

Memorandum

Project: 18123 Drury South Plan Change
Subject: Landscape and Visual Effects
Date: 26/07/2019

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Bridget Gilbert Landscape Architecture Limited (BGLA) has been engaged by Drury South Limited to provide landscape comment on their proposed plan change that seeks to modify the Drury South Precinct provisions.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide comment on the landscape and visual effects of the proposed plan change.
- 1.3 Aspects of the proposed plan change of relevance to landscape considerations are as follows:
 - a) A change in building height from 20m to 25m within Sub-Precinct C.
 - b) Changes to the front yard landscaping requirements for Sub Precinct A (which has an underlying zoning of Light Industry) and Sub Precinct E (which has an underlying zoning of Heavy Industry), such that landscape requirements are in accordance with the underlying zone provisions in the Auckland Unitary Plan – Operative in Part (AUP:OP).
 - c) Changes to the side and rear yard landscaping requirements for all of the Light Industry and Heavy Industry Sub Precincts (i.e. Sub Precincts A, B, C and E), except for side and rear yards in Sub Precinct B that front State Highway 1 (SH1).
- 1.4 I confirm that I have visited the site and local area.
- 1.5 I have also provided preliminary advice to Drury South Limited on landscape matters as they have developed their proposed plan change request.
- 1.6 In preparing my comments I have reviewed the Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment prepared by Boffa Miskell (January 2011) for the (original) Drury South Plan Change, together

with the Drury South Precinct plan and provisions. I have also taken into consideration the development outcome anticipated by the Drury South SHA which introduces a residential Precinct to the south of Sub Precinct B (Motorway Edge Precinct) of the Precinct.

- 1.7 I have read the urban design report prepared by Warren and Mahoney and Barker and Associates (titled: Drury South Masterplan, dated January 2019). This document provides a comprehensive background to the proposed plan change (including mapping of the existing Precinct plan and the approved SHA) and a thorough description of the proposed plan change (including relevant mapping and imagery of the intended development typologies) and should be read alongside this Memorandum.
- 1.8 In preparing these comments, I have applied the following rating scale for adverse 'landscape' related effects:

'Landscape' Effects Rating Scale

| Effect Rating | Use and Definition |
|-------------------------|--|
| Very High: | Total loss of key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. amounts to a very significant negative change in visual amenity and/or landscape values. |
| High: | Major modification or loss of most key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. little of the pre-development visual amenity and or landscape values remains and amounts to a significant negative change in visual amenity and/or landscape values. <i>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</i> <i>High: adjective - Great in amount, value, size, or intensity.</i> |
| Moderate - High: | Modifications of several key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. the pre-development visual amenity and/or landscape values remain evident but materially changed. |
| Moderate: | Partial loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. the pre-development visual amenity and/or landscape values remain evident but are changed. <i>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</i> <i>Moderate: adjective - average in amount, intensity, quality or degree</i> |
| Moderate - Low: | Minor loss of or modification to one or more key elements / features / characteristics, i.e. new elements are not uncharacteristic within landscape and do not disturb the pre-development visual amenity and/or landscape values. |
| Low: | Very little material loss of or modification to key elements / features / characteristics. i.e. new elements integrate seamlessly into the pre-development visual environment and/or landscape values. <i>Concise Oxford English Dictionary Definition</i> <i>Low: adjective- 1. Below average in amount, extent, or intensity.</i> |
| Very Low: | Negligible loss of, or modification to, key elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, i.e. influence of new elements is barely discernible with respect to visual amenity and/or landscape values. |

2 Sub Precinct C Building Height

- 2.1 The current provisions allow for 20m-high buildings within Sub Precinct C.¹ The proposed plan change seeks to increase the building height in Sub Precinct C to 25m.
- 2.2 Sub Precinct C is positioned centrally within the overall Drury South Precinct. The sub precinct corresponds to flat land (noting that, like much of the Drury South Precinct, the ground levels need to be raised to accommodate flooding constraints).
- 2.3 A generously proportioned combined open space and stormwater management corridor (focussed on the Hingaia Stream network) defines the western and southern edges of Sub Precinct C. Extensive landscape restoration is proposed throughout this area which will include large-scale tree plantings. This 'landscape framework' serves to separate and, in time, screen Sub Precinct C from the Residential Precinct, State Highway, and the mixed rural and rural residential properties further to the west.
- 2.4 A mix of Light Industry (Sub Precinct A) and Heavy Industry (Sub Precinct E) is located along the north eastern edges of Sub Precinct C. These sub precincts provide for industrial buildings of 20m and 25m high respectively and form viewing catchments for Sub-Precinct C. Given the heights in these adjacent sub-precincts, I consider that they will have a relatively low sensitivity to an increase in building height of the scale anticipated by the proposed plan change.
- 2.5 I also consider that the similarity in height across these areas suggests a 'visual fit' for the proposed change in building height for Sub Precinct C in respect of views from within (and outside) the Drury South Precinct.
- 2.6 The only external viewing audiences that have clear views of Sub Precinct C are the elevated rural residential properties (and roads) some 1.5km to the east of the Drury South Precinct throughout Peach Hill Road and Macwhinney Drive. In my opinion, the proposed change in building height will be barely discernible in views from these locations due to the diminishing influence of distance coupled with the relatively modest scale of building height change (i.e. 5m). The proposed change also fits within the context of the building height in Sub Precinct E (25m) that will also be seen in the outlook.
- 2.7 On balancing these considerations I consider that the adverse landscape and visual effects of a change in building height from 20m to 25m will be **very low**.

¹ AUP:OP H17.6.1 (1).

3 Light Industrial Landscape Requirements

Front Yard Landscape Treatment

- 3.1 The current Precinct provisions require a 3m-wide strip of flax along the front yards of sites within Sub Precinct A Light Industry and Sub Precinct E Heavy Industry.²
- 3.2 The proposed plan change seeks to delete this bespoke landscape provision, with landscape requirements ‘reverting’ to the underlying AUP:OP Light Industry and Heavy Industry zone requirements. The underlying zone provisions require a 2m planted front yard (described as ‘a mix of trees, shrubs and groundcovers’).³ Within the context of the proposed plan change, the AUP:OP Light Industry zone and Heavy Industry zone side and rear yard planting requirements would, by and large, not be triggered, as they relate to boundaries adjoining Open Space zones, the Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone or the Special Purpose – School Zone, which is not applicable here.
- 3.3 I consider that the adverse landscape and visual effects of a change from a 3m front yard flax planting requirement to a 2m width front yard planting requirement that calls for tree, shrub and groundcover planting is **very low**. In my view, this change could be considered a **positive effect**, given the capability to now introduce tree planting into front yards that can complement streetscape plantings and assist with the integration of large-scale buildings and paved areas that can be typical of light industrial and heavy industrial areas.

Side and Rear Yard Landscape Treatment

- 3.4 For all Light Industrial sites (i.e. Sub Precincts A, B and C) and Heavy Industry sites (Sub Precinct E), a row of Leyland Cypress, Casuarina or Macrocarpa is required to be planted along side and rear boundaries, with an additional requirement for a double row of Leyland Cypress along side or rear boundaries adjoining SH1 within Sub Precinct B (Motorway Edge).⁴
- 3.5 The requirement for a double row of planting along side or rear boundaries adjoining SH1 is proposed to be maintained. I consider this is appropriate due to the high public profile of this edge of the Drury South Precinct (as a consequence of its visibility from the state highway) and a fundamental design intention for the Drury South Precinct to establish a strong green buffer along the highway frontage.

² AUP:OP 1410 6.2 (6).

³ Refer AUP:OP Table H16.6.4.1 Yards and H16.6.4 (2) and AUP:OP Table H17.6.4.1 Yards and H17.6.4 (2).

⁴ Refer AUP:OP 1410 6.2.(7).

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- 3.6 The proposed plan change seeks to delete the requirement for a row of Leyland Cypress, Casuarina or Macrocarpa along the side and rear boundaries of Light Industry and Heavy Industry lots.
- 3.7 In considering the landscape and visual effects of this change, I have reviewed the landscape assessment that supported the original Drury South Plan Change (and from which the planting requirements evolved). It is my understanding that except for the immediate motorway interface (which relates to Sub Precinct B), the shelterbelt plantings along the side and rear boundaries of industrial lots were intended to break up the ‘sea of roofs’ in views from the elevated catchment to the east (Macwhinney Drive/Peach Hill Road environs).
- 3.8 The permeable carpark design outlined in Figure 1410.6.2.1 for Sub Precinct B (Motorway Edge) is likely to encourage a relatively ‘porous’ or ‘green’ site development response in this part of the Drury South Precinct, regardless of the side and rear yard requirements.
- 3.9 However, in my opinion, for this aspect of the proposed plan change to be acceptable from a landscape perspective, a standard should be included that requires all roofs within the Light Industry and Heavy Industry zoned portions of the Drury South Precinct to comply with the following colour control:
- a) Where any new building is proposed, the reflectivity value of the roof or roofs must not exceed 30 per cent.
- 3.10 I have also considered the potential influence of this change on the Drury South Residential Precinct and note that this residential zoned area is well buffered and screened from the Light Industry and Heavy Industry zoned land by the generously proportioned open space/stormwater corridor associated with the Hingaia Stream network.
- 3.11 Provided that my recommendations in relation to roof colour for buildings within the Light Industry and Heavy Industry areas outlined above are incorporated, I consider that the adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposed changes to the side and rear yard landscape requirements for Light Industry and Heavy Industry zoned areas within the Drury South Precinct are **very low**.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 In conclusion, the proposed change in building height for Sub Precinct C (20m to 25m) will generate adverse landscape and visual effects that are **very low**.
- 4.2 The proposed change to the front yard requirements for Sub Precincts A and E which sees the 3m width flax planting requirement ‘reverting’ to the underlying AUP:OP zone provisions (i.e.

2m width tree, shrub, and groundcover planting) will generate adverse landscape and visual effects that are **very low**. In my opinion, this change could be considered a **positive effect**, given the capability to now introduce tree planting into front yards that can complement streetscape plantings and assist with the integration of large-scale buildings and paved areas that can be typical of light industrial and heavy industrial areas.

- 4.3 Provided my recommendations in relation to roof colour for buildings within the Light Industry and Heavy Industry areas outlined above are incorporated, I consider that the adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposed changes to the side and rear yard landscape requirements for Light Industry and Heavy Industry zoned areas within the Drury South Precinct are **very low**.
- 4.4 Overall (and assuming my recommendations in relation to building roof colours are incorporated), I consider that the proposed plan change will be **acceptable and appropriate** from a landscape and visual effects perspective.

Bridget Gilbert

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