

22 April 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2024, The Independent Hearings Panel (IHP) released their recommendations under the Intensification Streamlines Planning Process (ISPP) on the Wellington City Council Proposed District Plan. The IHP did not identify the Johnsonville railway line as a rapid transit service, which resulted in a recommended zone change from High Density to Medium Density within the railway catchment area. The Wellington City Councilors did not accept this recommendation from the IHP and have deferred to the Minister to make a decision.
- 1.2 In the meantime, the 2024 Operative District Plan (ODP) is now relevant, and if taking a more conservative approach, the application site would be assessed as a Medium Density Residential Zone. However, there is a possibility that the site could change to a High Density Residential Zone before the hearing process is complete. As such, I have prepared an addendum to my evidence that assesses the proposal against the relevant urban design matters under both zones of the 2024 ODP. In both instances, the 2024 ODP has identified the planned urban built character, which is helpful when determining whether the proposal is consistent with the urban built character. This addendum also assesses the proposal against the 2024 Residential Design Guide, superseding the design guide assessment in my original evidence, unless stated otherwise.
- 1.2 This addendum assesses the proposal against the updated landscape plans prepared by Designgroup Stapleton Elliot, Sheets L001, L002, L100-L107, L200, L202, L600, L601, L700, L701, L702, Revision 6, Dated 11/04/2024, and the visual impact simulations prepared by Mr Wallace as part of the urban design and character assessment. These plans have been provided in the applicant's evidence. The landscaping perspectives and urban design visual simulations have been assessed after my original evidence was prepared.
- 1.3 Since preparing my original evidence, there have also been two late submissions. The urban design relevant matters include providing for cyclists and e charging facilities. This

has been covered in paragraph 5.5 and 10.5 of my original evidence, and paragraph 4.2 of this addendum.

- 1.4 I have read, and am familiar with, the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in section 9 of the 2023 Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note. Unless where stated within my report, the evidence which I present is within my area of expertise.

2.0 Medium Density Zone

- 2.1 Objective MRZ-O1 states the purpose of the Medium Density Zone, which *provides predominantly residential activities and a variety of housing types and sizes that respond to:*

- 1. Housing needs and demand; and*
- 2. The neighborhood's planned urban built character, including 3 storey buildings, and additional height and density where appropriate.*

- 2.2 The Objective provides 'predominantly' for residential activities, which still allows for non-residential activities where compatible with the zones purpose and consistent with the amenity values anticipated for the zone. This includes home businesses, visitor accommodation, childcare services, and community gardens.

- 2.3 Policy MRZ-P13 for non-residential activities and buildings is not yet operative, but must be given regard. The policy states:

Provide for non-residential activities and buildings that:

- 1. Support the needs of local communities;*
- 2. Are of an intensity, scale and design that is consistent with the amenity values anticipated for the Zone;*
- 3. Contribute positively to the urban environment and achieve attractive and safe streets;*
- 4. Reduce reliance on travel by private motor vehicle;*
- 5. Maintain the safety and efficiency of the transport network;*
- 6. Will be adequately serviced by three waters infrastructure or can address any constraints on the site; and*
- 7. Are integrated into residential developments where possible.*

2.4 A car park for a commercial activity is a Discretionary activity under the 2024 ODP. Therefore, the activity is still provided for through the framework.

3.0 High Density Zone

3.1 Objective HRZ-O1 states the purpose of the High Density Zone, which *provides predominantly residential activities and a variety of housing types and sizes that respond to:*

- 1. Housing needs and demand; and*
- 2. The neighborhood's planned urban built character, of at least 6-storey buildings.*

3.2 In this instance the planned urban built character does not just 'include' but is 'of' at least 6-storey buildings. Which provides for a zone with a considerably higher residential intensification and built form than the Medium Density Residential Zone.

3.3 The High Density Residential Zone enables non-residential activities similar to those in the Medium Density Residential Zone; home businesses, visitor accommodation, childcare services and community gardens.

3.4 The wording of HDZ-P12: Non-residential activities and buildings is the same as MDZ-P13.

4.0 MDZ-P13 and HDZ-P12

4.1 The following policy matters relate to urban design outcomes:

Are of an intensity, scale and design that is consistent with the amenity values anticipated for the zone

Contribute positively to the urban environment and achieve attractive and safe streets

These two points are addressed in the following section where the proposal is assessed against the 2024 Residential Design Guide.

4.2 *Reduce reliance on travel by private motor vehicle*

The application site is located in close proximity to public transport options, including railway and bus stops. As such, there is an opportunity to design the site with less

reliance on motor vehicles. A comprehensive design of the whole car park (including the existing car park on Ganges Road) would allow for a more integrated site layout for a range of transport options. While there is a bike stand outside the New World building, this is located in the road reserve and not in the site. The proposal includes four e-charging facilities. The design and location of these is not confirmed but could be clarified in a condition of consent.

5.0 Residential Design Guide

5.1 As the proposal is a Discretionary Activity under both zones, all effects must be considered. The RDG includes design outcomes and guidelines to achieve amenity values anticipated for both the Medium and High Density Residential zones, which addresses key urban design policy matters. The site is not located in a character precinct where a further character assessment might be required.

5.2 The following design outcomes are considered to be of particular relevance to the proposal:

Responding to context:

- *Design Outcome O1: New development responds to the valued characteristics within the surrounding environment.*

This design outcome of the 2024 ODP is similar to section 1: Character of the 2000 ODP. However, the 2024 ODP also refers to characteristics that include the 'planned patterns of built form'.

5.3 In the event the application site is zoned Medium Density Residential, the character assessment in paragraphs 4.0-4.9 in the main body of my evidence applies, however the planned built form would include taller buildings and a higher intensification of residential units. In the event the application site is zoned High Density Residential, the planned built form would be significantly higher, with buildings of at least 6 storeys in height.

5.4 In both zones, the planned built form includes further intensification of the residential form and density, with non-residential activities including businesses of a residential or small commercial scale such as home occupations, visitor accommodation and childcare facilities. Alternatively, community gardens are also enabled, which includes open

landscaped areas. The applicant's urban designer, Mr Wallace, has provided visual simulations to demonstrate what the car park could look like from Nicholson Road. Given proposed landscaping is kept low to ensure lines of sight for vehicles, there is minimal screening of the car park, as depicted on "VP2 From bottom of driveway of 32 Nicholson Road". Given my initial assessment that concluded Nicholson Road as having a residential character, I am still of the view that the proposed car park is inconsistent with the planned built character.

6.0 Responding to the natural environment in an urban context:

- *Design Outcome O2: New development acknowledges the natural environment as part of creating a sustainable and resilient built environment that responds to the topography, vegetation and ecosystems of the site and its surroundings, within the context of the planned urban environment.*
- *Design Outcome O3: Methods to maintain or enhance the mauri (the health and wellbeing) of waiora (water), where required, are integrated into the overall design of the development in a manner that provides for the amenity of the living environment.*

6.1 The 2000 RDG and 2004 RDG both encourage new development to respect the existing landform and to minimise the need for large retaining structures as much as possible or have these integrated into the development and landscaping in such a way that they are not visually dominant from within the site or neighbouring sites. This has been assessed within the main body of my evidence, with concerns over the visibility of the walls from adjacent public spaces. The Visual Simulations provided by Mr Wallace show the proposed vegetation on top of black painted retaining walls which does appear to visually break up the combined retaining and fence height. With the combined climbers in the landscape plan (but not shown on the visual simulation), the retaining walls do not appear to be out of scale with what might be anticipated in a residential setting. However, in this case they will not be screened by any residential buildings and will visually increase the non-residential open nature of the car park and inconsistency with the RDG and planned urban built character.

6.2 The 2024 RDG also includes water sensitive urban design outcomes. The proposal has been assessed by Wellington Water who are satisfied that stormwater can be managed and treated appropriately, as such I have assessed this guideline as being met.

7.0 Effective public-private interface:

- *Design Outcome O4: New development is configured and designed to contribute positively to the visual quality, spatial definition, amenity, and safety of adjacent street and the public realm.*
- *Design Outcome O5: The layout of new development (including blocks, streets and open space) integrates with the surrounding neighbourhood.*

7.1 This section of the 2024 RDG encourages residential development to provide visual and physical connections to the street. This provides passive surveillance over the street and adjacent public spaces to enhance the safety and security of public spaces.

7.2 The proposed car park will not comprise any buildings that could provide passive surveillance over the street, especially at night after hours. However, it is noted that the existing dwellings on the application site provide limited passive surveillance and the 2024 District Plan enables non-residential activities that could have a similar outcome, such as community gardens.

8.0 Well-functioning sites:

- *Design Outcome O.7: New Development maintains or enhances the walkability and permeability of the pedestrian network.*
- *Design Outcome O.8: New development provides for safe and convenient cycle and pedestrian movement and access.*
- *Design Outcome O.9: vehicle access, garage doors and car parking do not dominate the streetscape.*

8.1 The proposal includes a pedestrian accessway from Nicholson Road, through the application site that has been located separate from the car parking with bollard lighting for safety and security. The landscape plans show the pedestrian accessway linking up with the existing pedestrian accessway around the New World building. This will provide an improved pedestrian link between Nicholson Road and Ganges Road and encourage pedestrian access to the New World (noting there are steps so it is not accessible access, but gradients are kept low). It is not clear whether there will be a footpath or change in surface treatment on the existing site for linking of the pedestrian paths. This could be requested in a revised landscape plan as a condition of consent.

8.2 The location and design of garaging and car parking has similar guidance within the 2024 Residential Design Guide to the previous residential Design Guides, in that car parking is to be located so that it is not visually dominant at the street edge and hardscaping is visually broken up with variation of surface treatments and vegetation. The 2024 RDG also provides further guidance such as minimizing the amount of on-site car parking in locations that have good access to public transport, and to reduce parking areas and associated structures such as retaining walls to give the appearance of a front yard to the street edge rather than a parking area. As such, it is my view that a car park in the Medium or High Residential Zone is not consistent with the planned urban built form.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 It is acknowledged that the proposal will support the existing New World supermarket, which provides for the wider community. There is currently nowhere to extend the supermarket/car parking activity within the Local Centre Zone without moving to a new site, as the New World supermarket site is entirely bordered by the residential zone along its private boundaries. A car park could potentially be acceptable where located immediately adjacent the New World site on Dekka Street as it visually sits within the character of this area due to the commercial zoning. However, the proposal does not sufficiently integrate the development into the planned urban built character for both the Medium and Density zoning when viewed from Nicholson Road. In conclusion, when assessing the development against the relevant 2024 urban design considerations, the proposal does not have urban design support.

Note: the landscaping plan has been updated, but it is unclear what plants have been incorporated into the landscaping plan as the key is now missing apart from climbers.

Prepared by:



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