schedule, detailing the specific planting species, the number of plants provided, locations, heights and plant grades;
- (f) Annotated cross-sections and / or design details with key dimensions to illustrate that adequate widths and depths are provided for rain gardens, roof terrace planters and garden beds. Planting proposed for roof top terraces between apartment buildings B02, B03, B04, B05 and B06 must be a minimum height of 1.5m - 2m at the time of planting to ensure immediate impact for privacy screening;
- (g) An annotated pavement plan and related specifications, detailing proposed site levels and the materiality and colour of all proposed hard surfacing;
- (h) The location and type of all wind mitigation landscaping (including plantings, vertical screens or walls) that has been integrated into the landscape design to reflect the resident use patterns of the village; and
- (i) A management / maintenance programme.
- (j) The proposed planting plan shall be implemented in the first planting seasons following the approval of the Landscape Plan by Council. All landscaping is to be implemented and maintained thereafter.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

85. The special qualities of the site are reflected in the retirement village proposal. The proposal is a comprehensive and contemporary redevelopment of the site that includes retention of open space character and redundant Teachers' College buildings at the Donald Street frontage.

86. Partial retention and protection of Lopdell Gardens and the open space area at the southeast corner of the site will help maintain some landscape character features and values associated with the site. Further landscaping details will be required as a condition of consent and are outlined in the recommended landscaping conditions a) to j) on page 18.
87. The retirement village proposal is for buildings of greater mass and intensity compared to buildings previously on the site that have the potential to introduce more intrusive elements into the view for surrounding residents.
88. With the design changes (June 2021) to buildings B01B, B02, B07 I agree with Ms Skidmore in her conclusion that overall <sup>1</sup>*“the proposal will reinforce the prominent and distinctive character of the site”*.
89. Building B01B may be noticeable or prominent from some neighbourhood viewpoints however generally at a distance from the site. The dark colours proposed for the upper levels together with other mitigating factors such as the building placement within the centre of the site in context with lower buildings, the set back from street frontages and adjoining residential properties will reduce adverse visual intrusion effects and loss of visual amenity. Tree planting proposed at site boundaries and road frontages will also help filter closer range views into the taller buildings.
90. For buildings B02 and B07 fronting Campbell Street and Donald Street respectively, the magnitude of change in character will be high. However, this this change seems a predictable future street character given the available land and residential zoning. The buildings are contemporary in design for apartment style living. In my opinion the change in character will be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood character and amenity values.
91. For residents within properties at the northern side of Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street there will be variable views into buildings B02- B06 depending on existing fence heights and foreground vegetation. Adverse visual amenity effects due to the impact of these buildings will be moderated by the building height transition, setback from boundary and landscaping proposed.

---

<sup>1</sup> LVE Report July 2021 Conclusion Item 7.3

92. Overall, I concur with the assessment made by Ms Skidmore that adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity for residents along the northern side of Scapa Terrace and at 49 Campbell Street will be low (minor) reducing to very low (less than minor) once revised buffer boundary planting establishes and first floor terrace gardens are landscaped with screening shrubs along the southern edge.
93. Adverse effects on character and visual amenity for road users, recreational users of Ben Burn Parks, the council walkway and Karori Road will generally be low to very low (less than minor) due to the orientation, varying distance from the site and transient nature of the viewer.
94. In conclusion, I am supportive of the retirement village proposal within the site. This style of residential development seems a predictable and reasonable option given the size of undeveloped land and the location. Overall, I agree with the findings and conclusions made by Ms Skidmore in the Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LVE Report July 2021).

**Angela McArthur**

**28 July 2022**