

MT VICTORIA NORTH TOWNSCAPE PRECINCT



DRAFT DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS / URBAN DESIGN REVIEW

Prepared for Wellington City Council

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct in the Draft Wellington City District Plan (DDP) is to provide for the management of townscape values within the Mt Victoria North area.

The Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct follows the boundaries set by the Mt Victoria North Character Area in the Operative District Plan (ODP) and renames it as the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct (refer Fig 1).



Fig 1: Mt Victoria North Character Area Boundary Operative District Plan (refer Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide, p.2)

Deemed to be one of Wellington's most iconic and prominent urban landscapes, the city-wide significance of the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct (townscape precinct or precinct) and its contribution to Wellington's collective identity and sense of place, has been long-established. Accordingly, the integrity of its visual image has been managed through specific provisions under the ODP. These provisions have been largely retained and carried through into the DDP.

The townscape precinct is comprised primarily of sites within the identified Mt Victoria North Character Precinct in the DDP, but also includes sites that sit outside the character precinct. Together, these sites make up the precinct's collective townscape character.

The townscape precinct forms part of the identified Medium Density Residential Zone in the DDP. The DDP anticipates the same scale of development across the entire precinct, with additional provisions restricting demolition on sites within the character precinct. This approach is different from that applied to the non-character sites elsewhere in Mt Victoria, where the DDP enables a higher level of intensification.

1.2 PURPOSE & SCOPE

The rationale for carrying the ODP provisions for the precinct through into the DDP is underpinned by the planning history of the precinct and its undisputed townscape significance. However, no recent specific background work or specific assessment has been undertaken of the townscape significance of this area. To address this, the Council has commissioned an urban design/townscape review of the DDP provisions for the precinct. The purpose of the review is to establish whether the DDP provisions are fit for purpose and sound in townscape character terms.

The review is focused on:

- the boundaries of the precinct - establishing whether any adjustment might be warranted;
- the appropriateness of the draft provisions in relation to the purpose and significance of the townscape precinct and the reasons behind those provisions; and
- the potential visual impact of the draft increased building height in the vicinity of the precinct on views to St Gerard's Monastery and its setting.¹

1.3 METHODOLOGY

- Field work to: (a) re-test the visual extent of the precinct based on the draft boundaries; and (b) identify whether any of the increased draft height provisions for sites in the vicinity of the precinct, which fall within the draft Medium Density Residential Zone, are likely to impact on the townscape values of the precinct and associated views from the central city, waterfront and Oriental Parade.
- Analysis/review of the draft provisions relative to the existing townscape patterns to confirm or otherwise their ability to retain the integrity of the precinct's townscape character and associated values. The analysis is focused on the key bulk and location provisions which are most relevant to townscape character values. The relevant design guide provisions are also briefly discussed.

2 ASSESSMENT

2.1 TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER VALUES

According to the DDP (MRZ-PREC02) the importance of the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct is based on its *'high visibility and proximity to St Gerard's Monastery and escarpment below'*.

The townscape values within the precinct which the DDP seeks to manage are derived from a set of distinctive elements/character attributes and the relationship between them, which together create a memorable and highly prominent townscape setting.² These elements include the area's expressive topography, St Gerard's Monastery and the green escarpment below, and the collection of houses within the Mt Victoria North area, most of which were built prior to 1930 on long narrow sections. Following the underlying topography, these houses share a common built form and orientation creating a distinctive building pattern. The area's proximity to the harbour increases its visibility, making it a prominent feature in many views from across the central city and the waterfront.

One of the area's defining character attributes is the large number of pre-1930's buildings with consistent character. The character value of these buildings, and their contribution to the broader streetscape character, is acknowledged and managed in the DDP through the identified Mt Victoria North Character Precinct. However, the townscape precinct does not seek to protect historic or heritage values. Its main focus is on the collective identity of the area and associated townscape values. According to the DDP *'Townscape focuses on long-range views from public spaces, which differs from streetscape values*

¹ This is to address issues raised in submissions to the DDP.

² According to the DDP *'Townscape means the visual appearance of a neighbourhood when viewed from surrounding public spaces. It includes the collective image of, and relationship between, the following elements: setting and landscape - built form and landscape setting (landform and associated vegetation pattern); the lay-out of streets, lanes and footpaths (urban structure); subdivision patterns; buildings and structures; and gardens and open spaces.'*

which are enjoyed in the immediate streetscape...The benefits of streetscape values can contribute to townscape characteristics but is not a primary factor’.

In the DDP the townscape precinct is comprised of two site categories: (a) sites included within the identified Mt Victoria North Character Precinct; and (b) sites sitting outside the character precinct. The characteristics of the two site categories and associated issues are discussed in Section 2.3 of the report.

Under the DDP the townscape precinct is in the Medium Density Residential Zone. The retention of its townscape values is highly dependent on the management of new building development within the precinct. Establishing the degree of protection/management of the precinct’s townscape values offered by the relevant DDP provisions, is therefore important. The provisions relating to building bulk and location, and design appearance are most relevant in that respect. These are discussed in Section 2.4 of the report.

2.2 MT VICTORIA NORTH TOWNSCAPE PRECINCT BOUNDARIES/VISIBILITY

Boundaries - the boundaries of the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct under the DDP are outlined in Fig 2 below.



Fig 2: Wellington Draft District Plan: Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct

The northern and southern boundaries of the townscape precinct are defined by the Oriental Bay Height Precinct and associated escarpment, and the Town Belt respectively. To the west the precinct borders Roxburgh Street and to the east it largely follows the boundary of the Oriental Bay Height Precinct. The precinct’s boundaries ‘contain’ the existing concentration of hillside houses around St Gerard’s Monastery and define a highly visible area with characteristic townscape patterns that can be appreciated from a distance.

Visibility - the proximity of the precinct to the harbour increases its visual prominence and accentuates its contribution to the city’s identity and sense of place. An integral part of the central city’s visual context, the precinct features in various public views and identified viewshafts. St Gerard’s Monastery and escarpment below - a key townscape character attribute - is the focal point in several of the identified viewshafts under the DDP (VS11, VS12 and VS15 and also features in VS18/panoramic view of the city).

In addition to views along identified viewshafts, the precinct is experienced from a range of viewpoints within the central city, the waterfront and Oriental Parade. Depending on the viewpoint location (and associated viewing distance/viewing angle) different parts of the precinct will come into focus. The precinct is experienced in a dynamic way when moving around the city, and particularly when walking along the waterfront/Oriental Parade. This provides opportunities for the precinct to be appreciated in sequential views where the view of the precinct and its surrounding context are constantly changing. It is important that this is taken into account when reviewing the DDP provisions, and particularly the height provisions for the sites in the immediate visual context of the precinct.

High-level visual assessment - a high level visual assessment was carried out to help understand the visibility of the different parts of the precinct and identify the potential impact of new development under the draft increased height provisions on sites adjacent to or near the precinct.

The key observations of the assessment are summarised below:

- In most views the bulk of the existing Copthorne Hotel, particularly the horizontal bulk of its rear wing, blocks views to parts of the precinct (e.g. area in the vicinity of Prince Street). This means that the visual impact of new development in that location is likely to be limited to the local streetscape, rather than featuring in long-range townscape views. Notwithstanding that, it is important that the site of the Copthorne Hotel rear wing (a building that detracts from the townscape value of the precinct) stays included in the precinct to ensure its impact is managed should it be redeveloped in the future.
- Most of the sites which sit outside of the identified character precinct are prominent in both long-distance views from the central city as well as short-range/mid-distance views from the waterfront and Oriental Parade. These sites are located in two separate clusters - a cluster of sites at the south-western end of McFarlane Street (refer Fig 3), and a cluster of sites at the eastern end of the precinct in the vicinity of Oriental Terrace (refer Fig 4).

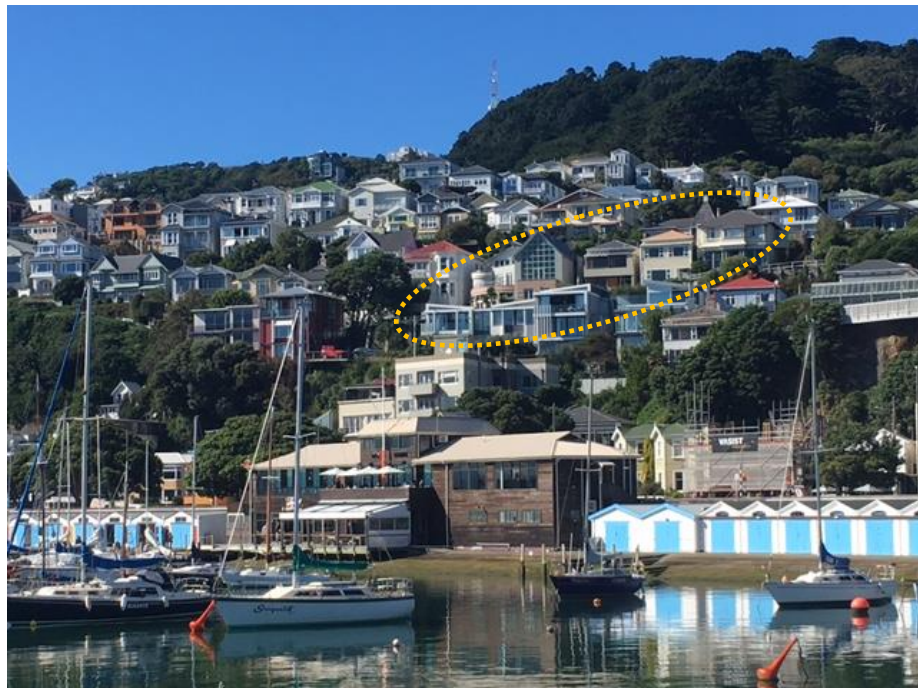


Fig 3: View from the southern end of Clyde Quay Wharf (McFarlane Street cluster of sites outside the character precinct)

- Sites within the identified clusters are more likely to be redeveloped as they are not subject to demolition restrictions as those in the character precinct are. Ensuring that the scale of development on those highly prominent sites is consistent with the scale of development on sites within the character precinct is important if the integrity of the precinct and associated townscape values are to be maintained. This has been acknowledged by and reflected in the draft provisions - an approach that is justified on townscape character grounds, but noting that it deviates from the approach taken to the management of sites outside identified character precincts elsewhere in Mt Victoria where a higher level of intensification would be enabled.



Fig 4: View from Oriental Parade looking west (Oriental Terrace cluster of sites outside the character precinct)

- The sites immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the townscape precinct (on the southern side of Oriental Terrace) have a height limit of 21m - refer Fig 5. This could result in a new 21m tall building built close to the street boundary within the front part of 20 Oriental Terrace (Jerningham Apartments occupy the rear part of the site). Such a building could potentially impact on the townscape setting of the Monastery in views from the east by changing the foreground of the view. To reduce the likelihood of such an impact, consideration could be given to reducing the height limit for the front part of the site at 20 Oriental Terrace.



Fig 5: DDP Height Map (20 Oriental Terrace draft height 21m)

- 31 and 33 McFarlane Street - located adjacent to the northern boundary of the townscape precinct these sites are part of the streetscape of McFarlane Street. However, they are included in the Oriental Bay Height Precinct and, as such, they are subject to a different set of provisions compared to those applicable in the townscape precinct. The buildings at 31 and 33 McFarlane Street are highly prominent in views from the waterfront. Sitting above the green escarpment, which separates them from the Oriental Parade buildings, they read more as part of the Mt Victoria North townscape setting

than as elements of the Oriental Parade streetscape - refer Fig 6. This suggests that including them in the townscape precinct is a valid consideration from a townscape character perspective. This is to ensure that the potential impact of new development on those sites is appropriately managed, and the visual integrity of the existing townscape setting is retained.³

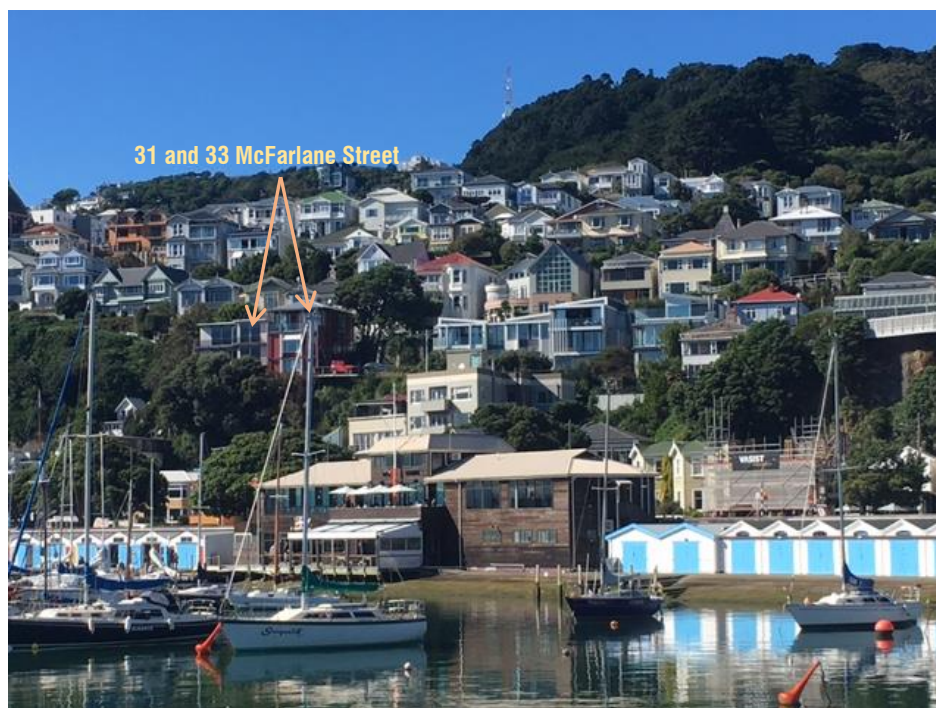


Fig 6: View from south end of Clyde Quay Wharf (31 and 33 McFarlane Street)

- The potential impact of the increased height provisions under the DDP in the vicinity of Hay Street on St Gerard's Monastery and associated views was raised in one of the submissions on the DDP, amongst other concerns regarding the wider Oriental Bay character. Given the scope of this review, the comments that follow focus solely on the potential impact of the increased height provisions on the Monastery and its setting as experienced in public views from Hay Street, Oriental Parade and the waterfront:
 - the Monastery is located to the west of Hay Street. The sightlines along Hay Street are oriented north-south. This, combined with the topography of the street and the existing buildings limit visual connections to the west, towards the Monastery. This means that the Monastery is not part of the visual environment of the local streetscape when moving along Hay Street;
 - the visual assessment identified two locations along the street where glimpses of the Monastery are possible. These are: (a) in the vicinity of 8 Hay Street where the gap associated with the vehicle lane to 8 Hay Street allows a glimpse of the rear part of the Monastery - refer Fig 7; and (b) in the vicinity of 3 Hay Street where the gap between 236 Oriental Parade (Kensington Apartments) and the adjacent dwelling at 2 Hay Street allows glimpses towards the north/eastern end of the Monastery - refer Fig 8, noting that any development under the proposed increased height will be located to the south of this view corridor and therefore will not impact on it. The partial views to the Monastery from both of the above locations offer fleeting glimpses to parts of the Monastery from a single viewpoint along the street. These glimpses are not a defining characteristic of the local streetscape. Moreover, as already noted, the view from one of the two locations will not be affected by the increased height;
 - the proposed increased height in the vicinity of Hay Street will not have any direct visual impact on the Monastery and its setting in views from the east when moving along Oriental Parade. This is because the sites where the increased height is proposed remain to the south of the

³ The appropriateness of including 31 and 33 McFarlane Street in the townscape precinct was an issue raised in one of the submissions to the Draft District Plan.

Oriental Parade buildings which frame the views. Similarly, development under the proposed increased height in the vicinity of Hay Street will not be prominent in views from the central city or the waterfront and will have no direct visual impact on the Monastery or the overall townscape image of the precinct.



Fig 7: View from footpath at 8 Hay Street towards St Gerard's Monastery



Fig 8: View from footpath at 3 Hay Street towards St Gerard's Monastery

2.3 TOWNSCAPE PRECINCT VERSUS CHARACTER PRECINCT

Under the DDP the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct is comprised of two site categories - refer Fig 9:

- **sites included within the identified Mt Victoria North Character Precinct** - the buildings on those sites, because of their age and associated consistency of character, define and contribute to the streetscape character. Due to the high visual exposure of the Mt Victoria North area, these buildings form part of and also contribute to the area's townscape character; and
- **sites outside the character precinct** - these sites follow similar patterns of development re building scale, building location and subdivision patterns as those in the character precinct. However, they do not exhibit the consistency of building character associated with the sites in the character precinct. In this sense their contribution is primarily to the collective townscape character.



Fig 9: Wellington Draft District Plan: Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct & Mt Victoria North Character Precinct

Mt Victoria North Character Precinct - the DDP identifies several Character Precincts (Mt Victoria Character Precinct being one those, refer Fig 10). Comprised of a range of older houses that are reflective of the historical development pattern of the City, the character precincts were identified based on the predominance of buildings constructed prior to 1930 and their contribution to the broader streetscape.

'The purpose of the Character Precincts: 'is to provide for the management of effects on character values within specifically identified residential areas of the City'. More specifically, 'The District Plan seeks to manage pre-1930 buildings within the Character Precincts in order to maintain the character of those neighbourhoods where the concentration of coherent development defines and contributes to their distinct character and sense of place'.

Under the DDP Objective (MRZ-PREC01-01) Character Precincts are managed to:

- 1) *Minimise the further erosion on their character;*
- 2) *Provide for their on-going use and development that maintains or enhances their character; and*
- 3) *Ensure development within the Precinct recognises and responds to the character of the Precinct.*

The associated policies relate to:

- Maintenance of character (MRZ-PREC01-P1); and
- Restriction on demolition (MRZ-PREC01-P2)



Fig 10: Wellington Draft District Plan: Mt Victoria North Character Precinct

The relevant rules for sites in the character precinct are focused both on protecting the character of pre-1930s buildings (through restriction on demolition) as well as maintaining character by managing the bulk, scale, height, location and design of new development.

Sites outside the character precinct - the sites that sit outside the character precinct are grouped in two separate clusters located at the south-western end of McFarlane Street (McFarlane Street cluster); and at the eastern end of the townscape precinct, in the vicinity of Oriental Terrace (Oriental Terrace cluster) respectively. The visibility of these clusters and their contribution to the overall townscape image/character of the Mt Victoria North area was discussed in the previous section of the report.

The buildings within the McFarlane Street cluster form an integral part of the precinct's characteristic highly prominent north-oriented housing pattern and feature in the main townscape views from within the central city and the waterfront. The buildings in the Oriental Terrace cluster, most of which are oriented to the east, are experienced primarily in views from the east when moving along Oriental Parade towards the city.

The sites within the two clusters follow similar patterns of building orientation, height/scale and subdivision patterns as those in the character precinct, but their building age/character is more diverse, and the associated streetscape character does not exhibit the consistency and coherence of character associated with the character precinct.

Both clusters include a mix of pre-1930s and newer buildings and both clusters include some buildings that are incompatible with the predominant pattern of building height and scale within the precinct. The most prominent examples include the Copthorne Hotel/rear wing which defines the north-western corner of the townscape precinct; and the 6-level apartment block at 2 Oriental Terrace, immediately to the south-east of the Monastery. The incompatible, contrasting bulk of those buildings illustrates the significant impact of a mis-managed scale of development on the townscape values of the area.

Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct - the sites within the character precinct, together with the sites within the identified clusters outside the character precinct, make up the collective character of the townscape precinct. Under the DDP (MRZ-PREC02-01) *The area around St Gerard's Monastery in the northern portion of Mt Victoria and western portion of Oriental Bay are:*

- 1) *Recognised as a townscape precinct;*
- 2) *Managed to maintain or enhance the iconic landscape setting and townscape values;*
- 3) *Developed in a manner that recognises and responds to the townscape values of the area; and*
- 4) *Enabled for their ongoing use and appropriate future development.*

The associated policy (MRZ-PREC02-P1) relates to the maintenance of townscape.

The relevant provisions are focused on the design, location, bulk, scale and height of new development and the extent to which the development makes a positive contribution to the precinct's predominant patterns, including building orientation, building form and relationship to St Gerard's Monastery.

2.4 DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS

Under the DDP the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct forms part of the Medium Density Residential Zone. The management/retention of its townscape values is highly dependent on the management of new building development within the precinct. The provisions relating to building bulk and location, and design appearance, are most relevant in that respect. These are discussed below.

Operative District Plan provisions - the ODP rules for the Mount Victoria North Character Area are restrictive in relation to both demolition and new buildings requiring resource consent, along with restrictive standards on the scale of development that can be built.

Draft District Plan provisions - the DDP provisions for the Mt Victoria North Character Precinct are similar to the operative provisions with some adjustments being made to the front yard, building height and ground level open space provisions in line with the requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

The DDP provisions for the sites in the townscape precinct that sit outside the character precinct are the same as those for sites within the character precinct, except that there is no restriction on demolition. The proposed DDP provisions for the precinct are summarised below.

Table: Draft District Plan Provisions / bulk and location

Sites within the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct but outside the Character Precinct (Underlying zone: Medium Density Residential)	Sites within both the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct and the Character Precinct (Underlying zone: Medium Density Residential)
Demolition is permitted	Demolition of any building or part of any 1930s building is a restricted discretionary activity, excluding accessory buildings New accessory buildings are permitted subject to standards
Construction, alterations and additions are a restricted discretionary activity and are assessed against the Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide. The following standards apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Front yard 1.5m (accessory buildings of less than 4m width can locate in front yard) ▪ Side and rear yards 1m ▪ 50% site coverage ▪ 11m maximum height ▪ 2.5m recession plane ▪ 20m sqm per unit outdoor living space ▪ 30% permeable surface 	Construction, alterations and additions are a restricted discretionary activity and are assessed against both the Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide and the Character Precincts Design Guide. The following standards apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Front yard 1.5m (accessory buildings of less than 4m width can locate in front yard) ▪ Side and rear yards 1m ▪ 50% site coverage ▪ 11m maximum height ▪ 2.5m recession plane ▪ 20m sqm per unit outdoor living space ▪ 30% permeable surface

Regarding the alignment of the DDP provisions with the precinct's townscape patterns and associated values they have to manage, the following observations are made:

- 1) Carrying over the operative provisions re bulk/location to the DDP (with some adjustments) is generally appropriate from a townscape perspective for two main reasons:
 - these provisions are generally aligned with the predominant patterns of height and frontage setbacks (front yards), and recognise the variable site coverage pattern, thereby maintaining and reinforcing existing patterns; and
 - the provisions have been tested through the resource consent process for a number of years and, in tandem with the relevant design guides, appear to work reasonably well, noting that the 'demolition rule' has been an effective tool for the retention of pre-1930s building character.
- 2) Applying the same bulk/location provisions for sites within and outside the character precinct means that the same scale of development is anticipated across the entire precinct. This approach is sound from a townscape perspective, as it will support the continuity of existing townscape patterns, thereby maintaining their integrity, while facilitating redevelopment of sites outside the character precinct where there is no restriction on demolition.
- 3) The townscape precinct is largely comprised of sites within the character precinct. Restricting demolition on sites within the character precinct, while aiming to protect existing continuity of building and streetscape character, will also, by-default, protect the townscape values of the entire precinct given the high visual exposure of the Mt Victoria North area.
- 4) Recession plane provision - the draft recession plane provision is the same as the operative provision applied in the medium density residential areas. The primary objective of this provision is managing amenity/sunlight access and from this point of view it works as intended. However, the

provision determines the maximum extent of the envelope of new buildings or additions/alterations to existing buildings and in doing so it promotes building forms which do not align with those typical for the area (i.e. typically building volumes extend, often significantly, beyond the building envelope based on the draft recession planes. This is partly due to the underlying pattern of generally narrow lots which is one of the precinct's defining characteristics).

Considering a re-formulation of the recession plane rule to better reflect the existing pattern of building form would be worth exploring from a townscape character perspective. This will require detailed investigations of possible options to identify the specific recession plane provisions that best reflect the characteristic townscape pattern of building form.

- 5) Proposed adjustments to the ODP rules - of the proposed adjustments to the ODP rules those relating to height and front yards are most relevant to townscape character values:
- building height provision - the maximum height in the ODP is 10m+an additional 1m to allow for a sloping roof form. In the DDP the maximum height is 11m. The relevant design guide for the townscape precinct (the Residential Design Guide /Appendix Mt Victoria North) calls for the use of sloping roofs to maintain and reinforce the existing pattern. It is assumed that any sloping roof will need to be contained within the maximum 11m height provision, as there is no provision for an additional 1m for a sloping roof. Clarifying this matter would help the interpretation of the height provision in relation to the design guide expectations. Should an additional 1m be included (i.e. maximum height 11m +1m) consideration should be given to specifying the maximum number of storeys, as otherwise this could potentially result in a 4-storey building with a very shallow roof pitch; and
 - front yard provisions - the change to the front yard provisions from 1m in the operative District Plan to 1.5m in the DDP is a minimal change with no significant townscape character implications. The relevant design guides applicable to the precinct provide the tool for varying frontage setbacks relative to the site-specific context of the development.
- 6) Design and appearance of new development in the townscape precinct under the DDP is managed through: (a) the draft Residential Design Guide and associated Appendix (Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide) that is applicable to the entire precinct; and (b) the draft Residential Design Guide and associated Appendix (Mt Victoria Character Precinct Design Guide) which applies only to development on sites within the character precinct.

The draft Residential Design Guide generally covers the same design matters as those in the OPD version, but has been revised and extended to include some new matters. The draft Appendices to the Residential Design Guide that apply to the townscape precinct and the character precinct respectively have a similar content to that in the current design guides under the ODP. Overall, the draft design guides appropriately cover the main character and design-related issues.

Regarding the application of the design guides, the following comments are made:

- development on sites within the townscape precinct which are also in the character precinct has to respond to two design guides - the Mt Victoria Character Precinct Design Guide and the Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide. This is somewhat confusing and will require a 'double assessment', noting that there is a degree of overlap between the two design guides, as they both promote recognition and reinforcement of the same general patterns, albeit from a slightly different perspective;
- the Character Precinct Design Guide (p.9) refers to Mt Victoria North area as a '*separate sub-area*' with '*a slightly different status determined by its location, which makes it an integral part of the visual image of the central city*'. However, no reference has been made in the character precinct design guide to the townscape precinct and the associated separate design guide (Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide). To facilitate the application of the design guides, consideration could be given to integrating the two design guides or aligning and cross-referencing their content to clearly state their different focus and expectations. Including a map in the design guides showing how the boundaries of the character precinct relate to those of the townscape precinct will be useful; and
- the design guide applicable to the townscape precinct is referred to in DDP as 'Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide', although in the Design Guide appendices it is referred to as 'Mt Victoria North Design Guide'. This is confusing as there is no defined Mt Victoria North Character Area as such in the DDP and the title does not make any reference to the townscape precinct. Consideration should be given to reviewing the title of the design guide.

3 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

- The DDP introduces the Mt Victoria North Townscape Precinct to formally recognise its townscape significance - a significance which transcends the character value of its pre-1930 buildings due to the high visibility of the precinct, its relationship to St Gerard's Monastery and escarpment below, and the distinctive hillside housing pattern accentuating its prominent underlying topography.
- The purpose of the precinct is to provide for the management of its townscape values. These values are derived from a set of distinctive elements and character attributes which together create a memorable and highly prominent setting.
- The precinct is comprised primarily of sites within the re-defined Mt Victoria North Character Precinct in the DDP, but also includes sites that sit outside the character precinct. Applying the same bulk/location provisions for sites within and outside the character precinct as proposed by the DDP is both appropriate and well-founded from a townscape perspective. This promotes the same scale of development across the entire precinct, thereby retaining the consistency and continuity of existing patterns and associated townscape values. This approach is different to that applied to the management of sites outside identified character precincts elsewhere in Mt Victoria, where a higher level of intensification would be enabled in line with the requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development. Nevertheless, the different approach taken to the townscape precinct is justifiable in relation to its distinctive townscape character and associated values.
- The precinct forms part of the identified Medium Density Residential Zone in the DDP. The DDP 'bulk and location' provisions for the precinct are the same or similar to those under the ODP. This is appropriate from a townscape perspective as these provisions: (a) are generally aligned with the precinct's predominant development patterns; and (b) have been tested and appear to work reasonably well, noting that the 'demolition rule' has been an effective tool for the retention of pre-1930s building character. However, the building envelopes promoted by the draft recession plane rule do not align with those typical for the area. To address this, consideration could be given to the re-formulation of the rule to better reflect the existing pattern of building form.
- Under the DDP new development in the townscape precinct needs to be assessed against the revised Residential Design Guide and associated appendices (Mt Victoria Character Precinct Design Guide and Mt Victoria North Character Area Design Guide). The design guides have similar content to those under the ODP and appropriately address the context of the precinct and associated character and design-related issues. However, to facilitate the application of the design guides consideration could be given to integrating the two design guide appendices or cross-referencing and aligning their content to more clearly state their different focus and purpose in addition to reviewing their titles.
- Regarding the potential impact of adjacent new development on the townscape character of the precinct and associated views, some adjustments to the draft provisions could be considered. These include: (a) reducing the height limit for the front part of the site at 20 Oriental Terrace; and (b) including the sites at 31 and 33 McFarlane Street within the townscape precinct.

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