



QBIX Limited
Planning & Urban Design

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE REQUEST
48 Esmonde Road
Takapuna

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this Urban Design Assessment Report is to review and make specific comments about the Proposed Plan Change (PPC) provisions which seek to achieve a quality urban design outcome for the site at 48 Esmonde Road, Takapuna. The review focuses on the proposal's urban design aspects – essentially, the effects "above ground".

This report should be read in conjunction with other standalone reports, specifically the Design Statement by Jasmax and Landscape and Visual Assessment by Stephen Brown. The Design Statement report describes various design principles which form the basic framework of the Proposed Plan Change. The Landscape and Visual Assessment report assess the appropriateness of the Plan Change provisions related to the potential landscape and visual effects that any future development on the site could generate due to the Plan Change.

For full details of the proposal, the application and the planning context review, refer to the AEE and s32 report prepared by Campbell Brown.

1.2 THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

The site and its surrounding environments are elaborately described and analysed in Campbell Brown's AEE, Stephen Brown's Landscape and Visual Assessment, and Jasmax's Urban Design Statement. This review concurs with these site information and assessment and confirms that –

- As the seawater and mangrove surround the site on three sides, it practically offers an island setting.
- The nearest critical private property is about 140 meters away to the southeast. Therefore, the future development will generally contain any typical adverse effect (i.e. shadow, privacy, outlook, etc.) within the site.
- Approximately 260 car parks are currently provided on-site. Currently, a Church building is the main establishment at the site, and a childcare centre was subsequently established within the Church building. As a result, the existing access to the site from Esmonde Road is already accommodating many vehicle trips through this intersection daily.
- The majority of the site is about 5 metres above the Esmonde Road level. The land towards the coastal boundary steeply goes down to reach the water level and creates a cliff edge. This cliff edge of the site is covered by dense bushes and trees and creates natural protection for the site.



Figure 1: The site and its surrounding area (Source: Auckland Council GEO Map)

- During high tide, some parts of the surrounding mangrove area are covered by seawater, and the water channel along the western edge of the site provides a direct water connection to the site.
- The proposed Northern Pathway, the NZTA led cycle path across the Waitemata Harbour, terminates at the intersection with SH1 and Esmonde Road, which will provide excellent cycle access to the city. The site offers good walking access to nearby facilities, including open space and a supermarket at the northern end of Barry's Point Road. Akoranga bus station, which is part of the high-frequency Northern Busway, is just over 10 mins walk, although there is also an express bus stop immediately adjacent to the site that travels directly to Auckland city centre with no further stops between the site and the city centre.
- In addition to the city centre and central Takapuna, several areas of high employment lie within 4km of the site, including Wairau Valley, Smales Farm, North Shore Hospital, Barry's Point Road, AUT North Shore campus and the Warehouse Way business park, which are giving the site very high accessibility to employment opportunities.
- A small reserve is located immediately opposite the site, while a much larger space at Barry's Point Reserve is approximately 10 minutes walk to the west. A new walkway/cycleway to the rear of Barry's Point Road along the coastal edge provides an alternative amenity space as well as a connection to the nearby supermarket and Takapuna centre.

In summary, several amenities in the wider surrounding environment enhance the appropriateness of the site as a suitable location for accommodating high-density residential development. The site is well located, close to public transport, transport links, services, educational and recreational facilities.

1.3 BACKGROUND OF THE PROPOSAL AND DEVELOPMENT VISION

The Harbourside Church Property Trust Board was the original owner of the site, but at the end of 2018, a development company called Brilliant Stone has entered into an unconditional agreement with the original owner to purchase the site. The settlement of this sale and purchase agreement is now completed in June 2021. Currently, Brilliant Stone has nominated KBS Capital Limited, the applicant of the Plan Change proposal, as the developer of the site.

In this context, KBS Capital is committed to developing the site as a sustainable urban village of the 21st century. The village will be primarily a high-density residential development with a limited number of non-residential uses to achieve a 'live-work-play' situation comprehensively for its residents.

The commercial vision of the development confirmed by KBS Capital includes the following aspects and have formed the backbone of the subsequent master planning and Plan Change work:

- Creating a sense of community
- Offering a lifestyle of convenience
- Celebrating an island of native trees
- Uncovering a hidden sanctuary
- Establishing flowing connections to city and coast
- Developing live-work-play in one place
- Forming a gateway between the Auckland CBD and Takapuna Metropolitan Centre
- Ensuring well-considered design in building mass and architectural treatments

2.0 ENVISAGED MASTER PLAN

An illustrative master plan (refer to the Design Statement by Jasmox) has been developed to accommodate the development vision of the site. Though the master plan appropriately complements the site characteristics, the underlying THAB zoning does not offer an appropriate statutory process for the master plan's implementation purposes. A site-specific Plan Change proposal has been developed to allow the master plan to be implemented on the ground in this context. Accordingly, the master plan has been used to test and inform the proposed provisions. This urban design assessment intends to review how effective the Proposed Plan Change provisions are to achieve the following key design strategies reflected in the master plan.

2.1 DESIGN DRIVERS

The island as a nexus:

- Maximise visual and physical connectivity with surrounding context and community.
- Draw the public through the site to reinforce the development as part of the city's fabric and broader pedestrian and cycle network.
- Provide separated public and private amenities.

Express local geo-morphology:

- Integrate nature-inspired forms, materiality and movement patterns.
- Utilise level change and mounding to define public, private separation and spatial programming and reflect the site's unique topography.

Reinstate coastal forest:

- Enhance contextual landscape rather than undermine it.
- Revegetate the site, integrate bio-filtration to maximise indigenous biodiversity and habitat.
- Maximise immersion and engagement with the natural environment in a human-scale setting.

Maximise outlook:

- Buildings float above the canopy of trees, maximising outlook and engagement with the broader context of Takapuna, city and harbour.
- Provide opportunities for residents and the broader community to engage with the immediate coastal reserve setting and the broader natural environment.

2.2 DESIGN MOVES

Based on the above design drivers, the master plan has taken the following specific design moves:

- Protection of a 20m Esplanade reserve highlighting the site's coastal edge.
- Establishment of perimeter buildings recognising the site's island setting
- Creation of openings through perimeter buildings offering site access points and view corridors.
- Connections to neighbourhoods maximising connections to surrounding the area and public transport.
- Massing to respond to topography using building form that is lower towards the edges and rising towards the centre.
- Massing articulated to read as multiple buildings by breaking up buildings to avoid monolithic forms.

2.3 MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

The background of the proposed massing response applied in the masterplan is identified in the Design Statement, which states that –

It has been considered that the site is well placed from a strategic urban design/planning perspective to accommodate building forms greater than the 16m expressly allowed by the Auckland Unitary Plan THAB zoning. After lengthy discussions with Council Officers and the Auckland Urban Design Panel, the building massing shown in the adjacent image and following 3D image was considered to be an appropriate built form response.

The main elements of this master plan are also described in the Design Statement report by Jasmax, which are as follows:



Figure 2: Envisaged masterplan for the site (Source: Jasmax, 2020).

- A 20m strip of land is provided around the coastal edge of the site, recognising the steepness of the bank and the presence of a number of mature coastal trees. This strip could become an esplanade reserve vested to Auckland Council.
- To provide access to the water's edge, a boardwalk is proposed around the perimeter of the site at the lower level (allowing an appropriate distance above sea level). This would be publicly accessible providing both walking and cycling connectivity around the site as well as introducing previously unavailable access to the water's edge.

- *Buildings are arranged around the perimeter of the site to create an attractive frontage on all edges, recognising that the “island” site is seen from all directions. However, gaps are created between the buildings to avoid a “fortress” response, and to allow views both in and out of the development. Buildings along Esmonde Road in particular will be designed to provide a high degree of activation and visual interest, avoiding overly blank or solid elements, recognising the high number of people using this major arterial corridor. However, given the traffic speeds and volumes, it is not considered appropriate to create active frontage in the form of retail that would require and encourage vehicles stopping on the carriageway.*
- *The existing vehicle intersection with Esmonde Road is used to create the main entrance to the development. It is proposed to reconfigure the intersection to provide much safer and accessible crossings for pedestrians and cyclists to move towards/from Takapuna, the east-bound bus stop located on Esmonde Road, Barry’s Point Road and walkway and the Akoranga busway station.*
- *A walking and cycling connection across the mangroves to Francis Street (Hauraki peninsula) is indicated in line with Auckland Transport and the Local Board’s proposal to improve connectivity between the Francis Street area and Esmonde Road / Barry’s Point Road / Akoranga busway station. Pedestrian and cyclists could either move through the centre of the new development or around the external edge of the site.*
- *A series of high-quality open spaces are proposed within and around the development. The eastern portion of the site, highly visible from Esmonde Road, will be publicly accessible and will consist of a slow-speed shared space bordered by a small number of ancillary non-residential uses such as a café / restaurant, convenience store and medical facility (to be determined). The western portion will be raised on a podium above the level of Esmonde Road (with car parking under) to create communal open spaces for use by the residents.*

3.0 PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE

The current AUP zoning of the site is Residential – Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB). As mentioned earlier in the report, the underlying zoning of the site does not enable the development vision of the project to be achieved comprehensively. Therefore, a design-driven Plan Change has been determined as the best option to accommodate and secure the most appropriate, efficient, and effective site development through its envisaged master plan. A Plan Change is also considered a more transparent and open approach that will enable zoning that properly reflects the site's physical characteristics for future development purposes.



Figure 3: Current zoning of the site (Source: AUP Zoning Map)

The Plan Change proposal includes a specific Precinct Plan covering the whole site while maintaining the underlying zoning THAB except rezoning the future esplanade reserve to Open Space – Conservation Zone.

The purpose of the precinct is to provide for the comprehensive and integrated redevelopment of the site. The precinct enables a new residential community comprising a mixture of building heights and forms within a unique urban setting.

The precinct seeks to maintain the ecological functions and water quality of the coastal edge while also enhancing the area's landscape and open space amenity values. The precinct plan facilitates the intended Francis Street boardwalk connection.

A location-specific range of building forms is provided that recognise the precinct's favourable size, location, and topography. Buildings of up to 16 storeys are enabled in identified locations. The precinct plan seeks to provide a variety of heights also to ensure that building modulation to the skyline is achieved. The precinct plan requires the provision of lower buildings around the edge of the site, in front of the taller buildings, to provide a cascade of increasing building heights and reduce the central tower's dominance.

The precinct plan seeks to manage effects on the adjacent transportation network. Triggers are provided within the precinct to handle the capacity of the local transport network to accommodate the planned growth.

3.1 PROPOSED PRECINCT PLANS

Development of this precinct will be guided by the following precinct plans:

- Precinct Plan 1 – Takapuna features plan
- Precinct Plan 2 – Takapuna height and building coverage control areas.

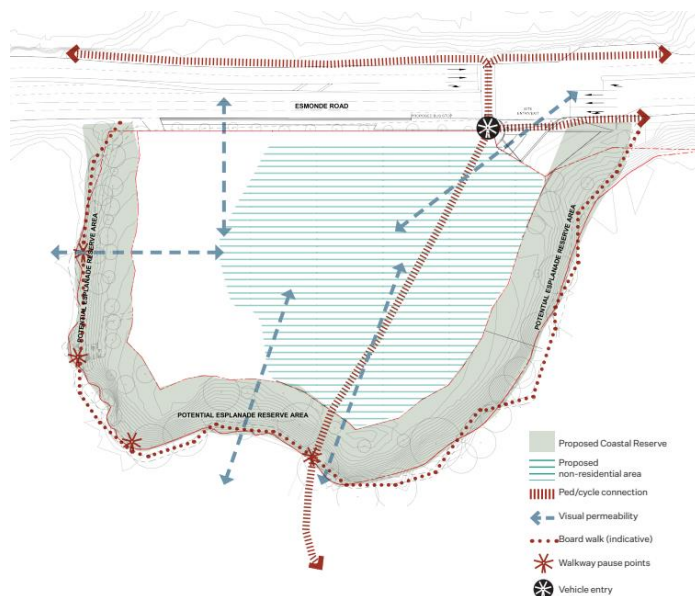


Figure 4: Proposed Precinct Plan 1 for the site (Source: Jasmax, 2021).

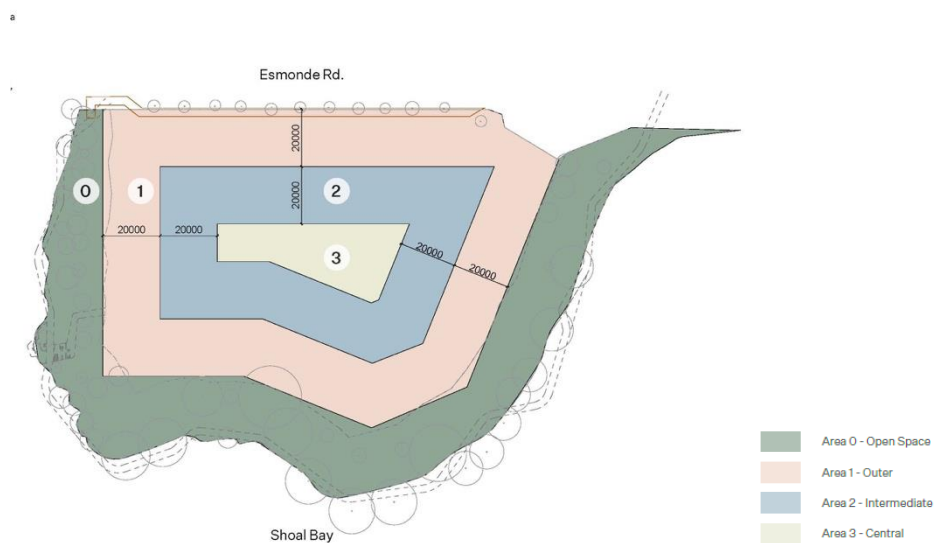


Figure 5: Proposed Precinct Plan 2 for the site (Source: Jasmax, 2021).

Some of the key features of the proposed Precinct Plan will include:

- The provision for additional building heights within the central area of the site (up to 16 floors), subject to high quality urban design outcome being achieved;
- The protection of the 20m coastal esplanade reserve and rezoning the land to open space;
- Provision of access for the public through the site to the coast;
- Restriction of parking spaces on the site to encourage mode change to public transport and cycling; and
- Provision for limited non-residential support activities to reduce trip generation.

Other than proposing two Precinct Plans identifying some site features and site-specific height and building coverage control areas, and some new objectives and policies, the proposed Precinct Plans do not seek to vary or change any provisions of the underlying zone.

4.0 URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF THE PLAN CHANGE PROVISIONS

The urban design assessment included in this report is divided into the following three categories.

- Assessment against the relevant planning context
- Assessment against the expected development vision
- Assessment against key site-specific urban design aspects

4.1 ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE RELEVANT PLANNING CONTEXT

The elaborate planning context of the Plan Change proposal is described in Campbell Brown's AEE. In this respect, two planning documents are specifically assessed here against the Proposed Plan Change provisions because of their urban design relevance.

4.1.1 NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 came into effect on 20 August 2020. It replaced the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity 2016. The NPS-UD 2020 recognises the national significance of:

- having well-functioning urban environments that enable all people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health and safety, now and into the future and
- providing sufficient development capacity to meet the different needs of people and communities.

It was developed by the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. It provides direction to the decision-makers on planning for urban environments. The NPS-UD 2020 requires councils to plan well for growth and ensure a well-functioning urban environment for all people, communities and future generations. This includes:

- ensuring urban development occurs in a way that takes into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (te Tiriti o Waitangi)
- ensuring that plans make room for growth both 'up' and 'out', and that rules are not unnecessarily constraining growth
- developing, monitoring and maintaining an evidence base about demand, supply and prices for housing and land to inform planning decisions
- aligning and coordinating planning across urban areas.

The NPS-UD 2020 contains objectives and policies that councils must give effect to in their resource management decisions.

There is an expectation in the Policy Statement that at all times, there is sufficient development capacity to meet expected demand for housing and business land over the short term, medium-term and long term. There is an emphasis on good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including public or active transport.

The NPS on Urban Development Policy 6 (b) seeks to ensure

that the planned urban built form in those RMA planning documents may involve significant changes to an area, and those changes:

- (i) may detract from amenity values appreciated by some people but improve amenity values appreciated by other people, communities, and future generations, including by providing increased and varied housing densities and types; and*
- (ii) are not, of themselves, an adverse effect.*

The underlying intention of the NPS on Urban Development is to ensure quality and compact urban development in appropriate locations. In this respect, the proposed Plan Change with its Precinct Plan will supply additional high-density apartment buildings. The buildings will be developed with variety in height and typology and some non-residential activities for future residents. The site is in a popular location that is properly connected by public transport, cycle-walkway, and serviced without further extension or significant investment in infrastructure (refer to stand-alone Infrastructure Report).

Accordingly, the proposal will be able to not only meet the relevant objectives and policies of the NPS on Urban Development but will also promote good urban design.

4.1.2 THE AUCKLAND UNITARY PLAN – REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) is the primary statutory planning document for Auckland. It is comprised of the Regional Policy Statement, Regional Coastal Plan, Regional Plan and District Plan.

The Regional Policy Statement in the AUP contains several objectives and policies of relevance to urban design considerations in assessing the suitability of the PPC site to provide for a grander scale and intensity of development and diversity of uses.

Chapter B1 of the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) provides an overview of the resource management issues of significance for the region. The regionally significant issues of particular relevance to this Plan Change are the provisions relating to B2 Urban growth, B7 Natural resources and B10 Environmental risk.

Chapter B2 on Urban Growth and Form seeks to enable and provide for urban growth and form in an integrated and compact manner while maintaining quality design and providing open space and social facilities. In particular, a number of the urban growth and form objectives and policies about achieving a quality compact urban form, quality built Environment and providing for residential growth is of particular relevance to this urban design assessment. Key objectives and policies at B2.2 are referenced below:

(1) Include sufficient land within the Rural Urban Boundary that is appropriately zoned to accommodate at any one time a minimum of seven years' projected growth in terms of residential, commercial and industrial demand and corresponding requirements for social facilities, after allowing for any constraints on subdivision, use and development of land.

(4) Promote urban growth and intensification within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A), enable urban growth and intensification within the Rural Urban Boundary, towns, and rural and coastal towns and villages, and avoid urbanisation outside these areas.

(7) Enable rezoning of land within the Rural Urban Boundary or other land zoned future urban to accommodate urban growth in ways that do all of the following: (a) support a quality compact urban form; (b) provide for a range of housing types and employment choices for the area.

The RPS emphasises the need to increase housing supply to achieve a 'quality

compact' urban form that makes efficient use of land and existing infrastructure while responding to local character and sense of place.

The subject site is separated from the surrounding properties in an island setting and can accommodate taller buildings with higher housing intensification without creating any possible adverse effects of dominance, shadow, noise, and privacy on its neighbours. However, it cannot make the best use of its unique locational character and practically available land resources for housing intensification purposes due to the height limitation of its current THAB zoning. It is therefore considered that the proposed Plan Change with a Precinct Overlay will ensure more appropriate zoning provisions for the site and demonstrates its consistency with Chapter B2 Objectives and Policies for the following reasons:

- Rezoning this site represents a quality compact urban form due to the higher density and better use of existing infrastructure (Objective B2.2.1(1));
- It is urbanisation within the urban area 2016 (as identified in Appendix 1A) (Objective B2.2.1(2));
- The Plan Change proposal will enable higher residential intensification close to public transport, social facilities (including open space) and employment opportunities (Policy B2.2.2(5)), Objective B2.4.1(3), and Policy B2.4.2(2));
- The proposed Precinct Plan will be able to create a specific built character as the gateway to the Takapuna Metropolitan Centre without any direct adverse effect on the built character of the area currently available around the site (Objective B2.4.1(2));
- It is a high-density residential development that is near many shopping, recreational and education facilities, and public transport (Policy B2.4.2(3)); and
- The current lower height limit of the underlying zoning of the subject site is not considered an efficient use of the land because the site is close to Akoranga Bus Station, Takapuna business and commercial area; it is not subject to high environmental constraints or significant natural hazard risks; there are no natural or physical resources scheduled in the AUP; the site can be serviced by existing infrastructure, and; there are no existing incompatible activities that would result in reverse sensitivity effects (Policy B2.4.2(4) and (5)).



Figure 6: Envisaged built character within the site from the periphery to the centre (Source: Jasmx, 2020).

Chapter B7 Natural resources have identified the combination of urban growth and past land, coastal and freshwater management practices as an issue as it has placed increasing pressure on land and water resources, including habitats and biodiversity. The objectives and policies to address this issue relevant to the Plan Change site are indigenous biodiversities and freshwater systems.

The proposed Plan Change will give effect to Chapter B7 Objectives and Policies for the following reasons:

- The coastal margin of the site, which has some indigenous biodiversity value, can be protected, maintained and enhanced through the establishment of a 20m wide esplanade reserve as Public Open Space as identified in the Plan Change proposal and supported by the Ecological Assessment (refer to stand-alone Ecological report) (Objective B7.2.1(1), Policy B7.2.2(1));
- Through the future subdivision process, it is proposed to protect and enhance the Esplanade Area and the existing degraded and inaccessible vegetation area on the edge of the site (Objectives B7.2.1(2) and B7.3.1(1), Policy B7.3.2(3));
- Water supply, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure are adequately provided for (Policies B7.3.2(1) and B7.4.2(1)(a));
- Mana Whenua have been consulted on the Plan Change, and no cultural concerns have been identified that would not otherwise be addressed (Objective B7.4.1(6)); and
- There will be no effects from wastewater discharges as the site can be fully serviced by connecting to an upgraded reticulated wastewater system (Policy B7.4.2(10)).

The issues covered by Chapter B10 Environmental risks relevant to this Plan Change are natural hazards and climate change. The other matters under B10 are not applicable because there are no hazardous substances on the site, the Plan Change does not involve genetically modified organisms, and a contaminated land assessment has been undertaken. No risk to human health has been identified.

The proposed Plan Change is consistent with Chapter B10 Objectives and Policies for natural hazards and climate change for the following reasons:

- The subdivision, use and development of this site will maintain the conveyance function of the existing overland flow paths in the area (refer to stand-alone Infrastructure Report) (Objective B10.2.1(6)).
- The already approved earthworks consent covering the whole site has adopted appropriate earthworks design to avoid risks to people, property and infrastructure (Objective B10.2.1(3)).
- The site abuts the coastal edge on three sides, but it is located well above sea level. The Coastal Hazard Assessment done by Tonkin & Taylor has confirmed that the site is adequately protected from any form of coastal hazard. Therefore, any potential effects from future sea rise or any other coastal hazards are not relevant for the proposed Plan Change (Policy B10.2.2(4))

4.2 ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT VISION IN THE LINE OF THE NEW ZEALAND URBAN DESIGN PROTOCOL

The New Zealand Urban Design Protocol has promoted flourishing towns and cities through quality urban design. In this respect, the Protocol has identified the following seven essential design qualities called seven 'C's'.

- Context: considering buildings, places, and spaces comprehensively as part of the surrounding environment.
- Character: reflecting character, heritage and identity of the area.
- Choice: allowing diversity and choice for the people living and visiting the development.
- Connections: ensuring networks for accessibility purposes within and around the development.
- Creativity: encouraging innovative solutions as part of the design of the development.
- Custodianship: adopting sustainable design for the development.
- Collaboration: incorporating community and stakeholder inputs in the design process.

As the Proposed Plan Change is a design-driven process, it has tried to achieve quality urban design as a development outcome. Accordingly, some specific objectives and policies are proposed on top of the AUP provisions

applicable to the site's underlying zoning, ie. Residential - Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings zone. These are included in the Plan Change proposal, but a summary of these provisions is included below for urban design assessment purposes.

The Plan Change proposal addresses the following four aspects of any development on the subject site and proposes the relevant Plan Change provisions:

Development:

Creation of a vibrant and diverse community in a comprehensive manner with a high quality architectural and urban design response not only for residential purposes but also for a limited number of non-residential activities to support residents within the Precinct.

Built form:

Development of new buildings and structures contributes positively to the amenity values of streets, open spaces, and the surrounding coastal environment, keeping with the planned urban built character of the Precinct, enabling buildings between five and 16 storeys in height in identified locations.

Open space and the public realm:

Provision of pedestrian and cycle linkages within and around the Precinct to enhance recreation and connectivity and create a network that links open spaces within the Precinct and the wider environment, including the intended Francis Street boardwalk connection.

Promotion of accessible open spaces and take advantage of the site's natural features, including incorporating the coastal edge, and identified existing mature trees within the available open space network.

Recognition and protection of the ecological values of existing coastal edge from inappropriate development.

Infrastructure:

Complement the local transport network by ensuring the appropriate scale of any development within the Precinct, which promotes a safe and efficient operation of the local transport network, supports pedestrian, cycle and public transport use, and facilitates and promotes alternative transport choices.

Mitigate the possible adverse effects of stormwater runoff within the Precinct to maintain water quality and preserve the mauri of the Waitemata Harbour.

By reviewing the Plan Change proposal, including its specific objectives and policies, it is considered that the proposal addresses the seven 'C's of the Urban Design Protocol in the following ways -

- The proposed Precinct provisions require an integrated urban form, including various development areas and associated building height, building coverage and building massing (height, width and length), and open space requirements. These will assist in protecting and enhancing the subject site's coastal edge and associated landscape features. At the same time, a positive public-private interface will be able to be established along the future esplanade reserve boundary and along the Esmonde Road boundary by specific building positions, setbacks, and boundary treatments.

The proposed provisions will assist the future development on site to recognise and connect the 'context' of the subject site. It is therefore considered that any future development will be able to be fitted in with and enhances its surroundings.

- A variety of building footprints and heights (five to 16 storeys) allowed by the proposed Precinct Plan will be appropriate to avoid large and bulky institutional type building masses in this particular location. Fine building grains, broken building facades and varying building setbacks as expected by various assessment criteria will guide the future building designer for an urban built character, variety in spaces and places suitable for a residential scale of the envisaged development on the site.

Accordingly, the proposal will establish the architectural design framework for creating site-specific 'character' for future development.

- Some non-residential activities have been allowed by the proposed Precinct Plan to service the community's needs in future development. But the limited gross floor area of these non-residential uses, their specific locations, along with the Esmonde Road frontage and highly restricted parking facility proposed by the Precinct Plan, will ensure that
 - The commercial uses will not detract from the residential amenity of the Precinct; and,
 - The scale and intensity of commercial activities will not adversely affect the role, function, and viability of Takapuna Metropolitan Centre.

The above allowance in the Proposed Plan Change is in the line of quality urban design, which fosters diversity and offers people 'choice' within the urban form of future development.

- The proposed Precinct Plan requires integrated pedestrian and cycleway movement networks which will encourage residents and visitors to reduce dependency on private motor vehicles as a means of transportation.

The proposed planning provisions will encourage the use and offer the enjoyment of the pedestrian network and natural environment within and around the site by allowing for

- passive recreation opportunities within open space areas throughout the Precinct area;
- activation use and enjoyment of the green space for residents within the Precinct;
- connectivity and a network that links open spaces within the Precinct and the wider environment, including the intended Francis Street boardwalk connection; and
- protection of the ecological values of existing coastal edge from inappropriate development.

The proposed provisions ensure quality urban design by promoting good 'connections' to support social integration, make places lively and safe, and facilitate contact with future residents of the development on the site. The future development with good connections between activities will reduce travel times and lower environmental impacts.

- The Precinct Plan proposes a transition in height to the coastal edge and Esmonde Road by using a building form that is lower towards the edges and rising towards the centre of the site. This will assist to
 - recognise buildings viewed from all sides of the site providing "frontage" in perimeter form in an island setting;
 - support both the identified visual corridors through to the site and key open space and pedestrian connections within site; and
 - ensure appropriate scale to the internal pedestrian network, the coastal edge and the public frontage along Esmonde Road.

The proposed provision about the transition in height is considered as a tool of 'creativity' to add richness, diversity and a sense of place in an island setting.

-
- The safety and capacity of the existing transport network around the site, alternative transport mode in the vicinity, and water quality and the mauri of the Waitemata Harbour will be promoted to establish a quality urban built form as the Plan Change proposal
 - has taken into account the anticipated maximum number of dwellings and non-residential floorspace enabled by the Precinct;
 - has confirmed one dedicated site access point to achieve a highly connected pedestrian, cycle and road network that provides for all modes of transport; and
 - has included the appropriate stormwater management provisions to mitigate the possible adverse effects of stormwater runoff from the site.

For the above reasons, it is also considered that the Proposed Plan Change promotes 'custodianship' when the ultimate expected outcome of the future development is to ensure quality urban design through site-specific responsive design solutions.

- The Plan Change proposal has been discussed with the Local Board, local-level elected community representatives, local Council, transport authority, infrastructure providers and Iwi.

It is therefore considered that the Plan Change intends to ensure quality urban design through 'collaboration' of ideas generated by the developer with expectations of various stakeholders.

4.3 ASSESSMENT AGAINST KEY SITE SPECIFIC URBAN DESIGN ASPECTS

The Plan Change proposed for the site at 48 Esmonde Road, Takapuna, seeks to provide more excellent movement connectivity, housing density, building scale, diversity of activity as part of a vibrant, comprehensively designed and integrated urban village-type community. To assess this Proposed Plan Change about urban design quality, a broad urban design theme for the site has been considered based on the overall development vision and the envisaged master plan. In this respect, the following critical site-specific urban design aspects incorporated in the envisaged master plan provide a framework to evaluate the appropriateness of the proposed plan change provisions.

- Protection of a 20m Esplanade reserve highlighting the site's coastal edge.
- Establishment of perimeter buildings recognising the site's island setting.
- Creation of openings through perimeter buildings offering site access points and view corridor.

- Connections to neighbourhoods maximising connections to surrounding the area and public transport.
- Massing to respond to topography using building form that is lower towards the edges and rising towards the centre.
- Massing articulated to read as multiple buildings by breaking up buildings to avoid monolithic forms.

4.3.1 PROTECTION OF A 20M ESPLANADE RESERVE

The subject site is surrounded mainly by seawater, and a 20m wide esplanade reserve will be created along its coastal boundaries. Currently, the coastal edge of the site is not accessible by the public, and the vegetated quality of this peripheral area is not under any maintenance or protection arrangement. It is therefore essential that the future esplanade reserve is enhanced, protected and appropriately managed.

It is included in the Precinct description that -

The precinct seeks to protect the ecological functions and water quality of the coastal margin, while also enhancing the landscape and open space amenity values of the area through the provision of publicly-accessible open spaces that incorporate established trees, planting (including coastal planting), visual corridors, shared pedestrian cycle paths, walkways and informal recreation and play areas. The proposed development pattern for the precinct facilitates the intended Francis Street boardwalk connection.

The Plan Change proposal has included the following specific provisions to address the future esplanade reserve.

1553.2 Objectives [dp]

2(b) ensures that the landscape and ecological values of the existing coastal margin are recognised and protected from inappropriate development;

1553.3 Policies [dp]

1(d) protects the character and amenity of the coastal margin;

(5) Promote the use and enjoyment of the Open Space zone and internal plaza areas for residents and visitors by:

(b) creating a network that links open spaces of the precinct with the wider environment including the intended Francis Street boardwalk and creating an easement in gross in accordance with Precinct Plan 1 (Takapuna features plan) to ensure 24 hour public access across the precinct.

(6) Ensure that the ecological and landscape values of the future esplanade reserve (Public Open Space – Conservation zone) are recognised and protected from the effects of inappropriate development.

(7) Ensure that the effects of stormwater runoff within the precinct are mitigated to maintain water quality and preserve the mauri of the Waitemata Harbour

1522.6.9. Standard - Coastal planting

Purpose: To ensure that the amenity, water quality and ecology of the coastal environment within the precinct is maintained or enhanced through coastal planting.

- (1) The coastal margin (Area O – Public Open Space zone) identified on Precinct Plan 1 – Takapuna features plan, must be planted in accordance with a council approved planting plan, using eco-sourced native vegetation, consistent with the local biodiversity and habitat in accordance with the Appendix 16 Guideline for native revegetation plantings.*
- (2) The plan must accompany any application for the first subdivision for the site, with planting to be completed prior to issue of new titles.*
- (3) Planting within the coastal margin does not preclude the provision of pedestrian and shared walkways and passive recreational spaces in accordance with Precinct Plan 1 – Takapuna features plan.*

In addition, the Plan Change proposal has included specific assessment criteria in Provision I553.8.2.(1)(d) concerning landscape of coastal and open spaces and in Provision I553.8.2.(1)(g)(vi) regarding the connectivity design within the future esplanade reserve area.

The purpose of the above provisions is not only to maintain the quality and available amenity within the esplanade reserve area but also to ensure a positive public-private interface with the future esplanade reserve boundary, and these are all considered as the vital aspects of the quality urban design outcome of any development on the site.

4.3.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF PERIMETER BUILDINGS

The master plan concept demonstrates that the site can be developed to provide a visually attractive urban form interface with streets and the esplanade reserve, which would give visual amenity and character to establish high-quality buildings along the perimeter of the site.

In this respect, Jasmax's design commentary states that –

Building are arranged around the perimeter of the site to create an attractive frontage on all edges, recognising that the “island” site is seen from all directions. However, gaps are created between the buildings to avoid a “fortress” response, and to allow views both in and out of the development. Buildings along Esmonde Road in particular will be designed to provide a high degree of activation and visual interest, avoiding overly blank or solid elements, recognising the high number of people using this major arterial corridor. However, given the traffic speeds and volumes, it is not considered appropriate to create active frontage in the form of retail that would require and encourage vehicles stopping on the carriageway.

The approved resource consent for Stages 1 and 2 of the development has already confirmed some interface related design decisions for the perimeter development area, which are:

- The Stage 1 building is proposed along the eastern boundary with the future esplanade reserve on the coastal edge of the site. This building will be primarily used as visitor accommodation, but it is part of an integrated development. Other parts of the site and buildings will be connected to this building as well. This means that the esplanade reserve and associated walkway/cycleway can be directly connected to various parts of the site, not only to the Stage 1 building.
- A dedicated pedestrian and cycle access for the residents has been accommodated at the middle of the Stage 2 building facing Esmonde Road. Within this building above ground, northern apartments directly face the road with their road fronting balconies and principal living areas. The car parking area has been provided at the rear of this building, and its access has been provided from the side private accessway to avoid car prominence on the Esmonde Road streetscape.

The Proposed Precinct requires lower buildings around the edge of the site with increasing building heights in the centrally located tallest structures.

The Plan Change proposal has included the following specific provisions to establish appropriate perimeter buildings.

1553.2 Objectives [dp]

- (1) *The Takapuna 2 Precinct develops as a vibrant and diverse residential community which:*

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- (a) *responds positively to its immediate surrounds and coastal setting with high quality architectural and urban design responses;*
 - (b) *provides a range of accommodation types including integrated residential development, and is in keeping with the planned urban built character of the precinct, enabling buildings between four and 16 storeys in height;*

I553.3 Policies [dp]

(4) *Require that new buildings:*

- (b) *are appropriate in scale to, and interface well with, the internal pedestrian network, the coastal margin and the public frontage along Esmonde Road;*
- (c) *provide a transition in building height down towards the coastal margin and Esmonde Road to reinforce the land-form/topography of the precinct and recognise that buildings will be viewed from all sides of the precinct - providing “frontage” in perimeter form;*
- (d) *achieve a minimum development of four levels around the coastal margin to ensure that screening of the taller buildings within the centre of the precinct is achieved;*

I553.6. Standards

I553.6.3. Minimum building height

Purpose: To ensure that buildings provide a minimum number of storeys to ensure that efficient use of the site is achieved and that the outer buildings of the precinct deliver a cascade of heights to break up the form of the taller buildings located in the centre of the site as viewed from outside the precinct.

- (1) *Buildings in Areas 1, 2 and 3 must provide a minimum height of 4 storeys above ground level(RL10).*

I553.6.5. Esmonde Road front yard setback

Purpose: To ensure that buildings:

- *maintain a reasonable standard of residential amenity for residents;*
- *reduce building dominance relative to Esmonde Road*
- *provide space for enhanced street amenity in the form of a shared pedestrian / cycle path using both hard and soft landscaping inside the front yard of the precinct.(refer to separate infrastructure rule)*

- (1) *Buildings shall be setback from the Esmonde Road boundary a minimum of 4.0 metres.*

At the same time, the Proposed Precinct Plan includes several specific assessment criteria to address the future building appearance, especially along the site's perimeter, to achieve a positive and attractive interface and a quality building perimeter. These assessment criteria are applicable for any new buildings, additions and alterations to existing buildings, which would maintain good urban design quality for perimeter buildings when viewed for various sides of the neighbouring locality.

4.3.3 CREATION OF SITE ACCESS POINTS AND VIEW CORRIDORS

Due to the site's open boundaries to all sides, including its road and coastal boundaries, it offers an opportunity to provide public access to the site from various directions. However, a defined access point for a legibility point of view is also essential. Therefore, it is expected in the envisaged master plan that any future development will have specific access from Esmonde Road as the primary site access point for both vehicles and pedestrians. This will offer a recognisable address to the site. In addition, the site will have several view corridors, which could be used as secondary pedestrian and cycle connections as well.

It is expected by the master plan that any future development on the site will

Create openings through the buildings

- *Allow views in and out of the perimeter buildings' openings respond to access points*
- *Create a strong sense of arrival using openings through the perimeter*

It is found that the Proposed Plan Change includes the following provisions, which would assist in achieving this particular urban design outcome related to site access points and view corridors.

1553.2 Objectives [dp]

- (1) *The Takapuna 2 Precinct develops as a vibrant and diverse residential community which:*
 - (a) *responds positively to its immediate surrounds and coastal setting with high quality architectural and urban design responses;*
- (2) *The Takapuna 2 Precinct functions in a way that:*
 - (a) *links pedestrian and cycling facilities within and around the precinct, to enhance recreation and connectivity with the wider environment including the potential Francis Street boardwalk connection;*

1553.3 Policies [dp]

(4) Require that new buildings:

(e) are located and designed to support both the identified Visual Corridors through the precinct and key open space and pedestrian connections to the locality.

(5) Promote the use and enjoyment of the Open Space zone and internal open space and plaza areas for residents and visitors within the precinct by:

(b) creating a network that links open spaces of the precinct with the wider environment including the intended Francis Street boardwalk and creating an easement in gross in accordance with Precinct Plan 1 (Takapuna features plan) to ensure 24 hour public access across the precinct.

In this respect, the proposed Precinct Plan 1 – Takapuna features plan indicates possible view corridors and access points for any future development on the site.

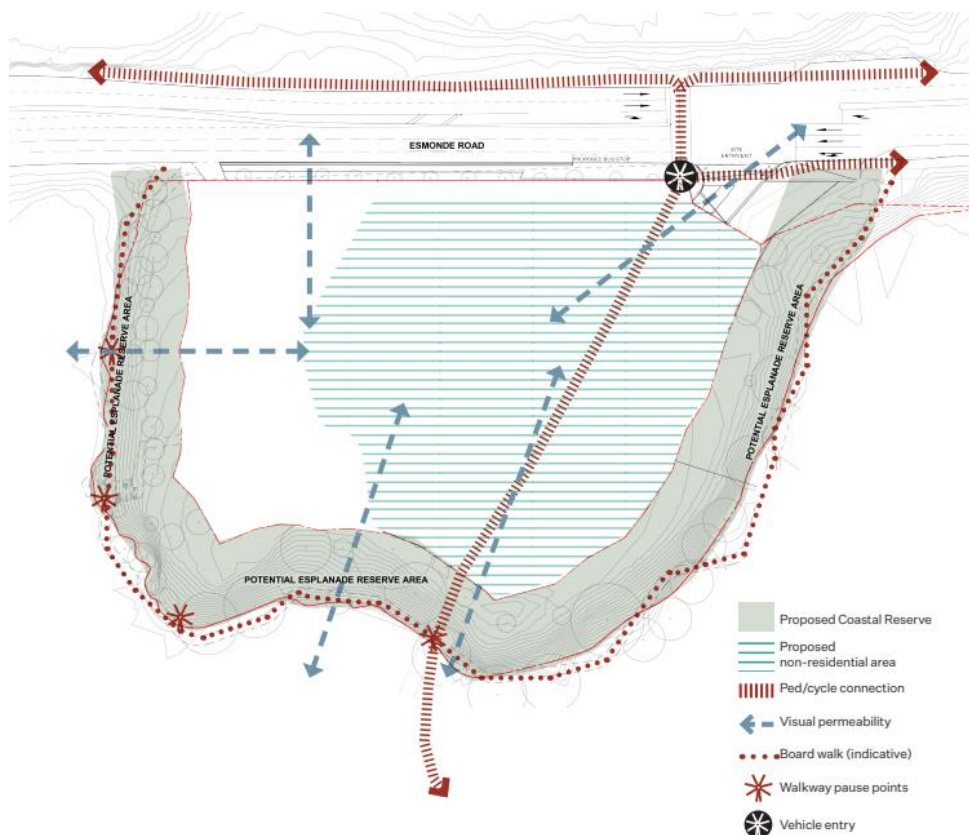


Figure 7: Proposed Precinct Plan 1 for the site (Source: Jasmax, 2021).

One of the proposed assessment criteria for any new building on the site as a restricted discretionary activity requires that new building designs need to

provide view corridors through the area towards the coastal edge in general accordance with Precinct Plan 1 as shown above.

4.3.4 CONNECTION TO SURROUNDING AREA AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The development has adopted a sustainable design strategy where connectivity to the surrounding area and public transport plays an important role. In this respect, a dedicated transport strategy has been adopted for the development. The objectives of this particular transport strategy are to:

- Maximisation of foot and cycle traffic to and from the site.
- Minimisation of vehicle traffic and associated trip generation to and from the site.
- Effective utilisation of public transport and other forms of alternative transport modes, i.e. shared car, cycle, shuttle bus, etc., to reduce car dependency for residents and visitors.

At the same time, the envisaged master plan has been structured to achieve the above objectives, and the master plan is designed to:

- Improve accessibility, connectivity, and legibility for an integrated movement and open space network within and around the site for pedestrians and cyclists of the site and involve the general public from outside the site.
- Ensure an effective connection of the proposed development with the current and future mass transit routes through Esmonde Road and the Akoranga Bus Station in the vicinity.

The approved resource consent for Stages 1 and 2 of the development has already committed that:

- Limited number of on-site parking spaces for allocated activities and uses only.
- A dedicated shuttle bus service will run between the site and Takapuna Central for residents and visitors.
- Two shared cars, five shared e-bikes and two shared kayaks will be available to hire residents and regular users to the site.
- The bus stop on Esmonde Road will operate near the site's entrance with a shelter on top and a dedicated pathway and sign guiding bus users from the site to the shelter will be constructed.
- The timetable for buses running through Esmonde Road and, to and from Akoranga Bus Station, and the ferry timetable for Northcote, Bayswater and Devonport will be available on the development website, on the community notice boards within the development and paper copies of these timetables will be available from the Site Management Office.

- A publicly accessible walkway and cycleway through and around the site (within the esplanade reserve) will be informed, guided and legible by appropriate site amenities (seating, soft and hard landscapes, bike racks, drinking water fountains etc.) and directional signs.
- An 'on-site parking management plan' will be implemented and managed by the development Body Corporate and will be administered by the on-site management office, which an appropriate number of staff will attend 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

To support the overall transport vision for the development, the Proposed Plan Change has included the following specific provisions:

I553.2 Objectives [dp]

(2) The Takapuna 2 Precinct functions in a way that:

- (a) links pedestrian and cycling facilities within and around the precinct, to enhance recreation and connectivity with the wider environment including the potential Francis Street boardwalk connection;*
- (c) ensures that development is integrated with improvements to the local transport network and other appropriate methods to ensure the safe, effective and efficient operation of the local transport network and support for active and public transport choices;*

I553.3 Policies [dp]

(2) Achieve an integrated high quality urban form that:

- (a) supports the safe, effective and efficient operation of the transport network.*
- (b) connects well with public transport and pedestrian and cycleway networks; and,*
- (c) promotes alternatives to, and reduces dependency on, private motor vehicles as a means of transport while taking into account the maximum number of dwellings and non-residential floorspace anticipated for the precinct.*

(5) Promote the use and enjoyment of the Open Space zone and internal open space and plaza areas for residents and visitors by:

- (b) creating a network that links open spaces of the precinct with the wider environment including the intended Francis Street*

boardwalk and creating an easement in gross in accordance with Precinct Plan 1 (Takapuna features plan) to ensure 24 hour public access across the precinct.

- (8) *Ensure/require that prior to any use or occupation of the site for any accommodation purposes the following works/infrastructures and parking management plan are in place at the developer's expense to serve the development enabled by the precinct up to 374 dwelling unit equivalents:*
- (a) *A revised intersection on Esmonde Road as located on Precinct Plan 1 and in general accordance with that depicted in Appendix 1 that can effectively and efficiently serve the traffic and movement changes anticipated through this access point, to a level of service acceptable to Auckland Transport (refer Appendix 1 – intersection & bus stop design); and*
 - (b) *A 30m long bus stop with shelters on Esmonde Road in the location identified on Precinct Plan 1 and in general accordance with that depicted in Appendix 1, to standards acceptable to Auckland Transport; and*
 - (c) *A publicly-accessible shared path of at least 3 metres wide(?) along the Esmonde Road frontage of the site as identified on Precinct Plan 1 and as depicted in Appendix 2 serving both pedestrians and cyclists to a standard acceptable to Auckland Transport; and*
 - (d) *A parking (and traffic) management plan to the satisfaction of Auckland Transport.*
- (9) *Require the applicant/developer to consider other methods to support movement to and from the site and encourage behaviour change away from private vehicles to other transport modes, including by way of a bus shuttle service to Takapuna or other locations where this is practicable and can be legally secured, such that the traffic generated by activities on the site does not exceed 256 vehicles per hour; and require an Integrated Transport Assessment to the satisfaction of Auckland Transport where it is anticipated that this Vehicle Per Hour threshold would be exceeded or where more than 374 DUEs are proposed.*
- (10) *Enable a consideration of alternatives to or variations of the requirements of policy where there has been a change of circumstances or a change of requirements from Auckland Transport, or where it can be demonstrated that significantly better outcomes would be achieved by way of the proposed alternatives or variations.*

The Plan Change proposal has included specific assessment criteria in Provisions I553.8.2.1.(e) and I553.8.2.2 (a) & (b) to address connectivity related issues of any future development on the site.

4.3.5 MASSING RESPONSE TO SITE TOPOGRAPHY

The site is open to all sides and surrounded by mangroves. This geographical location gives the site almost an island-like landform. Again, this setting offers visual exposure to the site even from a long distance. Therefore, it was necessary to address the possible adverse effect of any visual prominence of the future development through an appropriate design.

Accordingly, the envisaged master plan intended to arrange future buildings around the site's perimeter to create an attractive frontage on all edges, recognising that the "island" site is seen from all directions. The design also considered that the island-like form of the site needs to be reinforced by limiting the height of development around the perimeter and to concentrate the massing in the centre. The design has considered that lower height buildings around the site will mitigate the visual prominence of any taller building in the centre.

This building arrangement will complement the convex-shaped landform of the site and the forestry canopy formation, which is part of the natural environment of the site. Currently, tree species such as Pūriri, Taraire and Pohutukawa occupy the periphery of the site. Here the tree arrangement is distinct, with shorter species along the coastline and larger trees inside. It is assumed that much taller trees, including Kauri grew on the more elevated central part of the site in the pre-European period.

The design intention is to recognise the unique landform and its natural environment through any future built form on the site. From a good urban design perspective, it was an appropriate design decision in a coastal setting.

The Proposed Plan Change has responded to this design intention by proposing the following specific provisions. The expectation here is to ensure an appropriate massing response to topography using a building form that is lower towards the edges and rising towards the centre.

1553.2 Objectives [dp]

- (1) *The Takapuna 2 Precinct develops as a vibrant and diverse residential community which:*
 - (a) *responds positively to its immediate surrounds and coastal setting with high quality architectural and urban design responses;*
 - (b) *provides a range of accommodation types including integrated residential development, and is in keeping with the planned urban built character of the precinct, enabling buildings between four and 16 storeys in height;*

1553.3 Policies [dp]

- (4) *Require that new buildings:*
- (a) *achieve a high-density high quality urban built character of four to 16 storey buildings in identified locations in a variety of visually interesting forms;*
 - (b) *are appropriate in scale to, and interface well with, the internal pedestrian network, the coastal margin and the public frontage along Esmonde Road;*
 - (c) *provide a transition in building height down towards the coastal margin and Esmonde Road to reinforce the land-form/topography of the precinct and recognise that buildings will be viewed from all sides of the precinct - providing "frontage" in perimeter form;*
 - (d) *achieve a minimum development of four levels around the coastal margin to ensure that screening of the taller buildings within the centre of the precinct is achieved;*

1553.6.3. Minimum building height

Purpose: To ensure that buildings provide a minimum number of storeys to ensure that efficient use of the site is achieved and that the outer buildings of the precinct deliver a cascade of heights to break up the form of the taller buildings located in the centre of the site as viewed from outside the precinct.

- (2) *Buildings in Areas 1, 2 and 3 must provide a minimum height of 4 storeys above ground level(RL10).*

1553.8.2. Assessment criteria

The council will consider the relevant assessment criteria below for restricted discretionary activities in addition to the assessment criteria specified for the relevant restricted discretionary activities in the overlay, zone, and Auckland-wide provisions.

- (1) *New buildings, additions and alterations to existing buildings and accessory buildings:*
- (b) *Building design and external appearance:*
 - (i) *The extent to which building design and layout achieves:*

-
- *a design of buildings that contributes to the local streetscape and a sense of place by responding positively to the planned form and character of the surrounding area and the coastal setting;*
 - *a silhouette of the building as viewed from areas surrounding the site in a way that positively contributes to the Takapuna skyline;*
 - *a coherent scheme including proposed building heights for the whole precinct to demonstrate an overall design strategy that contributes positively to the visual quality of the precinct and the locality;*

4.3.6 ARTICULATION OF BUILDING MASS

As discussed earlier, the comprehensive master plan that has been envisaged for the overall development progressively accommodates building height from the edge to the centre of the site. At the same time, the architectural quality, building placements, and articulation of building mass are considered to address the site-specific conditions appropriately, minimise environmental effects on the neighbouring properties, and contain any possible adverse effect entirely within the site.

The primary design intention here is to massing articulation to read as multiple buildings by breaking up massing to avoid monolithic forms. The proposal includes mainly residential land use, so residential building scale by incorporating fine-grain building forms will be appropriate within the development context.

In this respect, the following controls on the building bulk massing are proposed in the Plan Change to manage potential visual dominance effects and residential amenity.

1553.2 Objectives [dp]

- (1) *The Takapuna 2 Precinct develops as a vibrant and diverse residential community which:*
 - (a) *responds positively to its immediate surrounds and coastal setting with high quality architectural and urban design responses;*
 - (b) *provides a range of accommodation types including integrated residential development, and is in keeping with*

the planned urban built character of the precinct, enabling buildings between four and 16 storeys in height;

1553.3 Policies [dp]

- (1) *Ensure comprehensive, integrated high quality development of the precinct in general accordance with Precinct Plans 1 – 2 that:*
 - (a) *provides for development in a variety of building forms and heights;*
 - (b) *enables the efficient and effective use of land;*
 - (c) *achieves the planned urban built character of the precinct;*
 - (d) *protects the character and amenity of the coastal margin, and,*
 - (e) *provides high-quality urban built character and on-site amenity.*

- (4) *Require that new buildings:*
 - (a) *achieve a high-density high quality urban built character of four to 16 storey buildings in identified locations in a variety of visually interesting forms;*
 - (b) *are appropriate in scale to, and interface well with, the internal pedestrian network, the coastal margin and the public frontage along Esmonde Road;*
 - (c) *provide a transition in building height down towards the coastal margin and Esmonde Road to reinforce the land-form/topography of the precinct and recognise that buildings will be viewed from all sides of the precinct - providing "frontage" in perimeter form;*
 - (d) *achieve a minimum development of four levels around the coastal margin to ensure that screening of the taller buildings within the centre of the precinct is achieved;*

The Plan Change proposal also includes the following standards.

1553.6.1. Building Height and Building Length

Purpose: To ensure development is consistent with the planned outcomes identified on Precinct Plan 2 – Takapuna height control areas and to make efficient use of the site, by:

- *focusing greater building height within the precinct in identified locations that are set back from the coastal margin and Esmonde Road;*

-
- *providing a cascade of building heights focussing the greatest height and density through the centre of the precinct; and,*
 - *controlling the length of buildings to manage building dominance effects*

The maximum building height and length must not exceed the standards for the specified areas as depicted on Precinct Plan 2.

1553.6.2. Building Coverage and Impervious surfaces

Maximum impervious area

Purpose: To provide for the intensive use of the majority of the precinct in recognition of the long coastal margin (esplanade reserve) and its capacity to mitigate the effects of stormwater runoff from the precinct's planned urban character of multi-storey buildings surrounded by open space.

Building coverage

Purpose: To ensure development is consistent with the planned outcomes identified on Precinct Plan 2 – Takapuna coverage control areas and manage the extent of buildings on a site to achieve the planned urban character of buildings surrounded by open space and ensure a varied and visually interesting skyline of built forms.

The maximum impervious area and building coverage must not exceed the standards for the specified areas as depicted on Precinct Plan 2.

1553.6.4. Maximum building dimension and separation

Purpose: To ensure that buildings over 19m in height:

- *are not overly bulky in appearance and avoid significant visual dominance effects;*
- *allow adequate sunlight and daylight access to Esmonde Road, public and internal open space and nearby sites;*
- *provide adequate sunlight and outlook around and between buildings; and*
- *mitigate adverse wind effects.*

The requirements of H13.6.4. Maximum tower dimension and tower separation, Business Mixed Use zone apply provided that the height at which the controls apply is 19m.

The high-rise buildings will be clustered within a central area and will be read as part of the whole when viewed from the surroundings. The provisions in the Plan Change anticipate that the visual dominance of these higher buildings will be mitigated by surrounding the central area with a street edge and

esplanade reserve fronting lower height buildings while remaining sensitive to the neighbouring surrounds. Otherwise, increased density overlooking key open spaces and streets contributes to a feeling of safety and 'eyes' over the area and concentrating most people closer to the amenities for maximum use and enjoyment.

As a restricted discretionary activity, assessment criteria for building design within site are provided, giving Council discretion to consider criteria related to the building mass, location, height, length, architectural form, details, and treatments. These measures restrict the overall bulk and mass that each building can achieve with the upper-level floor plates, allowing for sunlight access, the outlook from apartments, avoidance of overlooking between towers, and reducing the shading across the open spaces and neighbouring buildings throughout the year.

In overall consideration of the above, it is considered that the Plan Change proposal enables the most appropriate urban design outcome for the site, and it is supported.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This report has been prepared in support of a request for a Plan Change to the Auckland Unitary Plan – Operative in Part ("AUP") to rezone the land at 48 Esmonde Road, Takapuna.

The proposal has followed a design-led process and identified a well-designed and most appropriate design and development framework for the site. It is considered that the design process was comprehensive and of a depth that is commensurate to the scale and potential environmental effects that the Proposed Plan Change could give rise to.

The proposed zone provisions and Precinct Plan will ensure future development maintains and enhances the planned character and other qualities of Takapuna. The concept master plan gives the confidence that the proposed Precinct Plan will be of sufficient size and design that the 'downstream' resource consent provisions triggered in AUP: OP can be comfortably met.

The proposed Plan Change will also achieve the design principles and aspirations set out in the relevant statutory and non-statutory documents. The proposal does not require the change of the current underlying zone of the site, ie. Residential – Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (THAB) zone. Therefore, the current AUP THAB zone provisions and other Auckland-wide provisions would also be able to manage other potential urban design effects of the application.

The proposed Plan Change will increase housing supply and choice, while at the same time, the proposed precinct provisions will ensure that any actual or potential adverse effects can be managed to an acceptable level.

Based on the above assessment of urban design effects, it is concluded that the proposed Plan Change will have positive effects on the environment in terms of good urban design for a compact and integrated urban development in an appropriate location of Auckland.



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