

# Drury Metropolitan Centre Fast-track

Auckland Council Specialist Memo

**Annexure 15:**

**Landscape**

**David Ferrari**

**11 August 2025**

# Landscape Memo

**Prepared by:** David Ferrari, Principal Landscape Architect, Tāmaki Makaurau Design Ope,  
Auckland Council

**Date:** 11 August 2025

## **Qualifications and Relevant Experience**

1. I hold the qualification(s) of Bachelor of Architectural Studies Maj. Landscape Architecture, and Master of Landscape Architecture and have 10 years of experience in Landscape Architecture (design) and Landscape Character Assessment.
2. I am a member of the NZILA (Tuia Pito Ora, New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects). I have prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for resource consent applications, notices of requirement for designation and fast-track applications including Resource Consent hearings.

## **Code of Conduct**

3. I confirm that I have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (**Code**) and have complied with it in the preparation of this memorandum. I also agree to follow the Code when participating in any subsequent processes, such as expert conferencing, directed by the Panel. I confirm that the opinions I have expressed are within my area of expertise and are my own, except where I have stated that I am relying on the work or evidence of others, which I have specified.

## **Specialist Assessment**

4. List of documents reviewed:
  - Assessment of Environmental Effects 'Drury Metropolitan Centre Stages 1 and 2' prepared by Barkers & Associates, dated 25th March 2025
  - Appendix 5 – Proposed Draft Conditions
  - Appendix 6 – Architectural Drawings (Parts 1-5), prepared by Ignite dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (including revisions under s67)
  - Appendix 7 – Landscape Design Report, prepared by Boffa Miskell, dated March 2025 (including revisions under s67)
  - Appendix 8 – Subdivision Scheme Plans Stage 1 and 2, prepared by Woods, dated 20 March 2025 (including revisions under s67)
  - Appendix 9 – Engineering Drawings (Parts 1-3), prepared by Woods, dated 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025
  - Appendix 10 – Infrastructure Report, prepared by Woods, dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025
  - Appendix 14 – Urban Design Assessment, prepared by Barkers & Associates, dated 26th Feb 2025
  - Appendix 21 – Rules Assessment, prepared by Barkers & Associates, dated 25th March 2025
  - Appendix 34 – Drury-Opaheke Structure Plan 2019

- Appendix 35 – Objectives and Policies, prepared by Barkers & Associates, dated 25th March 2025
- Appendix 36 – Pre-application Meeting Minutes for Upgrades to Waihoehoe Road, prepared by Barkers & Associates, dated 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024

### **Scope and Limitations**

5. Though a specific Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment (LVEA) has not been provided as part of this Fast Track application, I rely on the Assessment of Environmental Effects prepared by Barker & Associates Limited (dated 25 March 2025) regarding the following matters which have been considered in this review. This reflects accepted current NZILA practice<sup>1</sup> and Council's information requirements for the assessment of landscape and visual effects, though it should be noted that not all criteria below are relevant to this fast-track application due to underlying AUP zoning and the anticipated development for this area.

- Methodology statement and terms of reference including identification of any assumptions made
- Description of the landscape character and attributes of the locality and site
- Identification of statutory matters relevant to the assessment including shared landscape value
- Complete description of the proposed development
- Identification of the viewing catchment and viewing audience
- Assessment of landscape change and consequential effects
- Assessment of visual effects, possibly including analysis of representative viewpoints
- Assessment of landscape and natural character effects
- Assessment of the proposal against relevant statutory criteria
- Any mitigation measures and/or recommendations

6. It should be noted that some application documentation reviewed within this fast-track consent application does not contain a sufficient level of detail that would be otherwise expected for an application of this scale with respect to the typical level of information required as a Resource Consent with Auckland Council.

### **Matters for review**

7. The proposal is for a fast-track application and is for a non-complying activity under the AUP.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

8. The site is approximately 48.4 hectares primarily located within the Business – Metropolitan Centre and Business – Mixed Use Zone, and subject to the Drury Centre Precinct, sub-precincts A and C. Development within the area is therefore expected to be rapidly different to the current characteristics of the site, the vegetated and natural patterning, and topographical setting as this site, and the surrounding area undergoes significant change, anticipated by the AUP zoning and underlying precinct.
9. This review will focus on Stage 2 of the Drury Metropolitan Centre Project and its relation to meeting the objectives and policies of the AUP zoning, and underlying precinct.

### **Assessment and Recommendations**

#### **Existing Environment and Key Features**

10. Development within the area is expected to be rapidly different to the current characteristics of the site, the vegetated and natural patterning, and topographical setting as this site, and the surrounding area, undergoes significant change, anticipated by the AUP zoning and underlying precinct. Key features to note prior to development occurring is the rolling pastoral grass fields, small gully formations angled toward the western edge and Hingaia Stream, pockets of remnant wetland of low-quality line Hingaia Stream, with mature treed areas on the surrounding parcels of land in shelterbelt and clustered formations.
11. It should be noted that the Stage 1 bulk earthworks are nearing completion which paints a stark contrast to the landform characteristics with Stage 2. Stage 1 is completely flat with a gentle grade applied to this sloping toward the north, northwest. Stage 2 earthworks are proposed to tie into Stage 1 with a continued gentle slope toward the north and northwest. As an expected outcome due to the Stage 1 earthworks this substantial earthwork modification is at odds with the Drury Centre Precinct objectives and policies<sup>2</sup> which sought to utilise landform as a way in which to reinforce and create a sense of place.
12. The surrounding characteristics of the adjacent sites include mature treed areas in either shelterbelt formations or large clusters, visible open paddocks and large residential dwellings with accessory farming buildings and character. However notably, this is zoned as either Business - Mixed Use Zone, or FUZ with the Drury Centre Sub-Precincts overlaid.
13. The Hunua Ranges provides an eastern backdrop to the subject site and surrounding area, visibly rising over the flatter plains.

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<sup>2</sup> I450 Drury Centre Precinct - I450.2.3 and I450.3.3.9 (a)

### Bulk, Scale, Massing + Height

14. Overall, the proposed bulk, scale, massing, and variation in building heights proposed as part of this fast-track development is generally supported from a landscape character perspective, aligning with the AUP zoning and precinct provisions.
15. Additional height is enabled by the metropolitan centre zone, and Drury centre precinct that would otherwise be favourable to the application with inclusion of well-considered residential intensification (apartments) as required by the Precinct policies <sup>3</sup> to supplement the current variety of retail (including large format), commercial, recreational, and community facilities and the proximity of the site to public transport (Drury Station, nearing completion), and SH1.
16. This would further unlock the proposal and align stronger with the precinct provisions to have further intensification of residential living located in proximity to public transport and centre facilities comprising of the retail, commercial, community, and recreational areas proposed in this application.

### Visual Dominance + Shadowing

17. Despite the view that further height could be explored through residential intensification (apartments) the proposal, as currently designed, provides for a variety of well-considered height variation, length of buildings, and block work that suitably manages visual dominance (from a bulk and massing perspective).
18. With the use of podium landscapes in larger building footprints, interplayed with height and architectural quality with recesses (shadowing), glazing, patterning, and material and colour use within the façade's of these proposed buildings, illustrates visual interest and high quality, ensuring dominance effects are minimised
19. Shadowing to the central open spaced area appears to be minimal, with evening summer and winter solar aspects causing effects on open space areas, based on the arrangement of building types, heights, and use that make use of peak flows and occupation, largely within the central stormwater/wetland filtration basin in the central portion of the site (despite this being in private ownership).
20. The relationship between the proposed restoration and activation of Hingaia Stream is a hugely positive aspect to the proposal allowing future visitors and residences in the immediate area to engage with this area. Buildings along this reserve are set back,

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<sup>3</sup> I450 Drury Centre Precinct - I450.3.3.9 (a)

however with the elevation difference, there may be adverse solar affects during the morning in both summer and winter.

#### Arrival Experience / Character (SH1 new off-ramp)

21. The proposed carparking strategy with the quantity and location is generally supported, however a careful and considered approach is required to be sensitive to the recreational and restorative qualities of Hingaia Stream, and the entrance and arrival experience from SH1 and Te Ara Hingaia Rd (Road 2).
22. The proposed façade treatment of both carparking buildings located in LOT D and LOT A, will need to be of a visual quality that heightens the experiential aspects relating to the sense of arrival as this will be one of the predominant ways in which people will be first experiencing the Drury Centre, making this arrival experience and important gateway to the development.
23. The façade design and treatment needs to hold the same quality as those buildings within the key retail and food/beverage areas to provide visual interest, interplay of shadowing/recesses, and use of patterning, material, colour, and aural screening elements to effectively manage adverse dominance effects to the recreational experience of Hingaia Stream, and arrival experience for visitors to the centre.
24. The architecture plans for this built response is considered more of an overview of what is to potentially be built, and lacks the information required generally of what would be otherwise expected at a Resource Consent level. The material images assist with understanding these treatments however as these buildings are quite long in elevation, it is essential to get the detailing right.
25. As such, a recommended consent condition to provide further information at a developed design stage would be crucial to ensure effects are managed and design outcomes are achieved both from the applicant, and Council in a collaborative manner. This condition would seek further information pertaining to the façade detailing of the carparking building components within Lot D and Lot A at a similar level and details that would be otherwise included in a traditional Resource Consent application.

#### Landscape Design + Mana Whenua (Cultural Opportunities)

26. The Landscape Design Report prepared by Boffa Miskell provides a high-level overview of the intention and integration of the proposal to stitch the proposed built fabric to craft a sense of place and compliment the proposed activity types across the Drury Centre. The landscape design (aside from the Hingaia Stream restoration works) will be a highly

modified environment and urban in its context relating to the Business – Metropolitan Centre zoning, noting that all existing features of the site (largely landform related) will be reimagined as flat plains, with minor grade change (toward the Stormwater Wetland).

27. The Landscape Design Report provides a series of intentions for areas including planting, lighting, streetscape typologies, public/open space typologies, and cultural design context, but lacks any detail that you would expect at a general Resource Consent level and has been illustrated as more of a Design Guidance document.
28. The design report illustrates these intentions in a manner that is clear and concise without providing intimate detailing on moments or interventions key that would otherwise be key public interfaces in the centre contributing to a sense of place.
29. The Stormwater Wetland and Food / Beverage Promenade will be the heart of the development which seeks to celebrate narratives from mana whenua as well as other key nodal points identified in this document. This is highly supportable approach to daylighting streams, managing stormwater, and crafting a public occupational response and interaction (despite being managed privately by the developer). The private ownership of this asset and the management of this would be a key driver in creating a successful heart and sense of place that facilitates the centre and food/beverage promenade.
30. Despite discussion that mana whenua has been and are continued to be engaged with, the lack of detail regarding co-design opportunities outside of those identified areas within the landscape masterplan at key nodal points, is an unfortunate weak aspect of the proposal at this stage. It is understood that co-design opportunities within the landscape and built form would be advantageous to creating a sense of place within the built fabric with a play on narrative design incorporated into building facades or as far as internal layouts subject to the type. It is highly recommended that co-design opportunities are explored further, and not just within the on-ground landscape areas.

## **Proposed Conditions**

### Proposed Draft Conditions

31. The proposed conditions pertaining to landscape design and landscape character and amenity effects have been identified as the following;
  - Condition 24\*
  - Condition 25\*
  - Condition 26\*
  - Condition 27
  - Condition 30\*

- Condition 83
- Condition 84

*\*require the need for finalised Architecture and Landscape drawings for certification from Council prior to lodgement of Building Consent.*

32. In general, these pertain to traditional conditions included in a Resource Consent decision that would be otherwise sought.
33. However, it is noted that the Architecture and Landscape design sets reviewed as part of this Fast Track application are less detailed than what would otherwise form a traditional Resource Consent application, particularly from an application that holds a technical non-complying activity status.
34. Therefore, additional consent conditions to ensure effects are managed early in the design phases for this application are sought. This is discussed in greater detail in paragraphs 4.6 – 4.11 below.

#### Recommended Changes to Proposed Conditions

35. I propose the following minor change to Condition 26 illustrated in red;

[26] *At the time of building consent lodgement for buildings approved in this consent, the consent holder must provide to the Council for certification, a finalised set of landscape design drawings and supporting written documentation which have been prepared by a NZILA Registered Landscape Architect, or NZILA Registered Landscape Architecture Firm suitably qualified and experienced professional. The information must be consistent with the Landscape Design Report prepared by Boffa Miskell, dated March 2025. At a minimum, this information must include landscape design drawings, specifications and maintenance requirements including:*

*(a) Annotated planting plans which communicate the proposed location and extent of all areas of planting;*

*(b) Annotated planting plans which communicate the proposed location and extent of all areas of riparian planting in accordance with Appendix 16 Guideline for native revegetation plantings in the AUP;*

*(c) Annotated cross-sections and/or design details with key dimensions to illustrate that adequate widths and depths are provided for any planter boxes and garden beds;*



*(d) A plant schedule based on the submitted planting plan(s) which detail specific plant species, plant sourcing, the number of plants, height and/or grade (litre)/Pb size at time of planting, and estimated height/ canopy spread at maturity;*

*(e) Details of draft specification documentation for any specific drainage, soil preparation, tree pits, staking, irrigation and mulching requirements;*

*(f) An annotated pavement plan and related specifications, detailing proposed site levels and the materiality and colour of all proposed hard surfacing;*

*(g) An annotated furniture plan and related specifications which confirm the location and type of all seats, bins, lights, fences, walls and other structural landscape design elements; and*

*(h) A landscape maintenance plan and/or report for a minimum period of five years and related drawings and specifications for all aspects of the finalised landscape design, including in relation to the following requirements:*

*(i) Irrigation and fertilisation;*

*(ii) Weed control;*

*(iii) Plant replacement;*

*(iv) Inspection timeframes; and*

*(v) Contractor responsibilities.*

#### Recommended Additional Conditions

36. As discussed above, the architectural design set and landscape design report are less detailed than what would otherwise form a traditional Resource Consent application, which would therefore suggest proposed conditions 24, 25, and 26 are certainties for this application should it be accepted by the EPA.

37. However as there is great importance and emphasis on landscape character and amenity effects pertaining to visual dominance, placemaking, and a fine-grained focus on creating a successful centre, it is recommended an additional step in the developed design process is adopted as conditions that would otherwise 'make-up' for the lack of robust information in the current set.

38. This would therefore lead to conditions that sought developed design plans for each building, and/or lot-by-lot, and/or block-by-block basis for both architecture and landscape design to ensure that effects are continued to be appropriately managed, and aspirations from the applicant area captured and considered in a collaboration with Auckland Council.

39. The following illustrates the proposed conditions:

*Developed Design*

[x] *For each building approved in this consent, the consent holder must prepare a developed design set of architectural drawings and submit to Council for review and approval. The developed design must be provided to the Council 20 working days prior to the submission of any detailed architectural drawings as required under condition XXX, and must include the following:*

- (a) plans, elevations, materials schedule and preliminary specification;*
- (b) sample palette of materials, surface finishes, and colour schemes (including colour swatches); and*
- (c) any external rooftop services/plant, lift/stairwell structures and visual/ aural screening elements including 'green' infrastructure.*
- (d) Architectural Design Statement*
- (e) details of the location of all building and tenancy entrances accessible by the public*

*Advice Note:*

*The purpose of this condition is to establish a process where design review comments and recommendations are captured to ensure the desired outcomes are sought and secured. This is intended to be a collaboration between Council and consent holder.*

[x] *For each landscape design area, podium landscape (integrated with the building), feature, plaza, promenade, streetscape, access lots within stage 1, and/or areas outside buildings approved in this consent, the consent holder must prepare a developed design set of landscape drawings and submit to Council for review and approval. The developed design must be provided to the Council 20 working days prior to the submission of any detailed landscaping details as required under condition XXX, and must include the following:*

- (a) planting plan/s and summary plant schedule identifying species, grade, and species ratio mix (for planting mixes)*
- (b) hardscape/pavement plan/s, material schedule and preliminary specification for all hardscape elements and areas*
- (c) furniture and landscape element plan/s and details.*

*Advice Note:*

*The purpose of this condition is to establish a process where design review comments and recommendations are captured to ensure the desired outcomes are sought and secured. This is intended to be a collaboration between Council and consent holder.*

40. Both these recommended conditions would sit prior to Conditions 24, 25, and 26 outlined in the Proposed Conditions, as the suggested conditions are for an earlier design iteration to ensure effects-based concerns are managed within this early design phase.
41. I confirm citing Auckland Council's Urban Design Specialist, Chris Butler's recommendations and proposed conditions and I support these from a landscape architecture and assessment perspective.