Beachlands South Fast-track

Auckland Council Specialist Memo

Annexure I:

Universal Design

Nidhi Nautiyal

09 October 2026

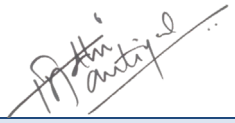
1.0 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Application and property details

Fast-Track project name:	Beachlands South
Fast-Track application number:	EPA reference: FTAA-2606-1256 Council reference: BUN60467962

2.0 Technical Specialist Memo - Universal Design Specialist -Nidhi Nautiyal

To:	Brooke Dales – Lead Planner Adonica Giborees – Principal Project Lead
From:	Nidhi Nautiyal – Principal Universal Design Specialist, Auckland Council
Qualifications & Relevant Experience:	I hold a Bachelor of Architecture, a Master in Sustainable Architecture, and a doctorate in Architecture (Community facilities focused multi-residential developments) and have 18 years of combined work experience in architecture & planning (TODs and walkable catchments), 6 years of specialisation in Universal Design and 5 years of teaching experience (UoA). I have been at the Council as a Specialist Universal Designer for the past 4.5 years. I am an affiliated member of NZIA**.** I have offered universal design-related advice for resource consent applications, universal design audits for mixed-use developments within plan changes, and notices of requirement for designation applications, including CRL. I also liaise with AT as part of an advisory group that deals with all matters of public access and safety on public transport, comprising disabled advocates from various organisations.
Preparation in Accordance with the Code of Conduct:	I confirm that I have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 – Code of Conduct. While not having appeared as an expert witness in any proceedings, I assure you that I have compiled responses based on my experience in my role as a universal design SME at the Council. 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. I also agree to follow the Code when participating in any subsequent processes, such as an expert conference, if directed by the Panel.

Signature:	Nidhi Nautiyal (PhD), Principal Specialist Universal Design, Auckland Council 
Date:	09.10.2026

3.0 Executive Summary / Principal Issues

This Universal Design memorandum reviews a Fast-track substantive application (FTAA) for 'Beachlands South', included in Schedule 2 of the FTAA as a Listed Project with significant regional or national benefits. The Project location or Site is situated across approximately 159.58 hectares of live-zoned land and approximately 108.6 hectares of Future Urban-zoned land at 110 Jack Lachlan Drive and at 620, 712, 758, and 770 Whitford-Maraetai Road, Beachlands.

Matters concerning pedestrian safety and movement were raised under s67 RFIs, to which the applicant team responded satisfactorily, except for details on the housing typology.

Section 6 comments on those responses and further assesses new information shared by the applicant on pedestrian safety around streets and crossings, ease of access to public areas within the development, the provision, design and nature of residential dwellings, the provision of accessible parking, and the importance of accessible playgrounds in large mixed-use developments.

4.0 Documents Reviewed

The following documents have been reviewed in preparing this memorandum:

- Attach 0B Planning Assessment
- Attach 0B2 s67 Response Table
- Attach 0C Proposed Conditions of consent
- Attach 1_ Beachlands South Design report, Rev C
- Attach 2_Architectural drawing Set
- Attach 2.11 & 2.12 (response to RFIs)
- Attach 3_Open space strategy
- Attach 4 Beachlands South_UDA -Rev B (Rev A - Final on cover)
- Attach 8 ITA

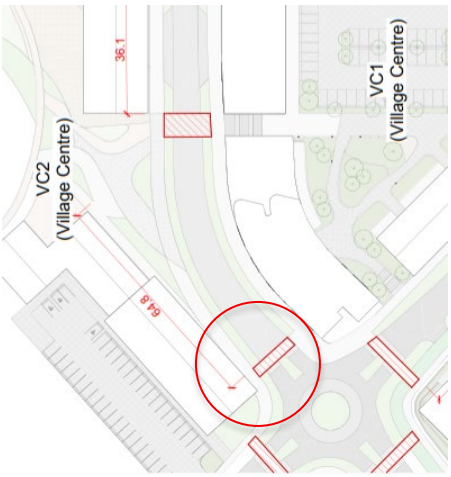
5.0 Additional Reasons for Consent Not Included in AEE / Incorrect Reasons for Consent

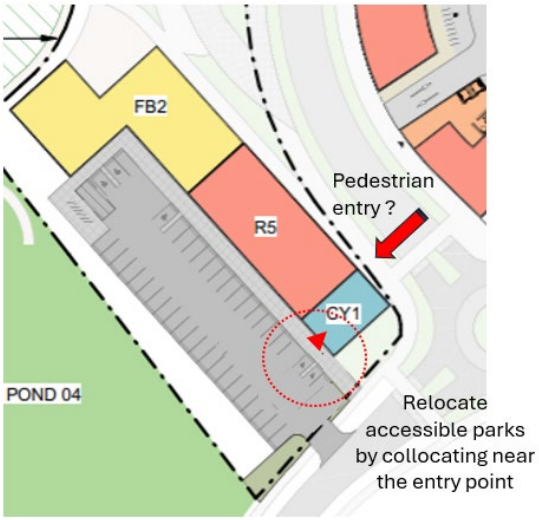
None

6.0 Specialist Assessment

6.1 Location of Community facility block

The rationale for locating the community facility building, stating the strategic corner location, with entry points from the South and End, has been noted in Appx 2.11. including reasons such as uninterrupted views adding visual relief at the upper level.



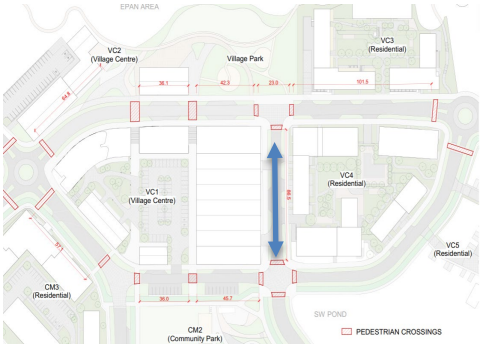


While noting the pedestrian crossing on the main street (also serving as the main bus route) leading to the community building, it is assumed the street-facing side will be the main pedestrian entry point, effectively rendering the car park entry at the rear of the building the secondary entrance. Considering this rationale, the location of the community facilities block is justified as it prioritises pedestrian linkages to a main entrance over a hidden secondary entrance.

However, the location of the accessible car parks should be revised. I advise moving the provision closest to the rear entry to minimise the length of the accessible travel route. An alternative, highlighted in a circle, is shown in Fig. 2 as a suggestion for the design team.

6.3 Pedestrian crossings between Village centres (VC)

The longest distance between two crossings located between VC1 and VC4 is indicated as 86.5m. It sits well within the 80-100m guide for urban environments to maintain pedestrian convenience and safety, and therefore, an acceptable distance apart.



6.4 Vehicle crossings and footpath conflict

Segment covered by others in detail.

The response to concerns raised under s67universal design RFIs regarding possible pedestrian-vehicle collision due to multiple crossing points has been noted under the Urban design tab of the 0B Response table.

I note the similar concerns raised by the urban designer and support any further design recommendations they may add to minimise conflict points, such as consolidating vehicular entries, changing the orientation of building blocks, or any other design amendments they may propose for enhanced outcomes.

6.5 CPTED concerns common areas, including car parking, open green, and coastal edges

I have noted the response in Attach 2.12, p5, which suggests a few design strategies to enhance passive surveillance and improve visibility in the proposal by creating a well-considered movement network with pedestrian links adjoining open spaces, building orientation facing linkages and open spaces, maintaining clear sightlines, landscape treatment, and avoiding inactive rear boundaries.

I concur with the design team's approach, as a combination of the above-mentioned strategies is useful in creating a 'sense of safety' for pedestrians, including children, using streets and extended play areas and agree that a well-worked-out design based on intuitive wayfinding principles remains the key to design out crime.

For a thorough pedestrian safety analysis, further recommendations include developing an integrated movement-pattern and building-orientation plan for each cluster within the development to ensure no areas remain unassessed. This assessment may be carried out in conjunction with a lighting and signage plan before lodging the building consent application. Alternatively, a CPTED assessment may be carried out by an expert consultant.

6.6 Housing typologies & apartment design

The s67 RFI response sheet does not address my query regarding the percentage of affordable units, housing accessibility parameters, and universal design aspects of the proposed housing typologies.

It is noted in Attach 1 Design report Rev C, that a variety of apartment typologies will be introduced. I support the design team's consideration of including a range of apartment sizes there, from 1-bed to 4-bed, to cater to a variety of household sizes. The location of higher-density apartment blocks at the fringes, with easy access to open space, transport, and amenities, is also commended. The proposed live-work units near the Eastern edge complement the area's light industry.

Similarly, Attach 4 UDA reflects a balanced mix of uses in the proposal for appropriate intensification, but does not address the design quality of the dwellings of the proposed housing typologies.

Housing provisions with diverse income mix, typologies, sizes and universal access considerations allow a wide range of household types to enjoy affordable, equitable rental or homeownership opportunities. Refer to the ADM apartment guide for universal design https://www.aucklanddesignmanual.co.nz/en/urban-design-guidance-and-processes.html. Therefore, to create equitable housing opportunities, the following aspects should be considered during the detailed dwelling design stage.

- A mix of housing tenures with a tenure-blind architectural approach – A certain percentage of the total housing stock to be proposed as affordable, including tenures such as affordable rental & alternative procurement models, as well as market-rate.
- Universal design dwelling standards - A certain percentage of dwellings within each housing typology designed in accordance with universal design access parameters such as ease of access from the footpath to the building entrance, step-free thresholds at ground level, and wheelchair- and pram-friendly gradients of less than 1:12.
- Accessible dwelling design - A certain percentage of dwellings within each housing typology to be designed with accessibility features (including wider corridors, accessible toilets and dedicated accessible parking).

6.7 Accessible parking ratios

I have noted the accessible car parking ratios worked out in Table 7.10 of Attach 8 ITA, and support excess provision in certain areas. Design-wise, creating accessible car parking aisles post-construction is challenging and expensive due to the additional 1.1m bay requirement; hence, excess provision at the design stage is a good strategy.

The allocation of general car spaces and their accessible component for VC2 (retail, food and beverage, and community), however, is missing from the table.

E4	12	1	Yes - 1
CM3	114	4	Yes - 4
VC1	54	3	Yes – 3
VC3	82	3	Yes - 3
VC4	150	4	Yes – 3

The accessible car parking design has also been noted in figures 7-54 – 59 in the same document.

Whereas fig 7-56 arrangement works best for parking, reversing and accessing the lift core, with minimal Continuous Accessible Path of Travel (CAPT) requirement, arrangements in fig 57 & 58 should be reconsidered with a suggestion to move the provision adjacent to the lift core in order to avoid wheelchair-vehicle

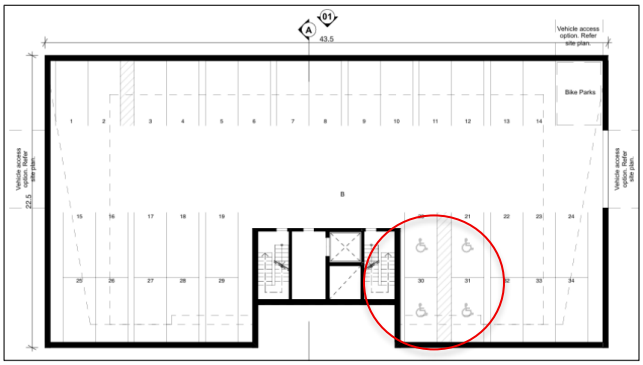


Figure 7-55: Type 2 Parking Layout

conflict, or adequately provide a safe CAPT from its current location.

The allocation of accessible car parks 30 & 31 in fig 7-55 type 2 parking with back-to-back parking bays appears impractical. Similarly, it seems the general car parking arrangement in type 1, fig 54, needs resolution. Arrangements may be modified before lodging the building consent. Refer to NZS 4121 for accessible parking guidelines.

6.8 Accessible playgrounds

I have noted the design teams' intention to consider a fully accessible playground in it's s67 response.

The 'suburb park', located at the centre of the Site, has been noted in particular as *"the primary destination" open space for Beachlands South, providing a larger catchment recreation space with a mix of flexible fields, play and social infrastructure.* My further advice, therefore, is to explore this provision as an all-age-friendly, accessible playground by incorporating sensory engagement equipment to promote inclusivity for children and adults with mobility issues and cognitive challenges.

As mentioned earlier, research suggests that in New Zealand, 1 in 4 people live with a disability, yet many adults and children are deprived of recreational facilities as regular playgrounds continue to remain inaccessible to those with special physical and cognitive needs. Developers of large-scale mixed-use developments, therefore, must champion universal access in design, products, and services to promote social inclusion.

7.0 Section 67 Information Gap

7.1. From a universal design perspective, no critical gaps have been identified, warranting withholding the decision for this application.

8.0 Recommendation

In my assessment, I do not identify any reasons to withhold consent based on the information provided in the proposal regarding pedestrian linkages, movement, and safety.

I therefore consider the consent to be granted with the following conditions and additional information provided to either the Auckland Council Universal Design Specialist or the Urban Designer before lodging the building consent.

9.0 Proposed Conditions

Design, Layout and Finishing of Buildings		
Condition	**Design, Layout and Finishing of Buildings**	**Comment or suggestion**
3	The housing typologies within the Beachlands South Housing Typologies document (as referenced in Condition [1] may be constructed on the residential lots specified in this Typologies document, in accordance with the identified lot size. The final design for each lot shall be submitted to the Council for certification of compliance with this Condition.	I agree with this Condition.
3A	*Before lodging the Architectural Building Consent (ABC), a finalised Apartment Schedule and apartment drawings must be submitted to the Council for written certification. The information must include the following:* *a. An analysis demonstrating efforts to consider Universal Design parameters in apartments closest to vertical circulation hubs, alongside an updated Apartment Schedule identifying dwellings designed to be accessible to meet design and access requirements, amounting to either 1% of the dwellings within each apartment complex or 5% of the total dwellings in the development, whichever is less.* *b. The ABC should provide for a range of dwelling sizes;* *c. Updated floor plans for each of the apartments to meet the above parameters* *d. A statement prepared by a Universal Design specialist or accessibility consultant confirming all considerations for Universal Design undertaken in general, and how design parameters for the accessible apartments have been met.* *e. Any changes proposed to the certified Universal Design Apartment Schedule must also be certified in writing by the Council prior to implementation.*	Advice notes: 1. Auckland Council Research (TR2025/31): Published in June 2026, the Auckland Council technical report "*Experience of disabled Aucklanders in medium-density housing*" found that most medium -density housing (MDH) dwellings lacked basic accessibility and flexibility at the design stage. Also, post-occupancy retrofitting and modifications resulting from inadvertently acquired injuries or disabilities impose substantial costs on the homeowner/renter. Therefore, the universal design team encourages a certain percentage of total dwellings to incorporate universal design features at the design stage. 2. Accreditation can be sought by the Consent Holder Accessibility Assessors, such as Lifemark (or equivalent), working to maximise accessibility, mobility, and adaptability for the aged or disabled.