

Drury Metropolitan Centre Fast-track

Auckland Council Specialist Memo

Annexure 14:

Urban Design

Chris Butler

11 August 2025

Urban Design Memo

Prepared by: Chris Butler, Team Leader Urban Design, Tamaki Makaurau Design Office, Auckland Council

Date: 11 August 2025

1. This memo provides a review of the urban design aspects of Stage 1 (residential subdivision) and Stage 2 of the Drury Metropolitan Centre Fast Track Application. The application has been made to an Expert Consenting Panel under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 ('FTAA') and in terms of the Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) 'AUP:OP'.

Qualifications and Relevant Experience

2. I hold the qualification(s) of Bachelor of Arts, Masters of Planning Practice (Hons.) and Masters of Urban Design from the University of Auckland, and have over 18 years of experience as an urban designer.
3. I have prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for resource consent applications, plan changes and fast-track applications, and have appeared as an expert witness before consent authorities and the Environment Court on multiple occasions.

Code of Conduct

4. 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

5. The following information has been reviewed for this assessment:
 - 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 10th 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 21st February 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 5th November 2024

Introduction

6. Having reviewed all application material and considered the relevant provisions of the AUP:OP, I consider the planning outcomes and environmental effects relevant to urban design can be synthesized into the following topic headings:
 - Street network and urban block structure
 - Open space provision and response to natural features
 - Built Form, scale, massing and appearance
 - Commercial and retail development
 - Residential development

Street network and urban block structure

7. The blocks and street pattern of the Drury metropolitan centre are laid out in the form of a loosely connected street grid which I would describe as coherent and responsive to the planned land use pattern. The roading layout is broadly consistent with the Drury Centre precinct plan 2 which outlines the structuring elements of the centre. Where the site layout does diverge from the Precinct Plan, this is typically associated with site constraints, including topography; alignment of the SH1 off ramp; and in the management of stormwater / open space. Key moves that have informed the site organisation are clearly explained on pages 5 and 6 in the Landscape Design Report prepared by Boffa Miskell. I agree with this analysis.
8. Proposed block lengths generally range between 130m-180m. I am satisfied that within the site, the general grain of the block pattern will enable a walkable centre and good connectivity to the future Drury Train Station. These outcomes are consistent with policies 5, 7 and 10 of the Drury Centre Precinct.
9. Notably within Stage 2 of the application, there is no formed legal road(s) connecting the subject site to large mixed use / Drury Centre landholdings abutting the eastern site boundary. This is despite an indicative Collector Road (in the general vicinity of Station Road), being clearly identified on Drury Centre: Precinct plan 3. The length of the eastern boundary of Stage 2 is approximately 400m. This is a significant departure from the typical block lengths found within the site and described above.
10. The lack of a road connection along this boundary has the potential to be a significant barrier to accessibility of the Metropolitan Centre and public amenities such as the train station, aquatic centre, and library from land holdings in sub precinct C of the Drury Centre. It also has

implications for the continuation of a logical and efficient block structure east of the subject site. My understanding from reading the application material, is that there are no design / site constraints to delivering a road connection(s) to the eastern site boundary.

11. The applicant has provided a 'break' in Lot K to establish a future connection, however this will not be formed as a public road and currently serves as the entry to the JOALs serving live-work residential units in Lot k.
12. It is recommended that Road 6 be fully formed and extended to the eastern site boundary as part of this fast-track application to provide certainty for neighbouring landowners. It is also recommended that a second road connection occur further south within Lot K between Road 11 and Road 13. Refer to **Figure 1** attached to this memo.
13. In addition to the street network, Blocks A, B and E also provide pedestrian accessways which will strengthen walkability in the centre and support connectivity to large car parking areas and open space areas within the centre. Whilst well intentioned, the covered pedestrian accessways will also create a series of challenging secondary frontage conditions for some retail lots in Stage 2. For example, a number of future buildings will have frontage to a street and a secondary frontage internally to the pedestrian accessway or car park.
14. This presents well documented challenges for retailers who typically prefer a single point of access to stores for security reasons. What this means in practice, is that stores may consider it more desirable to focus on opening up to the covered pedestrian accessways and 'turn their back to the street' by not providing access to the store and potentially using the street face of the store for advertising, signage or 'back of house' activities. This would negatively impact the visual quality and interest of streets; activation of the street; and opportunities for passive surveillance. These outcomes would be contrary to policies of the Drury Centre Precinct and general business centre zone provisions¹.
15. To ensure that building activation and engagement with the street is realised, it is recommended that a condition of consent require all lots that have frontages to both a street (public or private) and a covered pedestrian accessway or car park; ensure pedestrian access is provided to a store front door which opens out directly to the street during opening hours. This could be in addition to any secondary access which may be provided to that store from the covered pedestrian accessway or car park. Refer to **Figure 2** attached to this memo which identifies the affected lots.
16. With respect to the various streetscape typologies – these are broadly supported. The application proposes a mix of public and private roads. I acknowledge the concern raised by Auckland Transport (AT) as part of the s67 request - specifically, ensuring public access is maintained for public transport and emergency services along private roads. I agree with this concern and support further investigation of the merits of possible access easements (as proposed by AT). On the positive side, the inclusion of some private roads has provided opportunities for a more bespoke design and landscape finish than what may otherwise be enabled with a public road outcome. This is particularly evident through varied footpath widths, landscape berms and street furniture – subject to detailed design.

¹ I450.3(11)(a) and (b); H9.3(3)(b)

17. It is unclear from the information provided what the intent and final form of Road 11 is. The imagery provided in the architectural drawing package and the landscape design report (p.24) clearly convey a pedestrian oriented, low speed environment that minimises segregation between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. The engineering drawings don't reflect this vision, instead documenting a standard kerb and channel, surface treatment and separated planted berm and footpath like many other roads within the development. Given this street is intended to be a focus for pedestrian flow, activity, food and beverage outlets and a heightened user experience – this is seemingly a lost opportunity.
18. At the northern end of the site, the updated architectural drawings confirm that footpaths will not be continued to the northern site boundary along Flanagan Road. It is unclear what is proposed for this portion of Flanagan Road and who is being tasked with upgrading the street to ensure access and connectivity to Buildings H1 and H2 and the Drury Train Station. This is an area that would benefit from further clarity.
19. While streets have been designed to balance the needs of pedestrians, vehicles and landscaping, the inclusion of additional on street car parking opportunities particularly for the key retail street (Hotiki – Road 3) would in my view, have signalled a stronger endorsement for future retailers located along this 'key retail frontage' and supported the vibrancy of the main street with more people able to access the fronts of shops directly from adjoining on-street car parking. A recommendation to increase the number of on-street car parks on Road 3 has been included in this memo.

Open space provision and response to natural features

20. Open space provision for the Drury Town Centre is comprised of Valley Park (stormwater basin) and promenade; the town square; and Stream A riparian margins. Homestead Park as envisioned in the original masterplan and Drury Centre Precinct provisions will not be progressed. The reasons for this are outlined in section 5.3.2 of the Urban Design Assessment. I acknowledge concerns raised by Auckland Council Parks and Community facilities with respect to the non-delivery of Homestead Park or an alternative, suitably sized, primary recreation space in the Centre. I will leave further discussion of this aspect to the respective open space specialists.
21. I am satisfied that there is a good connection between open space and surrounding land uses including building definition 'or framing' of the space; generous glazed building edges; and suitable opportunities for passive surveillance and activation from a mix of activities bordering the open space. Valley Park includes street frontage on three sides ensuring there are good visual connections into the space.

Built Form, scale, massing and appearance

22. Overall, I am supportive of the building mix, scale and design quality proposed. Under Drury Sub-Precinct A the height limit extends to 72.5m. The application proposes a mix of buildings between 2 and 7 levels with a maximum height of 28m. While greater height would be a desirable outcome, I appreciate that the market will largely dictate how much height is realised. I also consider that a pragmatic - long term lens should be applied to how the proposal achieves the desired outcomes of a metropolitan centre given the developing greenfield context and comparable development challenges of other metropolitan centres in South Auckland (Manukau and Papakura). I understand that staging of the development will progress from the southern reaches of the site north towards the Drury train station.
23. This increasing graduation of height the closer you get to the train station, is logical and allows the centre time to establish and hopefully build greater height and activity mix in closer proximity to the train station over time. To this point, the ownership of the land by Kiwi Property – a long-term investor with a track record of mixed-use centre development – and guided by a site masterplan, should avoid the more damaging impacts of disjointed and fragmented land ownership, on securing coordinated development outcomes as evidenced in other greenfield areas of Auckland.
24. At a detailed level, the Precinct does direct that along Hotiki Road an appropriate level of definition and street enclosure is required with a building frontage of at least 8m in height². I am encouraged that this has been achieved with a minimum of two occupied building levels even at the southern end of Stage 2. I am satisfied that this will provide the scale, street enclosure and mix of uses necessary to support the visual quality and interest of streets.
25. The overall architectural narrative is positive and well-articulated. It is encouraging to see buildings designed to shape / define public space as well as create a sense of place through variation in scale, materials, articulation, roof lines etc. Glazing at ground levels has been relied on extensively to provide activation and passive surveillance, while the use of red brick has been used in many of the buildings in reference to the local history. These have been clearly described in the urban design assessment, and it is important that the design of these buildings continue this design language and story through detailed design and into construction.
26. There are a number of buildings for which the external design and appearance has not been as clearly articulated – perhaps understandable given the scale of the application. Examples include commercial buildings 63 and 39 in Lot E. The glass elements are illustrated as white with black line work offering very little detail for what is a taller building in a metropolitan Centre. The elevations also indicate building 63 is a multi-level commercial building and yet there is only one commercial floor plan provided.
27. With a more conventional consenting pathway, this building would be assessed as a separate application with a full suite of plans and likely referral through the Auckland Urban Design Panel. It is recommended that a full set of floor plans and detailed / coloured elevations are provided as a condition of consent.

² Assessment criteria I450.8.2(3)(d)(i)

28. There is a clear approach across both Stage 1 and 2 to internalise car parking (as much as practicable), and in Stage 2 at least, to 'sleeve' large footprint retail stores with smaller outward facing retail units to activate otherwise blank building edges. Te Ara Hingaia (Road 2) does have substantial surface level and multi-storey car parking buildings (Lots A and D). Whilst this does not align with the Metropolitan Centre zone (MCZ) or some of the widely understood principles of good urban design, I consider this to be a practical move aimed at balancing activity across the remainder of the site in a manner that minimizes the adverse effects of extensive car parking areas, and promotes walkable, active streets.
29. To minimize any adverse visual effects of this outcome on SH1 particular attention has been applied to articulating the facades of the car parking buildings which is supported. It is recommended that the details of this are provided through a condition of consent.

Commercial and retail development

30. It's not clear whether all buildings that address a key retail frontage include a continuous verandah canopy as per assessment criteria I450.8.(3)(d)(iii). This is a key building element intended to reinforce the primacy of this pedestrian route within the street hierarchy. It is recommended that all buildings located along a key retail frontage provide a verandah and that the details of this be provided as a condition of consent.
31. With respect to Lot C, there is no direct pedestrian crossing from Road 1 to the building entrance on Lot C which negatively impacts the ability for this site to integrate into the immediate context and provide travel options for users. This is particularly important given the large residential area proposed directly south of Road 1. It is recommended that a direct pedestrian path to the building entrance on Lot C be provided from the southern boundary of the lot. Refer to **Figure 3** for details of where this connection could be located.

Residential Development

32. The application includes some residential activities at ground level (notably Block J and Block K). The MCZ actively discourages residential at ground level as it tries to avoid reverse sensitivity affects and managing the often-conflicting outcomes of street activation and privacy that can be difficult to achieve for residential scenarios in commercial settings. I am broadly comfortable with the provision, location and extents of residential activity proposed in the application. The MCZ is large, and commercial realities will drive the extent and distribution of land use floor area. Given the proximity to the Drury train station (northern end of the site); adjacency of Valley Park - and the amenity and outlook afforded by this open space; and the integration with commercial and civic amenities, I am satisfied that the residential proposed will support a '24 hour' economy in the heart of the metropolitan centre.
33. Outside of the comprehensively designed residential and live work activities, the application also includes further subdivision of Stage 1 residential super lots. The subdivision of the super lots, will result in a number of rear lots and lots that are solely accessed via a JOAL. Given these JOALs will serve as the only access for deliveries, emergency services, visitors, the design of the JOAL and level of information required at subdivision stage, will be different to a JOAL that solely provides secondary access to vehicles only. For example, aspects such as lighting,

fencing, pedestrian footpaths and JOAL landscaping should all be comprehensively designed and considered up front for super lots where 'child lots' have sole frontage to a JOAL.

34. The Urban Design report includes examples from Vinegar Lane and Hobsonville Point illustrating possible outcomes for the Stage 1 vacant residential, lots, both of these developments were subject to detailed design guidance and design panels, neither of which is a feature of this application / consenting pathway. Given the relatively compact lot areas, inclusion of JOALs and vacant lot subdivision, it is recommended that future development of these lots be undertaken comprehensively to improve the likelihood of quality development outcomes.

Summary of recommendations

- a. It is recommended that Road 6 be fully formed and extended to the eastern site boundary. It is also recommended that a second road connection to the eastern site boundary of Stage 2 occurs further south within Lot k between Road 11 and Road 13. Refer to **Figure 1** attached to this memo.
- b. To ensure that building activation and engagement with the street is realised, it is recommended that a condition of consent require all lots that have a frontage to a street (public or private), ensure access is provided directly from the street to the store front during opening hours. This could be in addition to any secondary access which may be provided to that store from a covered pedestrian accessway or internal car park.
- c. It is recommended that further clarity is provided for who is responsible for the delivery of pedestrian footpaths at the northern end of Flanagan Road to ensure access and connectivity to Buildings H1 and H2 and the Drury Train Station.
- d. It is recommended that additional on-street car parks be provided along Hotiki (Road 3), to improve activation and support the intent of the main street / key retail frontage condition within the Centre.
- e. It is recommended that all buildings located along a key retail frontage (Hotiki) Road 3, provide a verandah over the footpath to provide weather protection and reinforce the main street experience anticipated by the application and under the key retail frontage provisions of the Precinct. The details of building verandah along Road 3 are to be provided as a condition of consent.
- f. It is recommended that a direct pedestrian path to the building entrance on Lot C be provided from the southern boundary of the lot. Refer to **Figure 3** for details of where this connection could be located.
- g. It is recommended that the future land use consents / design of residential lots (R10-R22) be undertaken comprehensively to improve the likelihood of coordinated and quality development outcomes.

Comment on Proposed Conditions

Recommended changes to proposed conditions:

Final Architectural Design Plans - Materials and Finishes

24. At the time of building consent lodgement for the buildings approved in this consent, the consent holder must prepare a finalised set of architectural detail drawings which must include the following:

- (a) detailed colour elevations with annotated material schedule and specifications;
- (b) details of the location of all building entrances accessible by the public);
- (c) details of all building verandah along street frontages;
- (d) final locations of bike parking and electric vehicle charging facilities;

~~(b) materials schedule and specification;~~

(e) sample palette of materials, surface finishes, and colour schemes (including colour swatches); and

(f) any external rooftop services/plant, lift/stairwell structures and visual/ aural screening elements.

Advice note: As part of the condition monitoring process, Council's monitoring inspectors will liaise with members of the Council's Tāmaki Makaurau Design Ope (Urban Design Unit) to provide confirmation of design compliance in relation to architectural drawings and materials specifications under this condition. The confirmation of design compliance does not relate to Building Act 2004 or Building Code compliance. A separate building consent application is required, and all building work must comply with the provisions of the Building Act and Building Code. We recommend that you seek appropriate specialist advice to ensure coordination between compliance with design requirements and Building Act and Building Code compliance.

Recommended additional conditions:

Prior to construction commencing, the consent holder must submit drawings to the Council which detail the extension and construction of a fully formed public road at the following locations and as indicated in **Figure 1** of this memo:

- Eastern side of Road 6 and Road 25 intersection directly to the eastern site boundary that continues the alignment of Road 6.
- A public road connection to the eastern site boundary within Lot K.

The above roading must be constructed at the above locations prior to the construction of any dwellings on lot k.

Prior to construction commencing, the consent holder must submit evidence that building access for pedestrians to the store front on the dual fronting lots identified in **Figure 2** of the urban design memo, will be prioritised from the adjoining street during store opening hours.

The consent holder must ensure that all ground floor commercial tenancies that have dual active frontages as identified in **Figure 3** of the urban design memo on lots A,

B, D, E and G2 must have prioritised pedestrian and customer access from the adjoining private roads during the entirety of the tenancy's opening hours.

Please refer to the figures on the following three pages:

Figure 1: Recommended road Connections to eastern site boundary of Stage 2

Figure 2: Lots recommended to have store front pedestrian access to a public street in addition to any secondary pedestrian access from a covered pedestrian lane or internal car park

Figure 3: Recommended location of Pedestrian access to the building entry on Lot C from the southern site boundary

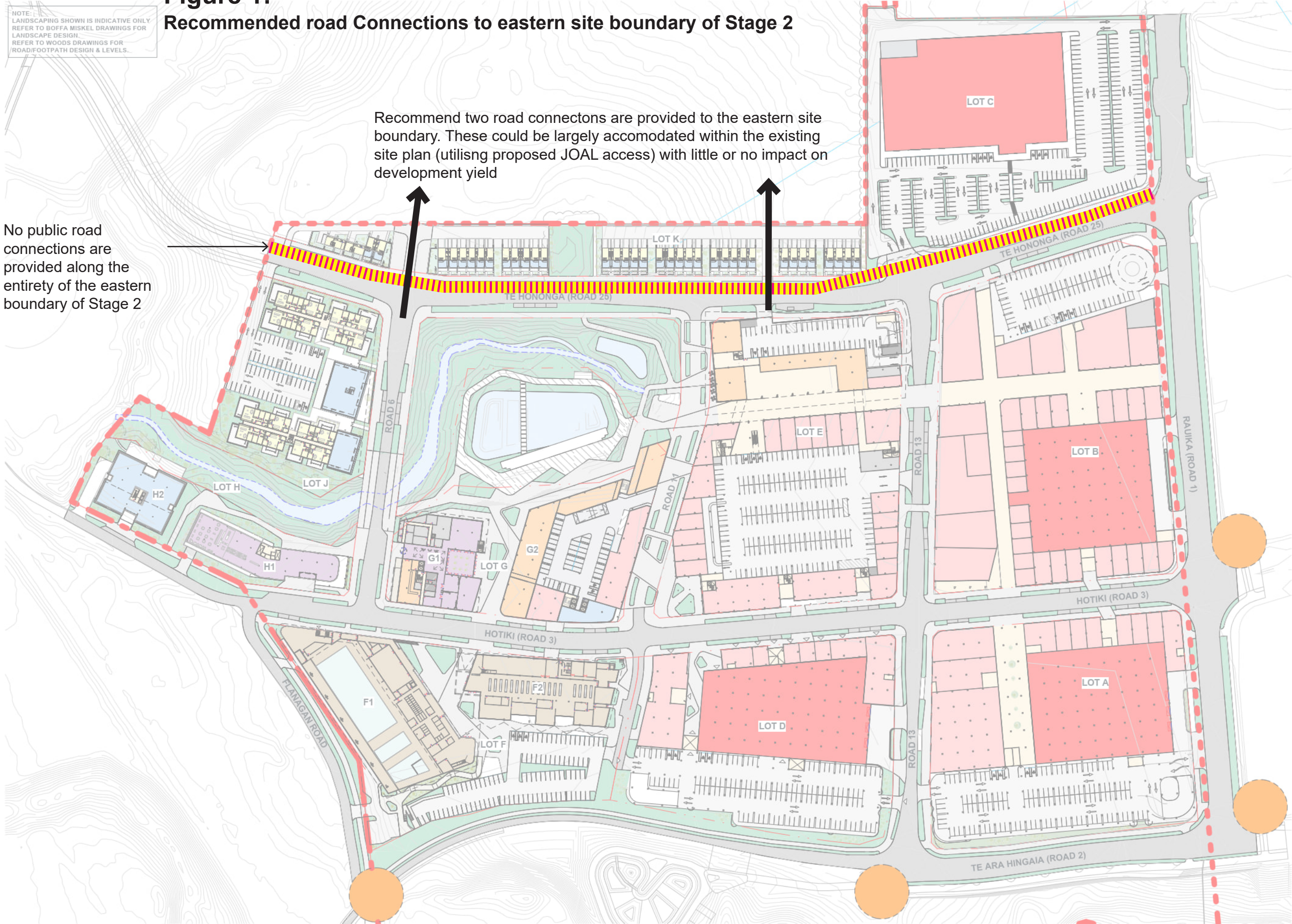
Figure 1:
Recommended road Connections to eastern site boundary of Stage 2

NOTE:
LANDSCAPING SHOWN IS INDICATIVE ONLY
REFER TO BOFFA MISKEL DRAWINGS FOR
LANDSCAPE DESIGN.
REFER TO WOODS DRAWINGS FOR
ROAD/FOOTPATH DESIGN & LEVELS.

No public road
connections are
provided along the
entirety of the eastern
boundary of Stage 2

Recommend two road connectons are provided to the eastern site
boundary. These could be largely accomodated within the existing
site plan (utilising proposed JOAL access) with little or no impact on
development yield

- MAJOR RETAIL
- RETAIL
- F&B
- RESIDENTIAL
- HOTEL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- COMMERCIAL
- COMMUNITY
- CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES
- CARPARKING
- CIRCULATION
- SERVICES
- LOADING/BOH



KIWI PROPERTY



IGNITE - AUCKLAND
1 Pakenham Street East
Viaduct Harbour
Auckland 1010
New Zealand
PO Box 91381, Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142
+64 9 356 4791
office@ignitearchitects.com
www.ignitearchitects.com

Drawing Title
DRURY TOWN CENTRE - BUILDING FOOTPRINT

PROJECT NAME
DRURY TOWN CENTRE STAGE 2

DRURY, AUCKLAND

Scale:
As indicated @ A1

Project No.
0460-119

Drawing No.
00-1201

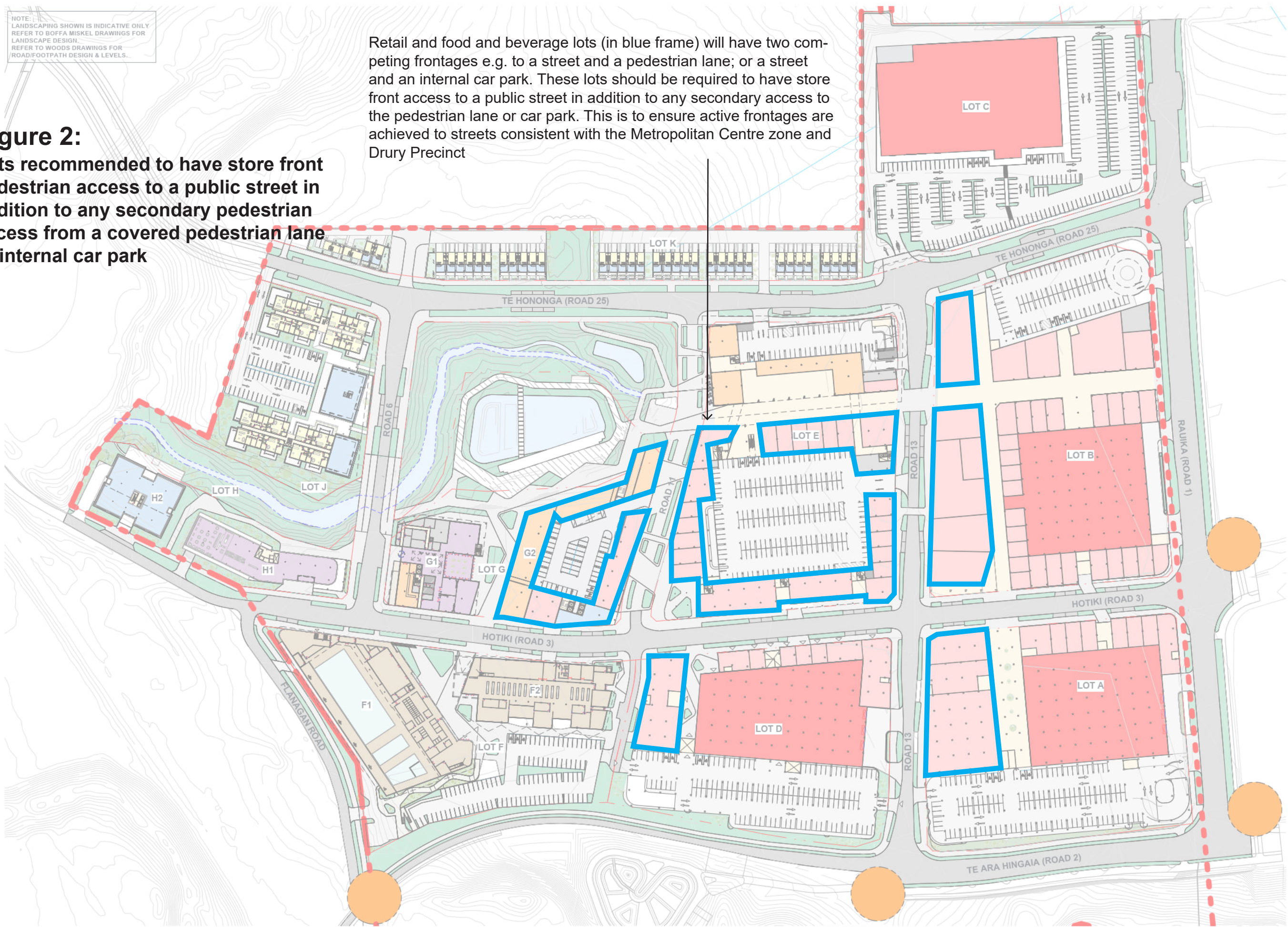
Revision:

NOTE: LANDSCAPING SHOWN IS INDICATIVE ONLY
REFER TO BOFFA MISKEL DRAWINGS FOR
LANDSCAPE DESIGN
REFER TO WOODS DRAWINGS FOR
ROAD/FOOTPATH DESIGN & LEVELS.

Retail and food and beverage lots (in blue frame) will have two competing frontages e.g. to a street and a pedestrian lane; or a street and an internal car park. These lots should be required to have store front access to a public street in addition to any secondary access to the pedestrian lane or car park. This is to ensure active frontages are achieved to streets consistent with the Metropolitan Centre zone and Drury Precinct

Figure 2:
Lots recommended to have store front pedestrian access to a public street in addition to any secondary pedestrian access from a covered pedestrian lane or internal car park

- MAJOR RETAIL
- RETAIL
- F&B
- RESIDENTIAL
- HOTEL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- COMMERCIAL
- COMMUNITY
- CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES
- CARPARKING
- CIRCULATION
- SERVICES
- LOADING/BOH



KIWI PROPERTY



IGNITE - AUCKLAND
1 Pakenham Street East
Viaduct Harbour
Auckland 1010
New Zealand
PO Box 91381, Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142
+64 9 358 4791
office@ignitearchitects.com
www.ignitearchitects.com

Drawing Title
DRURY TOWN CENTRE - BUILDING FOOTPRINT

PROJECT NAME
DRURY TOWN CENTRE STAGE 2

DRURY, AUCKLAND

Scale
As indicated @ A1

Project No.
0460-119

Drawing No.
00-1201



Original Size

Revision

Figure 3:
Recommended location of
Pedestrian access to the building
entry on Lot C from the southern site
boundary

