

## **William Field – Senior Urban Designer**

### **(Landscape Architect)**

*I have reviewed the planting proposal for RMA/2024/2460 in relation to 15.13.1 (new 15.14.1) Urban design and 15.2.4.1 Policy b (iii) - Scale and form of development ( maintain a low rise built form to respect and integrate with their suburban residential context). These comments were initially been prepared in relation to the Landscape Plan Rev D. Some identified issues have been addressed by Rev E, however I consider there are still some outstanding issues which I have highlighted as recommend amendments to the planting proposal. These are underlined below.*

#### Overall Planting

*The overall character of the planting proposal would be that of a mixed native and exotic plants with a predominance of exotic deciduous trees (with narrow canopy forms), and low native underplanting. It is noted that the Prestons (North and South) Outline Development Plan (Appendix 8.10.25) for this area, provides a plant list which is predominantly native with some options for specimen large exotic trees. The planting proposal includes some native species from this list but is not broadly consistent with the list.*

#### Eastern Boundary Planting

*Immediately adjoining the site on the east side is a public reserve with an existing publicly-used path. Building E would have a paved strip along this boundary. It is unclear what the purpose of this surface would be but no planting was initially proposed along the boundary.*

*Planting should be incorporated into this section of the boundary for an amenity treatment that would soften and visually integrate the 54m (approx.) long commercial building façade onto the amenity landscape of the reserve. Along this boundary, I recommend that sections of planting co-ordinated with gaps between proposed windows (providing for CPTED surveillance) should be provided. This has now been included in the amended in Rev E of the proposed Planting Plan.*

*Adjacent to this building to the south, is a section of carpark with 6 proposed upright oaks and a row of unspecified lower boundary planting. It is unclear what fencing is proposed along this boundary. I consider that the proposed oaks should be substituted for an evergreen species such as Podocarpus totara to provide all year round visual screening of the carpark from the reserve, and a hedge such as Griselinia littoralis, maintained no higher than 1.2 metres for surveillance, should be planted. The open 2.0m high pool fencing should be extended along the full length of the site boundary to Preston's Road. This has now been addressed in the amended in Rev E of the proposed Planting Plan with evergreen Magnolia tree species.*

#### South Eastern Corner Planting

*In the south eastern corner of the site, the applicant has proposed to plant an area with trees and shrubs that is beyond the cadastral boundaries of the site. This is presumably to mitigate views of the commercial building and fencing from Georgina Street and residential properties in this area. Three Liriodendron trees are proposed plus underplanted gardens beds of native shrubs and small trees. In my opinion, this planting would not fully screen the fencing, and the trees would be deciduous opening views during winter.*

*In relation to this corner, I recommend that:*

- *The 3 Liriodendrons are substituted for 6 Hoheria angustifolia (evenly spaced apart) and the underplanting increased with more planting such as Pittosporum tenuifolium that would fully screen the acoustic fencing.*
- *The applicant should locate the acoustic fence and mitigation planting within the application site cadastral boundaries in this corner area in case the planting beyond the site is removed or not well maintained overtime by others.*

### South Boundary Planting

*Along the southern boundary is a proposed 3m wide planting strip with the existing 1.8m timber fence and a proposed acoustic fence, and planting on a battered slope. Based on an indicative cross-section analysis of the proposed building heights and sightlines I consider that 6-8m high trees should be planted along this boundary to screen (in time) and mitigate the visual impact of the large commercial building on the outlooks from the adjacent suburban residential area.*

*I recommend that the following tree species should be planted along this boundary; Hoheria angustifolia, Pittosporum eugenioides, Pittosporum tenuifolium, Carpodetus serratus, Pseudopanax arboreus at max 4m spacings. These have been selected from [Flammability of Plant Species | Fire and Emergency New Zealand](#) to help address potential fire risk along the boundary (as I understand is an issue raised by FENZ).*

*The following infill planting should be provided at 1m spacings (to reduce maintenance within this confined area)*

*Coprosma robusta – karamu*

*Coprosma repens – taupata*

*Griselinia littoralis - broadleaf or kapuka*

*Pseudopanax crassifolius - horoeka or lancewood*

*The viability and healthy growth of planting on this battered slope will be an important consideration. Adequate topsoil irrigation, mulching and maintenance will be required and details of this should be provided as part of the application.*

*It is noted that this area could be used for unwanted access. To avoid this occurring the ends of the fenced landscape strip should be carefully secured so that the fences are not climbable from publicly accessible areas such as the reserve and cul-de-sac end. The use of prickly plants as a deterrent has been suggested however I consider that this would restrict access for ongoing maintenance of this area. These could be used at the end to assist with security where maintenance access could still be achieved. A suitable plant would be Pyracantha – Firethorn.*

*I also consider that the southern façades of the buildings should be painted/coloured with recessive earth-tone colours that would provide a recessive backdrop for the boundary planting and reduce the potential visual impact of the large buildings on the residential amenity of the adjoining suburban area. A colour reflectance value of less than 20% should be used.*

*I have not addressed lighting levels and glare affecting the residential zone as part of this review but consider that the impact and potential adverse effects of this could be an issue to address through the consent.*

### Western Boundary Planting

*Along the western boundary low native planting with intermittent native *Plagianthus regius* and exotic *Acer rubrum* deciduous trees are proposed. This site boundary adjoins a site that is part of the Commercial Zone with what appears to be an engineering business and a residential dwelling to the rear. The site is well planted with large areas of trees and landscaping. The application site is proposed to be well planted in the area with low and deciduous species. I consider that some evergreen tree species along this boundary would provide screening of the proposed commercial buildings, carparks and operations while this area is being used for residential living.*

### Prestons Road Frontage

*The Prestons Road frontage is proposed to have upright oak trees and low native underplanting along the entire length of the frontage, except where vehicle entrances are provided. I consider this would provide for adequate street front amenity for the frontage.*

*It is noted that positions of the trees do not appear to have been well considered in relation to visibility the proposed pylon signs. This may in time result in the trees being heavily pruned or removed. I consider that this could be avoided with further strategic positioning of the trees to provide for signage visibility and frontage amenity.*

*The proposed internal site planting around the carparks is all proposed to be deciduous leaving the site devoid of foliage over the winter periods. In my opinion, this area should be given some evergreen tree planting such as Podocarpus totara to provide for winter amenity.*

*I also note that there is no proposed tree planting within the large area of carpark bays to the rear of the carpark. In my opinion, this area should be provided with at least 14 large deciduous trees and 3 evergreen trees (in 1.5 x1.5 tree pits with raised concrete nib protection as per Appendix 6.11.6 Landscaping and Tree Planting - Rules and Guidance) to provide for adequate landscape amenity and shade.*