Proposed Development at
42-48 Ponsonby Road

Urban Design Assessment

Prepared for Samson Corporation Ltd by:

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Proposed Commercial Development at 42-48 Ponsonby Road, Ponsonby

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Cover image: Visual simulation from architectural package, Patterson
1 Introduction

1.1 RA Skidmore Urban Design Ltd. has been requested by Brown and Company, on behalf of Samson Corporation, to carry out an urban design assessment of the proposed commercial development at 42-48 Ponsonby Road, Ponsonby. The purpose of this report is to form part of the AEE accompanying the resource consent application to Auckland Council.

1.2 The following assessment is based on architectural plans prepared by Patterson Architects (plan set as set out in the cover page of the package dated 11 June 2018). The report should also be read in conjunction with the Character Assessment by Archifact (dated June 2018).

1.3 In carrying out the assessment, I have visited the site and surrounding environs on a number of occasions.

1.4 I attended a meeting with the Auckland Urban Design Panel on the 8th March 2018.

2 The Site and its Context

2.1 A detailed description and analysis of the site and its surrounding context is set out in the Architectural package (Sheets (2)01 – (2)04 for context analysis and Sheets (3)01 – (3)05 for site description and analysis).

2.2 In summary, the subject site (the “Site”) comprises two properties (see Sheets (3)01 and (3)02 of the architectural package). The first, 42 Ponsonby Road, contains a single-level building identified as a Character Supporting Building in the Special Character Area Overlay of the Auckland Unitary Plan (operative in part) (the “AUP(OIP)”). The building has been considerably amended over time. It is currently occupied by a restaurant and is clad to reflect the Thai theme of the restaurant. The second property, 44 – 48 Ponsonby Road is located on the corner of Crummer Road. It contains a two-level building that is identified as a Character Defining Building in the Special Character Area Overlay. The building was originally constructed as three residences and was known as ‘The Palace’. It has also been considerably amended over time. It is currently occupied by a bar with an outdoor seating area fronting the street and medical and commercial premises. The building is set back and slightly elevated above Ponsonby Road. The two properties are serviced from the rear via a driveway off Crummer Road, with car parking located to the rear of the buildings. A row of deciduous trees is located on the rear, southwestern boundary.
2.3 The Site forms part of a neighbourhood with a rich and varied history. This is reflected in the diverse built character that exists today. Ponsonby Road is generally configured as a traditional ‘Mainstreet’. However, in the vicinity of the Site a number of properties create a divergence from the predominant pattern of retail premises defining and opening directly onto the street (see Sheets (2)02 and (2)03 of the architectural package). These include: the Palace building on the Site; Allendale House on the opposite corner of Crummer Road, a building that is set in within a garden that contains large mature trees; the Auckland Unitarian Church on the opposite side of Ponsonby Road; and the adjacent Artstation building. To the west of the Hopetoun Street intersection is the large open space of Western Park which is devoid of buildings fronting the street.

2.4 Ponsonby Road is located along a ridgeline, with the topography falling away either side of this main, predominantly retail spine and axis through this inner-city suburb. Either side of the Mainstreet spine, the land-use and pattern of built development transitions quickly to a variety of commercial and residential environments (see Sheet (2)03 of the architectural package). The Crummer Road corridor is dominated by commercial activity. However, in recent times a number of higher density residential developments have also established.

2.5 The various historic buildings along the Ponsonby Road corridor make a particular contribution to the overall character of the streetscape. However, the various changes to the built environment that have occurred over an extended period also contribute to a somewhat eclectic character. Some of the more recent redevelopments and alterations to buildings along the corridor have responded to and reinforced the more traditional patterns of development to make a positive contribution to the evolving character of the Mainstreet. A number of developments that extend down the side streets to the southwest have also included laneway connections that contribute an additional layering of spaces that complement the public realm of the street network.

3 Statutory Context

3.1 A full description of relevant statutory considerations is set out in the AEE. Following is a summary of key provisions that have guided this assessment.

3.2 The Site is located in the Business – Town Centre zone identified in the AUP(OIP). This zone is applied to suburban centres throughout Auckland. The general policy framework for the Business zones seeks to ensure that development is of a form, scale and design quality to reinforce centres as focal points for the community and to facilitate development in a manner that positively contributes to the centres’ planned future form and quality, creating a sense of place.
3.3 The policy framework for the Town Centre zone seeks to balance increasing scale and intensity of development with ensuring compatibility with the design outcomes sought for the Centre. The objective is for town centres to be attractive places to live, work and visit with vibrant and vital commercial, entertainment and retail areas. The AUP identifies Key Retail Frontages (including Ponsonby Road and Crummer Road adjacent to the Site) which are a focus for pedestrian activity. The overarching objectives are supported by a detailed suite of policies that address relevant urban design considerations.

3.4 While the mix of activities proposed for the development are permitted in the zone, all buildings require consent as a Restricted Discretionary activity. The relevant assessment matters are set out in Clause H10.8.1(2) with the associated criteria set out in Clause H10.8.2(2). The proposal also exceeds the permitted height standard (Rule H10.6.1) which also requires consideration as a Restricted Discretionary activity. The matters for discretion are set out in Clause H10.8.1(6) and the associated assessment criteria are set out in Clause H10.8.2(6)(a).

3.5 The Site is also located within a Special Character Area Overlay. The policy framework for the Overlay seeks to ensure the special character values of the area that are identified are maintained and enhanced. The physical attributes that are sought to be retained relate to: built form, design and architectural values; streetscape qualities; and the relationship of built form to landscape qualities. The Site contains two buildings identified as having special character. The first is the building on the corner of Ponsonby Road and Crummer Road (the Palace) which is identified as a Character Defining Building. The adjacent building at 42 Ponsonby Road is identified as a Character Supporting Building.

3.6 Alterations to a Character Defining Building is a Restricted Discretionary activity. The relevant assessment matters for all Restricted Discretionary activities are contained in Clause D18.8.1.2(1). The associated assessment criteria for alterations and additions to a Character Defining building are contained in Clause D18.8.2.2(2). The demolition of a Character Supporting building is a Restricted Discretionary Activity. The relevant assessment criteria are set out in Clause D18.8.2.2(1). Construction of a new building in the Overlay area is also a Restricted Discretionary activity. The relevant assessment criteria are set out in Clause D18.8.2.2(4).

3.7 The assessment provided in the following section has been guided by the relevant assessment matters and associated criteria set out in this section.
4 Assessment of Effects

4.1 A full description of the proposal is set out in Section 1 of the AEE. In terms of a consideration of urban design matters and associated amenity effects, key aspects of the proposal include:

- Retention and refurbishment of the former Palace building with removal of the rear lean-to and addition of an enclosed verandah to the front to accommodate dining;
- Refurbishment of the terrace area in front of the Palace building to accommodate outdoor dining;
- Removal of the existing building at 42 Ponsonby Road and its replacement with a three-level building that reads as two adjacent buildings fronting the street;
- Construction of four-level component to the new building in the back portion of the Site wrapping around the Palace building and connecting to it via an air bridge; access to the upper level tenancies via an open breezeway on the northern side of the building;
- Creation of a laneway through the Site connecting from Ponsonby Road to Crummer Road;
- Inclusion of a range of sustainability measures that reflect in the Site organisation and form of development;
- A palette of external materials that includes copper and bronze to define the different building elements;
- Planting used to cascade over the northern façade of the higher building to complement the metal cladding (such as copper) and contributing a vegetated aspect to the façade;
- Provision of elevated terraces: at the upper level facing Ponsonby Road and in the southwestern corner of the upper level of the new building; and
- Car parking, bicycle parking and servicing located in the basement accessed from Crummer Road.
Site Configuration

4.2 The overall Site organisation has resulted from a thorough analysis of the Site and its context (both immediate and wide) as demonstrated in the architectural package. The location and character of the streets that bound the Site, together with the location and form of the Palace building, have been primary determinants in the Site configuration (see Sheet (4)03 of the architectural package).

4.3 The retention and restoration of the Palace building maintains its prominence as an important character-defining feature on the street corner. The location of this building presents some challenges to the overall Site development including its setback from the street frontages and its elevation above street level. The arrangement of additional development around this feature element has responded in a positive manner to the character building and has been configured to create a positive frontage to both Ponsonby Road and Crummer Road. Retail tenancies at ground level provide large areas of glazed frontage that provides a positive street interface. The new building elements provide a suitable setback and subdued façade treatment to enable the character building to remain prominent on the street corner. While it is proposed to remove the rear building ‘lean-to’, the visual integrity of the primary building form, with the contribution it makes to the streetscape character, is retained. The removal of this element enables the accommodation of a secondary building element in the rear portion of the site, together with a laneway connecting Ponsonby Road to Crummer Road through the Site.

4.4 The proposed laneway provides a secondary pedestrian-focussed connection that complements the public realm of the streets (see Sheet (5)02 of the architectural package). Features within the wider southern portion of the laneway, including planters and seating, will contribute to the amenity of the space for users. A subtle variation in the paving treatment will identify the outline of the former lean-to. The laneway is configured to avoid entrapment spaces. Gates at both entrances will enable the lane to be closed after hours.

4.5 The proposal has been configured in a manner to accommodate a range of activities including hospitality, retail and commercial. Enabling a concentration of activities will make a positive contribution to the vitality of the neighbourhood. The buildings have been configured in a manner to enable hospitality and retail activities to activate the adjacent street spaces (discussed further below). The rear portion of the new building is configured in a manner that provides flexible floor plates to accommodate a range of tenancies with different spatial requirements.

4.6 The proposal utilises a basement to accommodate parking (both vehicle and bicycle) and services, avoiding adverse amenity effects of these elements being accommodated at ground level. The entrance to the basement is located away from the primary Ponsonby Road frontage and its intersection with Crummer Road.
4.7 Overall, I consider the proposed site configuration has resulted from a thorough analysis of the characteristics of the Site and its relationship to the surrounding context. The proposal celebrates the former Palace building and accommodates a range of hospitality, retail and commercial activities in a configuration that creates a positive street interface.

Building Scale and Form

4.8 As noted above, the location of the Palace building provides some constraints to accommodating additional building mass on the Site. With the removal of the adjacent building at 42 Ponsonby Road, a single new building is proposed that is set back from, and wraps around, the feature Place building from Ponsonby Road through to Crummer Road. While a single building, it is designed to appear as a collection of buildings.

4.9 The three-level portion of the building is designed to read as two adjacent buildings fronting Ponsonby Road. The differentiation is created through a stepping in plan, variation in finished height, a different modulation of glazing and different façade treatment (both colour and material). The eastern portion of the building includes a rooftop terrace. The scale and form of the buildings fronting Ponsonby Road provide a level of cohesion to the retail frontage that extends to the east. The scale of building forms sits comfortably in relation to adjacent buildings.

4.10 The higher building form is stepped back from the frontage and creates a simple, gently curved form as an enclosing backdrop to the character Palace building. A variable placement of openings to the façade facing Ponsonby Road creates a level of transparency to the breezeway accessways behind. Planting cascading over the openings will further contribute to the texture and softening of the façade. The design rationale for the building form is set out on Sheets (4)01 and (4)02 of the architectural package. In my opinion, the scale and form of the building provides a suitable backdrop to the Palace building, drawing attention to, without visually competing with, the character building. The feature building will retain a visual primacy in relation to the street corner.

4.11 In a similar vein to the Ponsonby Road frontage, variation is introduced to the Crummer Road frontage to create the appearance of two adjacent buildings.

4.12 A material palette using metal claddings such as weathered copper and brass is proposed. While some flexibility of the final material selection is sought, the design intent is clearly expressed in the drawing set and accompanying visualisations. In my opinion, it would be suitable to include a consent condition requiring the final material palette to be submitted to the Council for approval.

4.13 The proposed development utilises a number of innovative sustainability measures. These are outlined in detail in the Living Challenge report by Tricia Love Consulting Ltd. (dated 11/06/18). A number of these features, such as the rooftop photovoltaic...
4.14 The proposed new building extends to the rear (southern) boundary. The AUP (OiP) does not have any setback or recession plane requirements for internal boundaries within the same zone. However, the proposed building does extend above the permitted height by more than 6m on this boundary. It is proposed to break down the blank façade with a profiled finish with metal panels set into a cement finish framework (see southern elevation on Sheet (6)03 of the architectural package). Further variation to the façade is achieved through a void being created at the western end of the elevation, accommodating an upper level balcony. Rooftop energy generation infrastructure, including photovoltaic panels and windmills, create additional built elements that extend above the main roofline. While the PV panels extend to the edge of the roof, the windmills are set back to the central area of the roof (see Sheet (5)06 of the architectural package).

4.15 The floor-to-floor-height of the ground level is in excess of 4m which allows for flexibility of use and adaptability over time.

4.16 While the proposal will introduce a building that is considerably larger than the established character building on the Site, the building form has been configured and detailed to break the mass into a number of elements that will sit comfortably in the existing urban context.

Street Amenity

4.17 As set out above, the proposed new building has been configured to address and activate Ponsonby Road in a positive manner, with retail tenancies opening directly to the street. The location and scale of the proposed building and its façade treatment will provide a positive edge and enclosure to the street. The upper levels of the building provide passive surveillance of the street. A visual connection between the buildings and the street is enhanced by the extensive area of glazing, both at ground level and at upper levels. A similar treatment of the building façade fronting Crummer Road creates enclosure and activation of the secondary street.

4.18 The location of the laneway will draw people through the Site, providing a secondary accessway and open space area that complements the public realm of the street. The internal area of the lane provides a sheltered amenity space.

4.19 The location of the Palace building and its elevation above the street creates a slight dislocation from the street edge. The proposal to introduce an enclosed verandah provides a protected intermediate space suitable for dining in various weather conditions. This is complemented by a small outdoor terrace area. The transition of spaces provides flexibility of use and will effectively activate the street edge. Planting
over a low wall along the street front with access directly from the street to the building will create a defined street edge while enabling easy access into the building.

4.20 The restoration of the Palace building will make a positive contribution to the streetscape and enhance its function as a landmark on the street corner. Analysis of the alterations proposed is detailed in the Character Assessment report by Archifact.

4.21 Verandas are proposed over the retail premises that front Ponsonby Road and Crummer Road, providing suitable weather protection and assisting to define the entranceways.

4.22 Overall, I consider the proposal, both in terms of activity generated and the building form, will make a positive contribution to the street amenity and character of both Ponsonby Road and Crummer Road. The laneway through the site will provide a secondary accessway and pedestrian-focused space that complements the public street network.

**Amenity of Surrounding Properties**

4.23 The adjoining property to the east at 40 Ponsonby Road contains a three-level building with a café at ground level and commercial use at the upper levels (see Sheet (3)02 and (3)04 of the architectural package). It has a solid boundary wall and the proposal will not adversely affect the amenity of this property.

4.24 The topography falls away from the Ponsonby Road ridge to the south. The property adjoining the southern boundary at 2-4 Crummer Road contains a two-level commercial building (see Sheet (3)04 ‘View from Crummer Road’, of the architectural package). It is set back from the boundary with a driveway and car parking located adjacent to the Site. The upper level of the building has large windows facing the Site together with a balcony in the central area of the façade (see Attachment 1 of this report).

4.25 The bulk and location provisions for the zone enable the construction of buildings on the boundary up to a height of 11m with an additional 2m for roof form. The proposed additional building height will result in some increased dominance in relation to the adjacent property. The articulation of the wall expanse and the inclusion of a balcony area at the western end of the upper level reduces the apparent mass of this façade. As shown in the shading analysis contained in the architectural package, the additional height proposed will result in some additional shading in the morning (see Sheets (8)07 and (8)08). Except around the winter solstice, the additional shading has moved off the upper level balcony by lunchtime. Given the inner-city location and the commercial use of the adjacent property, the relationship between the buildings is considered to be acceptable and will not significantly diminish the amenity of the adjacent property.

4.26 The adjacent property at 17 Maidstone Street also adjoins the south eastern corner of the Site. That property contains a two-level commercial building. With the sloping land,
the ground floor of this building, which fronts Maidstone Street, is almost one level
down from the ground level of the Site. The upper level has large north-facing windows.
The property has a driveway and parking area located on the south eastern side of the
building and wrapping around to the rear area adjacent to the Site.

4.27 As noted above, the bulk and location provisions for the zone enable the construction
of buildings on the boundary up to a height of 11m with an additional 2m for roof form. The
proposed building is set back 2m from the southern area of the eastern boundary
and between 1.9m and 2.5m from the eastern area of the southern boundary. While
the proposed building will be prominent, it only projects for a small length adjacent to
this property. Given the existing ground level differential, it is considered that the
additional height above the permitted standard will not significantly diminish the
amenity of this property.

4.28 Allendale House is located on the western corner of Ponsonby Road and Crummer
Road. The building has an office use and is occupied by Foundation North. The
building is set back from its boundaries, with surrounding vegetation creating a foil to
the street environment (see Sheet (03)03 of the architectural package). The building
is angled to have a primary orientation towards Ponsonby Road. A mature Pohutukawa
tree, in particular, creates a visual barrier towards the Site adjacent to the front of the
building. In my opinion, the separation provided by Crummer Road (20m wide) ensures
that the additional height proposed for the new building will not diminish the amenity
of this property. The replacement of the service and parking area with buildings creating
a positive street frontage will improve the visual quality of the street edge facing this
property.

4.29 Vinegar Lane is a recent redevelopment of an industrial site occupied by a vinegar
factory. The property has been subdivided with a number of properties, being
development for a mix of residential and commercial uses. The buildings create a
positive frontage to Crummer Road and are generally four storeys high. A café is
located on the corner of the lane and Crummer Road. While the buildings within
Vinegar Lane are slightly down the hill from the Site, the scale of building proposed will
not appear incompatible with the relatively intensive pattern of development
established at Vinegar Lane. The nearest building at 3 Crummer Road contains a retail
premises at the lower levels and a residential activity at the upper levels (see Sheet
(3)03 of the architectural package). The shading analysis contained in the architectural
package show that the additional height proposed will result in some additional shading
early in the morning between September and March (see Sheets (8)04 to (8)06 of the
architectural package). Given the inner-city location and the time of year that the
additional shading will be experienced, I consider that the adverse effects on the
amenity of the upper level residential activity will be less than minor.

4.30 The proposal will result in considerable change to the existing environment when
viewed from surrounding properties. The additional height above the permitted height
standard will result in some additional dominance in relation to the property at 2-4
Crummer Road. The proposal will result in some additional shading on a number of properties. However, it is concluded that the adverse effect resulting from this additional shading will be less than minor. Overall, it is concluded that given the inner city suburb location and the mixed use character of the area, the proposal will not significantly diminish the amenity of surrounding properties.

District Plan Objectives and Policies

4.31 In my opinion, the proposal is consistent with policy framework as it relates to urban design considerations; and the proposal is of a form, scale and design quality that will make a positive contribution to, and reinforce, the Ponsonby commercial centre as a focal area for the community (Obj. H10.2(2)). The scale and intensity of development proposed is, in my opinion, suitable for the location and balances the retention and restoration of a character defining building with the sensitive location and design of more intensive site development (Obj. H10.2(7)). The proposal will make a positive contribution to the vibrancy of the eastern end of the Ponsonby Road corridor, creating an attractive place accommodating commercial, entertainment and retail activities (Obj. H10.2(8)). The site configuration and design of buildings respond positively to the adjacent streets, which are identified as key retail frontages. The structuring element of the laneway through the site will complement the street network and support their role as pedestrian-focused environments (Obj. H10.2(9)).

4.32 Having regard to the supporting policies, I consider the proposal is consistent with those that relate to design considerations, supporting the objectives sought as outlined above. In relation to Policy 13 which relates to building height, I consider the proposed distribution of height on the Site is an efficient use of land, balancing the retention of the lower height and space around the character defining building with greater height behind, in a sensitive manner. The scale of development proposed will enable a mix of activities to establish in a manner that supports public transport and contributes to the centre’s vitality and vibrancy. The Site has a substantial separation from any residential zones and will not result in significant adverse amenity effects on those zones. In my opinion, the scale of development proposed, when combined with a consideration of its configuration and form, supports the status of the town centre in the centres hierarchy.

4.33 The appropriateness of the proposal in relation to the Special Character Area Overlay provisions is assessed in detail in the Archifact report. From an urban design perspective, I consider the proposal has been developed from a clear analysis of the special character features of the Site and its surrounding context. While the identified character supporting building will be removed, I consider that, on balance, the special character values have been responded to in a positive manner and those values will be retained and the overall character of the area enhanced by the proposal. In my opinion, the proposal is consistent with Objectives D18.2(1) and (3) and not contrary to Objective D18.2(2).
Urban Design Panel Feedback

4.34 An earlier iteration of the proposal was presented to the Auckland Urban Design Panel (minutes attached as Appendix 1). At the outset, the Panel acknowledged the quality of the proposal and the commitment to the innovative ‘living building challenge.’ The Panel provided some helpful feedback to guide the refinement of the project.

4.35 Considerable effort has been made to refine the proposed amendments to the Palace building to respond to the matters raised by the Panel. Further assessment of the appropriateness of the alterations is set out in the report by Archifact.

4.36 The Panel minutes identified different responses to the height proposed for the new building and its relationship to the Palace building. Additional effort has been applied to the design of the building façade and the design of the laneway to create a high amenity pedestrian environment. My assessment of the scale and form of the proposed building is set out above.

4.37 Further consideration has been given to create an articulated rear wall and break down the façade at the upper level by including a balcony in the south western corner of the building.

4.38 The design of the upper levels of the four-storey north-facing wing has been refined to create a more formal arrangement with openings punctuating the main façades so that the different levels are more readily apparent. Planters have also been added to provide for planting to cascade over the façade and create an additional grain of detail.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Site forms part of an established neighbourhood that is identified in the AUP(OiP) as having a special character. The proposal has been developed through a thorough analysis of the characteristics of the Site and its surrounding context. In my opinion, the proposal has responded to these characteristics in a positive and innovative manner.

5.2 The proposal balances the retention of the character defining building on the corner of Ponsonby and Crummer Roads and the low intensity use of this portion of the site, with development of a greater scale around it. In my opinion, the refurbishment of the Palace building and its modification to enable its use in a manner that actively engages with the adjacent public realm will enhance its role as a character defining feature. While of a greater scale and intensity, I consider the proposed new building is sensitive to this feature and the distinctive character of the wider environment. The Site configuration and design of buildings will enhance the adjacent public realm and accommodate activities that contribute to the area’s vitality.
5.3 In the context of relevant assessment criteria set out in the AUP, the above assessment addresses relevant urban design considerations in relation to: site configuration; building scale and form; streetscape amenity; and amenity of surrounding properties. In conclusion, I find that while the proposal will have some adverse amenity effects on the adjacent property at 2-4 Crummer Road, in the context of the inner-city suburb environment and the commercial use of the site, these effects are not significant. Overall, I consider the proposal will make a positive contribution to the evolving character of the area.

5.4 The AUP sets out a detailed policy framework that addresses a range of urban design considerations. It generally seeks to ensure town centres evolve in a manner that creates high quality built environments that reinforce their role as focal points for the community. As set out in the assessment above, I consider the proposal is consistent with that framework.

Rebecca Skidmore
Urban Designer/Landscape Architect
July 2018
Appendix 1:
Urban Design Panel Meeting Minutes
Introduction
The Panel thanks the applicant for their presentation and acknowledges the quality of the proposed development and its commitment to the innovative ‘living building challenge’.

Character Supporting Building
Subject to evidence to be provided to Council, the Panel supports the removal of the character supporting Sawadee building and its replacement with two buildings of three storey height that respond to the finer grain of the Ponsonby Road ridge. The setback of the taller portion of the building in this part of the site is appropriate.

Character Defining Building
The Panel is not convinced by the treatment afforded this character building which in the Panel’s view requires more careful resolution and attention to detail in a way that respects its special character attributes.

Lean-To
The Panel considers the retention of the wing-wall unsuccessful and urges the applicant to explore other ways of reinterpreting the existing lean-to, this might include adapting part of the existing lean-to structure within the courtyard space. Consideration could be given to removal of the wing-wall on Crummer Road if a successful interpretation of the lean-to was otherwise achieved.

Floor Lowering
The Panel has concerns about the extent of change required to the façade brought about by the lowering of the floor and encourages the applicant to re-evaluate this strategy, this may include...
modifying the levels in the lane. In particular the Panel is concerned about the apparent mismatch in head height of the doors and windows on the lower level.

**Front Terrace and Awning**
The Panel is not convinced by the width, geometry and materiality of the enclosed terrace and awning and considers that this part of the proposal is not yet successfully resolved. Consideration of this façade should also include the resolution of the upper level door openings.

**Crummer Road Awning**
The awning on the side elevation of the character defining building to Crummer Road should be removed.

**Junction with Crummer Road building**
This is currently poorly resolved if the wing-wall remains, and should be further investigated.

**Connection with Overbridge**
The current skewed alignment results in an unfortunate impact on the character defining building. This should be altered and further developed.

**Height and Bulk**
The Panel is concerned by the current height, bulk and complexity of the building as it sits behind the character defining building. From a heritage perspective the extent of additional height in and of itself is considered problematic. From an urban design perspective additional height may be appropriate provided that there are explicit benefits including greater enhancement of the public realm and ensuring that the additional height does not result in domination of the character defining building.

**South Wall**
The unrelieved scale and monolithic nature of the south wall is considered to be inappropriate and it is recommended that this be reconsidered.

**Façade Strategy/Design**
The Panel considers the street level façade strategy of the new buildings to be successful. However, the Panel has reservations about the random fenestration of the upper level of the north-east facing wing, which contributes to the dominance of this building relative to the character defining building.

The Panel is encouraged by, and supports, the use of high quality, naturally finished permanent materials.

**Conclusion**
Notwithstanding the recommendations above, 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.

*To the extent permissible by law, the Council expressly disclaims any liability to the applicant (under any theory of law including negligence) in relation to any pre-application process. The applicant also recognises that any information it provides to the 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). However, the Council is able to withhold information for certain reasons including to prevent unreasonable prejudice to someone's commercial position. All resource consent applications become public information once lodged with council.*
PHOTOGRAPH 1: View to neighbouring property at 2-4 Crummer Road from Crummer Road with Palace building in left of image.