Mein
Urban
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FTAA1039 Sunfield Masterplanned Community

URBAN DESIGN PEER REVIEW

Contract Reference: 2955

Prepared by Lisa Mein for Expert Panel

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11 November 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

The author, Lisa Mein from Mein Urban Design and Planning Limited (MUDP), has been engaged by the Expert Panel to undertake an urban design peer review of the urban design approach and likely outcomes for a comprehensive resource consent application by Winton Land Limited for Sunfield, a masterplanned development located on undeveloped rural land between Papakura and Takaanini.

The subject site (outlined in red in Figure 1 below) comprises approximately 244.5 ha in 22 titles bounded by Airfield Road to the north, Old Wairoa Road to the south, Cosgrave/Mill Roads to the west and Ardmore Airport and large rural landholdings to the east. As stated in the urban design assessment report, Mill Road and Cosgrave Road serve to delineate current urbanised land from rural land.

The land is predominantly flat, low-lying and flood prone pastoral land. The topography is more undulating on the eastern side culminating in a small hillock feature on the southeastern corner.

From the planning report, I understand the applicant owns 215.2 ha of the land, while the balance is owned by 8 individual landowners including Auckland Council.

Section 1 of the Planning report sets out the details of the application. For ease of reference the masterplan includes:

- 80ha of residential land comprising 3,854 dwellings in a variety of forms, including 3 retirement villages
- 460,000 sqm of employment, healthcare and education buildings
- 7.5 ha town centre
- A school
- 4 local hubs intended to be community focal points
- 25.6 ha of open spaces, green links, recreation parks and reserves and ecological areas
- Establishment of a renewable solar energy network for the community

As illustrated in Figure 1 and stated within section 2.3 of the Planning Report (Appendix 1 to the application), the site has a split zoning within the Auckland Unitary Plan (**AUP**) with 53.6 ha on the southwestern end zoned Future Urban Zone (**FUZ**) and the remainder is zoned Rural-Mixed Rural zone (**MRZ**). The land to the north and east of the site is predominantly also zoned MRZ with a significant area of Ardmore Airport Infrastructure – Special Purpose zone along the eastern edge; to the south and west is predominantly zoned Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban (**MHS**).

With the exception of the land zoned FUZ, the majority of the site is located beyond the Rural Urban Boundary (**RUB**). The Regional Policy Statement (**RPS**) - Chapter B2.2 of the AUP sets a clear direction for a well-functioning urban environment with a quality, compact urban form and urbanisation to be contained within the RUB.

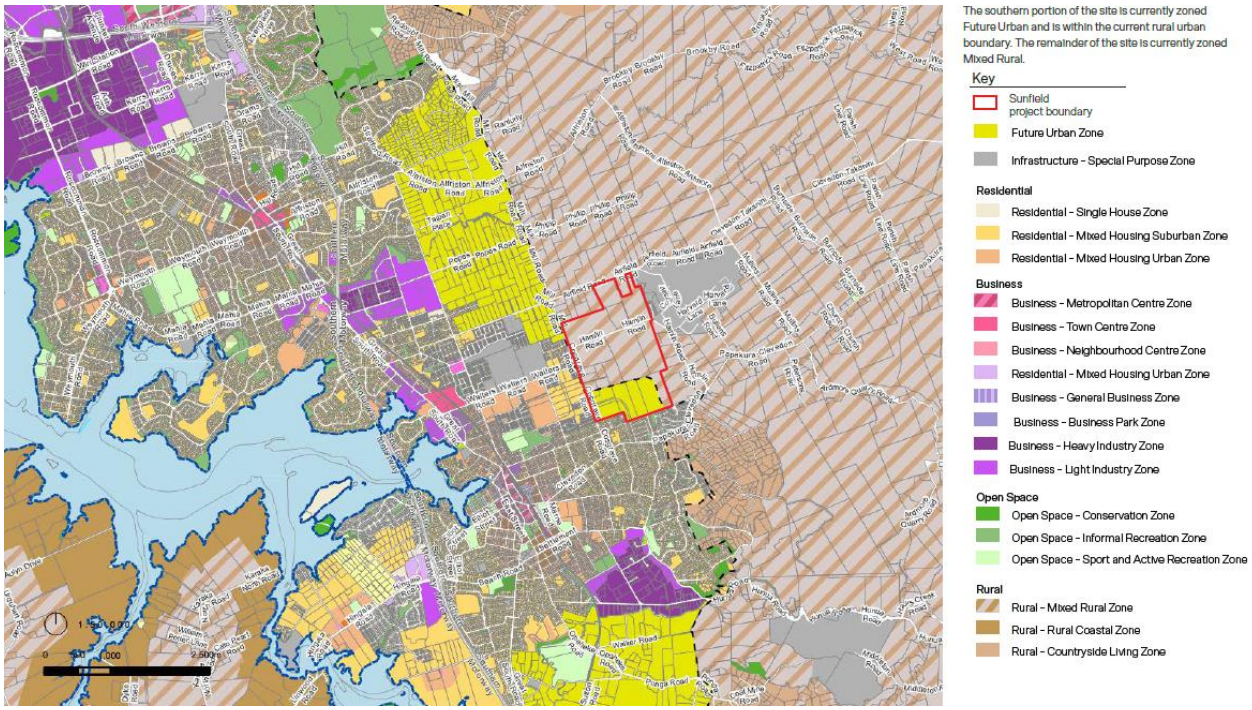

Figure 1: Existing AUP zoning (source: Masterplan contextual analysis)

The Auckland Future Development Strategy 2023-2053 (**FDS**) was released to promote integrated, long-term strategic planning with infrastructure and funding, ensure there is sufficient development capacity and achieve well-functioning urban environments over a 30-year period. The subject site is not identified for future urban growth.

In summary the AUP and other Auckland Council statutory and non-statutory documents do not anticipate development of this site at the present time. However, I am conscious the proposal is for a comprehensive urban masterplanned development, so like Mr Mainwaring for Auckland Council, I have focused this peer review on the quality and amenity of the approach to urban design, rather than consistency (or lack thereof) with the objectives and policies of the AUP. The review is focused on the questions asked by the expert hearing panel (the Panel) as follows:

- The appropriateness of the urban design approach and its outcomes to this location and whether the proposal achieves its intended design vision and principles set out in the UD assessment, including the design thinking and implementation of the transport strategy (limited private vehicle trips and use of public transport).
- An analysis of the precedent thinking for the proposal, with your thinking of whether precedent used for the design is appropriate and comparable and relevant to this site.
- An assessment of the design approach for this location, including the density proposal, including its relationship to the new town centre (are these are at the right level).
- A consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) for the retirement and other residential elements proposed.
- A consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) and carparking used for town centre.
- A consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) and carparking used for industrial elements proposed.

- An analysis of the open space strategy and its appropriateness to the level of density proposed.
- An analysis of the proposal staging and its implications for the overall urban design strategy for the proposal.
- An analysis of proposed conditions of consent in urban design terms and whether these will provide an appropriate urban design outcome (for all elements of the proposal).

1.2 PEER REVIEW APPROACH

This peer review has been based on a desk top review of:

- The original application material, with specific reference to:
  - all elements of the Sunfield Masterplanned Community concept masterplan, including the design controls, forming Appendix 3(a)-(p) to the application, prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture dated February 2025
  - Urban Design Assessment report, Appendix 4 to the application, prepared by Nick Barratt-Boyes of Studio Pacific Architecture dated 11 February 2025
  - Planning report, Appendix 1 to the application, prepared by Ian Smallburn of Tattico Limited dated 31 March 2025
  - Proposed conditions of consent as they relate to urban design
  - Scheme Plans including the staging plans prepared by Maven Associates
- Auckland Council's specialist comments, with specific reference to
  - Urban Design Memo (Annexure 18), prepared by Robert Mainwaring dated 4 August 2025
  - Parks Planning Memo (Annexure 9), prepared by Lea van Heerden dated 4 August 2025
- Auckland Transport's comment, prepared by Matthew Richard, Neil Stone et al dated 4 August 2025
- Applicant's response to Auckland Council Urban Design and Parks comments, prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture dated 10 October 2025
- Applicant's updated masterplan material in response to comments received including updated masterplan, updated employment concept masterplan and design controls and updated open space strategy.

Following the initial desktop review, a site visit was undertaken on 3 November 2025. I am already familiar with the locality from Auckland Council commissions for the Takaanini FTN NoR and urban design studies for land identified for removal from the FUZ within the FDS within the Takaanini area. The site visit was helpful to better understand the topography of the site and its context in relation to urbanised land to the west and south and Ardmore Airport to the northeast.

2 URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

2.1 APPROPRIATENESS OF URBAN DESIGN APPROACH

The Panel has requested comment on the appropriateness of the urban design approach and its outcomes to this location and whether the proposal achieves its intended design vision and principles set out in the urban design assessment (UDA), including the design thinking and implementation of the transport strategy (limited private vehicle trips and use of public transport).

Chapter 4 of the UDA explains that Sunfield is a fundamentally different model of housing in Aotearoa, New Zealand, creating walkable neighbourhoods and a deliberate reduction in private car ownership. Chapter 5 of the UDA and section 1 of the Concept Masterplan sets out the vision and principles for the Sunfield concept masterplan (**SCM**). This is illustrated through the design hierarchy in Figure 2 below.

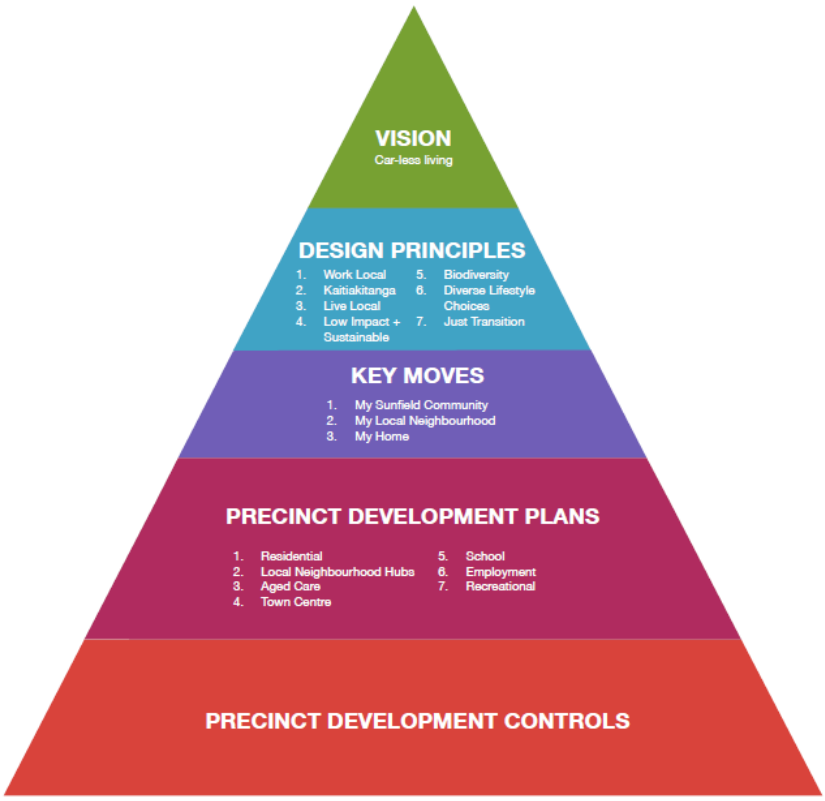

Figure 2: Design Hierarchy (source: Urban Design assessment report, Studio Pacific Architecture)

The overarching vision is to enable “car-less living”. Seven design principles are presented within the Concept Masterplan report to support the vision (see Figure 3) and are summarised below:

Live local – apply the concept of a 15-minute neighbourhood by ensuring close proximity to social, recreational, health, education, commercial and retail activities and employment.

Work local – providing a range of employment opportunities within Sunfield and support new ways of working including working from home and shared work spaces.

Kaitiakitanga – embedding a green and blue open space network to enhance the natural environment and connect it to the community, thereby cultivating a sense of custodianship and well-being, in line with the Māori world view of kaitiakitanga.

Low impact and sustainable living – a vision to be New Zealand's lowest carbon community through measures such as reducing car-dependence, water sensitive urban design, use of solar panels for clean energy and integration of community gardens.

Just transition – offering a low carbon lifestyle with healthy homes that are more affordable, cheaper to run and easily accessible

Diverse lifestyle choices – provide a range of housing typologies and tenures to respond to different needs

Connected with the natural environment, encouraging biodiversity – enhancing native habitats and waterways with the open space network to maximise biodiversity

Figure 3: Vision and Design Principles

The aspiration of a car-less community is an admirable one, and exciting from an urban design perspective. However, it is not without its challenges, particularly within this rural context, on the very edge of a suburban environment, beyond the urbanised extent of the Auckland region, and largely segregated from urban infrastructure. I tend to agree with Mr Mainwaring that the concept is optimistic given the proposed location, extensive floodplain and peat sub-surface ground conditions of the site do not naturally support intensive development.

In his UDA, Mr Barrett-Boyes acknowledges that a car-less development in this location requires what he describes as critical dependencies for it to be successful and sustainable. These include access to non-car-based transport modes such as public and community transport[1]. I agree with this assertion. I also agree with both Mr Barrett-Boyes and Mr Mainwaring that residents are likely to travel outside of Sunfield for employment and for commercial services to Takaanini and Papakura centres and to

[1] Barrett-Boyes, Nick, Sunfield Concept Masterplan – Urban Design Assessment, 11 February 2025, [4.04]

significant employment destinations including Manukau, Auckland Airport, East Tamaki, Onehunga and Mangere. Similarly, people will travel to Sunfield in the future to avail of all the additional non-residential activities. Sunfield cannot be viewed in isolation when assessing whether the approach and outcomes are appropriate in this location.

A walk of 10-15 minutes (800m – 1.2km) is considered the acceptable distance for people to regularly walk to rapid transit such as a train station and has been used as the framework for intensification under the NPS-UD. Earlier research conducted by Auckland Council in 2013, suggests people are willing to walk 1.2km or further if the transport is regular and reliable[2]. The closest train stations are both on the southern line and, according to the application material, services operate with a 10-minute frequency in both directions (connecting Pukekohe to Britomart) from 7am-7pm and a 20-minute frequency in early mornings and evenings. The two closest train stations are approximately 2.7km (Papakura) and 3.5km (Takaanini) away respectively[3], corresponding to approximately 35–45-minute walk. This is beyond a generally accepted distance for people to regularly choose to walk to a train station. Cycling to the stations could be more viable as this would reduce the travel distance to the train stations to 12-15 minutes. I note there are currently no dedicated cycle paths on the existing road network at present, but cyclists could choose local roads as an alternative to Cosgrave Road.

I understand the intention within the proposal is for the community transport, Sunbus autonomous electric shuttles, to connect to the closest train stations. At a minimum distance of 2km from a train station (noting that is the closest point on the corner of Cosgrave and Old Wairoa, so most dwellings will be further than 2km from the station), most residents within Sunfield will rely on that community transport (or at best an electric bicycle) to access the train on a regular basis. Therefore, in my opinion, it will be imperative to develop the Sunfield Loop, which connects the development to Takaanini train station via Airfield Road and Walters Road and to Papakura train station via Cosgrave and Old Wairoa Roads and instigate the Sunbus in tandem with the first stages of residential development to ensure the aspiration for prioritising active and shared modes is realised at the outset.

I note within the applicant's response to Auckland Council's urban design and parks comments[4], they state the Sunfield loop public transport route can be implemented from Stage 2 onwards and that prior to its development, a community connection to Papakura Station via Old Wairoa Road can be implemented at stage 1. I consider it critical that this is implemented at the earliest possible stage, otherwise the project runs the risk of creating car dependency which, once established, is difficult to shift.

Mr Mainwaring has also observed that with minimal formal provision for parking, the proposal is likely to result in uncontrolled vehicle parking within and around the site. My observation is that this is already happening in other locations within the region, where intensification has occurred with limited on-site parking. In the applicant's response to Auckland Council's urban design and parks comments[5] they state that initial stages will have greater temporary parking provision, which will reduce over time as infrastructure and amenities become established. I appreciate the intention and acknowledge the comment that people buying into Sunfield will be aware of the car-less strategy, but I do have some concerns that people coming to Sunfield to work or to visit residents may not have that same mentality and could contribute to a proliferation of vehicles on surrounding streets. I also reiterate my comment that once car-dependency is established, it can be challenging to modify that behaviour.

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[2] Wilson, L (2013) Walkable catchments analysis at Auckland train and Northern Busway stations. Auckland Council technical report, TR2013/014

[3] This is based on taking a main route from halfway along Cosgrave Road. Tattico planning assessment states 2km and 2.2km – this is from the western edge of the site, and, in reality, the journey would be longer. Commute transportation assessment states 3.1km and 4km, which is more realistic as dwellings will be to the east of Cosgrave.

[4] Studio Pacific Architecture, 10 October 2025, comment no. 18.10

[5] Ibid, comment no. 18.11

2.2 RELEVANCE OF PRECEDENTS

The Panel has requested an analysis of the precedent thinking for the proposal, with my thinking of whether the precedent used for the design is appropriate and comparable and relevant to this site.

I was unable to find reference to precedents in the UDA, planning assessment or multitude of masterplan documents other than scale comparisons to recent greenfields developments of Long Bay and Hobsonville Point. These are useful as both are master-planned communities in what were rural locations in the Auckland region. These have, over time, evolved to provide for most of the everyday needs of the local population. However, both are still largely car-oriented / car-dependent localities.

In the absence of any information on the precedents that informed the development of the Sunfield masterplan proposal, I have undertaken some high-level research into a number of car-less or car-free developments, low carbon neighbourhoods and 15-minute neighbourhoods around the world to sense check whether these are comparable and relevant to a greenfields site in a rural location that is neither proximate nor well-connected to public transport. These are set out below.

Vauban, a neighbourhood approximately 3km to the south of the town centre in Freiberg, Germany built on a former French military base. The settlement occupies 38 ha, provides 600 jobs and has more than 5,000 inhabitants in approximately 2,000 dwellings. The neighbourhood was planned around green transportation and since 2006 the development has been served by a light rail/tram that connects Vauban to Freiberg city centre. All homes are within easy walking distance from a tram stop and most trips within Vauban are undertaken by foot or bicycle. There approximately 160 cars per 1,000 residents, a car-sharing scheme and private vehicles are parked in one of two neighbourhood garages. Vauban also incorporates low-energy construction, solar houses, and a CHP plant that generates enough electricity for approximately 700 households.

Merwede, in Utrecht, is being developed as one of the largest inner-city car-free city districts in the Netherlands. Merwede is located on a 24 ha brownfields industrial site approximately 10-minute bike ride from Utrecht central train station. Merwede began development in 2016, with the first residents expected to move in 2027. When complete, the settlement will include 6,000 dwellings (including residential care) located within 200 buildings of varying heights, three schools, two supermarkets, offices, restaurants and a gym, as well as a network of green spaces and a large park, mobility hubs for shared transport. A car-sharing scheme is proposed with approximately 250 cars available, and there will be two purpose-built garages for private cars located on the fringe of the neighbourhood and space will be provided for 21,500 bike parks. A new tram line is currently being built to connect the neighbourhood to Utrecht city centre.

Culdesac in Tempe, Arizona, is being marketed as the first car-free neighbourhood in USA. Culdesac is located on 6.4ha of brownfield land, 4km from downtown Tempe (city with a population of 190,000 east of Phoenix). It began construction in 2023 and there are now approximately 288 apartments with about 300 residents, 27 local businesses, shops and food & beverage retailers, 2 dog parks as well as a connected network of pedestrian and cycle paths. The masterplan is based on southern European historic villages with similar climate to Arizona and includes a hierarchy of public spaces and streets, buildings and elements placed to deliver a “sense of discovery”, mixed use development, a co-working 3-storey walk up adjacent to the light rail station, 2-3 storey residential walk-ups clustered around communal courtyards. Importantly it is located right next to a light rail station (Smith-Martin) and locates the town centre and principal plaza by the rail station. In USA, which has similar car dependence to New Zealand, the car-free concept is dependent on proximity to light rail to provide residents immediate access to transit.

I acknowledge large parts of some European cities including Copenhagen and Paris are car-free. I have not included these as precedents because, as highly urbanised and heavily populated cities, contextually they are completely different to Sunfield.

The Sunfield masterplanned community appears to be based on many of the principles of low-carbon neighbourhoods and 15-minute cities such as: local access to schools, parks, shops, healthcare and

opportunities for employment; an emphasis on walking and cycling infrastructure with a corresponding reduction in private car use; a highly connected network of paths; ecological enhancement, green streets and spaces; choice in housing type and tenure and the ability to age in place; and opportunities for renewable energy. The key differences between Sunfield and the examples above are that the precedent examples are generally located on brownfields sites within, or very proximate to, existing urban centres, are relatively intensively developed with a range of building heights to make efficient use of land, and importantly have direct access to rapid transit which is critical to the success of these places as car-less or car-free communities.

2.3 DESIGN APPROACH AND DENSITY FOR THIS LOCATION

The Panel as requested an assessment of the design approach for this location, including the density proposal, including its relationship to the new town centre (are these are at the right level).

A thorough contextual analysis is included within the concept masterplan. This includes an analysis of Takaanini and Papakura centres and demonstrates both are approximately 2.5-3km from Sunfield. It also includes proximity to parks, schools, local employment opportunities and the existing public transport network. This has clearly informed the masterplan approach for the site, in particular the location of the school, parks and local hubs. The employment area appears to be located to avoid/minimise reverse sensitivity issues with Ardmore Airport, which is a logical solution. The suburban area to the west includes existing medium-density residential development; the proposed residential and aged care housing within SCM is located and designed to reflect that development pattern, which is appropriate from an urban design perspective.

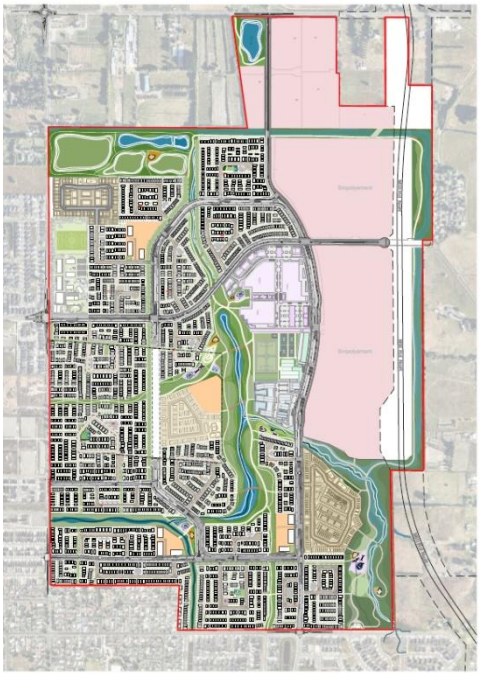

Figure 4: Masterplan (source: Studio Pacific Architecture)

The location of the town centre is interesting from a wider perspective. The urban design assessment report states the location will help with drawing people in from the surrounding area and creates a focal point for the development. If looking at the site in isolation as a self-contained, masterplanned community, then perhaps a town centre at the crossroads of the two key connector routes would make sense. However, the proposed location is at the eastern side of the masterplan area, closer to the employment hub than it is to the immediate and wider residential catchment it is intending to serve. Taking a cynical view, it also opens up opportunities for further residential sprawl onto the rural land to the north and east, to broaden its catchment; a point picked up by Mr Mainwaring at paragraph 43 of his

memo and apparently viewed as a positive by the applicant in comment number 18.44 of their response to the Urban Design and Parks comments.

The proposed residential neighbourhoods consist largely of detached and duplex dwellings of two-storeys, with predominantly single level detached, duplex or townhouse retirement units and a single level of apartments above the ground floor commercial within the local hubs. At paragraph 28 of his memo, Mr Mainwaring notes that within the residential super lots, the proposed density is approximately 40 dwellings per hectare, which he considers to be relatively low density. The applicant's response to that comment, which I assume was authored by Mr Barrett-Boyes, reasserts that the residential neighbourhoods in Sunfield are medium density. I concur, in a New Zealand context 40 dwellings per hectare is considered to be medium density. The scale comparison to Hobsonville Point, included within the concept masterplan, is interesting in terms of density. While the average density in Hobsonville Point is around 40 dwellings per hectare, some of the residential superblocks achieve densities of around 100 dwellings per hectare, which could be considered medium-high density in a suburban context in New Zealand. This is achieved through a combination of building typologies including predominantly attached terrace housing and multi-storey apartments.

It needs to be acknowledged that Sunfield is somewhat constrained by the underlying geotechnical conditions of the land, meaning that built form is largely confined to a maximum of 2 levels, which impacts on the ability to achieve higher densities. Notwithstanding the ground conditions, Mr Mainwaring considers pockets of higher density could be achieved within Sunfield, albeit these could require a further consideration of the adequacy of the open space network. While I tend to agree with him that this would support the intention of a car-less, walkable community, I am not convinced that will work in this location that is so far from rapid transit. I am also conscious that Auckland has an excess of terrace houses that are currently not selling well. I therefore consider the applicant's response, that if density shifted to higher and the demand was there then open space could be reconsidered, to be acceptable.

2.4 DESIGN APPROACH FOR RESIDENTIAL PRECINCTS AND AGED CARE

The Panel has requested consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) for the retirement and other residential elements proposed

As stated in 2.3 above, the suburban area to the west includes existing medium-density residential development, therefore in my opinion the proposed residential and aged care housing is appropriately located and designed to reflect that existing development pattern. These all include detailed design controls and guidelines which is supported to create certainty in outcome.

The proposed locations of the aged care housing relate well to the street network and local hubs which supports connectivity and integration with the wider residential precincts. These are also generally located adjacent to open space areas, which enables opportunities for both outlook and pedestrian and cycling connections to public open space. As with many existing retirement villages, the layout does appear to be somewhat inward-looking, with units facing to internal roads rather than towards the street or open space, but there are several pedestrian pathways proposed to enable greater permeability and connectivity. While Homehill and Lilyburn are proximate to local hubs, Brookside is located immediately adjacent to hub C. Only one laneway is proposed between Brookside and the hub. I consider a second laneway should be included to create a stronger connection between the aged care facility and the hub. Mr Mainwaring does not support modification of the hillock in the southern part of the site to be replaced with single-storey aged care units. This is addressed in the applicant's response by Reset Landscape Architects that the hillock is not considered a significant landform or feature. I am not overly concerned about the modification of the hillock in this location, although I acknowledge it is preferable to work with existing landform wherever practicable.

The residential precinct plan (Appendix 3d) sets out a full yield for each neighbourhood, with a breakdown of typology split and average lot size per neighbourhood. The residential lots are relatively compact with two-storey detached or duplex dwellings. Some of the lots include on-lot parking while others rely on shared neighbourhood parking areas. Several lots are accessed via narrow laneways, and I share Mr Mainwaring's concern that the reliance on nested JOALs raises fundamental concerns with access and safety. I am also concerned that a several lots in a number of the neighbourhoods, require crossing swales to access the lots, which could cause issues in a development of this intensity.

I also make the observation that the design approach to the residential neighbourhoods differs from other examples of similar car-less or 15-minute neighbourhoods in that those other examples tend to cluster residential development around courtyards or communal spaces in addition to pedestrian laneways. Very few of the neighbourhoods in Sunfield offer pocket parks or communal space and I am not convinced that the JOALs and pedestrian lanes in the proposed development offer the same degree of potential communal living.

Edge conditions have been considered within the application material, with edge condition controls included within the design controls for residential precincts. The relationship to streets and laneways appears appropriate from an urban design perspective and will enable a high degree of connectivity and passive surveillance. The relationship between private lots and open space is interesting. I can understand why some locations have no access to the open space, but consider this requires further thought, by way of example where play parks are proposed these would benefit from lots having increased access for enhanced surveillance, activation and consequent safety. These could also be then used in lieu of the communal spaces described in the paragraph above.

2.5 DESIGN APPROACH FOR TOWN CENTRE

The Panel has requested consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) and carparking used for town centre.

As discussed within section 2.3 above, I have some reservations about the location of the town centre, including the medical centre and major recreational facilities, within the overall SCM. In my opinion a location further to the west would be preferable in order to serve not only the future residents of Sunfield, but also the existing residential catchment to the west and south.

In terms of the layout of the town centre, there is an attempt to create more pedestrian focused streets, particularly the east-west connection between the play area and the transport hub, which will have a friendly scale. The design controls are well considered. Buildings are human-scaled, predominantly two-storey[6] and framing a variety of outdoor spaces. Extensive street tree planting is proposed, which will create attractive streets.

However, the overall layout appears similar to outdoor mall type developments like Botany or Westgate, where people come in from the primary road, typically by car, into a somewhat inward-focused town centre with parking on the outer edges. This model seems at odds with the intention of a car-less community and, given the proximity of Sunfield to Takaanini, Papakura and Drury centres which provide for more of the bulk retail requirements, perhaps a more traditional main street type town centre, that is within an easy walk of all of the Sunfield residential community would be more appropriate.

Figure 5: Town centre illustrative masterplan (source: Studio Pacific Architecture Sunfield Town Centre Concept Masterplan)

[6] Sunfield Design Controls for Town Centre Precinct – Built form controls establish 9m building height for the mixed use commercial and 12m for large format retail, medical centre and sports and aquatic centres

2.6 DESIGN APPROACH FOR EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT

The Panel has requested consideration of the design approach, including layout, orientation, heights and positing of building forms (to streets) and carparking used for industrial elements proposed.

Following Auckland Transport's comments regarding the likely alignment of the Mill Road Stage 2 project, which could sever this concentration of employment land, the masterplan was updated as was the employment concept masterplan. Therefore, these comments are based on the updated masterplans included within the applicant's response to comments.

At a high level the location of the employment precinct at the eastern edge of the site is logical, given its proximity to Ardmore Airport and the opportunity for co-location with the airport special zone. Even taking into consideration the proposed alignment of the Mill Road Stage 2 project, the extent of industrial land, together with the airport, creates a significant conglomeration of employment offering in this locality based on aviation and related logistics. The location also enables the employment land to be developed and accessed independently of the remainder of the Sunfield development.

Building footprints are large, as would be expected from an industrial location, with heights up to 20m. Like other parts of the SCM, the employment precinct has its own design controls. The design controls are clear and include guidance on building design and appearance, location and screening of outdoor storage and loading areas, and surveillance and interaction with the street and reserves, which will ensure a higher quality of outcome than might typically be anticipated within industrial areas. This is positive from an urban design perspective.

2.7 OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

The Panel has requested an analysis of the open space strategy and its appropriateness to the level of density proposed

The SCM depicts a series of interconnected parks and greenways throughout the masterplan, that predominantly act as open spaces for the treatment of stormwater. The Council is seeking four flood-free neighbourhood parks (only one of which was included within the application material, and which has already received approval for acquisition), supported by a central suburb park, all integrated with the street network.

In response to Auckland Council's extensive comments on the open space strategy, in particular concern at the ability of the development to deliver functional formal recreational outcomes, the applicant has offered an updated open space strategy. However, I note that while the design proposal more clearly sets out the extent of land for wetlands, no additional neighbourhood parks are proposed nor have the locations of the proposed parks been amended, with the exception of one on the eastern side which has been both relocated and reduced in scale.

The extent of the wetlands within the centralised stormwater park has increased resulting in the relocation and reduction of one of the proposed play spaces. Notwithstanding further commentary from Auckland Council's Parks and Healthy Waters regarding the extent of the stormwater I tend to agree with Mr Mainwaring that location of play spaces within the residential neighbourhoods should be considered as this would likely provide greater accessibility to flood-free play for residents that could be integrated with other amenities and local services.

The extent of open space offered by the applicant is approximately what would be required for a development of this quantum of dwellings. However, much of this is within the centralised stormwater park or lands set aside for wetlands. This land will support passive recreation, but is likely to be flood prone and unusable for active recreational requirements for much of the year. Given the nature of Auckland Council's commentary and the lack of comprehensive response to it, I consider the proposed open space strategy is not appropriate for the development and not likely to be adequate to meet the formal recreational needs of the proposed resident population at Sunfield.

2.8 STAGING

The Panel has requested an analysis of the proposal staging and its implications for the overall urban design strategy for the proposal

The scheme plans indicate that stages 1-6 will be generally within the area of land zoned FUZ. From an urban design perspective, it is appropriate that these neighbourhoods are the earliest to be developed as they are located within close proximity to the existing urbanised area. The town centre is within stage 7, and the school is stage 13. It is not clear when open spaces will be implemented.

It could take several years for the full Sunfield area to be completed. I agree with both Mr Barrett-Boyes and Mr Mainwaring that physical and social infrastructure, including the Sunfield loop and open space network, needs to be completed as part of the early phases of development to support the residential community[7]. As expressed in 2.1, the transportation infrastructure is especially important to foster the planned car-less development from the outset.

2.9 CONDITIONS

The Panel has requested analysis of proposed conditions of consent in urban design terms and whether these will provide an appropriate urban design outcome (for all elements of the proposal)

The proposed conditions were updated in response to comments received.

1. Two new conditions (1A and 1B) are proposed under Staging and Implementation, which requires physical infrastructure to be implemented prior to subdivision and to be operational prior to any building being occupied. This is supported from an urban design perspective to support residents as they occupy their homes.

2. Conditions 28-30 are appropriate from an urban design perspective and are relatively standard conditions where these are tied into a masterplan (in this instance the SCM).

3. I note condition 31 has been updated and support the proposed amendments.

4. Condition 101 relates to lighting which is supported for safety of pedestrians

5. Amendments to 160, 163, 164 appropriately address earlier feedback from Auckland Council, improving the safety of reserve and streetscape design.

I note Auckland Council's parks specialist provided a number of conditions, with recommendations on where these should be included. Not all have been included; however, I note those proposed for boundary treatment between public and private land have been included within condition 181.

I recommend the proposed conditions shared by Auckland Council regarding implementation and maintenance of landscaping and fencing also be incorporated.

[7] Summary UD and Parks Comments response to 18.36 and 18.47

3 CONCLUSION

Like Mr Mainwaring, I support the intent of a car-less development and the overarching principles of the Sunfield development. However, I am concerned that while the masterplan is based on many of the principles of low-carbon neighbourhoods and 15-minute cities, its rural location with relatively poor connections to rapid transit coupled with the geotechnical constraints of the site make it difficult to achieve the car-less aspiration on the subject site.

Lisa Mein
MA (Urban Design), BPlan Registered Urban Designer UDIA, MNZPI