
urban design assessment
3 PIGEON MOUNTAIN ROAD

for

HND HMB LTD

by

IAN MUNRO

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executive summary

This report documents an independent analysis of an application for 87 x generally 2-storey residential dwellings and associated subdivision prepared for HND HMB Ltd on an area of Mixed Housing Suburban-zoned land at 3 Pigeon Mountain Road, Half Moon Bay. The application has been made to Auckland Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) in terms of the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) “**AUP: OP**”. The key conclusions of this report are that:

- a. The proposal responds reasonably reasonably logically to the site’s context and will positively contribute to the quality of the street noting the unusual extent and slope of part of the road reserve on the Site’s northern side. The proposal will be markedly different to, but acceptably compatible with, the existing neighbourhood character and also the planned suburban character of the zone including by way of massing the dwellings along Pigeon Mountain Road as a series of 2-storey duplexes and triplexes that are comparable in scale and intensity to the existing dwellings within that street. The proposal has demonstrated that buildings of the scale and intensity proposed can be accommodated without compromising the amenity values of neighbouring sites, the street, or the neighbourhood.
- b. The proposed buildings have been acceptably modulated so as to mitigate potential urban design effects related to their bulk, mass and scale. The proposal infringes numerous zone standards including building for building height, Standard Height in Relation to Boundary (“**SHiRB**”), and front yard. The architectural response is to maximise the Site’s capability to accommodate unit yield and although proposed retaining walls are more extensive and taller than I would prefer, I consider that these infringements will both individually and collectively not result in concerning or problematic effects on the environment or any person.
- c. The visual appearance of the buildings is adequately varied and includes a successful mixture of materials, colours, surface planes and building volumes, and roof profiles. The quality of the buildings is in my opinion commensurate to their visual prominence. The expression of the development in blocks of no more than 8 dwellings assists in achieving this balance.
- d. The design and layout of the units will provide for adequate internal functionality. On site amenity space will be acceptable, and otherwise raises no adverse urban design effects of concern noting that the proposal does not meet the building coverage, impervious surface, landscaped area, and outdoor living space standards as matters of discretion and assessment.
- e. Adjacent residential amenity will be maintained including because of the way the proposal is massed within the Site and in particular because of generous setbacks from boundaries often well in excess of the zone yard standard. The overall scale of the buildings, and in addition the zone standard infringements, will have adverse effects on the occupants of the neighbouring properties but those effects will be acceptable and less than minor.
- f. Overall, the proposal will result in a number of positive and adverse urban design effects on the environment. Adverse effects will in my opinion be acceptable.
- g. In reaching the above conclusions I have considered each of the restricted discretionary activity consents required in terms of the restrictions of discretion that apply to each one, and the overall cumulative effects that could result from all of the consents required together.

Consent could be granted on urban design grounds subject to the recommendations outlined in this report.

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contact

ianmunro

B.Plan (Hons); M.Plan (Hons); M.Arch (Hons); M.EnvLS (Hons); M.EngSt (Hons); MNZPI

(e) ian@ianmunro.nz

(m) 021 900 993

1. introduction

- 1.1 This report documents an independent analysis of an application for 87 x generally 2-storey residential dwellings and associated subdivision prepared for HND HMB Ltd on an area of Mixed Housing Suburban-zoned land at 3 Pigeon Mountain Road, Half Moon Bay. The application has been made to Auckland Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) in terms of the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) “**AUP: OP**”.
- 1.2 For full details of the proposal, the Assessment of Environmental Effects (“**AEE**”) is referred to.

2. scope and involvement

- 2.1 I have been engaged by HND HMB Ltd to provide an urban design review of its proposal.
- 2.2 The process followed to undertake this urban design assessment is as follows:
 - a. A site visit was undertaken.
 - b. Briefing meetings with the project consultants were held.
 - c. Design meetings were attended and comments provided as the proposal developed.
 - d. An on-line pre application meeting with Auckland Council officers was held and minutes considered.
 - e. Final plans were received and assessed along with confirmation from the project planner on the planning matters to be considered.
 - f. My initial report has been prepared and then finalised.
 - g. Over an approximately 12-month period, a number of amendments and refinements were made in response to Council officer comments. Ultimately the Council made the decision to notify the application.
 - h. This updated report was prepared to reflect the refined design that has been arrived at (reducing the proposal from 92 dwellings to 87 dwellings).
- 2.3 The drawings relied on for the assessment were:

- a. Architectural plans prepared by ASC Architects Ltd, job no. 22924, September 2024.
- b. Landscape plans prepared by SOLA Ltd, job no. 114212, July 2024.
- c. Draft lighting plans prepared by Advanced Lighting Technologies Ltd, :3 Pigeon Mountain Road Half Moon Bay”, April 2023.

3. urban design framework

- 3.1 Although historically focused on the way in which private space and development impacted on public space, ‘urban design’ now encompasses a wide range of potential considerations. This is best evidenced by the breadth of matters included in MfE’s 2005 New Zealand Urban Design Protocol. As a result of this breadth urban design analyses, when based only on preferred or ‘ideal’ urban design prerogatives, do not always match well with the specific matters relevant to Resource Management Act proceedings. Practical challenges faced by urban designers working under the RMA, and which have been factored into this assessment, include that:
 - a. urban design outcomes only apply to the extent that they are relevant to the specific resource management issues relevant to each specific application;
 - b. RMA plans need to be interpreted in light of what the specific objectives and policies mean and with reference to the methods used by each Plan to implement those provisions – not against what outcomes an urban designer might consider to be preferred or ideal in pure urban design terms;
 - c. the RMA provides for positive environmental effects but does not require them (unless a NPS or Plan requires them);
 - d. the RMA does not seek or require that a resource consent proposal has to be the ‘best’ possible outcome for the land or what an urban designer might prefer - merely that a landowner promoting their own preference must demonstrate that it achieves whatever applicable RMA and RMA Plan outcomes apply; and
 - e. a failure to achieve an ideal or preferred urban design outcome as a potential ‘missed opportunity’ is not the same as the creation of an adverse environmental effect, and is often irrelevant to whether or not what is proposed merits the granting of consent.
- 3.2 In this instance, the proposal is for a type of land use and development that is in line with the purpose of the Mixed Housing Suburban zone. As such, for this

assessment it is not considered necessary to identify urban design outcomes or precedents beyond the provisions of the AUP: OP.

- 3.3 It is understood that in the MHS zone, for 4+ dwellings on a site, zone standards H4.6.4 (height), H4.6.5 (standard height in relation to boundary), H4.6.6 (alternative height in relation to boundary), and H4.6.7 (yards) apply. Standards H4.6.8 (impervious area), H4.6.9 (building coverage), H4.6.10 (landscaped area), H4.6.11 (outlook space), H4.6.12 (daylight), H4.6.13 (outdoor living space), H4.6.14 (fences and walls), and H4.6.15 (dwelling size) do not apply as rules for which resource consent is required but as restrictions of discretion to be considered.
- 3.4 I am advised that consent is required as a restricted discretionary activity. The following consents and restrictions of discretion are relevant to the proposal's urban design effects and I have disregarded all urban design effects that do not relate to these:
- a. Development of 4+ dwellings on a site (and associated new buildings) in the zone – restrictions of discretion H4.8.1(2).
 - b. Infringement of the SHiRB standard where compliance has been achieved with the AHiRB standard – restrictions of discretion H4.8.1(5).
 - c. Infringement of the SHiRB standard where the AHiRB does not apply - restrictions of discretion H4.8.1(4) and C1.9(3).
- 3.5 There is a relevant permitted baseline in urban design terms applying to my assessment as it relates to the Site. The permitted baseline is:
- a. Removal of all existing on-site buildings and vegetation.
 - b. Boundary fencing on all sides and a front fence complying with the AUP: OP zone standards.
 - c. Three dwellings on the Site (compliant with the zone standards based on PC78 and the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2021)), and one fourth dwelling if purposed for no more than 10 persons as either a visitor accommodation activity (such as a full-time Book-a-Bach or bed and breakfast motel), boarding house, or residential care facility. This would result in 4 dwellings on the Site as a whole. These could be configured in a variety of ways, including to the zone height standard.
- 3.6 However because of the difficulty in definitively identifying a specific hypothetical proposition for building form, location and scale on the Site for the permitted baseline, I have not sought to disregard those effects from my assessment. I have instead kept in mind the permitted outcomes that the Site could reasonably and non-fancifully accommodate as a matter of context.

3.7 Urban design assessments under the AUP: OP are not always straight forward. Considerations relating to public notification are focused on adverse effects on the existing environment, and decisions on overall merit are able to additionally consider positive and overall effects, and the planning outcomes sought by the AUP: OP (which may be substantially different to the existing environment). In undertaking my assessment, I have recognised that change proposed to an existing environment including by way of a development that might be markedly different to an existing pattern or 'norm' (especially where it is in line with what has been signalled by the AUP: OP zone provisions) should not be categorised as being inherently adverse just because it is different; whether or not the focus of urban design should be on maintaining an existing character or bringing about a new one is a matter of planning context. My view has been reinforced in this instance due to the absence of any objectives or policies within the zone framework that seek to protect or maintain the existing environment as a relevant planning outcome¹. To calibrate my analysis, I have in my assessment of effects on the environment and persons:

- a. Accepted the AUP: OP statement at chapter A1.7.3 that (my emphasis added): "*activities are classed as restricted discretionary where they are **generally anticipated in the existing environment** and the range of potential adverse effects is able to be identified in the Plan....*" I have taken this to refer to activities that are listed in a zone activity table as restricted discretionary activities, in this instance relevantly being H4.4.1(A4), four or more dwellings that comply with the listed standards of building height; height in relation to boundary; alternative height in relation to boundary; and yards. I have interpreted the phrase "generally anticipated" as being analogous to "generally appropriate". This has informed the way I have weighted the severity of identified urban design effects in terms of their reasonableness.
- b. In terms of notification, C1.13(3) specifies that I am to "have regard to" the "standards for any permitted activity" as part of the context of my assessment. I have interpreted that this requires me to be aware of the standards and understand the broad scale and severity of environmental effects that they could result in, but to not go so far as to disregard those or assume that they are a *fait accompli*. This has informed the way I have determined whether or not a given effect might be adverse and to what extent.
- c. Where a proposal is made to infringe a standard such that the restrictions of discretion at C1.9(3) apply, restriction C1.9(3)(e) specifically refers to the "*effects of the infringement of the standard*", which I have understood to require specific identification and consideration of the specific portion of the proposal's effects that sit

¹ This informs the extent to which amenity values derived from the existing built form character and associated qualities of spaciousness / openness; visual dominance; overlooking; and shadowing might be regarded as towards being permanent, or towards being interim / limited duration. An appreciation of whatever reasonable expectation for change might apply in turn informs the severity that should be attributed to any loss or diminishment of such existing amenity value(s).

beyond the relevant standard(s) as a part of my assessment of the proposal's overall effects.

- d. The AUP: OP provisions refer to effects on neighbourhood amenity and character, but the term "neighbourhood" is not defined. I have taken it as the local area around the Site that users would interact with on a day-to-day basis. This equates to a 1km radius area around the Site that can be accessed on foot.
- e. Based on the Enabling Housing Act and the Government's MDRS / National Policy Statement on Urban Development, it appears via PC78 that the Mixed Housing Suburban zone has a limited lifespan ahead and will in due course (in this locality) become a MHU zone with standards substantially increased to reflect the Government's requirements. I have considered the amended AUP: OP objectives and policies that will apply also as part of the context of my assessment.

3.8 Having considered the relevant provisions of AUP: OP chapter H4 (Mixed Housing Suburban), and in light of PC78, the planning outcomes and environmental effects to be addressed can be synthesised (for simplicity) into the following topic headings:

- a. the layout should respond to the site's opportunities and constraints;
- b. the development should achieve the planned urban built character of predominantly two storey buildings surrounded by open space;
- c. the development should achieve an attractive and safe outcome for the street;
- d. the development should maintain reasonable sunlight access and privacy and minimise visual dominance effects on adjoining sites;
- e. the development should meet the day-to-day needs of residents including usable and accessible outdoor living space;
- f. multi-unit buildings should be designed in a manner that manages the effects of building design and appearance; and
- g. overall urban design merit.

4. site and context analysis

site analysis

4.1 The Site's key characteristics in urban design terms are:

- a. The Site is unusually large for a residential site, at 1.473ha (the local norm is closer to 600m²). It is also a corner Site with public road on three sides. The Site's dimensions are approximately 135m along Compass Point Way (southern boundary); approximately 102m along Pigeon Mountain Road (eastern boundary); and approximately 109m along Ara Tai (northern boundary).
- b. The Site sits on a downhill slope at the entry to Half Moon Bay centre and marina. The Site is in this respect, and in conjunction with its three road frontages, in what I would describe as a locally very prominent location but is not widely conspicuous in the wider area.
- c. The Site was formerly occupied by a school that did not have a scale, intensity or character that could be described as being in keeping with the predominant built form character of detached (and generally large) family homes.
- d. The land drops along the northern boundary over what is a very wide area of road reserve (approximately 36m – 40m) including a bank that drops approximately 4m from the Site down to the road (Ara Tai) and a public parking area.
- e. An approximately 3m tall dense hedge follows the Site's northern boundary around into Pigeon Mountain Road. If this was removed, the Site would have excellent and elevated north-facing views over the centre and to the harbour. Numerous other trees are dotted around the Site and existing buildings.
- f. The Site is itself quite sloped; dropping down from the south-west to the north east. The Site falls approximately 10m along Compass Point Way (west to east, from 20m to 10m elevation), and 5.5m along Pigeon Mountain Road (south to north, from 10m to 5.5m elevation). In its long internal diagonal, the drop is approximately 15m. The nature of the gradient is such that although not affecting the Site's overall developability, it will have the effect of requiring retaining structures and also limit the placement of roads and blocks within the Site.
- g. Existing retaining walls run along the Site's western boundary, up to approximately 2m in places. This boundary is also densely fenced and landscaped to provide privacy for neighbours.
- h. To the immediate west are a row of properties occupied by detached houses. These uniformly back onto the Site and all are 1-3 storeys tall as they progressively step down the slope. Many have large habitable room windows or balconies orientated to face out and across the Site. These properties are 76, 78, 80, 82, and 84 Compass Point Way.
- i. To the south across Compass Point Way are 11 Pigeon Mountain Road (a corner site), 2 Compass Point Way, 2/9 Tuscan Place, 11 Tuscan Place, 8 and 8A Compass Point Way, and 16 Indus Place. These sites

are each occupied by 1-to-2 storey detached family dwellings and all are on land higher than the Site. All have a variety of windows and outdoor spaces orientated towards the Site, and a fairly consistent run of tall front fences sit at the front boundaries.

- j. To the east across Pigeon Mountain Road are 1/6 and 2/6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 Poseidon Place. These sites are accessed via a private accessway parallel to Pigeon Mountain Road. Along Pigeon Mountain Road the sites treat the road as a back boundary, with uniformly solid fences and landscape screening, and no front doors in the conventional sense of that word. These dwellings are between 1-and-2 storeys in height and although having windows that face the Site, are not what I would describe as fundamentally orientated to the Site.
- k. North across Ara Tai is the Half Moon Bay centre. This has a Local Centre zone enabling up to 18m-tall buildings (with resource consent). At present the centre is comprised of three stand-alone 2-storey tall commercial buildings surrounded by large car parking areas. To maximise car parking yield an angled parking bay configuration has been used and this has resulted in an inelegant snaking pedestrian route from the street, at only one point, to the central building. I would describe this configuration as very poor and of note, including the car parking that has been provided within Ara Tai itself, between the Site and the central commercial building within the Centre are no less than seven rows of car parking spaces and four vehicular carriageways / aisles across 61m width of land. Northwest of the centre is a substantial additional car parking area and a public ferry stop. North of the centre is the fairly large-scale marina operation.
- l. Pigeon Mountain Road is a 2km long, kinked / multi-axial road linking the centre (north) to Pakuranga Road arterial (south). In the vicinity of the Site it is approximately 24m wide and includes a wide north-bound lane and two south bound lanes (one for left-turns into Argo Drive). Outside the Site for its full frontage width are yellow No Stopping lines. There are footpaths on both sides, and the berms are each sloped. The road has a fairly low-quality existing frontage condition on either side.
- m. Compass Point Way is an approximately 775m-long road that ends in an internal loop. It serves a residential area on a natural cliff / rise that sits immediately south of the centre. It has the look and feel of a quiet residential street. In front of the Site the road is approximately 20m in width. It has quite wide berms (approximately 5.5m each), and the carriageway has three inlaid cobblestone strips close to the Pigeon Mountain Road intersection, which I have assumed act as a traffic calming / threshold treatment. Unmarked on-street parallel parking is possible on the road's southern side, but the northern (Site) side is marked with yellow No Stopping lines.
- n. Ara Tai is largely an access road dominated on each side by extensive public parking areas. Footpaths on both sides of the road continue from

Pigeon Mountain Road around the frontage of the Site but where it meets the first south-side parking area the footpath terminates here and continues only on the northern side along westwards ultimately to the ferry. In conjunction with the parking associated with the local centre commercial buildings, the road is in my opinion of a low urban design quality. The row of dwellings on the top of the natural cliff feature south of the road, including the Site and then dwellings along Compass Point Way, which often show three-storeys, frame the road and provide excellent views above and across it to the Marina and coast. I note that although I have described the public open space bank directly north of the Site as part of the Ara Tai road reserve, the AUP: OP planning maps identify it as Open Space: Conservation zone, indicating that it may not strictly-speaking be within the road reserve; I am not able to definitely determine its status one way or the other.

- o. Although the neighbourhood is a predominantly residential one, characterised by larger-scale detached family homes on 600m-700m sites, the Site sits at the edge of that and what is a large-scale, quite functional, local centre, public transport / park-and-ride, and Marina facility. This gives the Site an immediately missed use context noting its own previous use as a non-residential (education) facility. In my opinion this provides an opportunity for the Site to accommodate a scale and intensity of development that could be seen as a step-up or transition something between the suburban detached dwellings around it to the west, south and east, and the local centre north.
- p. As a matter of context, the existing AUP: OP provides for quite significant built form character change and intensification, including within the residential zoned area by way of generous permitted activity provisions for individual sites. The Council has notified PC78 to incorporate the Government's NPS: UD and Enabling Housing Act, which would substantially increase this again, specifically by changing the Mixed Housing Suburban zone to a Mixed Housing Urban zone. This is not a settled matter at this time, and I have elected to not consider that further.

5. design response

- 5.1 In urban design terms the key characteristics of the proposal are:
 - a. The proposal is for 87, generally 2-storey dwellings across the Site in terraced housing rows, duplexes and triplexes (Units 24-40 are 3-storeys on their 'internal', northern side).
 - b. The design process has taken slightly over a year and I have been frequently consulted with concept plans and options as ASC Architects worked through its own design exercise with HND HMB Ltd. In my

opinion it has been comprehensive and I can confirm that in terms both my own feedback and that of the Council's urban design officer (pre-application), comments provided have been extensively tested and worked through although I would not go so far as to describe the design process as having been 'urban design led'. Subsequent to lodgement additional refinements have been developed to respond to additional Council officer feedback.

- c. Broadly the concept is to provide dwellings that front onto the three road frontages, and then within the Site rationalise a series of compact blocks around an obvious network of accessways.
- d. Along the western boundary, which adjoins residential neighbours, the proposal is to uniformly back onto that and also provide additional retaining walls to those that exist so as to lower development down as much as possible relative to the dwellings that currently have windows and decks orientated for views across the Site.
- e. The internal structure of the proposal is also notable for suggestions made by the Council's officers at the pre-application stage. The staff were very firm in expressing a preference that the Site provide a through-site linkage for pedestrians from Compass Point Way through to Ara Tai. I record that I did not nor do I agree that this is as relevant as the officers did given that the proposed connection adds little to the existing routes already available via Pigeon Mountain Road. The through site link has been positioned as far west within the Site as possible to maximise distance away from Pigeon Mountain Road, but it is also constrained by steepening topography in the Site's western side. The result is a link that is relatively central and very direct, but which has the effect of interrupting the allocation of fronts and backs within the Site. This has been mitigated as much as is practicable and I am satisfied that what is currently proposed is now an optimal solution (although I consider deleting the link would have allowed a better-resolved internal layout). Ongoing refinement of the proposal post-lodgement, in consultation with Council officers, has further amended this linkage to now function much more as a more resident-centric linkage north.
- f. Along Compass Point Way the proposal is configured as a series of duplexes and triplexes intended to relate to (but not directly mimic) the pattern and intensity of buildings along the opposite side of the road. Vehicle access is via an internal rear service lane within the Site, and these dwellings are 3-storeys on their internal side.
- g. Pedestrian access has also been proposed to Pigeon Mountain Road from within the Site following an internal block depth back from Compass Point Way.
- h. A variety of materials and colours / finishes have been used to manage the potential effects of building scale and length, but in summary and

including the incorporation of frequently pitched roof elements the intent is to provide an obviously residential look and feel to the development.

- i. A comprehensive landscaping plan has been prepared that includes opportunity for larger-scaled trees and to help manage on-site amenity and privacy.
- j. However HND HMB Ltd has also sought to maximise the potential yield of the Site and in light of its slope (and also to accommodate the engineering requirements for vehicle access and manoeuvring), numerous retaining walls are proposed generally between 1m – 1.5m, but on occasion more.
- k. The proposal also infringes numerous standards including of note building height, SHiRB, and the front yard standard. Additional standards not complied with but that do not apply as matters of compliance in the first instance include impervious surface area and landscaped area as well as outdoor living space.

6. assessment

the layout should respond to the site's opportunities and constraints

- 6.1 At the fundamental design and layout level, the way in which a proposal responds to its site characteristics, opportunities and constraints is regarded by urban designers as one of the key ways that potential adverse effects can be avoided, remedied or mitigated (and, where possible, that potential positive effects can be maximised). In this respect, this topic relates to all of the MHS zone policies at Chapter H4.3 of the AUP: OP as well as the assessment matters at H4.8.
- 6.2 In my opinion the proposal achieves an acceptable urban design response to the site's opportunities and constraints. My reasons for this conclusion are:
 - a. The crux of the proposal's urban design 'question' is that the Site is fairly large and developable, directly adjacent to a centre zone and public ferry terminal (and the coast), but is also within what is a historically quite low-density suburban area. The MHS zone can in that respect be considered an interesting choice given that while there are other Local Centre zones in Auckland adjoined by the MHS zone, many others have either or both of the Mixed Housing Urban or Terraced House and Apartment Building zone around them. But in any event, I consider that the Site has characteristics that support the principle of maximising its capability to accommodate housing, subject to achieving a compatible built form

character interface along the Western and Compass Point Way boundaries.

- b. The proposal corresponds to the 'fronts and backs' of its external boundaries well including the intent to provide a new public footpath along the top of the slope on the northern site frontage above Ara Tai, and two new connections for this down to the existing street level.
- c. Massing of development along the western boundary to excavate dwellings into the slope and lower them relative to the existing dwellings will optimise the maintenance of existing amenity without compromising the potential of the Site to accommodate density so close to a local centre. To compensate from the darker-side on the west side, the dwellings have larger windows on the east side to maximise daylight access through the units' depth.
- d. Provision of a series of detached duplex and triplex buildings along Compass Point Way is a direct response to the scale and intensity of existing buildings within this street.
- e. The proposal is based on the premise of presenting a public front along the three public road sides, including a new public path within reserve land along the upper slope of Ara Tai. This is in my opinion the key spatial integration response I would expect.
- f. Secondly, along the Site's western boundary, which is backed onto by existing neighbours, the proposal is to respond with a compatible back condition here too, with additional excavations proposed to help sink the development down into the land relative to the upper floor windows and decks of the existing neighbours and so as to maintain as much as is practicable existing views and outlook across the Site that those neighbours enjoy. I regard this as a sensitive and appropriate approach.
- g. The internal configuration of fronts and backs will mitigate any potential adverse on-site amenity or security effects, and will be acceptable. It would be possible for residents of Compass Point Way to short-cut through the Site to the centre but this is not a direct link and I do not expect it to be a common occurrence.
- h. The Compass Point Way frontage has been composed as a series of duplexes and triplexes in response to the scale and intensity of development that can be seen in that road, which often include large-scale two-storey family dwellings.
- i. On-site JOALS include landscaping and footpaths where the JOAL is a 'frontage' device connecting to a front door, and will provide a suitably legible outcome. The connection from Pigeon Mountain Road to JOAL 5 is spacious at the road end (approximately 8m) but does narrow to approximately 4m at a 'pinch point' between Lots 22 and 57. I am however comfortable that this will remain an obvious and inviting linkage

noting the presence of elevated outdoor living spaces and set-back dwellings along the southern side.

- j. A draft lighting plan has been provided demonstrating how safe night time use of the Site by pedestrians and the public can be achieved.
- k. Retaining walls will frequently be visible along frontages, and in many instances these will be between 1m and 1.5m in height. I am satisfied that these are acceptable (and justified) based on the Site's slope and to achieve suitably flat and usable outdoor living spaces. To mitigate the potential adverse effects of front-facing retaining walls, they are to be of a keystone construction (along with those less than 1m in height), and will include semi-transparent aluminium fences to soften visual dominance effects. **I recommend however that the semi-permeable front fences shown on the landscape plan at 1.2m in height be reduced to 1m maximum.**

6.3 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:

- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to the general way in which the proposal relates to its site and context characteristics. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings.

the development should achieve the planned suburban built character of predominantly two storey buildings

6.4 This topic relates to policies H4.3(1) and H4.3(2), and development standards H4.6.4 (maximum building height), H4.6.7 (yards), H4.6.8 (impervious surface area), H4.6.9 (building coverage), and H4.6.10 (landscaped area). For the purposes of this consideration, I have set aside the uncertainty regarding how to reconcile the existing zone with PC78 and the signalled change to a MHU zone, and assessed the proposal in the context of the Operative AUP: OP only as it was prior to the notification of PC78.

6.5 In my opinion the proposal achieves an acceptable outcome that will be compatible with the outcomes sought for the zone. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. The 87 dwellings proposed on this 1.473ha site equates to an average density of 1:169m². This is at the higher-end of medium density housing, which I consider to be generally suburban-compatible. In part because of the prevalence of 2-storey buildings proposed, the proposal's overall intensity and scale would not in my opinion be considered high-density

(the cross-over between the two being in my opinion 1:100m² – 1:150m²).

- b. In terms of the neighbourhood's existing character:
- i. The proposal will substantially change the existing character of the Site. That was a substantially open-feeling school activity and did not contribute either any particular residential character on the one hand, or any particular urban design merit (the streets have been treated as a landscaped void, or in the alternative have been densely hedged in the form of blank 'green' walls) on the other. In these respects, I consider that the proposal will have fundamentally neutral-to-positive neighbourhood residential character effects in urban design terms (noting that I do not agree that the principle of change itself should be regarded as adverse).
 - ii. The neighbourhood has a mixed character, although is predominantly comprised of detached family-scaled dwellings (often 2-storeys and in places 3-storeys where dwellings step down slopes) on freehold-type allotments. The neighbourhood also includes a commercial centre and its characteristically larger-scale, functional-looking 'boxes', quite an extensive car parking areas associated with the public ferry use, a commercial marina, and other uses including a public primary school. I am also aware and have included in my consideration of the existing environment a 'COVID-19 Fast Track' resource consent for a large-scale retirement village with buildings up to 6-storeys in height. In my opinion the proposal will not in this context be fundamentally jarring or out of place.
 - iii. In terms of Ara Tai, I consider the proposal will be compatible with and if anything will positively contribute to the existing character of the commercial centre environment and its substantial car parking areas. There is already a pattern of elevated dwellings looking down onto Ara Tai from above west of the Site, and the proposal will continue this albeit in a higher-intensity manner.
 - iv. In terms of Pigeon Mountain Road, the proposal will contribute to what I consider is an appropriate transition in intensity from the Local Centre (north) and the typical detached houses of the area (south). The road currently lacks urban design qualities and on both sides the streetscape consists of largely blank fences and landscape hedges.
 - v. In terms of the existing neighbours along the Site's western boundary, the proposal will be lowered into the slope (substantially so for the most part), and although presenting a considerably intensified vista as neighbours look across the Site

at the development, they will continue to do so from an elevated and generally unencumbered position in terms of the orientation of existing habitable room windows and balconies on neighbouring sites. For these neighbours the proposed length of Units 41, 79-86, 88, and 2, the potential adverse character effects of that length and enclosure has been mitigated by the extent of excavation proposed – which will maintain a very spacious-feeling and open outlook for those neighbours to enjoy. Noting that those neighbours will also typically have views of the Local Centre and marina, and the COVID-19 Fast Track retirement village (when constructed), the intensity and character effects of the proposal will be adverse but not significantly so.

- vi. In terms of neighbours residing within Compass Point Way, passers-by will be exposed to the southern row of buildings, with most of the balance of the proposal screened from view. These buildings have been designed to be a row of duplex and triplex houses based the metaphor of a row of larger-scale detached family houses. I consider that this is a higher-intensity but still character-compatible solution for Compass Point Way, and I consider that any adverse effects arising will not be of concern.
 - vii. The proposal is not consistent with what are also prevalent character-elements of solid or tall front fences and walls; rear or internalised sites; or a frequent lack of pedestrian access along accessways and to front doors. I consider these are all undesirable solutions and the proposal not seeking to replicate them is a source of positive effects for the proposal.
- c. In terms of the neighbourhood's planned character:
- i. As noted earlier, I have confined my consideration to the existing configuration of zones, and have not considered the potential MHU zone indicated by PC78.
 - ii. But in terms of the existing framework of zones, I consider that the intensity proposed will not appear out of place in the context of the adjacent Local Centre zone and the well-established urban planning principle of higher intensity development adjacent to such community focal points. This includes the additional bulk, intensity and scale of development resulting from the zone standard infringements proposed.
 - iii. The proposal does include elements of buildings that will be 3-storeys in height but I am satisfied that, in the round, those dwellings will be predominantly 2-storeys in character including from the external Site boundaries and road frontages. Notwithstanding the infringements of the building height standard proposed, the dwellings will not seem unusually or excessively scaled.

- iv. The balance of the buildings will be and will exhibit a 2-storey built form character and include a variety of attached buildings ranging from duplex units to longer terraced housing rows.
- v. The proposal infringes the zone front yard standard, in relation to retaining walls associated with creating flat outdoor living spaces on sloping land. In my opinion the yard infringements, noting I would have preferred an outcome whereby the retaining walls were in each case no greater than 1m, will not create visual dominance of other effects that would diminish the openness or pleasantness of the street. These will be well-overlooked, visually-interesting, and pedestrian-orientated.
- vi. The dwellings along Compass Point Way (Units 23-41) all infringe the front yard setback and this is in my opinion generally unhelpful from the point of view of seeking to achieve a suburban-character street rather than an urban-character street. The extent of the infringement is 0.5m, and will not be significantly different to what a hypothetical fully-compliant alternative would present with. But in any event I consider that any adverse effects on the planned character here will be at worst minor, and be acceptable, because:
 - i. The front yard is clear of any vehicle crossings and this allows a consistent and high-quality landscaped frontage and setback to still be achieved.
 - ii. The dwellings are only 2-storeys in height here and the infringement will not give rise to any particular dominance or other 'urban' rather than 'suburban' character effects on the quality of the street.
 - iii. The nature of the street frontage on this side of the street (noting that 84 Compass Point Way has a triangular and 'point' front boundary next to the Site) is that it is free of any particular setback precedent or other pattern that might highlight the yard infringement proposed, including because on the southern side of the street solid front walls and tall fences make the true extent of building setback on that side difficult to confirm as well.
- vii. The proposal does not comply with the zone impervious surface, and landscaped area standards. I am not concerned by these noting that the proposal includes JOAL 2, a service lane. This has been included – despite unflatteringly diminishing the proposal's impervious surface and landscaped area statistics, because it allows a far superior quality of outcome along Pigeon Mountain Road and the internal JOAL 5 frontage lane. It would have been possible to pursue an alternative outcome that

allowed much of the JOAL 2 area to be open landscaped area, but it would have resulted in what I consider the inferior and less desirable outcome. I do not consider pursuing compliance for its own sake as justified where in circumstances such as this it could encourage an inferior solution.

viii. The proposal otherwise has an obviously and characteristically residential look and feel, and there is spaciousness around and between the various buildings proposed.

- 6.6 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to its suburban built character. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been successfully and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings.

the development should achieve an attractive and safe outcome for the street.

- 6.7 This topic relates to policy H4.3(3) and development standards H4.6.7 (yards), H4.6.10 (landscaped area), and H4.6.14 (fences and walls).
- 6.8 The proposal in my opinion will result in a suburban-character streetscape that will be well-overlooked, activated and enlivened, visually attractive, and safe. My key reasons for this conclusion are:
- a. The proposal avoids any vehicle crossings along the street to dwellings, although in fairness the existing slope would make this not possible anyway along most of the Pigeon Mountain Road frontage and all of Ara Tai. But in summary no dwelling will be visually dominated by garage doors, car parking spaces or manoeuvring areas.
- b. All public streets will be overlooked by habitable room windows, and in the case of Units 2-23, persons using the elevated outdoor living spaces as well. In my opinion a high degree of passive surveillance, and over and above that activation, will result.
- c. Front doors to all dwellings facing a street are visually obvious and directly accessible from the street, and I am particularly supportive of the initiative to provide new public footpaths to Units 2-14 along the top of Ara Tai rather than taking the 'easy' option of just treating it as a more passive 'back' (although the Council has not been supportive of an additional footpath within the reserve so this will be an informal means of access only).

- d. I refer to earlier observations as to the unfortunate height of some retaining walls but that these will be acceptable subject to slight refinement of front fence heights. These will not visually dominate or compromise the visual quality of the streets.
- e. Front yards are to be fairly extensively landscaped, and an on-site waste management strategy has been prepared avoiding the cluttering of streets with permanent bin storage.
- f. I note that because of the natural incline of the slope, public pedestrian access to several dwellings (notably 2-23) will not be possible without the use of stairs. Access to these dwellings would still be possible, but not via the identified 'front'. In my opinion this is reasonably unavoidable and does not of itself create an urban design effect of particular concern.
- g. I consider that overall, the urban design quality of the street edge on all three public street sides will be substantially enhanced as a result of the proposal, and I regard this improvement as a positive urban design effect.
- h. Most dwellings along Compass Point Way (Units 24-40) all infringe the front yard setback and this is in my opinion unhelpful from the point of view of seeking to achieve a suburban-character street rather than an urban-character street. The street frontage will be visually interesting, well-landscaped, and pleasant. The front yard infringements will not compromise pedestrian amenity or the quality of the street.
- i. In terms of internal site circulation, the 'loop' proposed is logical although it is an irregular solution created largely by the Site's internal dimensions. Specifically:
 - i. JOALs 1 and 2 are east-west, rear / service lanes. They provide no pedestrian thoroughfare or access for the public to any front door. This is a very conventional, and unremarkable, element of the design although **I recommend the addition of threshold treatments at the intersections of these JOALs and the north-south link from Compass Point Road to JOAL 5 so as to better differentiate the north-south (public) accessway from the east west (private) ones. My preference would also be for JOALs 1 and 2 to be narrowed at the intersection as much as is possible also.**
 - ii. JOAL 5 is a 'frontage' JOAL that provides public / pedestrian access to dwellings. It connects to Pigeon Mountain Road at its eastern end. This is, overall, well overlooked and features dedicated pedestrian footpaths and landscaped area on each side. Retaining walls up to 1.5m in height are proposed along the southern side of the pedestrian footpath, and this is a regrettable outcome. I considered whether it would be appropriate to narrow the JOAL width, reduce landscaping within it, and providing an additional 1m horizontal space to allow the retaining walls to

become stepped. **Overall I was not convinced that this would offer a material public amenity benefit, and subject to semi-permeable fences along the top of the walls being reduced from 1.2m to 1m in height (for Units 41-58), these will be acceptable noting also that the walls are to be of keystone rather than timber.**

- iii. JOAL 4 (north), is a long east-west section of lane that provides access as a de-facto rear-lane to Units 2-23. No dwellings front this section of lane although it will nonetheless be fairly well overlooked and the landscape plan indicates landscape planting to separate driveways and provide visual mitigation to users (passengers or drivers within vehicles). This has been designed to promote one-way circulation.
 - iv. JOAL 3, is a frontage lane. This JOAL includes car parking spaces integrated into the lane space, with landscaping provided periodically to break up the continuity of the parking spaces.
 - j. For all of the above accessway frontages, I am satisfied that an acceptable solution has been proposed.
 - k. Overall, on-site circulation and public access will be legible and safe from an urban design perspective.
- 6.9 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to the way in which the proposal relates to the street. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been successfully and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings, and the recommendations made in this report.

the development should maintain reasonable sunlight access and privacy and minimise visual dominance effects on adjoining sites

- 6.10 This topic relates to policy H4.3(4) and development standards H4.6.4 (maximum building height), H4.6.5 (height in relation to boundary), H4.6.7 (yards), H4.6.11 (outlook space), and H4.6.14 (fences and walls).
- 6.11 In my opinion the proposal will maintain reasonable sun and daylight access and visual privacy for adjoining sites, and adequately minimise visual dominance effects on them. In a cumulative sense, I also consider that the overall amenity value effects of the development on adjoining sites (and users of those sites) will be appropriate and consistent with the AUP: OP expectations for development in the zone. My key reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. For neighbours to the south (up-slope across Compass Point Way, typically 2m+ higher than the Site), and east (across Pigeon Mountain Road), the proposal will be sufficiently separated by the width of the public street, and presented in a manner and with sufficient visual quality, that any adverse effects would be less than minor.
- b. I do not consider that any neighbour to the north, across Ara Tai within the local centre, would be adversely affected by the proposal.
- c. The only direct neighbours that could be potentially affected by the proposal are to the west of the Site, being 76-84 Compass Point Way:
 - i. Perhaps because the historic use of the Site was as a lower-intensity education facility, many of these neighbours have orientated large windows and balconies on their eastern side so as to maximise views across the Site to the valley around to the coast. This is a configuration of what I would describe as 'borrowed' amenity.
 - ii. But notwithstanding my opinion that neighbours have no entitlement for continued outlook and views that they are deriving from a different person's Site, this is a matter that I have observed being approached inconsistently by decision makers. At times private views across private land have been treated as if they were fundamentally protected. This makes it a very difficult matter to give professional advice on.
 - iii. As a result, my approach is that where a Site is being 'borrowed' by other persons for views and outlook, if it is possible to retain this without compromising the objectives of the developer, it is usually simpler to do so.
 - iv. In this instance there are existing retaining walls along parts of the boundary and to accommodate workable vehicular access gradients along the JOALs, there is a need for excavation associated with Units 41, 79-86, 88, and 2, between 1m – 4m.
 - v. In working through the various options, I have come to agree with concentrating the excavation on the western boundary, resulting in between 4m – 5m in total retained depth in places between the existing and new (stepped) walls. This offers what I consider to be a quite rare opportunity to effectively 'hide' the scale and intensity of the proposal from neighbours, and allow most existing views to be retained above the new buildings and out across the Site. In my opinion this is the optimum strategy to maintain the existing amenities of neighbours and it will by the same token not give rise to visual privacy or overlooking, visual dominance, or loss of daylight / creation of shadow effects.

- vi. This is a very unusual outcome and I record that were it not for the particular configuration of windows and decks on adjoining neighbours' sites, I would have been less likely to support it.
 - vii. Unit 40 infringes the SHiRB standard and complies with the AHiRB standard. The top south-western corner of the top floor of the unit infringes the standard. The neighbouring site at 84 Compass Point Way is triangular-shaped noting that the road bends to the north-west at that point. The infringement in this respect falls on a narrow bottom corner of the Site where its effects will not materially impact on the existing neighbouring dwelling or its outdoor space. **Although I do not consider any adverse effect of concern is likely, including because immediately adjacent to Unit 41 (on its north side) is the open space void of the rear service lane that will provide a more-than-compensatory opportunity for daylight and morning sun to access to neighbouring site, if required a privacy louvre could be readily affixed to the north-western-most bedroom window on Unit 41's top floor to avoid any potential privacy effect at all.**
 - viii. I have also considered effects on the neighbouring sites that could occur as a result of the maximum building height and all other standard infringements proposed and have concluded that any adverse effects arising would not compromise the amenity of neighbouring sites or create adverse effects of any particular concern on any party.
- d. For all other persons living on land adjacent to the Site, I am satisfied that the scale and intensity of the proposal coupled with the setback distances that would apply, and the screening that intervening buildings and vegetation would provide, will be sufficient to ensure that any adverse effects would be less than minor.
- 6.12 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to daylight, visual privacy and visual dominance (and overall amenity values) on adjoining sites. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been successfully and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings.

the development should meet the day-to-day needs of residents, including usable and accessible outdoor living space

- 6.13 This topic relates to policies H4.3(5), H4.3(6) and H4.3(10), and development standards H4.6.7 (yards), H4.6.8 (maximum impervious surface), H4.6.11 (outlook space), H4.6.12 (daylight), H4.6.13 (outdoor living space), H4.6.15 (minimum dwelling size).
- 6.14 In my opinion, the proposal will achieve an acceptable standard of on-site amenity that meets the needs of residents and provides them with an appropriate amount of usable outdoor living space. My key reasons for this conclusion are:
- a. All dwellings have outdoor living spaces that connect directly to principal living rooms and have suitable solar access.
 - b. Many outdoor living spaces do front a street or a publicly accessible space. However in this instance because of the slope of the ground, these spaces are generally elevated (up to 1.5m) relative to the adjacent public or publicly accessible footpath and this will maintain privacy and amenity for users of the outdoor living spaces.
 - c. Outdoor living spaces meet, or often frequently exceed, the zone standard. But for several a minimum of 18m² has been proposed. But for the remainder of the dwellings, the space provided will be acceptable noting that there are Esplanade Reserves and other public open spaces within a convenient walk of the Site. I also note that several units have separate provision provided for bin and waste storage, and can also accommodate bicycle parking on the opposite side of the units (adjacent to the car parking spaces). For all of the above, the presence of secondary or additional spaces helps to mitigate the extent of principal outdoor living space provided.
 - d. The Site is otherwise laid out legibly such that residents will have an unambiguous understanding of what is their space and what is not. Suitable provision has been made for the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, and for the most part pedestrian pathways do not involve vehicles crossing over them.
 - e. I note that a draft lighting plan has been prepared and this will ensure safe night time use, and also that a good-standard of on-site landscaping has been proposed that will provide on-site visual amenity.
 - f. I have no concerns with the outlook space provided for units in terms of orientation, depth and width. All occupants will have ready access to a spacious-feeling view, and many will have varying degrees of views to the coast.

- g. For Units 79-86, and noting that these dwellings have been substantially excavated into the slope, I am satisfied that although unusual, no on-site amenity effects of concern will arise. Specifically:
 - i. If the lower / new excavation / retaining had been aligned with the actual building wall itself, which is common and typically is not of any interest to the Council, then there would no opportunity for any west-facing windows or service-court use at all. Similarly if the units were of an apartment style with a communal access hallway or breezeway along the western side, which is also a very common, small or no windows would be provide and an outcome comparable or inferior to the proposal would result.
 - ii. The west-facing outlook at the ground floor provides only for a small kitchen window and a back door, and a laundry room. Neither of these is needed to achieve any particular quality of outlook noting the rooms are open plan, with principal windows at the opposite end with the front door and outdoor living space.
 - iii. The ground floors will comply, I am advised, with the daylight requirements of the Building Act and in any event, if needed the back doors could be made of opaque glass to provide more daylight.

- 6.15 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to on-site amenity. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been adequately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings, and proposed landscaping.

multi-unit buildings should be designed in a manner that manages the effects of building design and appearance

- 6.16 This topic relates to policies H.4.3(2) and H4.3(3). There are no rules in the zone that relate to attractiveness and visual quality, although the underlying consent requirement for integrated residential development and restriction of discretion H4.8.1(2) is relevant.
- 6.17 In my opinion, the proposal will achieve an acceptably articulated built form solution that mitigates the potential visual effects of the proposed development's scale, and will positively contribute to the visual amenity of the neighbourhood. My key reasons for this conclusion are:
- a. The proposed buildings have been modulated and articulated. The facades will have a sufficient total depth that will avoid any adverse

effects associated with blank walls, and allow shadows to contribute to their visual interest throughout the day.

- b. The buildings have an obvious and appropriately proportioned roof form, and an obviously 'residential' aesthetic.
 - c. The cladding materials used are familiar and well-suited for residential developments within a residential neighbourhood.
 - d. A high-quality landscape plan has been prepared and this will provide visual amenity as well as screening / softening to the buildings.
 - e. Owing to the limited scale of the proposal, I do not consider there to be a need to impose conditions of consent requiring Council certification of a material palette at the time of building consent.
- 6.18 On the basis of the above, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects relating to the building's appearance and visual / neighbourhood amenity. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been successfully and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings.

overall urban design merit

- 6.19 In light of the above analyses, I have turned my mind to a cumulative and overall assessment of urban design merit.
- 6.20 The proposal presents an appropriate design for the Site and in light of the zone provisions that apply I consider the proposal to be at the more yield-intensive end of what could be expected and this includes what I would describe as a purposeful 'bushing at the boundaries' of the zone standards, reflected in the various infringements proposed. It is nonetheless in line with the overall scale, intensity and character of built form outcomes envisaged by the AUP: OP in my opinion.
- 6.21 The proposal will have at worst minor adverse effects on the character of the neighbourhood and, less than minor adverse effects on any identifiable person including, in particular, users of neighbouring sites. Although the proposal is for a substantial change to the Site, it will occur in a neighbourhood where a variety of development types, scales and forms exist such that the proposal will not jarringly stand-out or seem alien.

- 6.22 On the basis of the above and overall, subject to the applicable restrictions of discretion, and having regard to the applicable standards for permitted activities, I consider that:
- a. In terms of consent merit, the proposal includes a number of positive and adverse urban design effects. Adverse urban design effects have in my view been successfully and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the design decisions that have been made to place and shape the buildings, and the recommendations made in this report.

7. conclusions

- 7.1 This report documents an independent analysis of an application for 87 x generally 2-storey residential dwellings and associated subdivision prepared for HND HMB Ltd on an area of Mixed Housing Suburban-zoned land at 3 Pigeon Mountain Road, Half Moon Bay. The application has been made to Auckland Council under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) in terms of the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) “**AUP: OP**”. The key conclusions of this report are that:
- a. The proposal responds reasonably reasonably logically to the site’s context and will positively contribute to the quality of the street noting the unusual extent and slope of part of the road reserve on the Site’s northern side. The proposal will be markedly different to, but acceptably compatible with, the existing neighbourhood character and also the planned suburban character of the zone including by way of massing the dwellings along Pigeon Mountain Road as a series of 2-storey duplexes and triplexes that are comparable in scale and intensity to the existing dwellings within that street. The proposal has demonstrated that buildings of the scale and intensity proposed can be accommodated without compromising the amenity values of neighbouring sites, the street, or the neighbourhood.
 - b. The proposed buildings have been acceptably modulated so as to mitigate potential urban design effects related to their bulk, mass and scale. The proposal infringes numerous zone standards including building for building height, Standard Height in Relation to Boundary (“**SHiRB**”), and front yard. The architectural response is to maximise the Site’s capability to accommodate unit yield and although proposed retaining walls are more extensive and taller than I would prefer, I consider that these infringements will both individually and collectively not result in concerning or problematic effects on the environment or any person.
 - c. The visual appearance of the buildings is adequately varied and includes a successful mixture of materials, colours, surface planes and building volumes, and roof profiles. The quality of the buildings is in my opinion commensurate to their visual prominence. The expression of the

development in blocks of no more than 8 dwellings assists in achieving this balance.

- d. The design and layout of the units will provide for adequate internal functionality. On site amenity space will be acceptable, and otherwise raises no adverse urban design effects of concern noting that the proposal does not meet the building coverage, impervious surface, landscaped area, and outdoor living space standards as matters of discretion and assessment.
- e. Adjacent residential amenity will be maintained including because of the way the proposal is massed within the Site and in particular because of generous setbacks from boundaries often well in excess of the zone yard standard. The overall scale of the buildings, and in addition the zone standard infringements, will have adverse effects on the occupants of the neighbouring properties but those effects will be acceptable and less than minor.
- f. Overall, the proposal will result in a number of positive and adverse urban design effects on the environment. Adverse effects will in my opinion be less than minor on the environment or any person. In consideration of the scale and characteristics of development signalled via the zone development standards, adverse effects will in my view be acceptable.
- g. In reaching the above conclusions I have considered each of the restricted discretionary activity consents required in terms of the restrictions of discretion that apply to each one, and the overall cumulative effects that could result from all of the consents required together.

7.2 Consent could be granted on urban design grounds subject to the recommendations outlined in this report.