DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL | kaunihera a-rohe o Ōtepoti

Memorandum

TO:	Variation 3 Team, City Development
FROM:	Peter Christos, Urban Designer, City Development
DATE:	19 May 2023
SUBJECT:	**URBAN DESIGN COMMENTS ON 2GP VARIATION 3 – MINOR IMPROVEMENTS CHANGE PROPOSALS**

Introduction

1. This memorandum contains my comments on change proposals included in Variation 3 – Minor Improvements which have potential urban design or amenity implications. The comments provided respond to the various requests sent to me by staff working on the Variation 3 project and are given under headings for each change proposal in alphanumeric order.

Change CMU1 – Signs attached to buildings in CMU zones

2. Change CMU1 is to review the Plan provisions for signs attached to buildings in the commercial and mixed use (CMU) zones to ensure that they are appropriate to achieve the Plan's objectives for the maintenance and enhancement of streetscape amenity.

3. The rules under review are Rule 18.6.13 (number, location and design of ancillary signs) and Rule 18.6.11 (minimum glazing and building modulation) which contains a reference to signs on glazing.

4. Issues identified are that there are no provisions preventing signs attached on top of verandahs, and that a requirement for signs on glazing is not located in signs-related provisions but in glazing provisions.

5. I have been asked to provide comment on the above issues, including confirming:

    a. whether the additional proposed rule for signs attached on top of verandahs should apply generally within the CMU zones like the existing rule for signs on roofs, or whether there are specific locations where it should apply; and

    b. whether the rules for percentage of wall coverage with signs (Rule 18.6.13.3.a) should also count signs attached to glazing to ensure streetscape effects from overall visual clutter are managed.

Adding rules for signs on top of verandahs

6. Signs attached to verandah roofs provide challenges in terms of coordination with the host building as well as neighbouring buildings. Common issues are signage projecting well beyond facades and becoming overly prominent within streetscapes. They are often attached using brackets and guide wires which create additional clutter and poor coordination with buildings. Facade detailing can be over dominated or obscured by verandah signage and the risk of

proliferation of signage (particularly considering verandah facia signage is provided for) is increased.

7. The CMU zones cover a wide range of different environments including central city areas, Harbourside Edge, local centres, Princes, Parry and Harrow Street, the Warehouse Precinct, Smith Street and York Place, and South Dunedin Large Format. Given the compact form of the city, CMUs are generally integrated with surrounding environments and often part of daily journeys.

8. With the exception of centres and the CBD, verandahs are not prevalent and there would be no requirement to install them during redevelopment. While it is unlikely there would be many instances where verandah top signage would occur, restricting them within all CMU zones would provide some assurance against visual clutter.

Whether to count wall signs together with signs attached to glazing to limit sign coverage

9. Rule 18.6.13.3.a currently limits the extent to which walls facing the street can be covered by signs in CMU zones. Rule 18.6.11.4 separately limits the extent to which ground floor glazing can be obstructed by signs and other materials.

10. I have been asked to consider the merit of calculating the area of signage based on the combined areas of façade and glazing. This would mean that existing signage on glazing would control the area of signage on facades and vice versa.

11. In my view, calculating the total area of signage (façade and glazing combined) would have positive effects visual effects by controlling the scale of signage within CMU zones and reducing the risk of signage dominating building facades.

Change CMU2 – Exemption from Minimum Height

12. The purpose of Change CMU2 is to clarify the minimum height rules in the commercial and mixed use zones for buildings that cannot be seen from a public place.

13. In commercial and mixed-use zones, Rule 18.6.5.2 Maximum and Minimum Height, imposes a minimum height limit in all zones except for the Trade Related and South Dunedin Large Format zones and Centres other than the CBD.

14. I have been asked to comment on the potential adverse effects of an exemption for buildings that cannot be seen from a public place, especially regarding effects on streetscape amenity, which is the key matter of discretion for assessing contravention of the rule, and in terms of achieving Objective 18.2.3 and Policy 18.2.3.11.

15. Minimum height rules reinforce a consistent built form/streetscape within commercial and mixed use zones. Buildings not visible from streetscapes and not meeting minimum height rules would have no adverse visual effects on streetscapes.

Change D1 – Amend boundary setbacks for structures in residential and Ashburn Clinic zones

16. The purpose of Change D1 is to review whether it is appropriate to allow water and other storage tanks in boundary setbacks, and whether it is appropriate to allow other structures in road boundary setbacks, in residential zones and the Ashburn Clinic Zone.

17. Water and other storage tanks may be required on residential, industrial, recreational or other sites to store drinking water, water for fire fighting, collect stormwater for detention or

irrigation, or for other purposes. In areas where a connection to the public water supply is not available, water storage of at least 45,000 litres is currently required for new residential buildings (Rule 9.3.3).

18. The setback from boundaries currently required by the 2GP varies depending on the zone. For example, in the Township and Settlement Zone the required setbacks are 4.5m from any road boundary, 2m from side and rear boundaries, and 1m from a boundary with a right of way (Rule 15.6.13.1.a.vii). Some exemptions apply to the setback from boundaries, including for decks less than 0.5m above ground level, and structures less than 10m^2 in footprint and 2m in height (Rule 15.6.13.1.a.viii.5). However, this does not account for larger tanks, including when they are fully or partially buried.

19. I have been asked to comment on:

    a. options for a suitable exception from boundary setbacks for water and other storage tanks in terms of effects on surrounding sites' amenity and on neighbourhood amenity, including in terms of objectives 15.2.3 and 15.2.4 and relevant policies for the residential zones; and

    b. whether the current exception from boundary setbacks for structures (Rule 15.6.13.1.a.viii.5) should continue to apply to road boundary setbacks.

Exception from setbacks for water and other storage tanks

20. For the sake of clarity, the following comments assume a single 45000L storage tank with typical maximum dimensions of 3.4m H x 4.6mW and a footprint of 16m^2. By comparison a typical 25000L tank is likely to have a footprint of about 10m^2 and height of 3m (10m^2 and 2m = 2GP baseline).

21. Unlike other structures and small buildings (e.g. garden sheds and carports etc.) large storage tanks tend to be more difficult to integrate with existing architecture given their shape, materiality and by being visually impermeable.

22. Storage tanks are viewed either from the street/public space or from neighbouring residential sites or a combination of both. This is further distinguished by views from interior spaces (likely to be elevated and looking over a neighbour's tank) and views from yard spaces.

23. Views of storage tanks from public space and within front yards are considered more sensitive given the likely high number of viewers and effects on streetscapes.

24. Views of tanks from non-residential zones (excluding reserves) are less sensitive to yard breaches. Setback exemptions at side and rear boundaries that adjoin non-residential zones (excluding reserves) should be considered without the need for mitigation, for tanks up to 45000L, in these locations.

25. Assuming a 2m fence or similar is in place, visual effects from neighbouring properties are likely to be minor, providing tanks are under 2m tall or partly buried to no more than 2m above ground.

26. It is my view that tanks (regardless of size) within front yards should only be permitted where they are buried or otherwise not visible from the street (e.g. located behind a structure such as a fence).

Whether current exception from setbacks for structures is appropriate in road boundaries

27. The current exception from setbacks for structures is given in Rule 15.6.13.1.a.viii.5 and applies to all setbacks, including from road boundaries. It previously permitted structures up to 2m tall with a footprint of up to $2m^2$. However, the footprint limit was increased to $10m^2$ as part of Variation 1 to the 2GP, without consideration of the change in effects on streetscape character and amenity.

28. Structures up to 2m in height and with a maximum footprint of $10m^2$ within front yards could have significant adverse visual effects because of excessive bulk and scale, potential visual clutter and poor coordination with existing structures. I think this is particularly of concern when existing garages and carports are established close to road boundaries. I believe that structures with a footprint exceeding $2m^2$ should not be exempt from setback rules.

Change PA1 – Height for Pou Whenua

29. The purpose of Change PA1 is to review the height controls and definitions that apply to pou whenua.

30. The maximum height for monuments and memorials, and pou whenua is currently set at 5m (Rule 3.5.2.2.a.iv). However, other public amenities such as freestanding flagpoles have a much higher maximum height set at 9m.

31. I have been asked to comment on the potential effects on amenity which would arise from increasing the maximum height for pou whenua to 9m, including in terms of achieving Objective 3.2.1 and Policy 3.2.1.2.

32. I have also been asked to comment on whether other structures marking an area, territory, place or event of cultural significance to Manawhenua (e.g. waharoa or interpretation signage) would have different amenity effects to pou whenua and whether they should retain the existing height limit of 5m for monuments and memorials.

33. 3.5.2.2.a sets maximum heights of public amenities between 2m and 9m. Play equipment and flagpoles are currently provided for at 9m. Pou Whenua are likely to present more width/bulk/area compared with a flagpole but less/equal to play equipment at 9m tall. Pou Whenua at 9m would be below the height of many city light poles and buildings.

34. Providing Pou Whenua are limited to clusters of no more than three and each Pou no more than 500mm wide, they are unlikely to be experienced as having excessive bulk or be overly dominant.

35. For the above reasons, I believe Pou Whenua at a maximum height of 9m would be consistent with the visual effects of flag poles and play equipment.

Change Res1 – Height of Garages in Boundary Setbacks

36. Part of the purpose of Change Res1 is to review Rule 15.6.6.2 Maximum height as it applies to garages and carports when they are located within the boundary setbacks.

37. Rule 15.6.6.2 sets a maximum height limit of 2m for buildings such as garages and carports within the setbacks from side and rear boundaries. This does not provide for a garage or

carport of standard height. Typically, standard kitset garages are available in 2.1m, 2.4m, 2.7m or 3.0m stud heights[1].

38. I have been asked to comment on potential options for increasing the maximum height that applies to garages and carports in side and rear yards (provided they comply with Rule 15.6.13.1.a.viii clauses 3 and 4 regarding boundary setbacks) to better enable standard garages to be developed in yards while appropriately managing effects on surrounding sites' residential amenity and on neighbourhood residential character and amenity. Objectives 15.2.3 and 15.2.4 are relevant, along with Objective 2.2.4 and associated Policy 2.2.4.1, which promotes the efficient use of land.

39. An option to raise the maximum height of garages (ground to eave) within side and rear yards to coordinate with standard garage designs has been proposed. Given the relatively low profile of garages, effects of additional shading of neighbouring properties would be minimal in most instances if garage eave heights were raised to 2.4m-2.6m. This would allow for a nominal step down from the top of the slab to ground level for a 2.4m standard stud height while Rule 15.6.13.a.viii, clauses 3 and 4 ensures garage length is controlled.

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[1] Versatile Garage specifications: see https://www.versatile.co.nz/buildings/garages/double-garages/; Skyline Garage specifications: see http://skylinebuildings.co.nz/garages/single_garage_6m_x_36m#/products/attributes/construction