

1.0 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Application and property details

Fast-Track project name:

Downtown Carpark Site Development

Fast-Track application number:

FTAA-2512-1158

BUN60460864, LUC60460865, DIS60460866 and WAT60460867

2.0 Technical Specialist Memo – Arboriculture

To:

Sarah Wilson – Lead Planner & Adonica Giborees – PPL

From:

Rhys Caldwell, Specialist (Arborist), Specialist Unit, Planning and Resource Consents – Auckland Council

Qualifications
& Relevant
Experience:

I have a Trade Certificate in Amenity Horticulture (1993) and an Advanced Certificate in Arboricultural (2014) and have 36 years of experience within the horticultural and arboriculture industries with the last 9 years as a regulatory arborist at Auckland Council.

I am a member of the New Zealand Arboricultural Association. I have prepared expert evidence and technical assessments for resource consent applications, plan changes, notices of requirement for designation and fast-track applications, and have appeared as an expert witness before consent authorities and the Environment Court on multiple occasions.

Preparation in
Accordance
with the Code
of Conduct:

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.

Signature:



Date:

13 April 2026

3.0 Executive Summary / Principal Issues

The application seeks to demolish the existing Downtown Carpark Building and develop an approximately 170,000 square-metre gross building area mixed-use commercial and residential precinct comprising 2 towers.

There are existing protected trees adjacent to the site that will require either pruning or works within their protected root zones. It is also proposed to plant four 2000-litre grade pōhutukawa trees on the corner of Lower Hobson Street and Quay Street.

4.0 Documents Reviewed

The following documents have been reviewed in preparing this memorandum:

- Assessment Environmental Effects – titled Downtown Carpark Site Development – Fast-Track Approvals Substantive Application – 2 Lower Hobson Street, Auckland CBD, prepared by B & A Urban & Environmental, dated 18 December 2025
- Appendix 18 - Arboricultural Assessment – prepared by Peers Brown Miller Ltd, dated 04/11/25
- Appendix 9B_Landscape Drawings Off-site Tree Planting
- Appendix 9A_Architectural Drawings Part 2.
- Appendix 24: Proposed Consent Conditions
- Appendix 6 - Architecture and Landscape – s67 response.

5.0 Additional Reasons for Consent Not included in AEE / Incorrect Reasons for Consent

- From an arboricultural perspective the reasons for consent have been identified. The removal, pruning and works within the protected root zone will be permitted activity under E17.4.1 – A5, A7 & A9.
- There is rule E17.4.1 - A11 that allows for the planting of trees over utilities with a mature height of more than 4m as a permitted activity.

6.0 Specialist Assessment

- 6.1. The arboricultural assessment by Peers Brown Miller has identified the tree trees surrounding the site that will be impacted by the proposal. From an arboricultural perspective this is a fairly low risk activity and the impacts upon the trees are within the E17 permitted activity standards. The

subject site is not subject to any overlays that would protect the tree population within the site. The non-protected trees within the site are exotic species.

- 6.2. The arboricultural assessment has included “Recommended Tree Protection Measures” to manage the tree works to be undertaken within or adjacent to the protected trees. With projects of this nature the key to success, from an arboricultural perspective, is having an appropriate level of tree protection to ensure any trees being retained are adequately protected and ensuring onsite arboricultural supervision when works may impact upon a protected tree or trees.
- 6.3. Provided that the works are undertaken as recommended within the arboricultural assessment and in accordance with the recommended conditions, any impact upon the retained trees can be managed to an acceptable level.
- 6.4. Overall, I can support the proposal.

7.0 Section 67 Information Gap

At the time of writing this Memo I have identified the following information gaps:

Description of Missing Information

- 7.1. It is my understanding that the planting of the four 2000-litre grade pōhutukawa trees on the corner of Lower Hobson Street and Quay Street is required to mitigate some of the effects associated with the development.
- 7.2. The ability to plant trees of this size in this location is dependent on whether there are any underground obstructions or existing or proposed services. At present there are both stormwater and wastewater connections in the vicinity of these trees. It is not clear from the information provided if there is a conflict. The area provided also looks fairly small to establish four trees of this species. In comparison, there is an existing Pohutukawa to the north of the proposed planting location that occupies a similar space to the four trees proposed to be planted.
- 7.3. Confirmation of the ability to practically plant these trees should be provided, taking into account any potential underground obstructions, their species and their potential size as they mature.

Review of Applicants’ Section 67 Response

- 7.4. The response has confirmed that only a desktop review was undertaken regarding the planting of the four Pohutukawa trees. The response has confirmed that the potential tree pit volume will be between 15m³ and 20m³.

- 7.5. The total volume of soil or growing medium that a tree has, will ultimately determine a tree's final size and life span. If the volume is restricted, this will also restrict a tree's potential size and the benefits it provides. Determining if the volume being allocated is sufficient is dependent on what the purpose of the planting is and what is trying to be achieved.
- 7.6. Based upon the current volume of the planting pits, the trees are unlikely to attain a natural full mature canopy spread and size, compared to a tree with an unrestricted growing environment.

8.0 Recommendation

Based upon the information provided, I can support the proposal.

9.0 Proposed Conditions

The following amendments to the conditions should be considered.

Pre-construction meeting

45. Prior to the commencement of each stage of construction including demolition, enabling works and earthworks, the consent holder must hold a pre-start meeting that:
 - a. is located on the Site;
 - b. is scheduled **not less than five days** before the anticipated demolition works are to commence;
 - c. is scheduled **not less than five days** before the anticipated commencement of enabling works, earthworks and construction;
 - d. includes an Auckland Council Monitoring Officer;
 - e. includes representation from the contractors who will undertake the works; and
 - f. includes the project works arborist; and
 - g. includes the project archaeologist (excluded for the demolition stage)

The meeting will include a discussion on the methodology for the stage, including management plan requirements, and shall ensure all relevant parties are aware of and familiar with the necessary conditions of this consent.

The meeting prior to the commencement of demolition works must include agreement of the locations of tree protective fencing as required by conditions of this consent and record those locations.

Tree Protection

58. ~~All tree work proposed must~~ The consent holder must ensure that all tree work be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations within the Arboricultural Assessment, prepared by Peers Brown Miller Ltd, dated 04/11/2025, as listed in condition 1. A copy of this Arboricultural Assessment must be available onsite at all times.
59. ~~No~~ The consent holder must ensure that no excavations are to be undertaken within the protected root zones of any street trees (including those within Sturdee Street Reserve) as part of the works, as all hard surfaces or foundations are beyond the canopy of the identified trees. If any alterations are required, further advice must be sought from the works arborist.
60. The protected root zone of the street trees must be considered sacrosanct. No building or fill materials must be stored or placed within the protected areas, either on a temporary or permanent basis.
61. Protective fencing of at least 1.8m high must be installed at an appropriate alignment on the edge of the root zone, under the guidance of the appointed project works arborist. This fencing must be installed at the edge of the root zone where practicable.
62. The fencing as required in condition 61 must remain in place for the duration of the Project in order to best protect the subject trees. The fencing is to be rent-o style steel mesh sections. The location of this fencing is to be as described in conditions 61 and 62 must be confirmed and approved at the pre-construction meetings required by condition 45.
63. All pruning works are to be undertaken by a Council Approved Arborist under the supervision of the project works arborist. The pruning is to be recorded and added to the completion log.
64. Compliance with all conditions of consent relating to tree protection must be monitored by the appointed project works arborist, with the detail of each visit and communication being logged. The completed log must be provided to the consent holder at the completion of the project to serve as a compliance report and made available to the Council on request.