

The Point Mission Bay

Urban Design and Landscape Assessment Peer Review



Prepared for Generus Living Ltd by:

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 RA Skidmore Urban Design Ltd. has been engaged by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Whai Rawa Limited and Generus Living Group Limited (“Generus”) to provide urban design and landscape assessment peer review services in relation to The Point Mission Bay project (“the Proposal”). This role has included providing advice and feedback as the preliminary scheme has been developed, tested and refined.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide a peer review of the Urban Design and Landscape Assessment report prepared by Boffa Miskell Urban Designers and Landscape Architects (the “UDLA”) as part of the documentation for the Fast Track resource consent application.

Author’s Qualifications and Experience

- 1.3 I, Rebecca Skidmore, am the author of this report. I am an Urban Designer and Landscape Architect. I am a director of the consultancy RA Skidmore Urban Design Limited and have held this position for approximately twenty two years.
- 1.4 I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from Canterbury University (1987), a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Hons) degree from Lincoln University (1990), and a Master of Built Environment (Urban Design) degree from Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane (1995).
- 1.5 I have approximately 30 years’ professional experience, practising in both local government and the private sector. In these positions I have assisted with district plan preparation and I have assessed and reviewed a wide range of resource consent applications throughout the country. These assessments relate to a range of rural, residential and commercial proposals.
- 1.6 I regularly assist councils with policy and district plan development in relation to growth management, urban design, landscape, character and amenity matters.
- 1.7 I am an accredited independent hearing commissioner. I also have extensive experience providing expert evidence in the Environment Court and I have appeared as the Court's witness in the past.
- 1.8 I confirm that, in my capacity as author of this peer review, I have read the code of conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note (2023) and agree to comply with it. Except where I state that I am relying on the specified evidence of another person, the content of this Review is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

- 1.9 The Project is to establish a comprehensive retirement village, “The Point”, on the site of the former Eastcliffe Retirement Village, adjoining Takaparawhau / Michael Joseph Savage Memorial Park (the “Site”). The Site includes an existing care facility building within the western portion of the Site which is proposed to be integrated with the proposed retirement village.
- 1.10 In addition to the UDLA, my review has been informed by the following:
- Architectural Design Statement (the “ADS”) prepared by Warren and Mahoney Architects;
 - Architectural Drawings prepared by Warren and Mahoney Architects;
 - Landscape Concept Plans prepared by Boffa Miskell;
 - CPTED Assessment by Boffa Miskell.
- 1.11 In undertaking the peer review, I have visited the Site and its surrounding environs on a number of occasions, the most recent being the 5th November 2024.
- 1.12 I have attended a number of project meetings as the scheme has been developed, tested, and refined. I also attended meetings (online) with the Council’s urban design and landscape reviewers on the 18th July 2025 and 26th August 2025. Feedback provided at these meetings was considered, and has informed further refinement of the Proposal.
- 1.13 This peer-review assessment reflects my iterative involvement in the project as it has developed, as opposed to a static review of the final Proposal / design. This has enabled my input and feedback to the layout and design of the Proposal to be progressively considered and incorporated. In particular, I attended a number of design workshops and project review sessions and provided feedback on key design strategies relating to:
- Potential alignments, and design requirements for the relocation of the public walkways through the Site;
 - The distribution of the building mass on the Site, including the arrangement and height stepping of the upper building forms;
 - Ways to reflect the gifted cultural narrative in the Project;
 - Developing a design aesthetic to create a strong sense of place that reflects the Site’s location;
 - Use of articulation, material palette and colours to break down the visual mass of building forms and create an appropriate distinction between the podium and upper building forms;

- Internal layout and distribution of activities to achieve good on-site amenity;
- The landscape strategy for the Site and the way this integrates with the distribution of indoor activities and interfaces with adjacent properties

2 The UDLA – Overview Comments

- 2.1 The UDLA addresses both urban design and landscape effects considerations in a single report. Given the interrelationship between the disciplines of urban design and landscape architecture (assessment), I consider this to be appropriate. I note that the report has been co-authored by qualified practitioners in both fields.
- 2.2 Section 2 of the report clearly sets out the methodology used for carrying out the assessment. In relation to a consideration of landscape effects, the report notes that Tuia Pito Ora / The New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects has endorsed (July 2022) guidance for the assessment of landscape under the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”) in Aotearoa / New Zealand: Te Tangi a te Manu. In my opinion, the assessment provided is in accordance with the relevant guidance set out in that document.
- 2.3 There is no similar broadly agreed methodology standard/guideline in relation to urban design matters. Section 2.2 of the report sets out the factors that have informed the urban design assessment. These have been used to determine the topics addressed in Section 8 – Assessment of Effects of the UDLA report. In my opinion, these topics are suitable to address all relevant urban design considerations.
- 2.4 The report is accompanied by a graphic supplement containing a series of photographs illustrating representative public viewpoints from a range of distances in the surrounding environment. These are helpful to understand the Site’s relationship to its surrounding context. From these photographs a number of viewpoints were selected (in consultation with the Council’s reviewers) for the preparation of visual simulations. I agree that these viewpoints are suitable to inform the assessment. It is important to note that while visual simulations are a useful tool to help understand how a proposal will be accommodated in relation to its surrounding context, as static images they cannot fully replicate the more dynamic and moving way people experience the environment. I have viewed them in this context.

3 The Site and its Context

- 3.1 Section 3 of the Boffa Miskell report sets out a clear and appropriately detailed description of the Site and its surrounding context. The report focuses on an analysis

of the Site's landscape context. I have reviewed this in conjunction with Section 2 of the ADS prepared by Warren and Mahoney that sets out a detailed analysis of the Site's relationship to its urban condition and context using a series of diagrams (annotated aerial photographs) at various scales.

3.2 I note that the Site's location and shape/proportion present both opportunities and challenges to accommodate a comprehensive retirement village. These include:

- The elevated location and elongated proportion of the Site and its relationship to a broad open space enables expansive views to the surrounding landscape, including middle ground coastal views.
- The former Eastcliffe Retirement Village, with the remaining independent units at the eastern end of the Site and the care facility building at the western end of the Site has established the use of the land for retirement living.
- The sloping and benched (from former development platforms) landform of the Site presents both opportunities and constraints for how buildings are configured to integrate with their setting and provide easy access around the Village for residents.
- The Site's direct interface with four streets presents good opportunities for access to the Site and integration with its adjacent established urban environment.
- The location of two public pedestrian walkways through the Site, connecting the end of Rukutai Street and Aotea Street with Takaparawhau / Michael Joseph Savage Memorial Park severely constrain the ability to accommodate an integrated retirement village.
- The established urban environment to the south, both immediate and at a broader scale, presents the opportunity for development to integrate with the wider urban context.
- The Site has a direct interface with and relationship to Takaparawhau / Michael Joseph Savage Memorial Park. The land, including the Site, is of cultural significance as the ancestral land of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei ("NWŌ") with Ōrākei Marae and the Iwi's Whai Māia social arm accommodated alongside kaumātua kāinga, Okahukura, and healthcare services proximate to the Site.

3.3 Section 3.1 of the UDLA summarises the proposal for revocation and relocation of the existing public pedestrian walkways that traverse the Site. This is being progressed through a separate approval process.

- 3.4 Section 4 of the UDLA provides an overview of the relevant Auckland Unitary Plan (Operative in Part) (the “AUP”) provisions. A full description and analysis of relevant RMA instruments is set out in the planning report (“AEE”) prepared by Bentley & Co. In terms of the AUP, I note that the Site is subject to a complex set of provisions, with multiple zones applying to the Site and the Ōrākei 1 Precinct also applying in addition to the zone provisions.
- 3.5 For the Residential - Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings (“THAB”) zone which applies to most of the Site, the objectives and policy framework encourages land to be used efficiently to provide high-density urban living (Obj. H6.2(1)), and requiring development that is in keeping with the area’s planned urban built character of predominantly five, six or seven-storey buildings in a variety of forms (Obj. H6.2(2)) and ensuring that development provides quality on-site residential amenity for residents and the street (Obj. H6.2(3)). These overarching objectives are supported by policies that include enabling a variety of housing types including integrated residential development such as retirement villages (Pol. H6.3(1)).
- 3.6 For integrated residential development, the matters of discretion include consideration of the effects on neighbourhood character, amenity, and safety H5.8.1(3)(a)). Of relevance to the UDLA, this includes effects relating to building intensity, scale, location, form and appearance and the location and design of parking and access.
- 3.7 Also of particular relevance to the UDLA, are the matters of discretion listed for buildings that do not comply with the height standard (H5.8.1(4)).
- 3.8 The Ōrākei 1 Precinct acknowledges the cultural significance of the land and includes specific policies relating to Wairuatanga – spiritual connections and building design.

4 The Proposal – Design Process

- 4.1 The Proposal is described in Section 5 of the UDLA report and detailed further in the AEE. The Proposal, as illustrated in the Warren and Mahoney ADS and drawings set, and the Boffa Miskell Landscape Concept plans, is the result of a collaborative and iterative design process.
- 4.2 In my opinion, the design approach for the Site is based on a thorough understanding of the characteristics, urban structure and landscape values of the land in relation to its surrounding context. As set out in the UDLA report, importantly, the Proposal has been developed to respond to a series of Māori Design Principles agreed with NWŌ and aligned with the framework set out in the AUP Ōrākei 1 Precinct.
- 4.3 The overarching conceptual narrative gifted to the Project by Joe Pihema (Cultural Advisor, Te Kawau Ltd.) has been foundational for the concept development and has guided each stage of design development and refinement. In my opinion, the design

concept, with the built manifestation expressed as a solid and grounded podium form, communal gathering spaces atop this and a series of separated and off-set vertical elements, with a lighter, layered appearance, successfully draws on this narrative to create an environment strongly embedded in its place. The approach taken is clearly explained in the diagrams contained in Section 5 of the ADS.

- 4.4 The Landscape Concept package by Boffa Miskell also references this cultural narrative, together with the guidance provided by Ko Te Pūkāki 2024, NWŌ's regeneration vision as a foundation for developing guiding principles for the landscape concept. In my opinion, the architectural and landscape proposals are well integrated responding to both the characteristics of the Site's context, the deep cultural values of the land, and the proposed distribution of activity within the Site.

5 Landscape Assessment

- 5.1 I agree with the identification of the visual catchment and groups comprising the viewing audience set out in Section 6 of the UDLA report.
- 5.2 The introductory part of Section 7 of the UDLA provides an overview of the way landscape change and associated effects are to be considered. This is consistent with the guidance provided in Te Tangi a te Manu. As noted in the report, and of particular relevance in considering the Proposal, simply seeing a proposal, such as a building or buildings in an urban context, does not in and of itself constitute an adverse landscape effect. Also of relevance and, as noted in Te Tangi a te Manu, "change itself is not an effect: landscapes change constantly. It is the implications of change for a landscape's values that is the effect".¹ As noted in the UDLA, in urban areas, and particularly those areas identified for more dense or intensive future forms of urban residential and mixed use living, change including the introduction of taller and larger scaled buildings with bigger footprints can be reasonably expected. As noted, the appropriateness of such development will depend on their context and the management/mitigation of the effects of such built forms and their amenity effects particularly on direct neighbours². In assessing these matters it is important to bear in mind the policy guidance set out in Policy 6 of the National Policy Statement: Urban Development (2020). As noted in the Policy, the significant changes to an area may detract from amenity values appreciated by some people but improve amenity values appreciated by other people, communities, and future generations, noting also that those changes are not, of themselves, an adverse effect.

¹ Para. 6.03, p. 135, Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, NZILA, 2022.

² Section 7, UDLA, Boffa Miskell, 02/10/25

Landscape Character Effects

- 5.3 I agree with the opinion that the comprehensive approach to redevelopment of the brownfields Site and the creation of a high amenity environment will enhance the character of the local urban environment. In this respect, the proposal to reconfigure the existing public pedestrian connections through the Site is critical to enable a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment and create a well-functioning environment that meets the operational and amenity needs of a retirement village.
- 5.4 In my opinion, the Proposal responds creatively to the various opportunities and constraints that the Site presents, as summarised in Section 3 above. In terms of potential landscape character effects deriving from the scale/bulk/massing of the Proposal, I consider the scheme has resulted from a well-considered analysis and collaboration with NWŌ to create a built response that is deeply embedded in the cultural values of its place. The Site sits at the edge of an established urban environment and while of a scale and form that differs markedly from the built pattern of the immediately adjacent residential environment, this change is not unanticipated and not out of step with the outcomes envisaged by the zone and promoted by the Precinct. In that regard, I consider the configuration, form and design of the Proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of the evolving urban environment.
- 5.5 In relation to the adjacent broad and open space of Takaparawhau, the configuration and design of the podium element of the buildings will provide a direct relationship and anchor to the ground plane with activity within and at the podium top providing surveillance over and engagement with the adjacent open space. The series of residential buildings that sit atop the podium will introduce strong verticality into the landscape. The placement and design of these elements have been carefully considered to relate sensitively to the surrounding environment and to avoid adverse effects arising from their form, scale and massing on the open space character. In particular, their primary north-south alignment off-set creates an organic appearance, which together with the vertical stepping of the roof profiles, off-set stepping within the buildings, the layering of the facades and the use of materiality and colour provides an organic roofscape and a visually light appearance that contrasts with the solid base of the podium.
- 5.6 In my opinion, the detailed architectural strategy has been carefully considered to achieve a cohesive scheme, while responding to the different qualities of the surrounding context and the underpinning cultural narrative. Section 7.2 of the ADS clearly explains the strategy used for different façade expressions, with the subsequent sheets detailing the way these façade types are expressed. In my opinion, the Proposal represents a well-considered and sophisticated response that will contribute positively to the evolving urban landscape, while being respectful of the cultural values and open space qualities of the environment.

- 5.7 Section 4 of the UDLA notes that the Site is located within the urban backdrop of the coastal environment of the Waitematā Harbour and therefore consideration of AUP Chapter E18 Natural Character of the Coastal Environment and the NZCPS (in particular Policy 15) is also contextually relevant.
- 5.8 In my opinion, the Proposal will sit comfortably as part of the wider urban backdrop to the Waitematā Harbour. The Site's elevation and the verticality of building elements will create some prominence. However, with the considerable setback from the coastal marine environment, the broad expanse of the adjacent open space and the careful consideration of the placement of building forms and the use materiality and colour to integrate with the adjacent open space environment, I consider the Proposal will not diminish the existing natural character values of the coastal environment.

Visual Effects

- 5.9 The visual catchment and the identified groups that comprise the primary viewing audience for the Proposal are set out in Section 6 of the UDLA. As noted above, I agree with that analysis.
- 5.10 A detailed assessment of visual effects is set out in Section 7 of the UDLA, with reference to the 11 visual simulations prepared. In my opinion, these viewpoints provide a good range of representative views and while they are from public locations, they are also helpful to understand the nature and degree of effects experienced from private viewpoints.
- 5.11 I agree with the assessment set out in the UDLA. For residential properties immediately to the south of the Site, considerable visual change will be experienced from the Site's redevelopment. However, as set out in the UDLA and above, masterplanning for the Site and the design arrived at has configured the building forms to provide a generous setback from the southern boundary and to distinguish and further set-back the upper building forms from the lower podium base.
- 5.12 A detailed analysis of amenity effects, including visual dominance effects, experienced from properties immediately to the south of the Site is set out in Section 8.5 of the UDLA. I agree with the analysis provided. I note that the axonometric diagrams contained in RC32-10 of the Architectural Drawing Package are helpful to understand the distribution of building mass on the Site in relation to the AUP permitted height and HIRB standards. As depicted in these diagrams and in the cross sections also contained in Architectural Drawing Package, I note the generous setback of the both the podium and the further setback of the upper building forms from the Site's southern boundary. The configuration of building elements, and particularly the stepped form of Buildings 2 and 3 ensure that the permitted height in relation to boundary standard it met. The purpose of that standard (H6.6.6) is to reduce the overall visual dominance effects of buildings at upper levels. In combination with the configuration of the upper building forms, with their short ends presenting to neighbouring properties and

generous separation between these, I consider adverse visual dominance effects to be mitigated.

- 5.13 As shown in the Boundary Conditions section of the Landscape Concept package, care has been taken to create a visually sensitive interface with adjoining residential properties to the south. Solid boundary fencing, together with planting will screen views towards the internal access arrangements and parking, and filter views to the buildings beyond.
- 5.14 The UDLEA sets out an assessment in relation to each of the adjoining properties. I agree with the analysis provided, and consider the design elements set out in Para. 5.12 and 5.13 are effective in mitigating the prospect of visual dominance being experienced from these properties. Having considered the configuration of neighbouring properties and the way they interface with the Site, I conclude that the adverse visual effects experienced from 119a Rukutai Street and 104 Rukutai Street will be low. For the other properties assessed, I agree with the overall conclusion that adverse visual effects experienced will be very low.
- 5.15 I note that moving away from the immediately adjoining properties, views towards the Proposal will be variously obscured by intervening buildings and vegetation.

6 Urban Design Assessment

- 6.1 I generally agree with the urban design analysis set out in Section 8 of the UDLA report. I note that the analysis of neighbourhood character from an urban design perspective closely relates to an analysis of the landscape values of the area. I have provided comment on this above. In my opinion, while of a larger scale, including increased verticality in relation to the surrounding pattern of development, the Site can accommodate the scale and form of development proposed in a manner that contributes positively to the evolving character of the wider urban environment. In addition to responding to the established residential neighbourhood character to the south, the Proposal has also been designed to acknowledge and respond to the broad open space character of the adjacent Takaparawhau and the cultural values associated with this environment.
- 6.2 The relocation of the existing public pedestrian walkways within the Site is addressed in Section 8.2 of the UDLA report. The current alignment of the two walkways effectively breaks the Site into three separate parcels, severely limiting the potential to achieve an overall comprehensive and integrated development. The resulting configuration of possible development areas dictated by the current alignment of the walkways also limits the options available for the arrangement and configuration of buildings and how they relate to their surrounding context.

- 6.3 The relocation of the proposed walkways will enable a more integrated development response on the Site. Providing a cohesive development parcel will provide better options to accommodate a comprehensive and integrated design response. In particular, it will better facilitate the development of a comprehensive retirement village, as proposed and reflected in the application material prepared.
- 6.4 When considered in combination with the additional works proposed, including the intended enhancement of the pedestrian connection from the Aotea Street walkway to Atkin Avenue, widening the formed pathway widths, extending the formed path connecting from Te Arawa Street through to the east-west path in Takaparawhau, and enabling a comprehensive approach to their edge treatments and the way new development interfaces with these, there will be an overall improved amenity for the open space connections and creation of a sense of invitation for their use.
- 6.5 Section 8.3 of the UDLA report addresses public realm interfaces. I note that the cross sections contained in Section 4 of the Landscape Concept package are helpful to explain the detailed relationship between the Proposal and its immediately surrounding context, particularly in relation to varying ground levels.
- 6.6 In addition to the commentary provided, I note that the relationship of the Site to four public streets assists the way the Proposal stitches into the established neighbourhood with multiple entrance points. The main entrance from Aotea Street has an open aspect with a generous separation between Buildings 1 and 2 and a low-profile pavilion entrance. The resulting arrival experience is legible and welcoming. As set out in Section 8.2 of the UDLA report, pedestrian connectivity from the established residential neighbourhood to Takaparawhau will be maintained by the relocation of public walkways through the Site as proposed. I agree that safe and convenient pedestrian connectivity will be maintained.
- 6.7 In my opinion, the interface with Takaparawhau has been carefully considered and derived from a respect for the deep cultural values of the land. As noted earlier in the report, the cultural narrative gifted to the Project has underpinned the design process. While creating a prominent built edge to Takaparawhau, the scale and form is appropriate, and I consider a respectful interface is created.
- 6.8 The varied condition along the Takaparawhau interface is clearly described in the UDLA. In my opinion, the distribution of activities, and the associated architectural and landscape strategy responds positively to the varied ground condition of the adjacent open space. In addition to the comments set out in the UDLA, I note that direct pedestrian access proposed from the Point to Takaparawhau is provided from the Sensory and Wellness garden in front of Building 4.
- 6.9 Section 8.4 of the UDLA report addresses the on-site residential amenity created by the Proposal. At a broader level, I consider there is a positive amenity effect achieved by developing the Site in an efficient and comprehensive manner to meet the needs and preferences of elderly residents. As noted in the UDLA, the Proposal provides

residents with direct physical access to the adjacent Takaparawhau open space. Being in an elevated location, it also provides expansive views to the wider landscape. In my opinion, the Site is well located to integrate with an established neighbourhood and is proximate to a range of services and amenities (including the adjacent open space).

- 6.10 The UDLA notes the provision of convenient access to a wider variety of indoor and outdoor communal facilities. I note that the configuration of a range of activity spaces along the podium top has been carefully considered and arranged to create a social heart to the Point. The configuration and design of courtyard spaces on the podium responds to the adjacent internal activity spaces to create a series of outdoor rooms with distinctive functions and character. This is set out in the Landscape Concept package.
- 6.11 As noted above, I consider the masterplanning of the Site has resulted from careful analysis of the characteristics of the Site and the way it relates to its surrounding context. It facilitates the efficient development of a valuable land resource in a manner that achieves good on-site amenity and responds to and respects its surrounding context.
- 6.12 A key amenity consideration of the masterplanning, and my involvement in this particular matter, is the way the Proposal interfaces with neighbouring residential properties to the south and the resulting amenity effects on residents of those properties. An analysis of these effects is set out in Section 8.5 and 8.6 of the UDLA. As noted, “the Proposal has been carefully designed to ameliorate its massing in respect of its residential neighbours to the south”.³ I note that this includes meeting the height in relation to boundary standard in relation to the southern boundary. The purpose of this standard is to minimise the adverse effects of building height on neighbours (i.e. dominance and shading) and reduce the overall visual dominance of buildings at upper levels).
- 6.13 I agree with the detailed analysis set out in Section 8.5 of the UDLA. I also note that the cross sections (A-E) contained in Section 4 of the Landscape Concept package are helpful to demonstrate the immediate interface condition proposed along the southern boundary. In terms of potential shading effects, I agree with the analysis set out in Section 8.6 of the UDLA and the conclusion that potential adverse shading effects will be negligible.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 I agree with the conclusion drawn in Section 9 of the UDLA report and the key points noted. In my opinion, the Proposal has been developed through a rigorous design process and will make a positive contribution to the evolving urban environment, while

³ Section 8.5, UDLA, Boffa Miskell, 10/09/25

respecting the established urban and landscape characteristics and values of the area. In particular, the Proposal is respectful of the cultural values expressed by NWŌ and the Site's design response is underpinned by a powerful cultural narrative. In my opinion, the Proposal represents an innovative living environment for the elderly and will integrate with and make a positive contribution to its surrounding context.



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