

**BEFORE THE WAIPA DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Regulatory Committee**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of a resource consent application by  
Meridian Asset Management for a  
subdivision located at 47 Coleridge  
Street, Leamington, Cambridge

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MORNÉ HUGO**

**22 April 2021**

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## 1.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE

- 1.1 My name is Morné Hugo. I am a Landscape Architect and Urban Designer at Boffa Miskell Limited, a national firm of consulting planners, ecologists, urban designers, and landscape architects. I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture with Honours in Urban Design from the University of Pretoria, South Africa.
- 1.2 I am an Associate Partner at Boffa Miskell based in the Tauranga office and have been employed by the company as a senior landscape architect and urban designer for the past fourteen (14) years.
- 1.3 I have been involved with landscape architecture and urban design projects of various scales for the past twenty-five (25) years, from large scale structure planning and infrastructure projects through to detail design and implementation management.
- 1.4 I am a Registered Landscape Architect with the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects. I previously held registration as a professional landscape architect in South Africa.
- 1.5 I have visited the application site and I am familiar with the surrounding environment.
- 1.6 I have read the report prepared by the Council Officer to the application for resource consent by Meridian Asset Management for a subdivision located at 47 Coleridge Street, Leamington, Cambridge and I am familiar with the issues that have been raised in submissions.

## 2.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

- 2.1 I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note. I agree to comply with this Code. The evidence in my statement is within my area of

expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

### **3.0 INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROCEEDINGS**

- 3.1 I have been engaged by Meridian Asset Management to provide an urban design review and provide urban design advice relating to the subdivision of one lot into ten in the Residential Zone; Land use for Compact Housing Development; and Land use for Show Home within Proposed Lot 1.
- 3.2 During the urban design review process, I met the applicant's planning consultant, Ms. Steenstra, on-site and discussed the proposed development scheme and reviewed the proposed site layout and architectural design plans.
- 3.3 At our meeting and subsequently I provide urban design and landscape advice relating to the overall site layout, front boundary, and landscaping treatments, architectural 'look-and-feel' and site fencing. The advice I provided was adopted and is reflected in the revised development drawing package dated 07/04/2021.

### **4.0 DISTRICT PLAN AND GUIDELINES**

- 4.1 I have considered the relevant District Plan provisions of the Operative Waipa District Plan ('District Plan'). The property is located within the Residential Zone under the District Plan, there are no policy overlays or special features identified across the site.
- 4.2 As stated in the planner's report, the application is assessed overall as a Non-Complying Activity under the provisions of the District Plan as the proposed dwelling on Proposed Lot 1 will be within the road boundary setback (breaching Rule 2.4.2.1), and

the minimum and average lot sizes cannot meet the requirements of Rule 15.4.2.1(a) – Net Lot Area.

- 4.3 My urban design advice is however predominantly focussed on the appropriateness of the proposed development within the context and urban character of the existing residential neighbourhood.

## **5.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 5.1 The proposed development is to remove an existing dwelling and subdivide the property into ten (10) medium density residential units in 7 blocks (including 3 duplex units).
- 5.2 The surrounding residential properties consist of a mix of residential dwelling types and scales. Directly to the north is Lindsay Park and to the south is located Lauriston Park, a retirement village development, consisting of higher density residential units.
- 5.3 The proposal is for the applicant to comprehensively construct all ten units in accordance with the proposed architectural design plans submitted as part of the application.
- 5.4 This development approach will ensure that the overall site and architectural quality and character is carefully controlled during the development phase, including all landscaping, roading and site fencing elements.

## **6.0 URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 I have reviewed the comments provided by Council's Urban Design Consultant, Mr. Sam Foster from Beca Consultants, and I agree with all his comments.
- 6.2 Overall, despite the higher density units proposed for the development (10 residential units combined into 7 building footprints), the density is not dissimilar to the density of the

nearby located Lauriston Park Retirement Village. This does set a precedent for more compact residential offering within the vicinity of the site.

- 6.3 It can be seen that, by looking at Lauriston Park as an example, that medium density residential development does not necessarily detract for urban character and visual amenity, as long as the residential development is comprehensively designed (or guided by architectural guidelines) to achieve an appropriate level of architectural quality, and combined with good quality landscaping to visually integrate the development into the neighbourhood.
- 6.4 As raised by Mr. Foster, I agree that the applicant's proposal does represent an increase in density over the immediate surrounding sites, however this is not inconsistent with the existing character of Coleridge Street, with particular reference to the retirement village and larger two storey duplex units that are located at the end of the street.
- 6.5 I have reviewed and provided feedback into the overall site layout, landscaping, and architectural character of the development, which has been incorporated in the applicant's design scheme.
- 6.6 In my opinion the architecture is of a high quality, using a well balance combination of material colours and finishes, which is of particular importance to avoid adverse bulk, scale, and amenity effects, particularly for the two-storey units. The proposed architectural designs will have a good fit with the surrounding area.
- 6.7 The proposed landscaping (hedging) and fencing provide good screening to the side and rear boundaries of the site and essentially eliminates all privacy effects at ground level.
- 6.8 Upper level privacy concerns are mitigated by the fact that primary living areas are at ground level, and only smaller windows are in positions which could overlook adjacent

dwellings. Privacy tinting and louvres have also been added to relevant windows to further assist in mitigating overlooking concerns.

- 6.9 The proposed development site is well located in terms of access to local amenities and open recreation space. This clearly support the proposed increase in residential density in this location.
- 6.10 In my view the non-compliance in terms of the front yard setback relating to Unit 1 is negligible, due to the extremely wide road verge on Coleridge Street. This in combination with the proposed high-quality permeable fencing, hedging and two (2) proposed new street trees will result in an acceptable urban design and visual amenity outcome. I also consider that from a CPTED perspective, having the front unit in closed proximity to the street, is a positive outcome which provides good levels of passive surveillance over the streetscape.

## **7.0 SUBMISSIONS**

- 7.1 I have reviewed the submissions received relation to this application.
- 7.2 In my opinion from an urban design perspective, residential infill development is anticipated and required to meet housing demands nationally. The proposed development is designed in a manner which will fit with, and not detract from, the existing character of Coleridge Street.
- 7.3 Due to relatively narrow site frontage, the visual outcomes in terms of streetscape will not be significantly different to that of a complying redevelopment of the site.
- 7.4 The high-quality architectural design, combined with the proposed development landscaping and fencing, is appropriate for the setting and visually in keeping with the streetscape and neighbourhood context and character.

## **8.0 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 In my opinion the proposed development, whilst being of a higher development density than permitted within the current Residential zoning, is of a high-quality medium density housing design, that is acceptable within the proposed location.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 I recommend that all buildings, architectural materials and finishes, fencing, hedges, and landscaping elements be implemented in accordance with the applicant's proposal.
- 9.2 I recommend that all landscaping (hedging and tree planting) be carried out in accordance to the architectural plans. Hedging and tree stock to be of a suitable stock size and planted in accordance with good horticultural practice.

Morné Hugo

22 April 2021