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KD Holdings Ltd.

This submission is not presented as an expert witness, but in my professional capacity as a Registered Architect supporting my Form 13 submission as a director of Noremac Properties Ltd. dated 02 October 2020, and in response to some of the concerns raised by the objectors. I concur with the statement of evidence of Clive Cullen Architect.

I am a 4th generation Taranakian with parents and grandparents in the building industry and lived in New Plymouth all my life apart from 5 years at Auckland University and 6 months travelling Europe in 1964 and working in London 1964 – 1965. My grandfather and father's company Boon Bros Ltd built both the 1896, 49 Brougham Street and the 1925 Salvation Army Citadel, 38 Powderham Street buildings. I have been practising as an architect for 60 years including my own practice for 47 years with projects including Civic, Cultural, Education, Commercial, NZ Embassy Riyadh Saudi Arabia, and industrial. I have travelled every few years on 4 week long study tours to Europe, USA, Japan and Australia with particular interest in historical buildings, urban design and Art Museums. I am a Registered Architect, was President of the NZIA 1985 – 1987 and have a record of trying to save heritage buildings. I have been involved in restoring, renovating and retrofitting heritage buildings. Some examples are -

- 1967 retrofitted the Regent Cinema in Queen Street to create the highly regarded Govett Brewster Art Gallery including recycling steel timber beams and floor joists.



- 1968 restored the Gables, Colonial Hospital in Brooklands Park, removing rotted two tooth borer framing, new roof, researching to find the original colour when in Mangorei Road was grey.



- 1968 as the NPDC Centennial Project refurbished the NP Opera House which had been scheduled for demolition and I along with others made representation to save. Redesigned Gallery stair to give inside foyer access realigned the Stalls seating to be curved to fit with the “horse shoe” circle giving improved sight lines and new lighting enhancing the classic interior without changing the upper exterior façade/roof.



- 1998 major alteration and addition to create the TSB Showplace with the addition using sheet glass to contrast and emphasise the 1920 NP Opera House exterior, in particular the vertical element of the glass sheathed lift shaft.



- 1969 was part of a vocal group raising money to unsuccessfully save the Post Office Clock Tower from demolition. 1983 we prepared designs to replace the clock tower where fortunately the original clock faces, mechanisms and bells had been saved. Controversial alternative designs were considered and a free standing “replica” tower was built using contemporary materials, pre-cast concrete, acrylic facing which could be illuminated. Had to fight hard to have the tower located over the footpath because this, along with its location at the crest of the hill and centred on Queen Street (as a counterpoint to the cenotaph to the North) was a crucial element of its reconstruction.



- 1970 earthquake proofed the stone Te Henui Vicarage by connecting reinforced concrete walls to the interior, preserving the special exterior character.



- 1971 restored Hurworth House on Carrington Road by removing unfortunate additions and discovering the numbered internal wall framing which had been shipped from the UK and identifying where the original exterior doors and windows had been.



- I have been actively involved in the development of the Bowl of Brooklands as a member of the Bowl of Brooklands Trust Board 1970 – 1977 and from 1997 – 2001 created the Masterplan and detail design to redevelop and extend the stage with a curved canopy attached to the original “shell”, back of house, reconfiguring the lake, seating and bowl contour to improve sight lines. A service road was added giving “out of sight” access to the rear of the stage which finally made it a complete theatre experience.

- As part of our design for Puke Ariki project we saved the Wilkinson building façade and incorporated it into the foyer design. Wilkinson was a prominent Taranaki businessman; it was a well-proportioned, modelled façade and was on the line of Huatoki Stream’s estuary which is noted in the City and Town Centre Design Guide where F.A. Carrington 1842 survey plan “recognised the Huatoki Stream’s estuary”. This was another controversial design suggestion but fortunately accepted and is an appropriate part of the toanga contained in PukeAriki.



- I have owned the Salvation Army Citadel building at 38 Powderham Street (H-133) and the adjoining property at 48 Brougham Street (H-110) since May 1983. In 2014 we carried out a major exercise to improve the seismic strength rating to at least 67% NBS which is the acceptable minimum to not be an earthquake risk. Considerable extra cost was incurred to ensure the interior integrity of the design was unaffected. The simple way is to build in heavy steel K frames which are intrusive. We chose to remove and replace the roofing and install 25mm thickness plywood membrane fixed with 40m stainless steel screws set @ 150mm each way which satisfied the code but was hidden. We sincerely hope this building stays as an important element of our City Centre heritage.



- I have owned the building on the SE corner of Courtenay and Powderham Streets since 1973. The building was constructed in 1900 as a store and residence. The interior has been modified to suit our architectural studio but the exterior timber cladding, timber window frames and mouldings are all as original. It is the only remaining store in New Plymouth that has a strong, well defined architectural style and its corner location adds to its significance.



- I have also been involved in encouraging better urban design outcomes for New Plymouth, especially the City Centre. 1966 gave a series of 7 well attended public lectures for Victoria University Extension based on a T.V. series which was showing “living in Cities’ by Lewis Mumford. Frequently talk to community groups, like Rotary, Lions and the like on design and planning matters always trying to widen the interest and understanding of good design and its importance to the well-being of a community. As recently as 28 October 2020 was invited to attend an all-day Design Session organised by New Plymouth City Centre Strategy group which is preparing a guiding plan considering all of the aspects that help create a vibrant City Centre and celebrate what makes our place unique. Clearly the Huatoki Stream is a key element of our uniqueness. Sadly too much of the Huatoki is covered by buildings and Stage 2 of the applicants proposal is to change this and expose the Stream as part of a private/public partnership with NPDC.
- The applicant owns the Heritage buildings at 45 and 49 Brougham Street (H-133 and H-31) and intends to re clad the South and East walls (currently corrugated galvanise iron) with red painted rusticated timber weatherboards including opening up the East wall with balconies to give connection to the Huatoki stream. HVAC and drainage vents will be located under the building screened from view.
- In regard to the effects of the HCA in relation to the New Plymouth District Council City and Town Centre Design Guide dated July 2019 it is my assessment that there are many factors of the proposal which enhance, rather than detract from the nearby heritage buildings. Although the site is not part the HCA the close proximity has an effect. It can be argued the high quality of the proposed design is establishing a standard which may well be seen in 50 years as having heritage status in relation to future City Centre buildings. Cities are never static as social and economic changes influence development. There is ongoing debate about how planning which allows peripheral “big shed” shopping centres has the potential to impact the well-being of the city centre. Historically it is accepted there remains a human need to gather at the heart

of a city which respects the natural landform, civic, working, cultural, festival, shopping, dining, and partying. NP topographically and geologically has a natural heart which centres around the Huatoki Stream basin and the waterfront. All recent studies of the future strength of the City Centre emphasises increasing the density of quality housing and office space to bring even more vitality. **The NPDC City and Town Centre Design Guide July 2019 acknowledges that, “good design is site specific and responsive to its context as well as the needs of future occupants. This means that not all of the guidelines will be necessarily relevant to every site or type of development”.**

PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT AGAINST RELEVANT PARTS OF THE CITY AND TOWN CENTRE DESIGN GUIDE

- 1.1 The project is consistent with “**outcome**” as it integrates well with the character of the local streetscape and its visual appearance and use will enhance the wider city centre. It will enhance the setting of the heritage buildings within the HCA.
The building responds to Existing Context.
- 1.2 Maori Cultural connections are recognised by the unqualified support from the Ngati Te Whiti Hapu CIA which followed extensive consultation with the Applicant. The statement of evidence of Mr Bhaskar, 10 February 2021 outlines the way cultural issues have been integrated into the proposal. Although this application stands on its own merits, the design anticipates the building owned by NPDC known as Downtown Arcade will be demolished and the Huatoki Stream will be uncovered and revealed. The Boon Ltd drawing A1-01 shows the access from the east of the proposal is over part of the adjoining NPDC land giving access to the Huatoki Stream and Powderham Street, which is being encouraged by the New Plymouth District Council. The intention is to connect visually and physically across Powderham Street to the south linking with Sir Victor Davies Park. The concept drawing for Huatoki-Brougham Masterplan shows how the existing wooden steps from Brougham Street to the Huatoki Stream is replaced by a series of steps and landings creating a special public space where the community can enjoy and celebrate the Huatoki Stream. Sensitive landscaping and strong reference to Maturanga (Maori knowledge) along with Te Aranga Design principles, including appropriate cultural inspired installations are proposed:
- 1.3 The building scale, façade articulation and materials, the visual rhythm of windows is covered in the evidence of Mr Bhaskar 10 February 2021.
- 1.4 The proposal complements the height and scale of neighbouring buildings, Brougham Heights, Grand Central Hotel and the parking building. The perception it may overshadow the Heritage buildings is discussed later.
The rising contour of Brougham Street from Devon Street should be acknowledged as adding to the perception of height. Some Planners have discussed the concept of encouraging taller buildings towards the top of any ridges, rather than concentrating them in the basin of a location. The treatment of the apparently frameless glazing creates a seamless façade resulting in a sense of lightness which reduces the perception of height. This contrast assists in respecting the integrity and character of the heritage buildings as noted in the guide.

- 1.5 The project definitely creates a high quality memorable building. It is noted earlier the sites history and association with Maori is acknowledged by sensitive interpretation and inclusion of objects in association with Tangata Whenua, Ngati Te Whiti Hapu.

Section 2 Siting, Height, Bulk, Form and Scale

The project, particularly being aware of Stage 2 which opens the Huatoki Stream, fits with the desired outcome by achieving a positive height/scale relationship with neighbouring buildings, natural landforms and public spaces – enhancing the informal pedestrian network by creating a new pedestrian laneway from Devon Street to Powderham Street alongside the opening up of the Huatoki Stream.

- 2.1 The building aligns to the street edge and because it is to the east of Brougham Street the SW corner of the building does not require the 45° splay normally associated with Central City Street junctions. The splay is to assist visibility to oncoming traffic and, because of the one way system, this is not necessary. The result is a pure building shape. Because the building has 3 frontages to streets or reserve (E-S-W) and the fact the applicant owns the Heritage building to the North - the North face above the heritage building can be seamless glazing, maximising the opportunity to utilise natural light, outlook and ventilation.
- 2.2 It is not possible to meet all the guidelines in relation to Height and scale relationship to the adjoining Heritage building even if the proposal complied with the proposed height limit of 17m. However, I believe the reasoning in this submission demonstrates the quality of the facades and the setbacks of the top floor apartment mitigates against the perception the heritage buildings are overpowered. The buildings at 45 and 49 Brougham Street have distinctive, strong moulded façades emphasised by the deep red colour. 45 Brougham Street is a convincing replica of a masonry building constructed 1884 and 49 Brougham Street built 1896 is similar with interesting differences in detail. The heritage buildings have sufficient visual impact in their own right to stand alone, mitigating any sense of being overpowered.
- 2.3 For the reasons outlined earlier, including the transparency of the glazed façade and the upper floor set back, the visual impact or bulk is successfully mitigated in my opinion.

Section 3 Pedestrian connectivity and laneways

- 3.1 This guideline is not relevant to the proposal other than the prospect of Stage 2 opening the Huatoki Stream as noted earlier. The proposal does include the opening to the east including the canopy connecting to Powderham Street as shown on Boon Ltd Dwg A2.02 proposed L.1 Plan and this involves an arrangement with NPDC for air rights “use of the land”. The CIA prepared by Ngati Te Whiti Hapu endorsed the east entry and shared foyer space as important because it activates the connection to the Huatoki Awa. Apart from being required for egress, this access brings the building closer to the NPDC parking building which will benefit from use by the building’s occupants.

- 3.2 The building has well defined and sheltered entrances clearly visible from the Street.
- 3.3 The building services and limited car parking functions are located at the lower level below Powderham Street, minimising the visual impact. This takes advantage of the Brougham Street gradient and the number of carparks is reduced to 13 compared to 20 carparks on the existing site, reducing any concern of traffic movement issues.

Section 4 Building Design, Facades and Building Tops

The project meets the desired outcome of being fit for purpose, integrates well with the Streetscape and offers flexibility of use over time. The building meets all the guidelines of 4.1 Integrated Building Design, 4.2 Internal Amenity, 4.3 Building Facades, 4.5 Building Tops and Roofscape (lift plant and mechanical services are integrated within the building with no effect on the skyline), 4.6 Materials, Textures and Colours.

Section 5 Residential Development

The inclusion of an apartment on the top level is consistent with a generally often preferred situation providing mixed use of commercial and residential activity. This is a desired outcome for future city centre development stimulating use 24 hours per day. Mixed use occupancy adds vitality and vibrancy to any city centre.

Section 6 Efficient and Healthy Living Environment

The Boon Ltd Architectural Design Statement submitted with the Resource Consent application 29 April 2020 includes a section- Environmental Sustainability Framework which shows the building meets all of the guidelines 6.1 Energy Efficiency, 6.2 Material Selection, 6.3 Waste Reduction, 6.4 Water Use, Conservation and 6.5. Minimise Waste and Recycling. The predominantly timber construction is sourced and manufactured locally. The majority of construction and materials are prefabricated off site resulting in minimal waste created on site.

Conclusion

The project meets the majority of the design guidelines. It is fortuitous the Council is currently working with Consultants and the Public to establish a strategy to draw up a vision for the growth and development of New Plymouth City Centre in the years ahead. A key goal is to encourage development which brings more people to live and work in the City Centre. The intention is to have a guiding plan for the future that will help create a vibrant City Centre and celebrate what makes our place unique. One of the major pointers to uniqueness is the importance of the Huatoki Awa. As stated earlier the project must stand on its own merits and the location being a corner site with east boundary to the Huatoki Awa and the North boundary which includes the adjoining Heritage building allows for glazing on four sides.

Because the applicant owns 49 Brougham Street and the NPDC owns 33 Devon Street the usual solid 4 hour FRR (Fire Resistance Rated) boundary wall is not required, allowing transparent glazed facades on four sides. If the adjoining site was owned by others it would require an unsightly solid concrete wall. The NPDC and Ngati Te Whiti Hapu have requested maximum visibility to and from the Huatoki Awa including encouraging public access.

With the NPDC owning the Downtown Arcade with the intention to demolish the buildings to open up the Huatoki Awa, the proposed development has to be considered the most significant City Centre development since the removal of the railway marshalling yards about 40 years ago, followed by PukeAriki and the Coastal Walkway about 21 years ago. The final development of the Huatoki-Brougham master Plan will complete the link of open Public access to the Huatoki Awa from the Tasman Sea to Taranaki Maunga.

“Tradition is not a matter of inheriting the skeletons of the past. It is a matter of inheriting the spirit of the past”.

Auguste Rodin

T W BOON

17 February 2021