



15 October 2020

Resource consent application – Ryman retirement village, Kohimarama Road

The Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association represents the interests of the Mission Bay and Kohimarama communities and is therefore keenly interested in this proposal. We believe that the proposed development will potentially have significant impact on people well beyond those covered by the limited notification and are disappointed that notification did not extend to a wider community base. A number of our members are directly impacted by the proposal, and we wish to ensure that their concerns are adequately addressed.

Firstly, we broadly support the concept of a retirement village on this site. We believe that there is significant demand in the area for retirement villages, and that this site is well suited to this purpose. We also appreciate that the applicant has incorporated a spacious landscaped environment that will soften the impact of an otherwise high density development.

We are concerned, however, that this proposal has some significant adverse effects, particularly for local residents, and believe that these must be carefully evaluated and if necessary, changes made to mitigate the impacts. These issues can be broadly categorised into long term issue and construction issues. We set some of these out below.

Long term issues

1. Height and impact on close neighbours

The proposal substantially exceeds the Unitary Plan height controls, virtually doubling them in many cases. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate that these breaches have only minor adverse effects, but with extremely limited notification there is a real danger that many impacted parties will have no opportunity to be heard. This is unacceptable, and we urge the panel to use their discretion to allow anyone with a reasonable concern to be heard at the hearing.

Our biggest concern is that some of the over-height buildings are quite close to a few local houses, and that the height disparity will result in substantial dominance effects, particularly buildings B03 and B05. We believe that this issue could be resolved by reducing the height of these buildings, particularly on the side facing John Rymer Place.

The overall profile of the development seen from across the valley to the south intrudes into the skyline as a result of the height breaches and will have an adverse effect on residents there. We believe that this can be mitigated by reducing the height of the buildings on the ridge line.

2. Traffic through Allum St intersection

The intersection at John Rymer Place, Allum Street and Kohimarama Road is already very heavily choked. We have previously asked Auckland Transport to review whether a right turn arrow from Kohimarama Rd into John Rymer Place was justified, but at the time it was felt that there were insufficient cars to justify the arrow. Should this development proceed, however, we believe that a right turn arrow would be critical. This would have significant impact on through traffic and safety, and so we recommend that the intersection be redesigned to incorporate a dedicated turning lanes.

There is severe congestion at school drop-off and pick-up times, and traffic flows from this development would need to be looked at carefully to ensure that they do not compound the congestion.

3. Connection to the Glen Innes to Quay Street shared path

The Glenn Innes to Quay Street shared path will shortly be completed, and it is intended that it will have a connection to Kohimarama in the vicinity of John Rymer Place. We believe that the location of this path and the timing of the construction should be coordinated with this development to ensure that access is not compromised and that any opportunity to improve the connection can be incorporated. For example, if an off-road path could be created in conjunction with this development, there would be real benefits to the community that might offset some of the adverse effects.

Construction Issues

Construction is particularly problematic in this area. The project will be built right in the midst of a residential area, and is of a scale much larger than would normally be experienced in such areas. While we can expect that any project will result in traffic, noise, vibration and dust issues, the scale of this development makes the potential impact much worse. We point out that the applicant has chosen to breach the Unitary Plan rules in order to achieve a larger development, but that comes at a cost of greater construction adverse effects, a cost that local residents are expected to absorb.

We ask that any resource consent issued have strict requirements to minimise the impact of construction activities on local residents.

1. Construction traffic

Traffic is already highly congested, particularly during commuting and school drop-off and pick-up times. We believe that conditions should be put on construction traffic to avoid exacerbating this situation any more than necessary. We have not yet had the opportunity to assess this in detail, but conditions such as limiting heavy traffic before 9am and over the evening rush would be appropriate. Since John Rymer Place is a residential street, it might be appropriate to exclude heavy trucks from this street and have all heavy vehicle movements through the Kohimarama Rod entrance. Consideration needs to be given to the routes that heavy vehicles will take getting to and from the site to avoid creating further chokepoints.

2. Parking

During construction there will be large numbers of construction workers on site, most of whom will plan to drive and park either on site or in surrounding streets. John Rymer Place is particularly inappropriate for mass parking, and already suffers from during morning and afternoon school pickup times. As individual buildings near completion, the problem will escalate severely due to the large numbers of finishing trades on site at the same time. This was particularly apparent at a recent Ryman project, the Logan Campbell retirement village, where the surrounding streets were choked and reduced to single lane.

We recommend that a condition of the resource consent be that sufficient on-site parking or alternative transport arrangements are provided for all construction staff and contractors.

3. Noise

The project will generate a lot of noise for many years, to the detriment of the local community. We accept that any construction produces noise, but the size of this development, including the applicant's choice to breach height rules to allow a larger development, makes noise a much bigger problem. We believe that this should be mitigated to the highest possible extent through working practices and noise barriers. It does not seem reasonable to ask residents to accept non-complying noise because to fully mitigate it would require more expensive construction practices or more expensive sound barriers.

Recognising that this is a suburban residential neighbourhood where residents can reasonably expect to quietly relax during their non-work time, we believe that limits should be put on working hours for any noisy activity, excluding weekend work and early morning and evening work.

4. Vibration

Vibration will primarily be associated with the early stages of the work, and can be influenced by the choice of construction technique. We accept that some vibration is inevitable, and that creates a risk of damage such as cracking and subsidence to nearby buildings. We believe that a condition of the resource consent should be that surveys of all nearby properties be undertaken at appropriate times to document any damage occurring.

5. Dust

With the volume of earthworks planned, dust will be an ongoing problem. We believe the resource consent should require dust mitigation methods, and provide for washing resident's houses if dust accumulates beyond normal levels.

Yours sincerely



Don Stock
Chairman
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