



## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT



**401-403 Parnell Road, Parnell**

*Client:*  
Andra Trading Limited

**21 April 2020**



# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Background</b>	5
Experience	5
Methodology	5
Collaboration	6
<b>Proposal</b>	8
<b>Viewing Audience</b>	9
<b>Planning Context</b>	11
Auckland Unitary Plan	11
Existing Land Use Consent	13
<b>Existing Environment</b>	14
<b>Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects</b>	16
Viewpoint 1	17
Viewpoint 2	18
Viewpoint 3	19
Viewpoint 4	20
Viewpoint 5	21
Viewpoint 6	22
Viewpoint 7	23
Viewpoint 8	24
Discussion	25
<b>Conclusion</b>	26
Appendix 1 - Methodology	27
Appendix 2 - Southern Façade Progression	28
Appendix 3 - Parnell Special Character Area	29
Attachments - Viewpoint Location Map & VP1-VP8	



## Figures

Figure 1: Location Map 1	4
Figure 2: Original Southern Façade (included in the original Application)	7
Figure 3: Revised Southern Façade (included as part of the Sn92 response)	7
Figure 4: Garage door hidden behind window display	8
Figure 5: Viewshed analysis	10
Figure 6: Auckland Unitary Plan - Zone Map	11
Figure 7: Existing Land Use Consent (R/LUC/2015/4702)	13
Figure 8: Application site building (Marriotts Limited)	14
Figure 9: Nearby architectural styles and contiguous verandah	15
Figure 10: North-eastern side of Parnell Road	15
Figure 11: Viewpoint Location Map	16
Figure 12: Viewpoint 1 Photograph	17
Figure 13: Close view toward Auckland Museum	17
Figure 14: Viewpoint 2 Photograph	18
Figure 15: Sidewalk views are obscured by buildings and vegetation	18
Figure 16: Viewpoint 3 Photograph	19
Figure 17: Viewpoint 3 location context - looking north	19
Figure 18: Viewpoint 4 Photograph	20
Figure 19: View from outside 11c Birdwood.	20
Figure 20: Viewpoint 5 Photograph	21
Figure 21: View of the front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral	21
Figure 22: Viewpoint 6 Photograph	22
Figure 23: View from the front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral	22
Figure 24: Viewpoint 7 Photograph location	23
Figure 25: View from Parnell Road outside St Mary's Cathedral	23
Figure 26: Viewpoint 8 Photograph	24
Figure 27: View from the application site to neighbouring properties	24



## INTRODUCTION

1. Narrative Landscape has been engaged by Building Innovation Group (BIG), on behalf of Andra Trading Limited, to prepare a Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment for the proposed development at 401-403 Parnell Road, Auckland. This assessment has been prepared in response to point (3) of the Section 92 request for further information, dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, which has directed consideration of particular viewpoints.
2. The proposal site is located near the southern end of the Parnell Town Centre Zone, in close proximity to the intersection of Parnell Road and St Stephens Avenue (Figure 1). This is a prominent position in Parnell, with both of these roads being arterial links and with the landmark Holy Trinity Cathedral site located across the road.



Figure 1: Location Map 1

3. This site had already been through a number of development iterations. There is an existing land use consent which granted the demolition of the existing building and construction of a 4 storey high building. The current proposal is for a new 6 storey proposal which itself has continually been refined through pre-application discussions with Council. The key component of this application, from the clients perspective, is the addition of an extra two storeys to ensure the financial viability of what is considered a higher quality building appearance, while also retaining the façade of the existing ‘character supporting’ building.
4. While the additional floors of this current application exceed the height limit for this location by a maximum of 8.3m, there will be a positive effect on the locale through the retention of the early 20th Century, Art Deco style, Marriotts Limited façade. This project has applied an innovative approach to the design constraints and the intention is to retain the immediate streetscape character in front of the building, while enhancing the overall streetscape in the nearby vicinity.



## **BACKGROUND**

### **Experience**

5. This assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects has been prepared by Josh Hunt of Narrative Landscape, a Registered NZILA Landscape Architect who has a decade of experience undertaking landscape planning and assessment. He has undertaken landscape and visual impact assessments throughout New Zealand for both public and private clients on a variety of topics including; infrastructure, marine farms, regional parks development, public walkways, retirement villages, design guides, and the preparation of four District-wide Outstanding Natural Landscape Assessments in the North Island.
6. While this assessment has been undertaken based on the NZILA Best Practice Guide (in conjunction with guidance from the Quality Planning website), it is acknowledged the this report has been prepared as a desktop analysis, having extensively utilised 3D modelling, the Auckland Council GIS information, Google Earth (including Streetview) and site photographs collected using a DSLR camera. This is an unfortunately reality for an assessment which was requested during the unprecedented COVID-19 nationwide lock-down (Sn92 Requested 1 April 2020, with the response required by 21 April 2020).
7. I am familiar with this very prominent location, however must acknowledge that I have not been to the Birdwood Road locations. Despite this, I am confident in the graphical material (particularly the high quality viewpoint location photographs) prepared in conjunction with BIG, along with the conclusions drawn in this assessment.

### **Methodology**

8. The intention of this assessment is to determine the potential level of visual effect, over and above what is anticipated under the existing LUC, arising from this proposal in the context of the receiving environment.
9. All of the relevant information included in the main application has been reviewed in preparation of this assessment. Other key information that has been reviewed includes; the relevant chapters of the Auckland Unitary Plan, the updated application architectural package (produced by BIG), the Council initiated 30 year 'Parnell Plan', and data from on-line resources (Auckland GeoMaps, LINZ, Google Earth etc.).
10. The desktop analysis has focused on reviewing the streetscape context of the surrounding environment, starting with the list of viewpoints identified in the Sn92 request, and then further refining these based on likely viewing angles and relevance. I have had access to the 3D CAD file, used by BIG in preparation of the architectural drawing package, to assist within understanding how this building will integrate into the surrounding context.



11. The effects ranking system within this assessment is based on a 7-point scale, as recommended by the NZILA Best Practice Note. The descriptions of how these relate to landscape and visual effects are outlined in Appendix 1, including their relationship to RMA terminology, and include the following rankings;

*Very High, High, High-Moderate, Moderate, Low-Moderate, Low, and Very Low*

## **Collaboration**

12. During initial discussions with the project team, the treatment of the southern façade was identified (from a streetscape and visual amenity perspective) as the key component which required addressing. My correspondence with BIG on 10 April 2020 stated that;

*My initial reaction in relation to the influence on the streetscape is positive. My only small concern is in relation to the 'View from the South' as illustrated on page 25 of the Design Statement. Despite the suggested detailing that I can see you have already introduced, I think that it may need a bit more done to reduce the expansiveness of the relatively blank southern façade.*

13. During further discussions with the project team, it became clear that there was general consensus that the southern façade would be built out when the adjacent property to the south undergoes further development. However, with no guarantee of time-frame or what this may look like, we are proceeding on the basis that the southern façade of our application will likely be a visible component in the streetscape for some time to come.
14. With that in mind, BIG, Narrative and DPA, have collectively agreed that a subtle introduction of elements onto the southern façade is warranted to break up this elevation and reduce the scale of built form (Figure 2 & Figure 3), particularly when seen from nearby locations south of the site. A progression of this southern façade treatment is included as Appendix 2, in order to convey the collaborative process that has occurred.
15. In my opinion this is an excellent option for breaking up the potentially expansive blank façade, and any proposal that is commensurate with the intentions of the current architectural plans would be an appropriate design response. This effectively breaks the previous horizontal dominance of the southern elevation into three well proportioned sections, while also increasing the buildings design flare with this contemporary response to the Art Deco style.
16. It is with this revised concept that the following assessment of effects has been considered, noting that the ability to collaborate on refining this southern façade is a key mitigation measure considered in this assessment.



Figure 2: Original Southern Façade (included in the original application)



Figure 3: Revised Southern Façade (included as part of the updated Sn92 response)

Note: Above figures both provided by Archavium.



## PROPOSAL

17. The current proposal has been thoroughly detailed in the application material submitted to Council. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the rest of the application material, particularly the planning assessment (The Development Collective), the architectural package [BIG/Archavium], and the heritage impact assessment [Dave Pearson Architects].
18. Essentially, the property owner is looking to build a 6 storey complex which has a retail tenancy at ground level, along with vehicle/pedestrian access for the apartments which occupy the 5 floors above ground level. This is on the existing 336m<sup>2</sup> site located at 401-403 Parnell Road.
19. In order to retain an effectively fully built frontage for the site, while also providing vehicle access (the existing 160m<sup>2</sup> carpark at the rear of the site is accessed via an tenuous and undocumented agreement with the adjacent property owner), an innovative solution has been developed which utilises a window display fixed to a tilting door which folds up and reveals the vehicle entry (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Garage door hidden behind window display (Source: Archavium)

20. An excellent overview of the design progression is detailed on page 20 of the Design Statement which accompanied this application. The façade of the existing 'character supporting' building is going to be retained, giving the impression of a full width retail occupancy across the property frontage, with the ability to change/update the material within the display window. The new building façade has been set back from the retained Marriotts Limited façade, which preserves the street scale through the appearance of a podium style development. The top floor and western elevation are also recessed from the property boundary to reduce the overall bulk of the building. A refinement to the southern façade has also been undertaken, which was discussed above.





## VIEWING AUDIENCE

21. This assessment is primarily concerned with the potential visual effects arising within the nearby neighbourhood and streetscape. As part of the Section 92 Request from Council, the following viewpoints were identified;

- a. Outside 14 Birdwood Crescent looking southeast towards the site
- b. From 11c Birdwood Crescent looking southeast towards the site
- c. From the parvis of the Cathedral
- d. Driving south 'up' Parnell Road from approximately outside 180 Parnell Road
- e. Driving south 'up' Parnell Road from the intersection of Parnell Road and St George's Bay Road – the proposed building and the Cathedral in the same viewshaft.
- f. Near the intersection of St Mary's Cl and Parnell Road
- g. From the hardstand area outside the Auckland Museum

22. Further collaboration has taken place with BIG/Archavium in the refinement of these locations. It was quickly apparent that only locations (a), (e) and (g) from the list above were appropriate viewpoint locations. In order to achieve what was intended by the other locations, we have amended the remaining viewpoints and indicated the reason for the change in the Table 1 below. The viewpoint order was revised so that there was a logical flow through the locations in the assessment below.

Table 1 – Viewpoint Selection

Sn92 VP' s	Yes/ No	Revised VP' s	Comments
(a)	Yes	VP8	Representative of the nearby streetscape views in Birdwood Cres behind the site.
(b)	No	VP4	From here the view toward the proposal would be significantly blocked by the Church building at 4a Birdwood Cres.
(c)	No	VP6	Vegetation and the monument screen this view. VP has moved to allow a view toward the proposal.
(d)	No	VP2	Distant view up a narrow corridor. Will include view, but suggest the addition of the closer VP3.
		VP3	Better medium range view looking along Parnell Road.
(e)	Yes	VP5	Good view looking south.
(f)	No	VP7	VP has been moved north so that the Trinity Apartments don't screen the view.
(g)	Yes	VP1	Good distant view from the Museum.



24. The revised VP locations (VP1 to VP8) are considered to convey a range of representative views of the proposal from varied distances and angles. Each of these viewpoint locations has been reproduced in the Attachments Each photograph has been taken with a DSLR camera using a 50mm equivalent lens which adheres to accepted photographic standards.
25. As an additional layer of scrutiny, a simple viewshed analysis has been undertaken using the 3D information available from Google Earth. This has produced the image below (Figure 5) which helps to illustrate that the selected viewpoints are fair locations for assessment. The viewshed analysis shows us that there will be a view obtained from in front of the War Memorial Museum, through the eastern vegetated border of the Auckland Domain (VP1). The main views directed toward the site are likely going to be looking south along Parnell Road for individuals in motor vehicles or bicycling (VP2, VP3 & VP5). The intersection east of the application site will offer views toward the southern façade of the proposed building (VP6 & VP7), while views from within Birdwood Cres will also be obtainable (VP4 & VP8).



Figure 5: Viewshed analysis (Google Earth Pro)

26. It is considered that the views from within Birdwood Cres are likely to be more static views, from people who live in the area, however it does not appear that any views from here are funnelled toward the proposed building. The remainder of the views are more likely to be transient visitors through the area. Provided that the proposal is no out of character with the receiving environment, neither the static or transient views should experience a drastic change to this urbanised business zone setting. The selection of 8 viewpoints is considered sufficient to address likely visual effects in the surrounding area.



## PLANNING CONTEXT

### Auckland Unitary Plan

27. The proposed planning framework has been extensively documented within the Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE), prepared by The Development Collective, which identifies that within the RMA, clause 7 of schedule 4, requires assessment of “(b) any physical effect on the locality, including any landscape and visual effect”. The application site is located within the Business Town Centre Zone at the southern end of the Parnell grouping (Figure 6). Provisions relating to landscape and visual matters of this Restricted Discretionary Activity have been reviewed, with the key aspects considered to be around the influence of built form, the special character control, visual and streetscape effects.

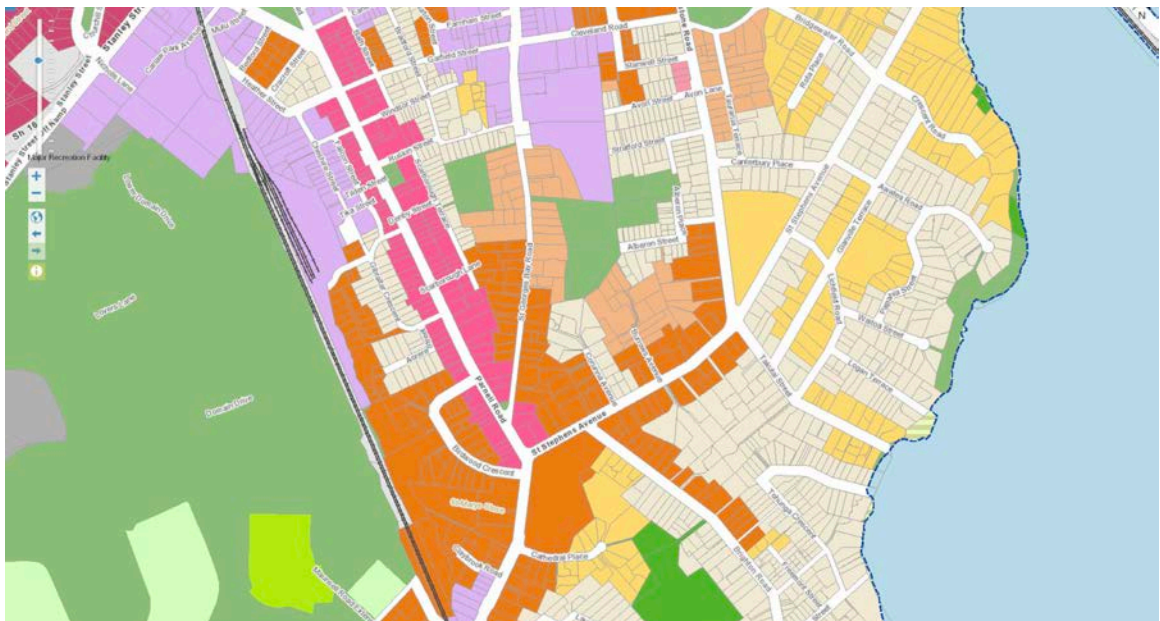


Figure 6: Auckland Unitary Plan – Zone Map

28. Within the Business Town Centre Zone (H10), there is a requirement to manage visual dominance (H10.6.1), with the relevant Matters of Discretion (H10.8.1) directing Assessment Criteria (H10.8.2) back to the appropriate zone Policies. In this case being, Policy H10.3;

(3) *Require development to be of a quality and design that positively contributes to:*

*(a) planning and design outcomes identified in this Plan for the relevant zone;*

*(b) the visual quality and interest of streets and other public open spaces; and*

*(c) pedestrian amenity, movement, safety and convenience for people of all abilities*

(7) *Require at grade parking to be located and designed in such a manner as to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on pedestrian amenity and the streetscape.*

(18) *Require those parts of buildings with frontages subject to the Key Retail Frontage Control to maximise street activation, building continuity along the frontage, pedestrian amenity and safety and visual quality*

(19) *Require those parts of buildings with frontages subject to the General Commercial Frontage Control to achieve street activation, building continuity along the frontage, pedestrian amenity and safety and visual quality.*



29. Within the Special Character Areas Overlay - Residential and Business (D18), a key consideration is the effect on streetscape and special character context. The Parnell special character area is detailed within Schedule 15 (15.1.6.12).
30. It appears that almost the entirety of the Business Town Centre Zoning along Parnell Road is contained within the Parnell Special Character Area (Appendix 3), with the exception being the 4 parcels across the road from the application site. Also, over 50% of the western side of Parnell Road (within this character area) is occupied by either a character defining building or a character supporting building.
31. Along with reference to the relevant policies of this chapter (D18), the assessment criteria for alteration or additions to a character supporting building include;
- (b) whether the alterations or additions to the building:*
- (ii) have street elevation(s) sympathetic to the existing building, and any other surrounding scheduled historic heritage place, character-defining or character-supporting buildings;*
  - (iii) where relevant, are positioned and designed to retain the continuity of the front façade alignment of the building or adjoining buildings, and the adjoining established horizontal or vertical modulation;*
  - (iv) are compatible with the dominant architectural style of the existing building in terms of form, mass, proportion and materials;*
  - (v) use materials which maintain the integrity of the special character and materiality of the building;*
  - (vi) propose to combine adjoining buildings and whether the finished appearance/ façade retains visual evidence of the historic pattern of development by vertical modulation;*
  - (vii) for retail premises, have main frontage(s) incorporating significant areas of unobscured display glazing and building entries reflecting traditional forms in order to maintain good visual connections with the street; and*
  - (viii) locate and design attachments, such as signs, aerials and air conditioning units, sympathetically to the existing building.*
32. The key provisions included within this section of the assessment are not an exhaustive list, however provide guidance on the type of factors that the Auckland Unitary Plan is seeking to address. It is also worth noting that the application site does not sit within any 'Regionally or Locally Significant Viewshafts' identified in the Auckland Unitary Plan.



## Existing Land Use Consent

33. It is relevant to acknowledge the existing unimplemented land use consent (LUC) for this property. This consent, which granted a four storey apartment complex (six residential units and a ground floor tenancy), identifies a consented development baseline for the site. When addressing potential adverse visual effects from the current application, it is my understanding that an existing consented development forms part of the existing environment. Therefore the level of effect that this assessment is evaluating is not the degree of change from the 1 storey Marriotts Limited building to the proposed 6 storey building, rather the difference in effect between the consented 4 storey apartment option and the proposed 6 storey option.
34. While the overall height of the existing LUC is consistent with the height limits of this zone, the overall appearance of the building is considered to be a reduction in streetscape amenity and visual appeal. Although the existing LUC would blend in well with the adjacent building to the north (Figure 7), when comparing it to the current proposal it is my opinion that; the retail frontage treatment is less representative of the historic character, the prominence of the vehicle entry detracts from the streetscape, the overall character contribution to the setting is reduced and the southern façade has a large blank precast concrete wall.
35. It is in relation to the existing LUC context that the proposed building is being assessed.



Figure 7: Existing Land Use Consent (R/LUC/2015/4702)



## EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

36. The suburb is located close to the Auckland CBD, being bound to the west by the Auckland Domain, to the east by Hobson Bay, to the north by Ports of Auckland and to the south by Newmarket Park and Ayr Reserve. The application site is located at the raised southern end of the linear strip of commercial development which forms the extent of the Parnell special character area.
37. This historical value of this area is due in part to Parnell being the first suburb established outside the central city (in the 1840's), along with being one of the earliest suburban commercial mainstreets in the region<sup>1</sup>. *“The area collectively reflects important or representative buildings, types, designs, styles, methods of construction, materials and craftsmanship, urban patterns, landscape, and streetscape qualities”*.<sup>2</sup>
38. The existing building on site has the characteristic parapet wall facing the street (Figure 8), which is in keeping with the range of nearby architectural styles from the 19th and early 20th century (Figure 9). The site also exhibits the narrow lot width that was common during early periods of subdivision. The southern end of this Parnell Road special character area is anchored by the Holy Trinity Cathedral site, which acts as a dominant landmark building.



Figure 8: Application site building (Marriotts Limited)

1 Auckland Unitary Plan: Schedule 15 - Pg 96.

2 Auckland Unitary Plan: Schedule 15 - Pg 97



Figure 9: Nearby architectural styles and contiguous verandah

39. There is a wide variety of uses along the Parnell Road streetscape which contributes to a degree of variation in the existing streetscape character. However, the layout of this streetscape has a fairly traditional suburban main street character, particularly along the south-western side of Parnell Road where the building form and alignment provide for an almost contiguous length of verandahs (Figure 9).
40. The north-eastern side of the road has greater variation in built form, with more building separation and setbacks from the frontage/footpath (Figure 10). The north-eastern side also has a greater number of street trees breaking up the length of footpath. Many of these trees are well established, with possibly the most prominent being the towering Norfolk Pine which is identifiable both nearby and from much further away (e.g. from the Museum).



Figure 10: North-eastern side of Parnell Road



## ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

41. In this scenario, the specific effects on the physical landform from the proposed new building are very limited. This will include the excavation/earthworks required to demolish most of the existing building and then construct the new one. The existing urban setting within this zone and the adjacent scale of building that has occurred on the property immediately north, anticipate development of a nature similar to that being proposed. Furthermore, the physical landscape effects would be of a similar scale under the existing unimplemented LUC for this property. The physical landscape effects are considered less than minor.
42. In a broader sense, the effects on landscape character are more closely linked to the visual effects that may arise from this over height building. It is the potential visual effects that will be addressed in more detail below. The general assessment process can be summarised into the following steps.
- A) Determine the baseline environment (e.g. description of existing)
  - B) Identify the proposed change (e.g. the scale of change in this specific context)
  - C) Evaluate the overall effect (e.g. factoring in viewing audience sensitivities and the existing environments ability to absorb change in order to conclude on the level of effect).
  - D) Identify any mitigation measures that have been taken or need to be taken.

### Viewpoints

43. The eight viewpoint locations have been identified above in the 'Viewing Audience' section, with the full size photographs included in the Attachments. The Attachments also include a larger copy of the viewpoint location map (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Viewpoint Location Map





## Viewpoint 1



Figure 12: Viewpoint 1 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

44. This viewpoint (Figure 12) is located on the hardstand area in front of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, looking east, approximately 400m from the application site. It is considered representative of a long range view. This view looks out across Parnell, with the Holy Trinity Cathedral and Trinity Apartments clearly visible on the skyline to the right of this view, and a glimpse of Hauraki Gulf to the left of this view. The application site would be centrally located within this viewpoint photograph, around the position of the phoenix palm. This view has a strong mix of the Parnell built form and extensive established vegetation.
45. The introduction of the proposed building will not compromise this viewpoint. The Holy Trinity Cathedral will remain the dominant built element of this view, with the tall elements of the existing Norfolk pines (located near the application site) helping to integrate the proposed building into this already varied skyline. Overall, visual effects from this location are considered to be Very Low.
46. This viewpoint is relevant due to the prominence of the Museum location and the large viewing audience who visit. However, it must be noted that from this location, an individuals focus is not typically orientated in the direction of Viewpoint 1, with the focal point of the Museum building having a commanding presence within the immediate area (Figure 13).

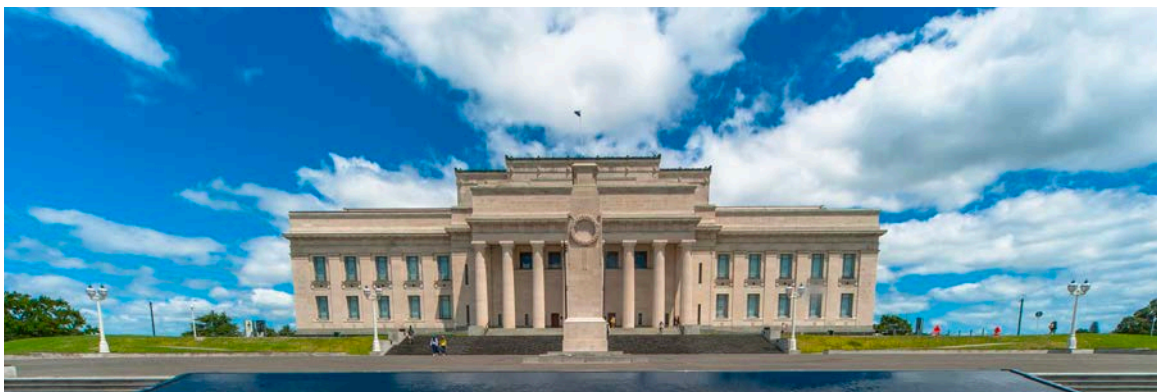


Figure 13: Close view toward Auckland Museum



## Viewpoint 2



Figure 14: Viewpoint 2 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

47. This viewpoint (Figure 14) is located at 180 Parnell Road adjacent to Heard Park, looking south along Parnell Road, approximately 520m from the site. It is considered representative of a long range view. This view looks straight up the Parnell Road corridor, with the existing Ridges building (located immediately north of the application site) currently forming the distant focal-point of this view. The view overall displays a typical suburban mainstreet character, with variation on building style, diversity of building height, on-street parallel parking, verandahs and street trees partially screening buildings on either side of the road.
48. The application site would be visible from this location above the distance Ridges building. Despite the view being directed toward the application site, the additional height of the proposed building is only considered to result in little or no loss of the existing streetscape character. This viewpoint is considered to have a reduced sensitivity to change due to the transient nature of this location (i.e. views are really only obtainable from a motor vehicle), the distance from the proposal, the screening that will occur from the existing Ridges building and the lack of views for pedestrians from the adjacent sidewalk or Heard Park (Figure 15). The introduction of the proposed building will not compromise this viewpoint and the overall visual effects from this location are considered to be Very Low.



Figure 15: Sidewalk views are obscured by buildings and vegetation



### Viewpoint 3



Figure 16: Viewpoint 3 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

49. This viewpoint (Figure 16) is located at the pedestrian crossing outside 283 Parnell Road, looking south along Parnell Road, approximately 280m from the application site. It is considered representative of a medium range view. This view along Parnell road is around where the Holy Trinity Cathedral starts coming into view. The view continues to display a typical suburban mainstreet character (as it would have while transitioning between the VP2 and VP3 locations). There is a row of existing tall buildings located immediately adjacent to the viewer (Figure 17), which would be seen while using this crossing. There is a strong sense of enclosure due to the building frontages and street trees.
50. The proposed building would be visible from this location, rising above the Ridges building that is central in this view. While the proposed building will introduce additional height to this view, it is not considered to be at odds with the anticipated streetscape character, nor detract from the existing visual amenity. From this location the eastern and northern façades will be visible, both of which are considered to be sympathetic to the surrounding architectural styles, with the building design considered a positive contribution to this setting. This viewpoint (in a similar manner to VP2) has a reduced sensitivity to change due to the transient nature of this location (i.e. it is really only obtainable from a motor vehicle) and the existing vegetation which provide dominant vertical elements. The overall visual effects from this location are considered to be Very Low.

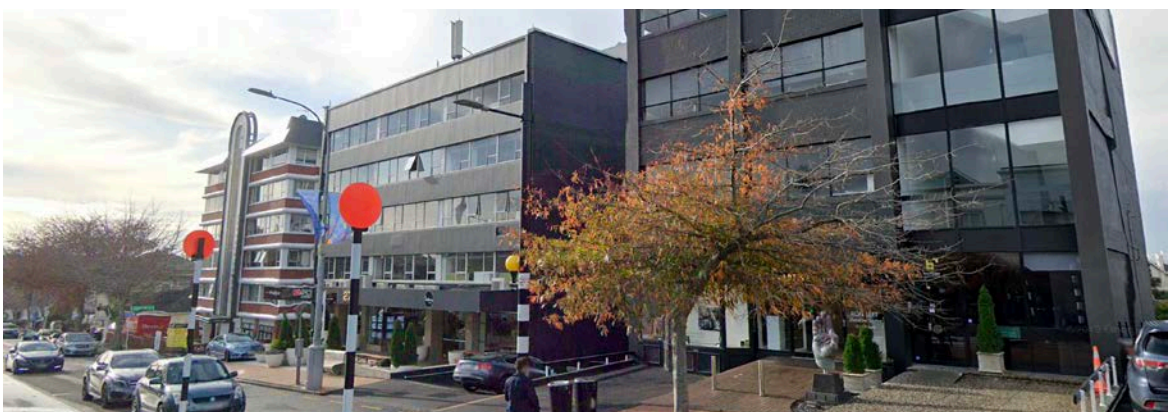


Figure 17: Viewpoint 3 location context - looking north



## Viewpoint 4



Figure 18: Viewpoint 4 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

51. This viewpoint (Figure 18) is located outside 5 Birdwood Cres, looking south-east, approximately 140m from the application site. It is considered representative of a medium range view. The Sn92 Request from Council had initially requested a viewpoint from 11c Birdwood Cres (Figure 19), however from that location the large building occupying the corner site of 4a Birdwood Cres (Church Building) would effectively block views toward the application site. Moving further south would have become similar to that of Viewpoint 8 (addressed below), and so Viewpoint 4 was selected to illustrate that an obscure glimpse toward the application site is obtainable.
52. The proposed building, when observed from this viewpoint, will be a barely discernible change to the streetscape character. The additional height would be diminished by the dominant foreground buildings. The adverse visual effects from this viewpoint are considered to be Very Low.
53. Even if a view toward the application site is obtainable from the south of the church building, this would only be a recessive inclusion in the setting which would remain dominated by the buildings located in the foreground at 4a and 6 Birdwood Cres.

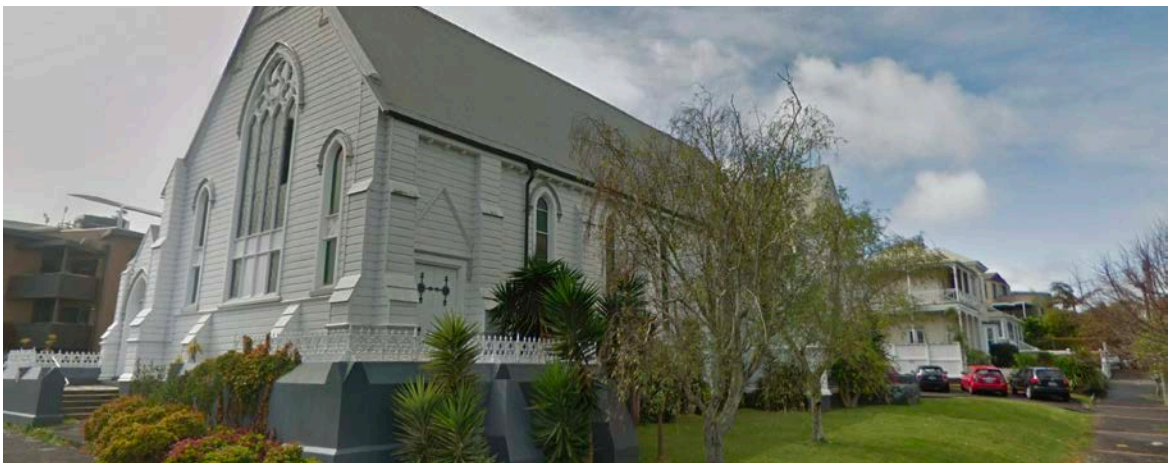


Figure 19: View from outside 11c Birdwood.



## Viewpoint 5



Figure 20: Viewpoint 5 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

54. This viewpoint (Figure 20) is located outside 380 Parnell Road, looking south across the Parnell Road and St Georges Bay Road intersection, with the Holy Trinity Cathedral visible in the same view as the application site. This viewpoint is approximately 90m from the application site and is considered representative of a close range view.
55. This is one of the more prominent locations that the proposal will be visible from. Vehicles, pedestrian and cyclists heading south along the north-eastern side of Parnell Road have a clear view toward the dominant southern half of the Holy Trinity Cathedral, with the proposal site also in view. There is an almost entirely built frontage along the south-eastern side of Parnell Road (which is effectively the end of the Parnell special character area), while the north-eastern side of the road is in contrast with extensive vegetation. The portion of the Cathedral that is in view is very dominant, however it is less architecturally impressive than the northern entrance (Figure 21), which is screened from view. The proposed development will sit taller than the adjacent Ridges building at the street frontage, however the adjacent building (north) will screen the top of the proposed building from this view. The design response is considered compatible with the variation of surrounding architectural styles. The adverse visual effects from this viewpoint are considered to be Low.

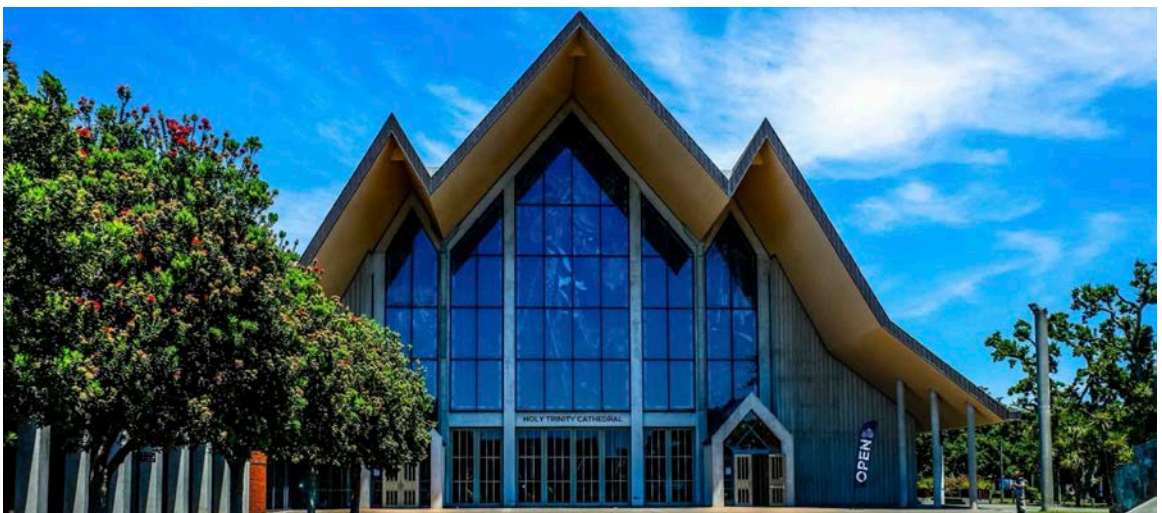


Figure 21: View of the front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral



## Viewpoint 6



Figure 22: Viewpoint 6 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

56. This viewpoint (Figure 22) is located on the grounds of the Holy Trinity Cathedral, looking north-west across the Parnell Road and St Stephens Ave intersection. This viewpoint is approximately 90m from the application site and is considered representative of a close range view. The viewpoint requested from in front of the Cathedral (Figure 23) was going to be the initial viewpoint location, however the memorial and existing vegetation provide significant screening toward the application site. The selected view represents a similar distance and overall view to that which would be achieved from the St Stephens Ave footpath in front of the Cathedral.
57. The special character defining building on the corner of Parnell Road and Birdwood Cres is prominent in the mid-ground. The Ridges building is also visible in the center of the view. As with viewpoint 5, the north-eastern side of Parnell Road is dominated by vegetation, while the south-western side is dominated by built form. The proposed building will sit comfortably between the surrounding buildings, providing a continuation of verandahs and retention of the ground floor (including parapet) character supporting feature of the Marriotts Limited building. While the proposed building will increase the existing height in this location, it is not considered out of place in the context of this streetscape which has other nearby tall buildings such as the Cathedral and 5 storey high Trinity Apartments (Refer to Figure 25 below). The adverse visual effects from this location are considered to be Low.



Figure 23: View from the front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral



## Viewpoint 7



Figure 24: Viewpoint 7 Photograph location (Ref: Attachments)

58. This viewpoint (Figure 24) is located outside the Trinity Apartments on the corner of Parnell Road and Birdwood Cres, looking north, approximately 70m from the application site. It is considered representative of a close range view. The photograph used above is actually taken with a wide angle lens to provide visual context within this part of the assessment, however the Viewpoint 7 photograph included in the Attachments is taken using the appropriate 50mm equivalent lens.
59. The original view requested was from back towards the St Mary's Cathedral building (Figure 25), however, the Trinity Apartment building and existing street trees provide a visual buffer. By the time motorists, cyclists or pedestrians traveling north along Parnell Road get a clear view toward the proposal site, the building and vegetation within Viewpoint 7 become an intervening element. From this intersection, the viewer is looking directly at the character defining building positioned at the beginning of the Parnell special character area. The focus of the view however is off to the right and directed toward the open intersection. Viewers will be able to find a view from this location to the back of the proposed building, however this rear portion of the building is stepped, and includes a green wall feature, which will soften any visual intrusion. The adverse visual effects from this location are considered to be Very Low.



Figure 25: View from Parnell Road outside St Mary's Cathedral



## Viewpoint 8



Figure 26: Viewpoint 8 Photograph (Ref: Attachments)

60. This viewpoint (Figure 26) is located outside 14 Birdwood Cres, looking east, approximately 50m from the application site. It is considered representative of a close range view. The properties visible here (number 14 & 14A), along with the property to the right (number 16), are located within the adjacent residential zone which backs onto the application site.
61. From this view within the streetscape the proposed building will sit prominently on the existing skyline. However, views from this location are considered to have a reduced level of sensitivity. The view is off at an oblique angle from the road corridor, and also looking up (as Birdwood Cres descends in elevation from the intersection with Parnell Road). The potential change to the private views of these residents was initially a concern, however there are a number of mitigating factors which reduce the adverse effect. Firstly, a 4 storey building has been consented on the application site, which has already changed what we anticipate within the existing environment. Secondly, the proposed building has a profile which is stepped back from this adjacent residential zone. Lastly, these dwellings have not been designed to take advantage of views toward the application site, as evidenced by the photograph below (Figure 27). This location has the greatest potential visual change, however this is still only considered to reach a Low-Moderate adverse level of effects.



Figure 27: View from the application site to neighbouring properties





## Discussion

62. In relation to the overall proposal and level of effect, I make the following comments.
63. The key mitigation measure has been in the continued refinement of the building design. The southern façade was originally of concern, however the suggested architectural treatment is considered appropriate, until such time as it is built out by adjacent development.
64. It needs to be acknowledged that the representative viewpoint locations have all been taken from the public realm within the streetscape. While an effort has been made to consider the potential effects on neighbouring properties, no private properties have been visited, and there is the potential for adverse visual effects on specific private locations which are greater than those identified in this assessment. However, this potential visual effect needs to be considered in relation to the existing environment (which includes the consented 4 storey development), and also note that individual values may differ from that of an expert based assessment. This assessment does not intend to diminish the potential effect on adjacent neighbours and I consider the findings in the AEE in relation to notification of the adjacent properties, to be an appropriately conservative approach.
65. The existing LUC has played an important baseline consideration in the conclusion drawn within this assessment. It is my clear preference for the higher quality, innovative and character retaining design response of this current application over that of the consented 4 storey option. This is relevant to consideration of views from the building located immediately north of the application site. Despite this being a change to their current viewshed, the existing LUC would also result in blocking of views out to the south.
66. I have considered the range of relevant statutory provisions, and in my opinion, the proposed Restricted Discretionary Activity is consistent with the overall intention of the relevant landscape and visual effects on the surrounding streetscape. In relation to the identified viewpoints, the level of effect can be summarised as;

*Table 2 - Viewpoint Summary*

<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Distance to Site</b>	<b>Level of Adverse Visual Effect</b>
1	400m	Very Low
2	520m	Very Low
3	280m	Very Low
4	140m	Very Low
5	90m	Low
6	90m	Low
7	70m	Very Low
8	50m	Low-Moderate



## CONCLUSION

67. The key reasons for supporting this application, in relation to landscape and visual effects, include:

- The retention of the existing building façade in order to save an architectural element contributing to the special character values of Parnell;
- The innovative approach to introducing vehicle access (shopfront display garage door), which promotes a higher quality street frontage continuity when compared to the existing Land Use Consent;
- Consideration of the reduced quality outcome of the existing Land Use Consent building design;
- The additional mitigation taken to refine the southern façade so that the visual dominance of the proposed building is minimised;
- That the existing setting can accommodate the proposed additional height as Parnell can be characterised as having an eclectic mix of architectural styles (i.e. the proposed building will not be uncharacteristic);
- The limited level of visual effects that the proposal will have, as assessed by the surrounding viewpoint analysis;
- The 4 storey high green wall that is to be included on the southern façade against the residential zone boundary which will help soften the appearance of the building; and
- The building profile which steps back the 5th floor from the adjacent residential boundary, and which steps back the 6th floor from all boundaries. Both features which help to reduce visual dominance.

68. In my opinion, the potential adverse effects arising from this proposal on landscape and visual matters will be no more than minor. I support this application for resource consent.

Josh Hunt  
Narrative Landscape Ltd.  
Registered NZILA



# Appendix 1 – Methodology

The following table outlines the scale of effects used within this assessment. Rather than duplication of this table for both Landscape Effects and Visual Amenity Effects, the conjunction 'or' has been used within the table to provide for either of these two effect assessment categories. It is noted that while the primary consideration is typically in relation to negative effects of a proposal, effects can also be neutral or positive.

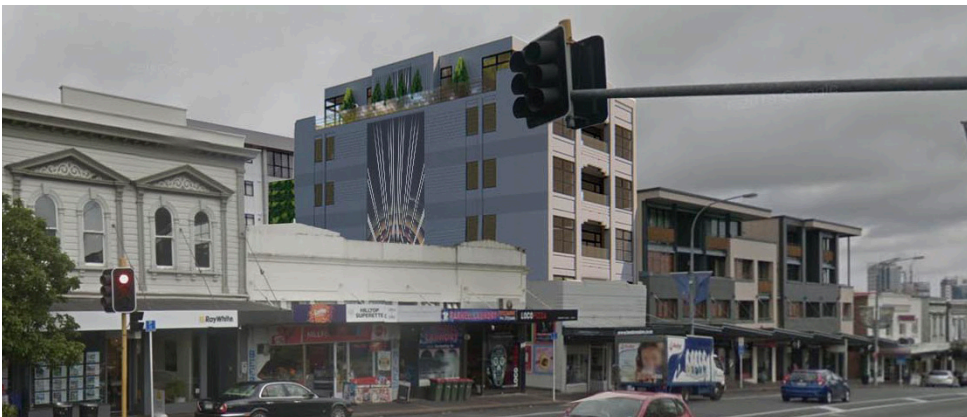
<b>Adverse Effect</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>RMA Terminology</b>
Very High	Total loss/modification of key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. amounts to a fundamental change of landscape character or visual amenity.	Significant Effect
High	Major loss/modification or loss of most key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. substantial change to the pre-development landscape character or visual amenity.	Significant Effect
High-Moderate	Loss/modification of several key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. the pre-development landscape character or visual amenity remains evident but is distinctly changed.	More than Minor Effect
Moderate	Partial loss/modification to key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. new elements may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape or views.	More than Minor Effect
Low-Moderate	Minor loss/modification to one or more key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. new elements are not prominent or uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape or views.	Minor Effect
Low	No material loss/modification to key elements / features / characteristics. i.e. modification or change is not uncharacteristic and integrates seamlessly within the receiving landscape or views.	Less than Minor Effect
Very Low	Little or no loss/modification to key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline, i.e. approximating a 'no change' situation that is barely discernible.	Less than Minor Effect



## Appendix 2 - Southern Façade Progression



Original  
Application



Quick  
Discussion  
Concept



Revision 1



Revision 2



# Appendix 3 – Parnell Special Character Area

AUP Schedule 15:

## 15.1.6.12. Special Character Areas Overlay – Business: Parnell

### 15.1.6.12.1. Extent of area

#### Special Character Areas Map:

