

MEMO

Project	10476 The Point Mission Bay
Date	11 March 2026
Subject	The Point: Mission Bay Panel Minute 3: Request for Information
Prepared	By <i>Peta Nichols</i> on behalf of Warren and Mahoney Living New Zealand Ltd

On 27 February 2026, the Panel held a Project Overview Conference with the Applicant and Auckland Council. Minute 3 of the Panel seeks clarification on a number of matters, including [3](c) – The cultural narrative for the design as noted below:

[10] During the Project Overview Conference, the Applicant’s team explained the design methodology, the importance of the cultural narrative that underpins the design and the importance of restoring the mana of the site. The Panel found this explanation to be of interest.

[11] The Panel would be assisted if the Applicant could provide a further explanation as to how the Project Design, in terms of the overall approach to its height, bulk and massing, are important mana enhancing features of the Proposal from the perspective of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei.

1. Joe Pihema on behalf of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei describes the cultural narrative for the design as:

He mātārae kua tauria e te kapua is a whakataukī that uses the natural world to explain a recurring human phenomena. A mātārae is a lofty headland — a point of land that rises prominently above its surroundings, strong, visible, and enduring against wind and sea. In this imagery, the headland represents people who have lived long lives and stand elevated through experience, learning, and reflection.

The kapua — the grey clouds — settling upon the headland evoke the image of grey hair resting upon the heads of elders. Grey hair becomes a quiet symbol of longevity, knowledge, and wisdom gained through time. Just as clouds naturally gather upon the highest points of the land, wisdom gathers upon those who have journeyed through life and reached its later stages.

When applied to a proposed retirement village, the whakataukī acknowledges the people who will live there as the mātārae of the community — those who have reached the high point of life. The “grey clouds” reflect the grey hair of age, honouring the experience, stories, and wisdom carried by its residents.

2. The Project Design responds to this narrative through its overall approach to height, bulk and massing, with the architectural composition being structured around three elements that directly reflect the narrative: the headlands (mātārae), the human domain and the clouds (kapua).

Through the design process, the building forms were developed to express qualities associated with both clouds and headlands. Cloud-like forms are expressed through horizontality, lightness, layering and the breaking up of building edges. Headland forms are expressed through a heavier and more grounded architectural language, including stronger horizontal articulation, depth variation and building forms that step in response to the site. The relative height and scale of the proposed buildings enable these elements to be strongly legible within the architecture when viewed from within the site and from wider public viewpoints.

The Headlands

The “headland” element is expressed in podium form.

The site has a significant cross fall of approximately 26 metres, and the podium responds to this topography. To read as a grounded landform within this sloping context, the podium generally comprises a minimum of three storeys.

The bulk and scale of the podium are important in establishing a strong base to the composition, analogous to a headland rising from the land. The massing steps and modulates as it follows the changing levels across the site, stepping up where the landform rises and stepping in and out to accommodate internal uses while articulating the overall form.

The Human Domain

The “human domain” sits between the headland and cloud elements and is generally expressed at Level 03 of the proposal. This level is conceived as the place for residents to gather and socialise within various internal and external amenity spaces. It is single storey with a generous four metre floor-to-floor height.

This height is determined by the functional requirements of the communal spaces it contains but height also plays an important role in visually separating the grounded headland forms below from the lighter cloud forms above. The façade at this level is set back relative to the building forms above and below, accentuating this separation and reinforcing the layered composition of the architecture.

The Clouds

The upper building forms metaphorically represent the “clouds”. Their height and elevation enable them to visually sit within the “sky” layer of the natural landscape strengthening the presence of these elements within the wider context, including from longer distance views such as from Tāmaki Drive.

Rather than forming a single continuous mass along the length of the site, these upper elements are arranged as a series of smaller building volumes that rotate to vary their orientation and step down the site following the natural progression of the landscape.

Stepping in plan and elevation breaks down the overall bulk of the development and creates a layered composition consistent with the qualities associated with clouds, including softness of edges, variation in depth and a lighter visual expression.

Through this approach, the height, bulk and massing of the development are integral to expressing the cultural narrative of *He mātārae kua tauria e te kapua*. The architecture therefore seeks to acknowledge and celebrate the elders who will live within the village, reflecting their status as the *mātārae* - the elevated and respected members of the community.

Further explanation of how this narrative is expressed in the architecture is provided on pages 24–25 and 53 - 58 of the Architectural Design Report prepared by Warren and Mahoney and submitted with the substantive application.

3. Concluding comment from Joe Pihema on behalf of Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei:

“Kei ngā rangatira, tēnā koutou. I couldn’t be more pleased with the design interpretation by Warren and Mahoney of the cultural narrative. The development itself is the embodiment of the human aspect and brings to life the reverence and respect for our kaumātua and kuia through a considered and high-quality design. Secondly, the physical aspect of the building and layering of the narrative gives clear indication of the high-level of understanding and alignment Warren and Mahoney had for the cultural narrative. From a Ngāti Whātua perspective, this proposal not only elevates our own cultural philosophy and narrative but restores mana to the site and wider whenua on Takaparawhau.”