



## **APPENDIX L**

Landscape and Visual Assessment –  
R.A. Skidmore Urban Design Limited

# Proposed Comprehensive Care Retirement Village at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street, Karori, Wellington

---

## *Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment*

### Contents

1	Executive Summary .....	1
2	Introduction.....	2
3	The Site and its Context.....	3
4	The Proposed Village .....	5
5	Planning Context.....	6
6	Assessment of Effects.....	9
7	Conclusions.....	23

# 1 Executive Summary

## The Site

- 1.1 The large Site is located within an established and mixed urban environment. The former Teacher's College established a distinctive character that contributes to the diversity and richness of the neighbourhood.
- 1.2 The characteristics of the Site, including its large scale, established buildings, and vegetation, present a number of opportunities and constraints to accommodating a comprehensive care retirement village. These opportunities and constraints have informed the design process for the Proposed Village.

## Assessment Methodology

- 1.3 The assessment set out in this report has been carried out from: analysing the architectural drawings, landscape concept plans and visual simulations; carrying out site visits; and reviewing relevant planning provisions. The methodology used is in accordance with the NZ Institute of Landscape Architect's 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management Best Practice Guide (10.1)'.

## Landscape Effects

- 1.4 Overall, it is concluded that the Proposed Village will reinforce the prominent and distinctive character of the Site. Retention of the Teachers' College buildings adjacent to the Donald Street frontage will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character and distinctive sense of place.
- 1.5 The proposal will result in an increased scale and density of buildings on the Site. However, unlike the collection of Teachers' College buildings, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character. While referencing the former 'brutalist' style, the overall collection of buildings will appear more domestic in character. Extensive planting with a range of ornamental trees will further enhance this residential character. The extensive planting will also mitigate the loss of some vegetation. The typology of apartment buildings will differ from the surrounding predominant pattern of stand-alone dwellings. However, the location, scale and design of the buildings has been designed to respect the residential interfaces and to create a domestic character that is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood character. Overall, the Proposed Village will result in positive effects on the landscape character of the neighbourhood.

## Visual Effects

- 1.6 The assessment identifies the primary viewing audience as comprising four groups:
- users of the surrounding street network;
  - users of surrounding open spaces and public recreation facilities;
  - users of schools in the vicinity; and
  - residents of surrounding properties.
- 1.7 The assessment finds that the magnitude of visual change will vary considerably for the various groups. In the context of the character established by the Teachers' College and the relevant planning provisions, including the identification of 'windfall sites' within residential environments being suitable for intensification, the assessment finds that the resulting effects will vary from moderate adverse to positive. From some locations, as proposed planting, particularly around the perimeter of the Site, becomes established, adverse visual effects will be reduced. For a limited number of residential properties (16, 18 and 24 Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street), adverse visual effects will be reduced to, or remain, low following the establishment of planting. For all other properties, effects will be very low to positive.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 RA Skidmore Urban Design Ltd. has been requested by Ryman Healthcare Ltd. ("Ryman"), to carry out a landscape and visual effects assessment of the proposal to construct and operate a comprehensive care retirement village ("Proposed Village") at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street, Karori, Wellington ("Site").
- 2.2 The following assessment is based on: architectural plans prepared by Ryman; landscape concept plans prepared by Sullivan and Wall; and visual simulations prepared by Ryman (referred to as the Resource Consent Drawings and the Assessment Drawings in the AEE). Rather than reproducing images contained in this set, this report should be read with reference to the drawing package. This report should be read in conjunction with the Urban Design Review report by Clinton Bird Urban Design Ltd, and the Technical Report - Heritage by Dave Pearson Architects submitted with the AEE.
- 2.3 In carrying out the assessment, I visited the Site and surrounding environs on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018.
- 2.4 I have attended a number of pre-application meetings with Council staff as the Proposed Village has been progressed.

## 3 The Site and its Context

### The Site

- 3.1 The Site is located at 26 Donald Street and 37 Campbell Street, Karori, Wellington. The Site is large, with an overall area of approximately 3.05 ha. It has an irregular shape and has frontage to both Donald Street and Campbell Street. The topography of the Site generally falls from the northeast down to the southwest with an overall fall of approximately 10m across the Site.
- 3.2 From 1970 to 2016, the Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Education (formerly the Wellington Teachers' College) (the "Teachers' College") occupied the Site. The collection of modernist buildings in the 'brutalist' style that formed the campus has created a distinctive landmark in the established Karori neighbourhood. A full description and heritage evaluation of the collection of buildings and associated open spaces is set out in the 'Technical Report – Heritage' by Dave Pearson Architects. The rich history of the Site results in a complex range of characteristics that have informed the design of the Proposed Village and the assessment of landscape and visual effects.
- 3.3 The Site layout formerly included a varied collection of buildings. A number of these have recently been deconstructed, to ground level on the Site. The layout of the former Teachers' College and the naming of the various buildings is shown on Sheet RCA04 of the Assessment Package. The Allen Ward VC Hall, Tennant Block and the Oldershaw Music Octagonal Building have been retained. The large scale and somewhat institutional form of a number of the former and existing buildings contrast markedly with the predominantly suburban residential character in the immediately surrounding context. In particular, the Allen Ward VC Hall creates a strong edge to Donald Street; and the former Malcolm Block that extended to 10 storeys with a collection of telecommunications aerials affixed to the roof has been a visible feature in the wider urban landscape.
- 3.4 As shown in Sheet RCA04, the collection of Teachers' College buildings was clustered in the northern portion of the Site. To the south of these, a main accessway provides a vehicular link from Donald Street through to Campbell Street. The open street frontage to Donald Street around this entrance contains a mix of native vegetation to the north and south. This contributes a vegetated quality to the adjacent streetscape. To the west is an open area that contains tennis courts and a carpark. A grassed playing field fronts Campbell Road.
- 3.5 In the northern area of the Site, the Lopdell Gardens contain mature native vegetation within a deeply incised gully area. The garden previously extended between the former Waghorn Block and the Panckhurst Block under elevated bridges with distinctive concrete piers. The demolition of buildings either side of this garden area has resulted in most of the garden between the two buildings being removed. While the northern

portion of the gardens comprised mainly native species, the area between the two buildings contained a mix of native and exotic species.

## The Surrounding Context

- 3.6 The Site is located within the established neighbourhood of Karori. While embedded in a predominantly residential context, the area contains a diverse mix of activities. A detailed description of the activity mix in the surrounding area is set out in the Urban Design Assessment report by Clinton Bird Urban Design. Section 3 of that report includes an analysis of the character of the existing context that is supported by a number of photographs. I agree with that analysis.
- 3.7 In terms of a consideration of landscape and visual effects, key features in the surrounding context include:
- the commercial centre focussed along the Karori Road corridor (approximately 270m from the Site);
  - a number of schools, including Karori Normal School immediately to the north of the Site, and the Samuel Marsden Collegiate School further away to the east; and
  - open spaces and recreation facilities, including the Karori Pool immediately to the north of the Site, Ben Burn Park to the southwest of the Site, and the Karori Bowling Club to the northwest.
- 3.8 The surrounding neighbourhood has a predominantly residential character. While the area contains diverse building styles, it is typified by stand-alone single and two-storey dwellings. Donald Street is an undulating street with a single lane of traffic in each direction and on-street carparking. Between the Site and Karori Road, the character of the western side of the street is influenced by the educational facilities of both the former Teachers' College and the primary school. On the eastern side of the street, dwellings are generally raised above street level. To the south of the Site, the street has a residential character on both sides of the street and rises relatively steeply to the south.
- 3.9 Campbell Street also provides a single traffic lane in each direction with on-street parking. Just to the south of the Site, Ben Burn Park fronts the western side of the street. The park contains a number of playing fields raised slightly above the street level.
- 3.10 Dwellings along Campbell Street are typified by stand-alone single and two-storey dwellings set in established gardens. Some properties have solid screening to the street created variously by fences, vegetation, and garaging.
- 3.11 Scapa Terrace is a local street that connects Donald Street with Campbell Street to the south of the Site. The residential subdivision pattern creates regularly shaped

rectangular sites, containing stand-alone dwellings fronting and directly accessed from the street.

- 3.12 To the north of the Site, a pedestrian path connects between the swimming pool carpark and a small lane that connects to Campbell Street. The walkway extends into the northern area of the Site for a short length. In this area, the swimming pool building is in close proximity to the Site boundary. A boundary adjustment is proposed that will result in the walkway staying within the Council's property.
- 3.13 Considering the Site in its wider context, the suburb of Karori is contained by hills to both the north and south. Lower density residential environments extend up Johnston Hill to the north and Wrights Hill to the south. The vegetated hill slopes create a strong containment to the valley neighbourhood.

## 4 The Proposed Village

- 4.1 A full description of the Proposed Village is set out in Section 2.0 of the AEE. The proposed Site layout is shown in Figure 1 below. In terms of a consideration of landscape and visual effects, the key aspects of the proposal include:
- a comprehensive care retirement village accommodated in a series of buildings, both repurposed and new;
  - communal amenities located in the repurposed Allen Ward VC Hall and new sections of Building B01A;
  - a main site entrance off Donald Street with additional pedestrian access points off Campbell Street and Donald Street;
  - carparking located in a series of basements and undercroft areas;
  - retention and alterations to enable re-purposing of the Allen Ward VC Hall, Tennant Block, and Oldershaw Music Octagonal Building;
  - retention of a portion of the Lopdell Gardens;
  - creation of a small 'pocket' park adjacent to the Donald Street frontage;
  - creation of a number of communal courtyard spaces.



Figure 1: Proposed Village layout

- 4.2 An Indicative Tree Planting Plan / Landscape Concept Plan has been prepared for the Site that will provide the structural planting to complement existing Site vegetation. Detailed design of lower-level planting will complement the structural planting.

## 5 Planning Context

- 5.1 A full description of relevant statutory considerations is set out in the AEE. The following is a summary of the key provisions contained in the Wellington District Plan (“WDP”) that have guided this assessment.
- 5.2 The Wellington District Plan was prepared some time prior to the gazetting of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS:UD) which takes effect on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020. The NPS:UD will replace the National Policy Statement: Urban Development Capacity. It seeks to ensure that NZ’s urban environments, including their amenity values, develop and change over time in response to the diverse and changing needs of people, communities and future generations (Objective 4). While the NPS:UD does not include specific objectives and policies on the expected

landscape qualities of residential zones, it does direct decision-makers to take into account:

- a) The benefits of well-functioning urban environments that have a variety of homes that meet the needs of different households; and
- b) The planned urban built form may involve significant changes to an area, and those changes may detract from amenity values appreciated by some people but improve amenity values appreciated by others people, communities and future generations, including by providing increased and varied housing densities and types. These changes are not, of themselves, an adverse effect.

5.3 This policy framework has been considered in the following assessment.

5.4 The Site is located in the Outer Residential Environment zone of the WDP. It is also identified as an 'Educational Precinct'.

5.5 An overarching objective for the City's residential environments is (Objective 4.2.1):

*To enhance the City's natural containment, accessibility and residential amenity by promoting the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources in Residential Areas.*

5.6 The supporting policy (4.2.1.1) is:

*Encourage consolidation of the established urban area.*

5.7 The associated explanation notes that "in the Inner and Outer Residential Areas there is scope for some degree of residential intensification, but the plan seeks to ensure that new development is compatible with existing character and respects the amenity of surrounding residential properties". This is reflected in Policy 4.2.1.5 for the Inner and Outer Residential Area which is:

*Enable residential intensification within 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.*

5.8 The methods explanation identifies 'windfall' sites which are larger sites within established residential areas that have never been developed for residential purposes. Because of their size, they are noted as providing significant opportunity for residential intensification.

5.9 Policy 4.2.1.6 seeks to encourage the adaptive re-use of existing houses in the Inner and Outer Residential Areas.

5.10 Objective 4.2.2 relates to character and sense of place. It seeks:

*To recognise and enhance those characteristics, features and areas of the Residential Area that contribute positively to the City's distinctive physical character and sense of place.*

5.11 Objective 4.2.4 seeks to:

*Ensure that all residential properties have access to a reasonable level of residential amenity.*

5.12 This is supported by Policy 4.2.4.2 which states:

*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.*

5.13 A number of policies relate to the way open space is provided to enhance visual amenity, assist with the integration of development into existing residential environment (Policy 4.2.3.5), minimise hard surfaces (Policy 4.2.3.6) and encourage the retention of mature, visually prominent trees and bush (Policy 4.2.3.7).

5.14 The description of methods associated with this policy sets out a number of matters to consider when assessing a proposal to vary the standards for buildings in residential areas. The explanation also explicitly notes that there are no controls to protect views from private properties. The explanation also provides particular guidance in relation to multi-unit developments and notes that new multi-unit developments will be assessed against the contents of the Residential Design Guide to ensure that the proposed buildings (and associated spaces) make a positive contribution to the local townscape.

5.15 As detailed in the AEE, the Proposed Village infringes a number of permitted development standards, including:

- The permitted height of 8m;
- Building recession planes of 2.5m vertical from the boundary ground level inclining into the Site at 45 degrees;
- Site coverage of 35%.

5.16 Rules associated with the Education Precinct sit within the Residential Areas chapter. However, there are none that are relevant to this assessment.

5.17 The Proposed Village is classified as a 'multi-unit development' under the WDP. Overall, the proposal requires a non-complying activity resource consent.

## 6 Assessment of Effects

### Assessment Methodology

- 6.1 The following assessment has been carried out from: analysing the architectural drawings, landscape concept plans and visual simulations; carrying out site visits; and reviewing relevant planning provisions. The methodology used is in accordance with the NZ Institute of Landscape Architect's 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management Best Practice Guide (10.1)'.
- 6.2 *Landscape* is the cumulative expression of natural and cultural features, patterns and processes in a geographical area, including human perceptions and associations. The following assessment evaluates the effects of the Proposed Village on landscape character and amenity in relation to the landscape features of the area identified in Section 4 above.
- 6.3 *Visual* effects are somewhat different from many other environmental factors because their assessment requires information on perceptions as well as on resources. Because visual experience is a combination of physical stimulus and psychological response, some aspects of visual effects are undeniably subjective. To understand and assess the visual effects of a project, we must therefore understand not only the project and its context, but also anticipate the probable responses of the people who will see it.
- 6.4 The visual effects assessment is based on:
- the background and context within which the Proposed Village will be viewed;
  - the proportion of the Proposed Village that will be visible, determined by the observer's position relative to the objects being viewed;
  - the number and type of viewers and their location in relation to the Site; and
  - the ability to mitigate any identified adverse visual effects.
- 6.5 The following assessment identifies the groups that comprise the primary viewing audience and sets out an assessment of visual effects in relation to each of these groups.
- 6.6 There is a distinction between the magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Village when viewed by the various groups comprising the viewing audience and the effect resulting from that change. Whether the visual effect is seen as positive or adverse will depend on the perceptions of the viewers and may vary between different people that comprise the audience.
- 6.7 The magnitude of visual change resulting from the proposal will vary considerably for the different groups that comprise the viewing audience. Whether a view is transient

or static influences the magnitude of change as well. While the magnitude of visual change may be high, the effect of that change may be viewed as positive or adverse depending on the perceptions of the viewer.

- 6.8 Appendix 1 includes a list of factors that inform the assessment of the magnitude of change and the effects arising from that change.

## Landscape Effects

- 6.9 The Site is not identified in any statutory or non-statutory document as being within, or in proximity to, an outstanding natural landscape or feature. It is not within any protected viewshafts.
- 6.10 The character of a place is determined by the way a range of natural and cultural elements and layers come together. These include: landform patterns; vegetation patterns; subdivision patterns and street layouts; land uses; and building forms.
- 6.11 The Site is embedded in a neighbourhood that has variable character that reflects the combination of natural patterns and the varied land uses accommodated. The large scale of the Site and the distinctive Brutalist architecture of the buildings constructed to accommodate the Teachers' College created a distinctive feature in the urban landscape. In particular, the Malcolm Block that extended to 10 storeys had a range of telecommunications aerials attached to the roof, creating a prominent built element in the landscape.
- 6.12 While differing markedly from the predominantly residential character in the surrounding area, the architecture of the Teachers' College has been valued, both for its heritage value and the associations it provides with the former use of the Site.
- 6.13 The proposed Site layout and building designs have been carefully considered to develop a village that retains a number of key elements of the Site's built fabric adjacent to the Donald Street frontage. The retention of the Allen Ward VC Hall and Tennant Block buildings in the north-eastern area of the Site and the use of the Allen Ward VC Hall for the village centre communal facilities will create a distinctive environment and provide a link to the past. As noted in the Technical report – Heritage, some later additions, which are obtrusive elements, will be removed. These include the student lounge below the link between the Allen Ward VC Hall and the Tennant Block, and the later entrance portico facing Donald Street. The eastern elevation link will be restored to its original configuration, including reconstruction of the original entrance portico. In my opinion, the retention and restoration of the Allen Ward VC Hall and Tenant Block will maintain a strong visual presence in relation to the Donald Street frontage and provide a clear link to the Site's heritage.
- 6.14 Due to operational requirements and constraints related to achieving suitable earthquake strengthening, Ryman has recently demolished the remaining buildings associated with the former Teachers' College. It is proposed to replace them with purpose-built structures.

- 6.15 The Technical Report – Heritage, notes the heritage value of the spaces between the buildings. Maintaining these spaces, particularly the courtyard between the cluster of the Tennant Block, Allen Ward VC Hall, former Gray Block and former Waghorn Block, was an important driver in determining the Proposed Village layout. The heritage assessment noted that the courtyard generated a strong sense of community and it was considered important to retain this.
- 6.16 This courtyard space and the repurposing of retained and new buildings retains this function as the open space heart of the Proposed Village.
- 6.17 As noted in the Technical Report – Heritage, the design intent for the new Building B01 is to more closely resemble the buildings it replaces than other buildings on the Site. The design objective has also been to ensure this building is sympathetic with the retained Allen Ward VC Hall and Tennant buildings, but have a more contemporary appearance which will clearly indicate that they are new structures. The report notes that the design of the new building has been inspired by the former buildings it will replace and has taken strong architectural cues from them, while also being able to be read as a contemporary building. In particular, the report notes that the original Waghorn and Gray Buildings used a variety of materials and textures with a commonality of elements to maintain a cohesive appearance and this has been taken into account and reflected in the design of the new building. The proposed replacement building will have exposed concrete frames to echo the details of the original structures.
- 6.18 In my opinion, the building designs, and particularly Buildings B01A and B01B, strike an appropriate balance between creating a residential style apartment building, referencing the former Brutalist architectural style, and complementing the retained buildings to the north-east. The Proposed Village provides a clear link to the past while looking to the future and providing a contemporary living environment that is suitable for the elderly.
- 6.19 The highest portion of Building B01B extends to six levels of occupied space above a carpark level that is partially below grade and partially at ground level. The maximum height of the building ridgeline is RL187.94. From this northern wing, the height steps down to the southern wing. The maximum height of Building B01B main ridgeline is lower than the former Malcolm Block which extended to RL 191.4. However, Building B01B has a greater mass extending along a north-south axis. The proposed building will reinforce the landmark qualities of the Site with a well-resolved building form that has strong articulation. Physical stepping of the façade, and the use of recessed balconies and variations in materials and colours, provides visual interest that breaks down the overall visual mass of the building form. The building is terminated with strong roof forms that have generous eaves that extend over the primary façades. Rooftop services are integrated and screened. The removal of the unsightly collection of telecommunications aerials on the former Malcolm Block will be positive.
- 6.20 Building B01A is of a similar scale to the former Waghorn Block. The building form complements Building B01B and suitably references the character established by the former Teachers College campus. The scale of Building B01A is subservient to B01B but extends closer to the Site's northern boundary.

- 6.21 The proposal will see an overall increase in building mass on the Site. This will reinforce the Site as a feature within the urban landscape. The series of apartment buildings in the southern portion of the Site will result in a change in character for an area of the Site that currently has an open character. In particular, Building B02 will have a strong address to Campbell Street, creating a built presence in relation to the street. While the apartment typology and building scale will differ from the established residential character along Campbell Street, it will reinforce the differing character of the Site as an established feature within the neighbourhood, albeit extending buildings into an area of the Site that is currently open. The apartment building is designed to create a positive address to the street with covered balconies, extensive areas of glazing, and the use of varied materials, colours and decorative screens to provide visual interest. This creates a positive and visually interesting frontage. In my opinion, the apartment building design has a domestic character that will complement both the surrounding pattern of development in the residential environment and the larger scale building form located towards the centre of the Site.
- 6.22 It is proposed to retain the feature open space area in the south eastern corner of the Site. This area contains mature vegetation that contributes to the amenity of the neighbourhood, particularly the Donald Street streetscape. In this area a small pocket park will be defined adjacent to the street edge. This will make a positive contribution to the amenity of the street. While the existing vehicular entrance will be retained, it will require widening with some resulting loss in vegetation. The introduction of Building B07 will also result in the removal of vegetation and the creation of a built edge to the street. This will result in some reduction in the existing character and amenity of the street created by the vegetated open space. However, the setback from the street front and the stepped two to three-level building form of Building B07 will complement the bold Allen Ward VC Hall frontage that extends right to the street edge. Unlike the solid façade of the Allen Ward VC Hall, the proposed building will have an engaging frontage that makes a positive contribution to the street environment and wraps around to create a well-articulated edge to the main Site entrance. The proposed tree planting along the street frontage will partially mitigate the loss of vegetation along the frontage.
- 6.23 The Lopdell Gardens are located in the northern area of the Site and contain a mix of mature native and exotic vegetation extending through a deep gully area. The qualities of the gardens are mostly appreciated from within the Site; however, they do interface with the carpark and swimming pool to the north. The portion of garden to the north and east of the retained Oldershaw Music Octagonal building will be retained. As shown on the Indicative Landscape Plan by Sullivan + Wall and the Arboricultural report by Tree 3 Ltd., construction will require the removal of vegetation within a perimeter of approximately 4m around the building footprints. Replacement planting is proposed. The arboricultural report and Indicative Landscape Plan identifies two Kauri and one Pohutukawa tree within this area that should be retained. In addition to that recommendation, I recommend that at the detailed design phase of the project a detailed planting plan is prepared for this area, demonstrating a mix of planting that effectively mitigates the loss of established vegetation to ensure the garden continues to contribute to the character of the neighbourhood.

- 6.24 The Proposed Site Fencing Plan (Sheet RC12 of the Resource Consent package of drawings) depicts the various boundary treatments proposed. While it is important that the Village provides a secure environment for residents, where the Site interfaces with the public realm, an open fencing type is proposed, enabling a visual connection and positive street interface. Along the street interfaces, the fencing will be lowered to 1.6m high. Where the Site adjoins private properties, a 1.8m high timber palisade fence is proposed. It is proposed to retain the Council's publicly accessible walkway to the north of the Site (with a boundary adjustment resulting in the existing alignment being outside the Site), with the fence diverted inside the path alignment. It is proposed to fence on the inside of the open space in the south eastern corner of the site. This will result in this area appearing as a continuation of the streetscape.
- 6.25 Overall, it is concluded that the Proposed Village will reinforce the prominent and distinctive character of the Site. Retention of the Teachers' College buildings adjacent to the Donald Street frontage will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character and distinctive sense of place. The proposal will result in an increased scale and density of buildings on the Site. However, unlike the existing collection of buildings, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character. While referencing the former 'brutalist' style, the overall collection of buildings will appear more domestic in character. Extensive planting with a range of ornamental trees will further enhance this residential character. The extensive planting will also mitigate the loss of some vegetation. The typology of apartment buildings will differ from the surrounding predominant pattern of stand-alone dwellings. However, the location, scale and design of the buildings has been carefully considered so that they will integrate well with the surrounding environment.
- 6.26 In my opinion, overall, in the context of the character established by the Teachers College and the planning framework, which recognises the opportunities presented by 'windfall sites', the Proposed Village will result in positive effects on the landscape character of the neighbourhood.

## Visual Effects

- 6.27 The primary viewing audience will comprise four groups:
- users of the surrounding street network;
  - users of surrounding open spaces and public recreation facilities;
  - users of schools in the vicinity; and
  - residents of surrounding properties.
- 6.28 An assessment in relation to each of these groups follows.

*Users of Surrounding Street Network*

6.29 While users of the street network, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, comprise a large viewing audience, given the moving nature of the view, the sensitivity to change is lessened. With distance from the Site, intervening buildings and vegetation variously obscure the Proposed Village and the prominence of the proposed buildings as part of the wider environment reduces. The Proposed Village will be primarily experienced from the immediately surrounding streets.

*Donald Street users*

6.30 Viewpoints 01 – 05 of the visual simulations depict the Proposed Village from a number of locations along Donald Street. When travelling along Donald Street from the north, the restoration of the north-eastern buildings, being the Tennant Block and Allen Ward VC Hall and the courtyard between the two, will maintain and enhance the landmark quality of the Site. The Allen Ward VC Hall will be retained. The introduction of the Building B07 to the south of the Allen Ward Hall will result in an increased built presence along the Donald Street frontage. The change in character will be particularly evident when travelling past the Site from the south to the north (see Viewpoints 3 and 4).

6.31 While some may perceive the loss of open space and associated vegetation as adverse, in my opinion, the proposed Building B07 provides a suitable transition from the Allen Ward VC Hall to the residential environment to the south. The scale and form of the building achieves this transition function better than replicating the pattern of stand-alone dwellings in the surrounding area. Planting along the street edge will mitigate the loss of vegetation to a certain extent. The open space area to the south of the main entrance will be retained and provide a visual break to the lower-density residential environment to the south. The creation of a publicly accessible pocket park adjacent to the street edge will make a positive contribution to the streetscape, visually reading as part of the public realm.

6.32 Building B06 is located adjacent to the southern boundary and is set back from the Donald Street frontage. The established and proposed vegetation in the open space area between Building B06 and the street will provide an effective visual foil to the buildings. As depicted in the visual simulations, it is only as Donald Street rises more steeply some distance to the south of the Site that Building B01 becomes readily apparent (see Visual Simulation Viewpoint 5). The building has a strong horizontal character that complements the pattern of rooflines in the foreground and is visually contained by the more distant hills behind. The proposed building will be less prominent than the former Malcolm Block together with its associated telecommunications aerials.

6.33 Overall, from Donald Street, it is concluded that the Proposed Village will largely result in positive visual effects. For a limited street length immediately adjacent to the southern area of the Site boundary and to the immediate south of this, the change in character resulting from the loss of open space and the introduction of Building B07 may be perceived as low adverse by some viewers. However, in my opinion, this

change in character creates a suitable transition to the existing buildings that will be retained. As the street front planting matures, it will provide some mitigation for the loss of vegetation in this area with a low adverse visual effect reducing to very low.

#### Campbell Street users

- 6.34 Visual simulations from Viewpoints 9 and 10 depict the Proposed Village when viewed from Campbell Street in the immediate vicinity of the Site. For a short length of the street, the existing character of the Site contrasts with the established pattern of stand-alone dwellings along the street. The playing fields and carparking create an open aspect that provides clear views into the Site. This formerly revealed the large, somewhat institutional buildings, including the Malcolm Block, Panckhurst Block and Theatre Block. The proposal will see the introduction of a residential character along the street edge, with proposed apartment building B02 directly addressing the street with a strong street presence and engagement.
- 6.35 While the apartment typology differs from the predominant surrounding pattern of stand-alone dwellings, as described above, the design of the apartment building is well-articulated to break down the visual mass of the building. The three levels step down to two levels at either end to complement the scale of surrounding dwellings. Tree planting with ornamental gardens underneath will further contribute to the creation of a domestic character. As the trees mature, they will also make a positive contribution to the amenity of the adjacent street and filter views to the apartment building. In my opinion, the scale and form of the proposed building B02 will reinforce the different use and character of the Site in a manner that complements the character of the surrounding residential neighbourhood. From the street immediately in front of Building B02, the larger Building B01 will not be visible.
- 6.36 As seen in visual simulations from viewpoints 11, 12, and 13, as one moves away from the immediate vicinity of the apartment building on Campbell Street, Building B01 becomes more readily apparent. The view from Lewer Street (Viewpoint 11) shows how the former Site development contrasted markedly with the pattern of residential development along Campbell Street. The proposal will also provide visual contrast; and, while the horizontal mass of building will be increased by Building B01, it will have a more residential character that better complements the surrounding residential neighbourhood compared to the Teachers College buildings.
- 6.37 Overall, from Campbell Street, it is considered that the magnitude of change will be very high with the perception of visual effects ranging from low adverse to positive depending on the location and attitude of those travelling along the streets. The planting along the street will reduce the potential visual effects to very low adverse when viewed in the immediate vicinity of Building B02 along Campbell Street but will not impact on the wider views towards Building B01.

#### Karori Road users

- 6.38 Karori Road is a busy street. Only glimpses of the proposal (Building B01) will be obtained from this street (see Viewpoints 12 and 13). The magnitude of visual change will be low. The more residential character of Building B01 will be less visually obtrusive than the former Malcolm Block in the context of the surrounding residential neighbourhood; and it is considered the visual effects resulting from the Proposal will be positive.

#### Scapa Terrace users

- 6.39 The visual simulation from Viewpoints 6, 14 and 15 demonstrate a visual connection from Scapa Terrace to the Site. These views are taken at right angles to the street. The street runs parallel to the Site's southern boundary. When travelling along the street, glimpses will be obtained between dwellings and vegetation along Scapa Terrace to the apartment buildings along the southern boundary with Building B01 viewed behind. However, given the angle of view and the scale and separation, they will not be prominent or obtrusive. Overall, it is considered that the magnitude of visual change will be low, and the adverse visual effects will be negligible.

#### Wider street network users

- 6.40 From the wider street network, glimpses of the Proposed Village will be obtained, primarily Building B01. From elevated street locations on Johnston Hill to the north and Wrights Hill to the south, views to the Site are limited by intervening topography, buildings and vegetation. The magnitude of visual change will be low. From the limited locations where it is visible (see visual simulation from Viewpoint 7), the proposal will appear more varied and articulated than the Teachers' College collection of simple and somewhat institutional buildings; and will better integrate with the surrounding context. The dark colour finish proposed for the new building roofs will reduce the prominence of buildings compared with the light colour of the Teachers' College roofs. Overall, it is considered the visual effects will be negligibly adverse to positive.

#### Summary of visual effects on street users

- 6.41 Overall, it is concluded that the Proposed Village will be visible and, in some instances, prominent from a range of locations in the surrounding street network. The magnitude of visual change will vary from low to very high. The proposal will reinforce the established difference of the Site from the surrounding predominantly low-density residential neighbourhood. However, it will have a more domestic character than the collection of buildings that reflected the former education institution use. From many locations, this will result in positive visual effects. From limited locations on streets in the immediate vicinity, adverse visual effects may be perceived by some as low adverse, reducing to very low as planting matures.

### *Users of Open Spaces and Recreation Facilities*

#### Ben Burn Park users

- 6.42 Ben Burn Park is located on the western side of Campbell Street, to the south of the Site. Viewpoint 8 of the visual simulations is from a seat on the western side of the park. From here, the collection of Teachers College buildings were previously clearly visible and the telecommunications aerials on the Malcolm Block were prominent, projecting above the skyline of the hill that forms the landform backdrop. From here, the Proposed Village will be viewed with a layering of different building elements. Building B01 will be prominent. The magnitude of visual change will be moderate. While Building B01 has an increased horizontal mass than that of the former site development, being of a lower height and without the telecommunications aerials means the building form is better contained by the landform backdrop behind. Even at this distance, the articulation of the various buildings is legible; and, in particular, the white framing elements are successful in breaking down the forms into a series of complementary elements. In my opinion, this results in a less institutional appearance that is better suited to the residential context, when compared with the former site development. Overall, it is considered the proposal will have positive visual effects when viewed from Ben Burn Park.

#### Karori Swimming Pool users

- 6.43 The Karori Swimming Pool is located immediately to the north of the Site. It is an indoor pool without any windows overlooking the Site. The pool is accessed from Donald Street and a carpark is located adjacent to the east of the Site's northern boundary. From here, the Lopdell Gardens and the buildings that will be retained are visible. While the proposal will necessitate some vegetation removal in the Lopdell Gardens within the construction perimeter, the area adjacent to the carpark will not be disturbed. A vegetated quality to the interface will be maintained. It is considered that the magnitude of visual change will be low.
- 6.44 Replacement planting for the vegetation that is to be removed will provide effective mitigation as it matures. As noted above, it is recommended that a detailed planting plan is prepared when the project progresses to the detailed design phase.
- 6.45 Building B01 will be clearly visible from parts of the carpark. However, it will be viewed with the foreground of dense vegetation. In this context, I do not consider the building will appear incongruous or obtrusive. It is concluded that adverse visual effects will be very low, reducing to negligible as planting becomes established.

#### Users of the Walkway along the Northern Boundary

- 6.46 As the pathway from the swimming pool carpark descends down the hill to the west, it extends into the Site. However, as noted above, the boundary adjustment will bring this portion of the walkway into the adjacent Council site. From here the pathway will be located in close proximity to the northern wall of Building B01A, with the Pool

building close to the path on its northern side. In this constrained location vegetation removal will result in a more open aspect to the pathway. Fencing within the Site along the edge of the path will maintain a visual connection into the Site. For a short length Building B01A will appear prominent. Further to the west the pathway is flanked by vegetation which will filter views to the Proposed Village. For those using the walkway, views will be transient. The Proposed Village will result in moderate visual change in the vicinity of the Karori Pool. In my opinion, the visual change will result in very low adverse visual effects.

*Summary of visual effects on Open Spaces and Recreation Facilities users*

- 6.47 It is concluded that the magnitude of visual change resulting from the Proposed Village when viewed from surrounding public open spaces and recreation facilities will be moderate to low; and the resulting visual effects will be very low adverse when viewed from the walkway, very low adverse reducing to negligible as mitigation planting becomes established when viewed from the Karori Swimming Pool site and positive when viewed from Ben Burn Park.

*Users of Schools in the Vicinity - Karori Normal School*

- 6.48 Karori Normal School is located to the north of the swimming pool carpark. The school buildings have a primary orientation towards Donald Street. The character of the Site will be maintained as it is viewed from the school, with the retention of existing buildings in the eastern area of the Site adjacent to Donald Street and the retention of the vegetated quality of the Lopdell Gardens.
- 6.49 From the school playground that fronts Karori Road, the Malcolm Block was visible and a prominent built feature before its recent removal. From here, Building B01 will be visible. However, given its orientation, the horizontal extent of Building B01 will not be readily apparent. It will be lower than the former Malcolm Block and will have a less imposing appearance. From this location, I consider the visual effects resulting from the change will be positive.

*Residents of Surrounding Properties*

*Scapa Terrace properties*

- 6.50 Properties that will most directly experience visual change resulting from the proposal are those that directly adjoin the Site. Properties on the northern side of Scapa Terrace adjoin the Site's southern boundary. Many of these properties have solid fences and vegetation that effectively screens views towards the Site from the ground level of dwellings and their gardens. Most dwellings along the northern side of the street are single-level. The Site's existing ground level adjacent to these properties varies along the boundary length. The relationship between the proposed buildings and neighbouring properties is shown in the cross sections shown in RCA14-16.
- 6.51 The series of five apartment buildings proposed in the southern area of the Site are located and configured to respect the Site's relationship with neighbouring properties.

The buildings have a set-back of between 4.2 and 5.5m and extend to two levels, stepping up to three levels away from the boundary. The apartment buildings are oriented to present the short end of the rectangular buildings to their southern neighbours. At ground level the apartment buildings are connected to accommodate a single-level, contiguous undercroft parking area. At the upper level the apartment buildings are separated by landscaped terraces. Hedge planting is proposed to define the southern edge of these terraces. The separation between the building faces is between 15 and 17m. From the neighbouring properties to the south, the higher Building B01 will be variously viewed behind these lower apartment buildings. The proposal will result in moderate - high visual change when viewed from these properties. The proposed apartment buildings will appear as a different housing typology when viewed from the adjacent properties. A co-ordinated approach to landscaping of the boundary and spaces between the buildings is proposed with specimen trees located to complement the building forms. As the trees mature (between five to ten years), they will successfully filter views into the Site. However, for an area between Buildings B03 and B05, planting along the boundary is restricted by stormwater management requirements. In this area an open visual aspect will be maintained from neighbouring properties. While the Proposed Village will result in considerable visual change, as noted above, the District Plan identifies 'windfall sites' as being suitable to accommodate increased residential density. Therefore, a different residential typology could be reasonably anticipated on this Site.

- 6.52 Given the generally solid boundary treatments along property boundaries, and the low profile of most dwellings, the proposal will not appear as obtrusive from the ground level of the Scapa Terrace properties. From the upper levels of the small number of two-storey properties, the proposal will appear as more prominent. However, the former Site development has established a different character for the wider Site and the pattern of development proposed will reinforce that difference of character. In my opinion, the scale and design of the southern apartment buildings, while prominent, will not result in an overdominance of the adjacent properties. The end façades of Buildings B02 – B06 have also been designed to avoid overlooking of neighbouring properties. In the context of the planning framework that recognises the opportunities presented by 'windfall sites', it is considered that the adverse visual effects will be low from most properties, reducing to very low as planting between the apartment buildings and Site boundary becomes established. For a limited number of properties (16, 18, and 24 Scapa Terrace) it is considered that the adverse visual effects will remain low after planting is established.

#### Donald Street properties

- 6.53 Dwellings on the eastern side of Donald Street are generally elevated above street level. They are generally oriented to the west, with private gardens located to the rear of dwellings. For those dwellings directly opposite Building B07, the proposed new apartment building will result in high visual change. However, the street provides visual separation, avoiding visual dominance. The relationship of Building B07 to dwellings on these properties (33, 35 and 37 Donald Street) is shown in the cross sections on

Sheet RCA14. The building will be viewed in the context of the Allen Ward VC Hall, which has established a bold and somewhat harsh built edge to the street. The Proposed Village, including the higher Building B01 that sits behind the Hall, will be visually subservient to this foreground building form. In the context of the site character that has been established by the former Teachers College and the planning framework that recognises the potential for a different form of development presented by 'windfall sites', adverse visual effects resulting from the Proposed Village, and particularly the loss of open space and removal of vegetation along the street front, will be low but will be mitigated to a certain extent by new planting. The adverse visual effects will reduce to very low as the planting becomes established.

#### Campbell Street properties

- 6.54 Similarly, dwellings on the western side of Campbell Street directly opposite proposed Building B02 will experience high visual change, with the apartment building located in an area that is currently open. Dwellings on these properties are set back from their front boundary with various solid walls, garages and planting screening views towards the Site. The relationship between the Proposed Village and these properties (34, 36, 38, 40, 42 Campbell Street) is shown in the cross sections contained in sheets RCA-16 and 17. While the proposal will appear as different from the pattern of residential activity in the wider area, the scale and domestic form of the proposed building will not appear incongruous in its residential setting. The street provides suitable separation to avoid over-dominance or overlooking of properties on the western side of the street. Overall, it is considered that the adverse visual effects will be low reducing to very low as the street boundary planting becomes established.
- 6.55 The property at 49 Campbell Street adjoins the Site's southern boundary adjacent to Building B02. This property contains a two-storey dwelling. The relationship between Building B02 and this dwelling is depicted in the cross section contained in Sheet RCA-16. While Building B02 has been designed to step down to this boundary, respecting the permitted HIRB standard, and planting along the boundary will provide a visual buffer, from the upper level views to the wider Village will be obtained. In the context of the character established by the Teacher's College, including the somewhat institutional former Pankhurst and Waghorn Blocks, and the planning framework that recognises the potential of 'windfall sites' to accommodate a different form of development, I consider that while the magnitude of visual change experience from this property will be high, the adverse visual effect will be moderate, reducing to low as the planting along the southern boundary becomes established.
- 6.56 To the north of the Site, the property at 33 Campbell Street is owned by Ryman and written approval has been provided. Therefore effects on this property can be disregarded.
- 6.57 Further to the north, views towards the Proposed Village from residential properties on the eastern side of Campbell Street are variously obscured by other buildings and vegetation. While a greater building mass is proposed than that of the collection of

Teachers College buildings, the Proposed Village has a more domestic character. In the context of the planning framework that recognises the potential of 'windfall sites' to accommodate a different form of development, I consider that the magnitude of visual change will be moderate, and the adverse visual effects will be very low when viewed from these properties.

#### Other properties

- 6.58 For a range of dwellings to the south and west of the Site, clear views will be obtained towards Building B01. As with the assessment from surrounding streets, it is considered the proposal will reinforce the Site as a visual focus within the wider neighbourhood. The magnitude of visual change will vary from very low to moderate. While the collection of proposed buildings has a greater horizontal mass than the existing collection of former Teacher's College buildings, the overall height will be lower than the Malcolm Block, and the architectural form will be more finely articulated and residential in character. Adverse visual effects will vary from very low adverse to positive.

#### Summary of visual effects on residential properties

- 6.59 Overall, it is concluded that the visual change resulting from the proposal when viewed from surrounding residential properties in the immediately surrounding environment will range from high to very low, and the resulting adverse visual effects will range from moderate adverse to positive. As planting becomes established, adverse visual effects will reduce to between low and very low. Once planting is established, low adverse visual effects will still be experienced from the residential properties at 16, 18 and 24 Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street.

### Summary of visual effects

- 6.60 The following table provides a summary of the magnitude of change and the visual effect resulting from that change when viewed by the various groups identified as comprising the viewing audience (see Appendix 1 for a list of factors that contribute to the magnitude of visual change and the effects arising from that change) using the following terminology:
- **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.

Viewing Group	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effect	Notes
Users of street network	Very high to low	Low adverse (reducing to very low as planting becomes established) to positive	Moving nature of viewing audience reduces sensitivity to change.
Users of open spaces and recreation facilities	Moderate to low	Very low adverse to positive (with effects experienced from the pool carpark reducing to negligible as planting becomes established)	
Users of schools	Low	Positive	
Residents of surrounding properties	High to very low	Moderate adverse to positive (with the most significant effects reducing to low adverse as planting becomes established)  Low adverse visual effects will be experienced from residential properties at 16, 18 and 24 Scapa Terrace and 49 Campbell Street.	Visual experience will vary considerable between different properties in the surrounding context

## Residential Design Guide

- 6.61 I have reviewed the Residential Design Guide referred to in Section 3 above. The assessment above has addressed the relevant guidance relating to landscape and visual effects considerations. In relation to character, I consider the proposal has identified and responded positively to the unique qualities and sense of place of the Site and its setting. In particular, I consider the Site is suitable to accommodate visual contrast in relation to the surrounding context, while being sensitive to the interfaces created with its surrounding environment. While some existing vegetation will be removed, established garden areas will be maintained and continue to make a positive contribution to the Site and surrounding environs. In addition, there will be extensive tree and complementary shrub planting throughout the Site.
- 6.62 Careful consideration has been given to the site planning to ensure good on-site amenity, specifically designed to meet the needs and preferences of elderly residents, while also ensuring a positive interface with adjoining streets.

- 6.63 In terms of the configuration and design of buildings, the proposal draws on the retention of a number of the former Teachers' College buildings, to create a cohesive and distinctive character. Buildings that interface with adjacent streets have been designed to present a public and engaging interface with the adjacent public realm. Similarly, the network of open spaces builds on key spaces created by the former Teachers' College site development and complements these with a range of communal spaces that are suitable for the retirement village environment and maintain a positive interface with the surrounding public realm.

## Urban Design Review Report

- 6.64 I have also carried out a review of the Urban Design Review report by Clinton Bird Urban Design Ltd. In my opinion, the report sets out an appropriate methodology for considering urban design matters and assessing the associated amenity effects.
- 6.65 The report assessment is based on a thorough description and analysis of the Site in relation to its surrounding context, both immediate and wider.
- 6.66 I agree with the assessment of the effects of the Proposed Village on the site and context character. This aligns with the assessment of landscape effects set out above.
- 6.67 There are some small differences of opinion, in relation to visual effects experienced from locations surrounding the Site and these are clearly expressed in the respective reports.
- 6.68 In relation to other amenity effects experienced by surrounding residential properties (overlooking/loss of privacy and shading), in the context of amenity expectations within an established residential environment, I agree with the assessment set out in the Urban Design Review report.
- 6.69 I agree with the assessment provided in relation to CPTED. In addition, I note that the Proposed Village will be actively managed by Ryman with the grounds well cared for and maintained. This will make a positive contribution to a sense of 'ownership' of the communal spaces by residents, assisting to create a safe environment.

## 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Site is located within a well-established neighbourhood that, while predominantly residential, contains a diverse mix of activities. The Teachers' College created a distinctive built environment within the neighbourhood. In particular, the Malcolm Block was a prominent feature, visible from a range of locations.
- 7.2 Using the terminology contained in the District Plan, the Site can be described as a 'windfall' site that provides particular opportunity to take a comprehensive approach to development and achieve residential intensification through establishing a comprehensive care retirement village.

- 7.3 The Proposed Village has been designed in response to a careful analysis of the characteristics and values of the Site and its surrounding environment. Overall, it is concluded that the proposal will reinforce the prominent and distinctive character of the Site. Retention of a number of the Teachers' College buildings will provide a visual link to the Site's history and will continue to make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood's character. The proposal will result in an increased scale and intensity of use; however, the design of the various built elements will be residential in character.
- 7.4 While referencing the former 'brutalist' style established by the Teachers' College buildings, the overall collection of buildings will appear more domestic in character. Extensive planting with a range of ornamental trees will further enhance this character. The extensive planting will also mitigate the loss of some vegetation. The typology of apartment buildings will differ from the surrounding predominant pattern of stand-alone dwellings. However, the location, scale and design of the buildings has been carefully considered so that they will integrate well with the surrounding environment. In my opinion, overall, the Proposed Village will result in positive effects on the landscape character of the neighbourhood.
- 7.5 The analysis above identifies four primary groups that comprise the viewing audience for the Proposed Village. Views to the proposal will vary considerably from different locations, with the greatest visual change being apparent from the immediately surrounding environment. While the magnitude of visual change will be high from some locations, the resulting visual effects have been assessed as being positive from some locations. From a limited number of residential properties adjacent to the Site, adverse visual effects may be perceived as moderate. However, these will reduce to low to very low as the proposed tree planting around the perimeter of the Site establishes and matures.



**Rebecca Skidmore**

Urban Designer/Landscape Architect  
August 2020

## Appendix 1

### Factors Informing Visual Assessment

#### *Magnitude of Change*

1. Geographical extent/proportion of view – from a small proportion of a wider view (low) to a high proportion of a view obtained (high).
2. Distance from viewer – far (low) to close (high).
3. Duration of view – transient and fleeting (low) to static (high).
4. Contrast between the proposal and the existing view from similar (low) to highly contrasting (high)

The summary contained in Section 7 combines a consideration of these factors and applies a 7-point scale of magnitude from negligible to extreme.

#### *Effects of Change*

1. Sensitivity of view to change including its visual quality, and visual absorption capability.
2. Number of viewers affected by the change.
3. Characteristics of the viewing group. For example, residents and people visiting an area to enjoy its visual characteristics will likely be more affected by visual change than people passing through an area or working in an area.
4. Viewer's values and attitudes towards the proposed activity (this may be negative, benign or positive).

The assessment contained in Section 4 considers these factors in combination and the summary at the end of the section applies a 7-point scale from very high adverse to positive.