

# AUCKLAND URBAN DESIGN PANEL

## RECOMMENDATIONS



<b>Project:</b>	<b>Dominion and Valley Road Development</b>
<b>Site Address:</b>	113-117 Valley Road, Mt Eden 200-202 Dominion Road 214,216, 218-220 and 222 Dominion Road
<b>Panel Location:</b>	135 Albert Street, Level 14, Room 10
<b>Date:</b>	18th March 2024
<b>Time:</b>	1:00PM – 5:00PM
<b>Panellists:</b>	Stuart Houghton (Chair), Jon Rennie, Tracy Ogden-Cork
<b>Council Planner:</b>	Dylan Pope
<b>Council Urban Designers:</b>	Andrew Henderson
<b>Council Landscape Architect:</b>	Peter Kensington
<b>Council Built Heritage Specialist:</b>	Rebecca Fox
<b>Council Premium Team:</b>	Adonica Giborees, Jesse Joseph

- ☐ ~~Support for the following reasons~~
- ☐ ~~Some changes are needed (stated below)~~
- ☒ **Fundamental changes are needed (stated below)**
- ☐ ~~Cannot support for the following reasons~~

## **Introduction**

The Panel thanks the applicant for their presentation and the clarity of the drawing package that clearly communicates the key aspects of the scheme at this early stage in the proposal's design development.

Responding to the stated development drivers and design intent, the panel acknowledges and agrees with the identified benefits of the basic site layout of two buildings either side of a large central courtyard functioning as a single development with access and entries from Dominion and Valley Roads and a third lower key entry from Carrick Place.

## **Site Layout**

The consolidated basement and discreet entry and space of servicing to create a clear back of house zone to the development is a positive aspect of the scheme. The clarity of this arrangement supports a safe and secure gated scheme for residents and their visitors that does not provide for public through-site access. This should be a driver of the further development of these aspects of the scheme.

To this end, the panel considers that greater clarity and design detail is needed around the delineation of pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation at the Carrick Place entry, and separation from basement and loading dock. This will need to address safety and security considerations as well as wayfinding for visitors from Carrick Place.

In this part of the site the Panel identifies opportunities for strengthening the boundary planting and landscape treatment that would benefit the amenity of the apartments at lower levels as well as the interface with adjoining neighbours.

## **Building Cores**

The use of one core per building leads to a predominance of single aspect apartments and long circulation corridors. The Panel considers that a multi-core strategy would result in shorter corridors and smaller cohorts of apartments per floor that fosters a stronger sense of community and safety. This would also enable a greater proportion of dual aspect apartments, with cross ventilation

and enhanced solar access. This would be aligned with Eke Panuku's Essential Outcomes. The *New South Wales (NSW) Apartment Design Guides* provides a useful reference to this approach in terms of key metrics and as a benchmark for good apartment design (Floor-to-floor heights, apartment depths etc).

### **Central courtyard**

Further development of the courtyard space requires careful consideration of the communal versus unit interface, and spatial design to support communal activity versus just pedestrian desire lines to and from building cores and entries. Levels and buildups to achieve planting to manage privacy at the interfaces will require careful consideration in relation to courtyard-level apartments.

### **Valley Road Building**

The Panel supports the direction that this building is going in as a massed form up to five storeys in height above car parking level. The Panel recommends setting up massing studies from viewpoints in a visual impacts assessment report. There needs to be further studies and investigations to come back to Panel about the visual impact of the building from the East. These will confirm the appropriateness of the height and massing strategy and how the architecture addresses the building bulk proposed.

### **Valley Road Frontage**

The panel supports the way in which the scheme provides for high quality café / retail tenancy spaces at the street front to either side of the apartment lobby entry. The question of shopfront height, including ability to increase floor to floor height as well as devices such as parapets, warrants greater consideration in determining an optimal design response that more strongly relates to the scale, articulation and frontage character of the adjacent special character buildings that define the corner with Dominion Road.

### **Dominion Road Building**

The panel supports the intent to design this building in a differentiated way from the larger Valley Road block, with apartment typologies oriented to the street and its building frontage to Dominion Road, that needs to address the special character context of the precinct. There are a number of aspects where the panel questions the current design response and considers that further

investigation of alternatives may enhance the quality of this building for future residents as well as to the public realm. These include:

- *Easement* – while understanding the current development response to stay out of the street easement area, the panel notes that the consented development adopted a more nuanced frontage line that built into this zone in mediating between the varying setbacks of the neighbouring buildings to both sides. Aligning to the frontage line of the special character buildings through to the Valley Road corner has benefits in more readily relating new to old in a way that relates to the character, including the position of the Universal Buildings on the subject site.
- *Typology* – the panel understands and supports the identification of different apartment typologies oriented to Dominion Road that support a different lifestyle and occupant, and considers that the scheme could go further in this regard, such as to remove occupiable balconies and consider dual aspect which provides not only cross ventilation but also relief for residents from Dominion Road.
- *Main entry* – further consideration of the location, scale (width) and positioning of the lobby entry to Dominion Road, noting that its current scale and qualities seems out of keeping with the character of Dominion Road and reads overly commercial.
- *Vertical circulation* – consider the merits of switching the lift and stairwell to the internal courtyard side of the building, which would have the benefit of all of the occupants of the Dominion Road building feeling more strongly connected to the central courtyard as part of everyday comings and goings, as well as the circulation activity being a further contributor to enlivening the central open space in a way that builds community.
- *Street frontage height and number of storeys* – the panel has mixed views on the current height and massing proposal and whether this represents an appropriate and supportable response to Dominion Road. A reduction in building height for the southern end of the Dominion Road building, in response to its relationship with the adjoining special character buildings needs to be considered. Overall, the matter of scale along the Dominion Road frontage, needs to be more carefully addressed alongside the architectural qualities of the street-facing facades and responses to the special character context, matters that we propose are the focus of a second urban design panel session.

## Dominion Road Frontage

The panel supports the design intent to create a street-facing elevation that responds to and is respectful of the special character of Dominion Road.

The Panel notes that the extent of design investigation of this important aspect of the scheme has been very limited and somewhat superficial to date, and as such is a fundamental issue requiring significantly further attention and design development prior to the next urban design panel review. There are some positive directions, including the level of solid mass to void and the use of brick cladding, which are appropriate high-quality responses to the special character.

To inform this further design development, the panel makes the following comments at this time:

- *Grain* - engage more deeply with the existing and historic grain of the site's building frontage including the width of existing buildings and their subdivision of street-facing tenancies, as an informant to grain that requires less modules than the 8 modules expressed in the current design.
- *Horizontal emphasis* – explore the merits of an alternative elevational strategy that results in a more horizontal emphasis, noting that the current treatment is contributing to the building mass appearing taller and bulkier than it is.
- *Façade articulation* – while acknowledging and supporting that design responses can successfully be interpreted in a contemporary way as is the stated design intent, the panel considers that the architects must engage more deeply with the particulars of the special character of this part of Dominion Road in articulating the facades. Current features such as the large-scale arches do not resonate and feel out of place.
- *Cohesiveness* – The panel notes that the design response to the Dominion Road elevation, in its articulation and use of materiality, needs to achieve a greater level of overall cohesiveness with the architectural language and materiality strategy for the building as a whole. As depicted in the Valley Road corner view at present, the materiality of upper levels bears no or little relationship to the lower levels addressing Dominion Road and this is not supporting the ability to achieve a building stepping up to this height.

## **Further information for next panel session**

As part of the further development of the scheme, and to form part of the further information for next panel session, the Panel would like to see the following:

- Viewpoint analysis of 3D model from more middle and long distance views in the neighbourhood such as from and around Mt Eden Road from the east, with reference to the viewpoints established in the assessment of the consented scheme on the site.
- Aerial oblique model shots – it is helpful at this stage in design development to provide the panel with aerial oblique views from above each corner of the site, taken to include the immediate context of adjoining buildings and street frontage / corners, to quickly inform an understanding of how the building massing, architecture and boundary interface conditions relate to both the public realm and adjoining properties.
- Site sections that depict heights relative to the AUP 11+2m heights and relevant height in relation to boundary controls, and shading studies, as provided in the pack for Panel 1, should continue to be provided and updated as the scheme evolves.

## **Conclusion**

The panel thanks the applicant team for the open way in which they engaged in this design review session and look forward to a second panel review responding to these minutes, and with a focus more closely on the architectural development of elevations in response to the context and character of Dominion Road, Valley Road and the adjoining neighbours to the east and north.

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# AUCKLAND URBAN DESIGN PANEL

## RECOMMENDATIONS



<b>Project:</b>	Dominion and Valley Road Apartments - Panel 2
<b>Site Address:</b>	113-117 Valley Road, 200-202 Dominion Road, 214,216, 218-220 and 222 Dominion Road, Mt Eden
<b>Panel Location:</b>	135 Albert Street, Level 14, Room 4
<b>Date:</b>	31 July 2024
<b>Time:</b>	12:00PM – 5:00PM
<b>Panellists:</b>	Jon Rennie (Chair), Tracy Ogden-Cork, Richard Mann
<b>Council Planners:</b>	Dylan Pope
<b>Council Urban Designers:</b>	Andrew Henderson
<b>Council Landscape Architect:</b>	Peter Kensington
<b>Council Built Heritage Specialist:</b>	Rebecca Fox
<b>Council Premium Team:</b>	Adonica Giborees, Jesse Joseph

- ☐ ~~Support for the following reasons~~
- ✓ **Some changes are needed (stated below)**
- ☐ ~~Fundamental changes are needed (stated below)~~
- ☐ ~~Cannot support for the following reasons~~

### Introduction

The Panel thanks the applicant for their presentation of the development and improvement of the proposal that has occurred since Panel 1, noting:

- The Panel acknowledges the amount of work undertaken in developing this scheme.
- The dialogue between the applicant and Council specialists is appreciated, in moving the project forward in a positive way.
- The proposal now demonstrates a good response to the sensitivities and complexities of the site, adjoining heritage buildings, and neighbours,

with respect to bulk, mass, form and materiality. The proposal is a marked improvement over the previously consented scheme in this regard.

- The presentation of the proposed development to Carrick Place is well-considered and a balanced approach to the interface between existing residential and the level of urban intensification anticipated by the current planning framework.

The Panel however continues to be concerned about the following matters:

### **Dominion Road street interface & entrances**

The Panel supports the overall façade composition of Dominion Road and the strategy employed, including the recessive entrance. However, the Panel has reservations about the universal access strategy and the dignity of users via an internalized ‘service entrance’. Due to the Dominion Road building having two cores, there is an opportunity for them to be separated further and the northern core to move north (with minimal replanning of apartment layouts and corridors at upper levels). This would provide an equitable and generous entrance for universal access and can still be connected internally to the more southern entry, which would remain on axis to the Carrick Block core beyond. This change would also improve and increase the street activation and may result in better-proportioned ground-floor retail to Dominion Road that is more viable.

### **Interface between internal courtyard and ground-floor apartments**

The Panel is generally supportive of the proposed landscape strategy and the creation of a series of distinct character areas; however:

- The Panel has concerns about the interface of the communal courtyard with the ground-floor single-aspect apartments adjacent.
- The Panel is not convinced that planting as shown is adequate to delineate public and ‘private’ space, and ensure positive residential amenity, including privacy in relation to the communal activities.
- The apartments are very deep in plan, and adequate daylighting is yet to be tested. High planting and / or screening / curtains to mitigate privacy issues could negatively impact daylight penetration to the point of non-compliance.

- The Panel strongly encourages the applicant to consider a level change (preferable) or greater distance and stronger delineation between private spaces and the paths. It may be that the Western path of the courtyard could also be omitted.

### **Apartment typologies**

The introduction of additional cores has led to better outcomes, but the panel notes that the proposal still falls short in a number of areas. In particular, there are proposed typologies that are poorly planned and / or have poor amenity which are described as follows.

- The Panel has concerns over the two-bedroom typologies type 2A & similar, and type 2K, due to the poor amenity provided to the second bedroom. This could be improved with a reduction in unit numbers, and/or some reconfiguration/replanning to provide a wider typology with better proportioned and spatially arranged bedrooms
- The Panel considers that Apartment type 1A & 1B should not be referred to as being a two-bedroom apartment. The panel considers that every habitable room should have a window in an external wall and that daylight and air should not be borrowed from other rooms. Nevertheless, if the applicant persists with them as “office/adaptable spaces” they would benefit from a swapping of the bathroom and the office space location, to enable more long-term adaptability of the floor plate and minimizing relocation of services to make changes.
- Apartment type 3B would benefit from being handed like Apartment 3A so the deck and living is in a north-western corner, also with louvres to the balcony to provide privacy / minimise overlooking to the north.

The panel notes that in addition to the Auckland Design Manual, the New South Wales guidance for apartments also includes a range of helpful standards for future reference (e.g. percentage of cross ventilated apartments, number of apartments per floor, depth of apartments etc). These standards can assist in with ensuring the residential qualities of apartments meet Eke Panuku’s ‘Essential Outcomes’ for the city.

## **Valley Road Building**

The Panel considers that the three-storey portion of the Valley Road building should be further refined to address the following matters:

- The Western elevation could be further improved by reconsideration of its articulation and how it turns the corner to reduce the appearance of the otherwise large blank wall - in particular from the high-profile vantage point of the Dominion Road / Valley Road corner.
- This module or the Western third of the building may also benefit from being of a different colour or texture, to better respond to the heritage context, differentiate from the larger block behind, and potentially differentiate from the Dominion Road Building.
- The Panel suggests the height of the canopy could be lowered to better match the canopy in the pediment of the adjacent character buildings, noting that this may also benefit the size of the clerestory windows over and daylight access (visible sky) into these south-facing tenancies.
- The Panel supports the extension of the block to the Eastern boundary, and the framing of a vehicle entry. Although this is an improvement from the previous arrangement its success will be dependent on the quality of the materiality, finishes of the soffit and sidewalls, and the hiding of all services.

## **Materials**

The Panel supports use of brick and the general approach taken in material selection and detailing, which is a key component to the project's success in response to heritage.

We note that in the Existing Material Context Analysis (RC012), there is a greater variety of colours and textures than is currently proposed. The Panel encourages the applicant to keep this in mind as the material palette is refined.

## Conclusion

Given the Panel generally supports this project, a further Panel review is not expected subject to the resolution of the above items to the satisfaction of the Reporting Council Officers.

**Disclosure of Information:** *The applicant acknowledges that any information it provides to Auckland Council may be required to be disclosed under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (unless there is a good reason to withhold the information under that Act). All resource consent applications become public information once lodged with Auckland Council.*

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