BEKON MEDIA

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Ref: 2023_025 332 Queen St Richmond Digital Billboard UDVIA Addendum_B

Tuesday, 21st May 2024

RM230535 – URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT - ADDENDUM

332 QUEEN STREET, RICHMOND

Dear Anita,

The following memo is an addendum to the Urban Design and Visual Impact Assessment which was undertaken by DCM Urban Design Limited in January 2023. A Notification Decision Report from the Tasman District Council was issued in December 2023, and in preparing this memo I have read the Notification Decision Report and the following aspects have been covered below:

a. The cumulative effects the proposed sign will have on the visual amenity of the receiving environment.
b. The interrupted views of the Richmond Ranges and the effects this will have on the surrounding visual amenity.
c. Additional assessment of the TRMP Objectives and Policies under the TDC District Plan.

The original UDVIA and consent application was for a 6 x 3m static billboard, the proposal has now been changed to a digital billboard 7m wide and 3.5m high with a total area of 24.5m². The sign will still be located in the same position, above the parapet of the PetMart Shop on the corner of Queen Street and Gladstone Road (SH6).

I consider the change from a static billboard to a digital billboard will not cause additional adverse effects, due to the commercial nature of the receiving environment and ability to absorb this change. The existing receiving environment is considered highly modified, very low visual quality and includes commercial buildings and activities, signage of varying types and sizes, and a high traffic volume that passes through the intersection. Although the sign will sit above the existing parapet, it will not extend past the existing building footprint and the combined height of the sign and building is approximately 8.8m, which is below the permitted 10m building height. Open views will be experienced by those travelling along Gladstone Road and through the intersection, where there is already visual clutter, and constant vehicle movement. The transition of images will be less noticeable. There is a substantial amount of ambient light currently present within the immediate area, including streetlights, the McDonalds sign, and the NPD and Z Fuel Petrol Stations. It is considered that the proposed digital billboard will successfully integrate with the existing commercial character of the receiving environment, and that any visual effects will be less than minor.

a. THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS THE PROPOSED SIGN WILL HAVE ON THE VISUAL AMENITY OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

The notification decision report discusses the cumulative effects the billboard will have on the receiving environment and that the additional sign will add to the visual clutter already present causing cumulative effects and a tipping point for amenity values of the area.

I consider the receiving environment does not have a sensitive character or landscape values of high quality. The site is within the Central Business zone and is primarily occupied by Commercial businesses of varying quality and signage of varying types and scales are anticipated in the area. The addition of the proposed digital billboard will not be unexpected within this zone or pose additional adverse effects on visual amenity for the already highly modified commercial area and busy intersection.

b. THE INTERRUPTED VIEWS OF THE RICHMOND RANGES AND THE EFFECTS THIS WILL HAVE ON THE SURROUNDING VISUAL AMENITY

In the report the interrupted views of the Richmond Ranges from the proposed sign were assessed as minor and that the ranges offset the low visual amenity of the intersection and immediate receiving environment. The billboard will not adversely interrupt and affect the wider amenity values of the intersection and beyond.

I agree that the Richmond Ranges help to offset the lower amenity values of the already highly modified intersection and commercial character of the receiving environment, however there are currently no planning controls regarding the protection of views to the Richmond Ranges, and although the billboard will interrupt views briefly, the wider ranges are still visible for those travelling east or south through the intersection. The existing PetMart building already breaks views of the Ranges and the proposed billboard will be below the permitted 10m building height restriction. Should the building extend to the 10m permitted height, this would substantially obscure a wider field of view to the Ranges. I consider that for these reasons, the proposed digital billboard will only interrupt views of the Richmond Ranges briefly when travelling through the intersection and that for the most part the wider views will be retained. The effects on visual amenity are still considered to be less than minor.

c. ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE TRMP OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES UNDER THE TDC DISTRICT PLAN.

SIGNAGE RULES

Rule 16.1.4.1(a) which requires a sign to be located and have the dimensions in accordance with Figure 16.1B.

Response

The sign will be 7m wide and 3.5m high and 24.5m², it will be located approximately 0.7m above the existing parapet of the Petmart Building and is therefore not consistent Figure 16.1B. There are no rules within the TRMP regarding maximum signage area for signs extending wholly above the building parapet.

Rule 16.1.4.1(b) which requires a sign to meet conditions (b) to (h) of Rule 16.1.3.1. (b)The sign relates only to activities undertaken on the site unless it is a temporary sign.

Response

The proposed sign will be permanently fixed above the parapet of the building, and although the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown will be primarily for local businesses and could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township.

Any perceived effects from the advertising will be the same regardless of whether it is for activities undertaken on the site or off site.

Rule 16.1.4.1(c) requires a sign to comply with the requirement indicated in Figure 16.1B.

Response
The sign will be located above the parapet of the building to which it is attached.

Rule 16.1.4.1(e)(i) Requires any sign painted on or attached to a building to be related to the activity operating therein (i.e. onsite advertising).

Response
Although the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown will be primarily for local businesses and could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township. As noted above, any perceived effects from the advertising will be the same regardless of whether it is for activities undertaken on the site or off site.

Rule 16.1.4.1(e)(iii) Requires a sign to be no higher than the roof peak or parapet of that part of the building to which the sign is attached.

Response
Although the sign will sit above the existing parapet, it will not extend beyond the existing building footprint. The combined height of the sign and building is approximately 8.8m above ground level, which remains below the permitted 10m building height.

In conclusion, the cumulative effects of the proposed sign, whether static or digital are still considered to have less than minor effects, due to the highly modified, low visual quality commercial character of the existing receiving environment, the high traffic volumes along SH6, and the already high level of ambient lighting in the immediate area including several large, illuminated signs. While the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township. Nonetheless, advertising of on site or off-site activities has the same effect.

Views of the Richmond Ranges will momentarily be interrupted for those travelling east or south through the intersection, signage is anticipated within the commercial area, and wide views of the Richmond Ranges are still maintained beyond the proposed billboard.

Overall, it is of my opinion that the proposed digital billboard will still have less than minor effects on the visual amenity of the receiving environment.

Yours sincerely,

David Compton-Moen
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332 Queen Street, Richmond - Digital Billboard

BEKON MEDIA

Urban Design & Visual Impact Assessment

Project No. 2023_025

11 April 2024_C

332 Queen St, Richmond - Urban Design & Visual Impact Assessment

Project no: 2023_025
Document title: Urban Design & Visual Impact Assessment

Revision: C
Date: 11/04/2024
Client name: Bekon Media

Author: Nadine Kirton
File name: 2023_025 332 Queen St Richmond Digital Billboard_LVIA_C

DOCUMENT HISTORY AND STATUS

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	REVIEW	APPROVED
A	22/01/2023	Report for comment	NK	CG	
B	22/01/2024	Updates to Report	NK	CG	
C	11/04/2024	Updates to Report	NK	CG	

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

The following report is an Urban Design and Visual Impact Assessment for a proposed digital billboard at 332 Queen Street in Richmond, Tasman District.

The original UDVIA and consent application was for a 6 x 3m static billboard, the Tasman District Council issued a Notification Decision Report in December 2023, and notification was required due to traffic related issues and concerns about the cumulative effects on the visual amenity of the Richmond Ranges. This has been discussed in the Addendum Memo that is attached to this document. The client, Bekon Media has changed the original static billboard application to a digital billboard, this report has been amended to reflect this change.

The proposed digital billboard will be 7m long and 3.5m wide with a total area of 24.5m², the billboard will be located above the veranda overhang and existing parapet of the Pet Mart building situated at 332 Queen Street. The proposed sign will face northwest across the Queen Street and Gladstone Road (SH6) intersection.

The site is located within the Central Business District Zone within the Richmond Town Centre and is controlled by the Tasman District Plan and the Tasman Regional Management Plan (TRMP). Billboards are a permitted activity, although the proposed billboard, is over size and is positioned above the existing parapet of the building, therefore it is considered a Restricted Discretionary Activity as set out in the TRMP. An assessment against the matters set out in the TRMP are outlined in Section 3 and a series of photos and plans are attached in the Appendix 1 to assist with the assessment.

2. METHODOLOGY

Refer to Appendix 2 for assessment methodology and terms used when assessing landscape and visual effects of the proposal.

2.1 STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Relevant statutory documents relating to Visual Amenity are referred to below:

- The Tasman District Plan
- The Tasman Regional Management Plan

These have been addressed in section 3.3.

3. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Below is an assessment of effects relating to the urban character and visual amenity values in accordance with the Tasman District Plan. The proposal is deemed to be a **restricted discretionary activity**.

3.1 EXISTING URBAN CHARACTER

The proposal is located within Richmond's township, the Tasman districts largest town centre. The Richmond town centre is generally defined by buildings of varying scales and architectural styles, with a mixture of retail, hospitality, and small-scale commercial activity. The site is located on the northern end of Queen Street, facing northwest across the Queen Street and Gladstone Road (SH6) intersection. Commercial buildings, Petrol Stations, carparking, restaurants, and office spaces are all

within the immediate area. Opposite the proposed site is a McDonalds fast food restaurant and further along Gladstone Road (SH6) is an NPD petrol station.

Richmond's town centre extends southeast approximately 100-300m down Queen Street. On the northern side of Gladstone Road, there are both Commercial and Mixed-Business Zones, with numerous commercial buildings varying in size, location and architectural styles, most of these have associated signage varying in scale and type. Buildings are typically one storey high, with setbacks approximately 5-10 metres from the road to allow for onsite carparking. The facades and windows for both retail and commercial buildings, are consistently varied, this lack of cohesive design reduces the overall visual quality of the receiving environment which is predominantly commercial in character. The nearest residential dwellings are located approximately 180m from the proposed digital billboard at 337 and 334 Lower Queen Street. Both dwellings are single storey, surrounded by established vegetation and are not directly facing the proposed sign.

Within the receiving environment there are numerous existing signs, for both traffic and commercial purposes, these include free-standing, wall mounted signs and billboards advertising onsite activities, the signs vary in size, colour, type and setbacks from the road. The McDonalds sign sits above the Railway Restaurant and Bar opposite the proposed billboard site, it is approximately 3m above the existing parapet and can be seen in all directions when travelling through the intersection, it is also illuminated at night.

Commercial buildings and associated infrastructure including roading, visually dominate the receiving environment. Queen Street has a moderate-high level of traffic movement and is a key route though Richmond, for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, while Gladstone Road (SH6) has high-heavy traffic movements for cars, trucks and commercial vehicles. The proposed digital billboard will be visible from a reasonable distance by those travelling in a north-easterly direction along Gladstone Road and when travelling south through the intersection down Lower Queen Street. A series of viewpoints are discussed within Section 3.3 of this report to assess the extent of the views of the proposal.

3.2 URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

The proposal has been assessed against the relevant objectives, policies, and rules of the RMA and the Tasman Regional Management Plan (TRMP).

RMA Sec 6 Matters of National Importance:

6 (a) The values of the coastal environment, wetlands and lakes and rivers and their margins can be protected by the management of signage.

6 (b) The values of outstanding natural features and landscapes can be protected by the management of signage.

6 (f) The management of signage on historic sites and places can help protect these from inappropriate development.

Response: These are not relevant to the location or the proposed digital billboard.

RMA Section 7 Other matters:

7 c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values can be directly affected by signage.

7 f) The maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment can also be relevant to signage management.

Response: The proposed digital billboard is not located within a natural or sensitive area, and due to the already highly modified, and visually cluttered commercial character of the area it is considered that the quality of the existing environment will not be changed and that there will be no adverse effects on the amenity values within the receiving environment by the proposed digital billboard.

The proposal has also been assessed against the rules and objectives of the ***Tasman Resource Management Plan Summary Guide No. 10 – Provisions for Outdoor Signs and Advertising:***

In the Central Business, Commercial, Mixed Business, Tourist Services and all Industrial zones, a sign is a ***permitted activity*** if it complies with ***Figure 16.1B*** and conditions relating to:

1.) *Location and size. (Projected signs max. area 1.0m²)*
2.) *Appearance: the sign does not mimic traffic signs, the sign is maintained in a tidy, legible state.*
3.) *Letter size (minimum vertical height of 150mm and minimum line spacing of 100mm).*
4.) *Illumination (only illuminated when the business is open if the property is adjoining a Residential Zone), and it does not incorporate retro-reflective materials, flashing illumination, or a display that is aerial, animated or moving).*

The proposal does not comply with the above condition ***1.) Location and size***, and also does not comply with ***Figure 16.1B*** as the sign will be located above the existing building parapet to a maximum height of 3.0m.

1.) Location and size. (Projected signs max. area 1.0m²)

Response: The proposed digital billboard does not comply as it will be mounted above an existing veranda and building parapet, it will be 3m high x 6m wide and 18m². The proposed sign is over size and over height but is not considered to adversely affect the visual amenity or urban/commercial character of the receiving environment, which is considered to have a low-quality level of visual amenity. A viewshed has been prepared showing the likely visibility of the billboard and is shown on page 7 of the supporting figures.

2.) ***Appearance: the sign does not mimic traffic signs, the sign is maintained in a tidy, legible state.***

Response: The proposed billboard will be positioned above and away from the traffic lights / signals of the Queen Street / Gladstone Road (SH6) intersection it will be maintained in a tidy manner and will have a clearly legible display. The proposed sign will not have an effect on the architectural integrity or amenity values / character of the host building or the receiving environment.

3.) ***Letter size (minimum vertical height of 150mm and minimum line spacing of 100mm).***

Response: The proposed digital billboard will have a customisable and clearly legible digital display, and all text will be complying.

4.) ***Illumination (only illuminated when the business is open if the property is adjoining a Residential Zone), and it does not incorporate retro-reflective materials, flashing illumination, or a display that is aerial, animated or moving).***

Response: The proposed billboard will have changeable messages and images, the transition and change of images will be visible to passing traffic, cyclists, office workers and pedestrians. The transitions, however, will be minimised, being no faster than every 8 seconds to reduce any effects

caused through flashing or flickering. No moving images are proposed, and the position of the sign is fixed. Traffic and pedestrian safety standards shall apply to the billboard.

SIGNAGE RULES

Rule 16.1.4.1(a) which requires a sign to be located and have the dimensions in accordance with Figure 16.1B.

Response

The sign will be 7m wide and 3.5m high and 24.5m², it will be located approximately 0.7m above the existing parapet of the Petmart Building and is therefore not consistent Figure 16.1B. There are no rules within the TRMP regarding maximum signage area for signs extending wholly above the building parapet.

Rule 16.1.4.1(b) which requires a sign to meet conditions (b) to (h) of Rule 16.1.3.1. (b)The sign relates only to activities undertaken on the site unless it is a temporary sign.

Response

The proposed sign will be permanently fixed above the parapet of the building, and although the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown will be primarily for local businesses and could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township.

Rule 16.1.4.1(c) requires a sign to comply with the requirement indicated in Figure 16.1B.

Response

The sign will be located above the parapet of the building to which it is attached.

Rule 16.1.4.1(e)(i) Requires any sign painted on or attached to a building to be related to the activity operating therein (i.e. onsite advertising).

Response

Although the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown will be primarily for local businesses and could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township.

Rule 16.1.4.1(e)(iii) Requires a sign to be no higher than the roof peak or parapet of that part of the building to which the sign is attached.

Response

Although the sign will sit above the existing parapet, it will not extend past the existing building and the combined height of the sign and building is approximately 8.8m, which is below the permitted 10m building height.

3.3 VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

3.3.1 VISUAL CATCHMENT AND AMENITY

The following table outlines the potential visual effects likely to be experienced by Visually Sensitive Receivers in the receiving environment. To assist with determining effects, a series of public viewpoints were visited, which were considered representative of views that may be experienced from surrounding businesses, residences, and public spaces (including footpaths). These were as follows:

1. VP1 - View Southeast from 337 Lower Queen Street
2. VP2 - View East from 321 Lower Queen Street
3. VP3 – View Northeast from 4a Gladstone Road (SH6)
4. VP4 – View Northwest from 301 Queen Street
5. VP5 – View Northwest from 273 Queen Street

Table 1: Assessment of Effects on Visually Sensitive Receptors

Viewpoint	Visually Sensitive Receptors (VSR)	Distance from Proposal (m)	Type of View (open, partial, screened)	Magnitude of Change	Mitigation Measures	Effects after mitigation
1	Vehicle users/ pedestrians and cyclists along Lower Queen Street	150	OPEN	Low	MM1	Less than Minor
2	Vehicle users, pedestrians and cyclists travelling through the Queen Street / Gladstone Road SH6) intersection.	20-30	OPEN	Low	MM1	Less than Minor
3	Vehicles, Pedestrians and cyclists along Gladstone Road (SH6)	90	OPEN	Low	MM1	Less than Minor
4	Vehicle users/ pedestrians and cyclists when travelling north along Queen Street towards SH6	100	OPEN	Very Low		Less than minor
5	Vehicle users/ pedestrians and cyclists when travelling north along Queen Street towards SH6	200	OPEN	Very Low		Indiscernible

1. VP1 - VIEW SOUTHEAST FROM 337 LOWER QUEEN STREET

Description of existing view – Views are open looking southeast along Lower Queen Street. The view consists mainly of roading and associated infrastructure such as traffic management signage, traffic lights, street lighting, overhead powerlines and commercial activities. There are several static billboards and commercial related signs visible when travelling along Lower Queen Street towards the intersection, including the McDonalds and Hells Pizza signs. Just beyond the intersection, the concentration of existing signage, and commercial and retail buildings increases, creating a densely urban and commercial visual experience.

Description of Effects – Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian users will experience open/full views of the billboard when travelling along Lower Queen Street towards the intersection. The proposed digital billboard will be positioned approximately 3m above the existing building parapet of a commercial building. Views will be open while users are travelling through the intersection, however it is anticipated that due to the appearance of the proposed digital billboard being similar to other signage and billboards in the area, and the existing commercial/retail activities, heavy vehicle movements, and the low visual amenity of the surrounding area, the proposed billboard will have a low magnitude of change. The mitigation measure MM1 will further minimise effects on visual amenity, which are considered to be less than minor.

2. VP2 - VIEW EAST FROM 321 LOWER QUEEN STREET

Description of existing view – Views from this location are open, across the intersection looking directly at the proposed billboard. Varying styles and sizes of signage including billboards are visible down the length of Queen Street and Gladstone Road (SH6), these are located on both building faces and rooflines with some being freestanding. Commercial development varies in architectural style and is set back on either side of the road. The mix of commercial, and roading activities, and its associated infrastructure such as signage, street lighting, traffic signals and carparking can be viewed throughout the street scene. The Richmond Ranges can be seen in the distance.

Description of Effects – Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian users will experience open and direct views of the proposed digital billboard when travelling through the intersection of Gladstone Road (SH6) Queen Street and Lower Queen Street. Open views will be possible of the proposed digital billboard from this location, the billboard will be set against the skyline and will form part of the roofline of the existing commercial building. The screen does not interfere or block any existing vistas as the wider open views over the Richmond Ranges are still visible behind the sign. The magnitude of change and the effects on visual amenity are considered to be low. The mitigation measure MM1 will minimise the effects which are considered to be less than minor.

3. VP3 - VIEW NORTHWEST FROM 165 QUEEN STREET

Description of existing view – This viewpoint was taken approximately 90m down Gladstone Road (SH6) looking northeast towards the proposed billboard, views are open across the road corridor. The existing view consist of a mix of commercial, hospitality and roading activities, and its associated infrastructure such as signage, street lighting, traffic signals and carparking. Commercial buildings, signage and the Richmond Ranges can be seen in the distance.

Description of Effects – Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian users will experience views of the proposed digital billboard when travelling northeast along Gladstone Road (SH6) towards the proposal. Open views will be possible of the proposed digital billboard from this location. The billboard will be set against the skyline and viewed above the roofline of the existing commercial building. The screen does not interfere or block any existing vistas. The wider open views over the Richmond Ranges are still visible behind the sign, the quality of the existing views within the commercial and light industrial development surrounding the proposed sign are low with the magnitude of change also considered to be low when compared to the existing McDonalds and NPD signs. The mitigation measure MM1 will minimise the effects which are considered to be less than minor.

4. VP4 - VIEW NORTHWEST FROM 165 QUEEN STREET

Description of existing view – This viewpoint was taken approximately 100m down Queen Street looking northwest towards the proposed billboard, views are open across the existing roadway. The existing view consists of a mix of retail and commercial buildings, roading and its associated infrastructure such as signage, street lighting and carparking. The back of the proposed billboard can be seen in the distance.

Description of Effects – Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian users will experience intermittent views of the backside of the proposed digital billboard when travelling northwest along Queen Street towards the proposal. At this distance, approximately 100m from the proposed billboard any views are largely blocked by intervening buildings and road infrastructure. Given the distance and the angle from which the backside of billboard is viewed from, the magnitude of change is considered negligible and effects indiscernible from this location.

5. VP5 - VIEW NORTHWEST FROM 165 QUEEN STREET

Description of existing view – This viewpoint was taken further south down Queen Street looking northwest towards the proposed billboard, views are open across the existing roadway and the Richmond Town Centre. The existing view is a mix of retail and commercial buildings, roading and its associated infrastructure such as signage, street lighting and carparking. The back of the proposed billboard can be seen in the distance.

Description of Effects – Vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian users will experience intermittent views of the backside of the proposed digital billboard when travelling northwest along Queen Street towards the proposal. At this distance, approximately 200m from the proposed billboard, it will be difficult to discern the billboard, as the visual clutter of the commercial area including signage, lighting, and other associated infrastructure increases as you travel in a northern direction towards the billboard. Given the distance, the angle from which the backside of the billboard is viewed from, and the existing visual clutter within the receiving environment the magnitude of change is considered negligible and effects indiscernible from this location.

3.4 SUMMARY OF EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

In terms of visual effects, the proposed digital billboard is not seen to adversely affect the visual amenity of the receiving environment. The sign will be positioned above the existing building parapet and the existing traffic signals, it will be visible by those travelling north-east along Gladstone Road (SH6), south-east along Lower Queen Street and north-west along Queen Street when stopping at the traffic lights. Views of the digital billboard will be open when travelling through the intersection, but at a distance, the sign will become harder to distinguish from other signage and commercial infrastructure.

The closest residential properties are located approximately 180m from the proposed billboard and are facing the road and are screened by vegetation or fencing, it is considered these residents will experience a very low magnitude of change.

The proposed billboard will be visible above the existing parapet, but when seen from a distance, it will not block the wider views of the Richmond Ranges and will not be out of character. Given that the existing McDonalds sign is approximately 3m above the existing parapet and can be seen in all directions when travelling through the intersection, it dominates the outlook, and is illuminated at night; It is considered that the proposed location of the digital billboard is not out of character and will not generate any additional effects on the existing commercial character or visual amenity of the receiving environment.

Queen Street, Gladstone Road (SH6) and Lower Queen Street are heavily dominated by vehicle movements, and roading related infrastructure (signage, traffic signals and streetlights). Views of the billboard will be experienced by users moving through the intersection, but the level of traffic movement within the receiving environment will mitigate the changing images of the proposed digital billboard. There is a significant amount of ambient light currently present through streetlights and other signage including McDonalds, NPD and Z Fuel Petrol Stations, it is therefore considered that the proposal will successfully integrate with the existing commercial character of the receiving environment, and that any visual effects will be less than minor.

4. MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures are recommended to either avoid, remedy, or mitigate any potential effects on Visual Amenity:

MM1 DIGITAL IMAGE TRANSITION AND LUMINANCE

It is recommended that the image transition be every 10 seconds, with a 0.5 sec fade between images. The screen shall incorporate lighting control to adjust brightness in line with ambient levels. The maximum digital sign luminance shall be a maximum of 250 cd/m² at nighttime and 5,000 cd/m² during daytime. For further guidance refer to the Christchurch City Council – Practice Note – Billboards.[1]

5. CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the proposed digital billboard at 332 Queen Street in Richmond is consistent with the existing commercial character of the surrounding environment, which is not considered a sensitive location. As discussed in the assessment above, the level of change that the proposed digital billboard will impose on the receiving environment is considered to be low and the proposal will not detract from the commercial character of the receiving environment.

In terms of visual amenity, the effects will be limited to road users travelling through the Queen Street / Gladstone Road (SH6) intersection, while the proposed billboard will be elevated above the existing parapet and views will be open from various viewpoints throughout the receiving environment, the effects experienced will be temporary and intermittent as the users move past the proposed billboard. The cumulative effects of the proposed digital billboard are considered to be less than minor, due to

[1] https://ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Consents-and-Licences/resource-consents/PN-03-2021-Billboard-practice-note.pdf

the commercial character of the receiving environment, the high traffic volumes along SH6, and the already high ambient lighting in the immediate area including several large, illuminated signs.

Although the sign will be advertising off site activities, the advertising shown could also promote local activities within Richmond, encouraging visitors to stay and not just travel through the township.

Views of the Richmond Ranges will momentarily be interrupted for those travelling east or south through the intersection, signage is anticipated within the commercial area, and wide views of the Richmond Ranges are still maintained beyond the proposed digital billboard.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed digital billboard will still have less than minor effects on the visual amenity and the commercial character of the receiving environment and all sensitive receivers.

APPENDIX 2: DIGITAL BILLBOARD AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The urban design and visual impact assessment considers the likely effects of the proposal in a holistic sense. There are three components to the assessment:

1. Identification of the receiving environment and a description of the existing urban character
2. The urban design assessment is an assessment of the proposal against the policies, objectives, and rules of the relevant District Plan regarding building style, land use activity, setbacks and active frontages, height, shading and signage (if relevant);
3. The visual impact assessment is primarily concerned with the effects of the proposal on visual amenity and people, evaluated against the character and quality of the existing visual catchment.

1.0 URBAN CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

To describe the character of the receiving urban environment a site visit is undertaken noting the character of existing buildings, their height, setbacks from street frontages and where there are any active frontages. The style and character of individual buildings are noted and grouped where possible, with particular emphasis placed on buildings with any heritage value. A combination of desktop and site analysis is used to determine the overall character of an urban area and what its 'Sensitivity to Change' may be. For example, an urban area which exhibits a high level of cohesion and uniformity may have a higher sensitivity to a proposal than an area which is more irregular and mixed. As the proposal relates to signage, a broad-brush inventory of existing signage is undertaken within the receiving environment, noting their size, orientation, height, relationship to adjoining buildings and illumination. In many examples, corporate colours are considered signage and will be noted accordingly.

2.0 URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT

The urban design assessment component reviews the proposal against the policies, objectives and rules of the District Plan which relate to Signage and Central City Urban Design matters. When assessing the proposal, the receiving environment is considered and whether the proposal will have an adverse effect on the existing urban character and amenity of a place, which is described above.

3.0 BILLBOARD ANALYSIS

For the assessment of Billboards, the following research is a useful resource: ***LED Billboard Research: Technical Review of Visual Effects, prepared by CCC, October 2016 by Boffa Miskell and Connectics.***

The report states 'Following an assessment of the potential sensitivity of the available viewing audience, the visual assessment then considers the potential change which will result from visibility of the Proposed Development. It should be remembered that views of a development do not necessarily equate to visual effects. Visual impact is not always negative and a change in view is not automatically wrong'.

To assist further with the analysis of digital billboards we have visited several existing billboards, both digital and static, to determine their extent of influence or visual catchment of a billboard as well as to compare the brightness of a digital billboard versus a externally illuminated static billboard. Four different existing 6x3m billboards were observed during the day and night to assess the visibility of digital and static billboards in an urban environment during these times. During the day, the billboards were generally noticeable when standing further than 100m away from the structure but their content indiscernible. At night, both static (externally lit) and digital billboards had a higher level of visibility but did not necessarily have an adverse effect on the surrounding environment, depending on the character of the receiving environment. Between 100-200m away the billboards started to blend in with the surrounding light sources and activities, and with distances further away the boards are viewed in context with lights from houses, traffic lights and other illuminated signs. The billboards that were placed in front of or integrated

into a building did not look out of context and tended to assimilate better than a free-standing sign. Again, this is dependent on context. Visual effects of these billboards when viewed from over 200m were generally not considered to be adverse in these urban environments, particularly when surrounded by a high level of ambient light and activity.

There was no apparent difference of visibility between a digital billboard and a static, externally lit billboard at night.

The visual assessment involves the following procedures:

- Identification of key viewpoints: A selection of key viewpoints are identified and verified for selection during the site visit. The viewpoints are considered representative of the various viewing audiences within the receiving catchment, being taken from public locations where views of the proposal were possible, some of which would be very similar to views from nearby residential properties/apartments. The identification of the visual catchment is prepared as a desktop study in the first instance using Council GIS for aerials and contours. This information is then ground-truthed on site to determine the key viewpoints and potential audience. Depending on the complexity of the project a 'viewshed' may be prepared which highlights the 'Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence' (TZVI) from where a proposal will theoretically be visible from.

- Assessment of the degree of sensitivity of receptors to changes in visual amenity resulting from the proposal: Factors affecting the sensitivity of receptors for evaluation of visual effects include the value and quality of existing views, the type of receiver, duration or frequency of view, distance from the proposal and the degree of visibility. For example, those who view the change from their homes may be considered highly sensitive. The attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook from their home will have a significant effect on their perception of the quality and acceptability of their home environment and their general quality of life.

- Those who view the change from their workplace are considered moderately sensitive as the attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook will have a less important, although still material, effect on their perception of their quality of life. The degree to which this applies depends on whether the workplace is industrial, retail or commercial. Those who view the change whilst taking part in an outdoor leisure activity may display varying sensitivity depending on the type of leisure activity. For example, walkers in open country on a long-distance tramp are considered highly sensitive to change while other walkers may not be so focused on the surrounding landscape. Those who view the change whilst travelling on a public thoroughfare will also display varying sensitivity depending on the speed and direction of travel and whether the view is continuous or occasionally glimpsed.

- Identification of potential mitigation measures: These may take the form of revisions/refinements to the engineering and architectural design to minimise potential effects, and/or the implementation of landscape design measures (e.g. screen tree planting, colour design of hard landscape features etc.) to alleviate adverse urban design or visual effects and generate potentially beneficial long-term effects.

- Prediction and identification of the pre-mitigation and residual effects after the implementation of the mitigation measures.

4.0 VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In response to section 7(c) of the RMA, an evaluation is undertaken to define and describe visual amenity values. As with aesthetic values, with which amenity values share considerable overlap, this evaluation was professionally-

based using current and accepted good practice. Amenity values are defined in the Act as *"those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes."* The visual assessment looks at the sensitivity of receptors to changes in their visual amenity through the analysis of selected representative viewpoints and wider visibility analysis. It identifies the potential sources for visual effect resulting from the Proposal and describes the existing character of the area in terms of openness, prominence, compatibility of the project with the existing visual context, viewing distances and the potential for obstruction of views.[1]

The visual impact assessment involves the following procedures:

- Identification of key viewpoints: A selection of key viewpoints is identified and verified for selection during the site visit. The viewpoints are considered representative of the various viewing audiences within the receiving catchment, being taken from public locations where views of the proposal were possible, some of which would be very similar to views from nearby houses. The identification of the visual catchment is prepared as a desktop study in the first instance using Council GIS for aerials and contours. This information is then ground-truthed to determine the key viewpoints and potential audience. Depending on the complexity of the project a 'viewshed' may be prepared which highlights the 'Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence' (TZVI) from where a proposal will theoretically be visible from. It is theoretical as the mapping does not take into account existing structures or vegetation so is conservative in its results.
- Assessment of the degree of sensitivity of receptors to changes in visual amenity resulting from the proposal: Factors affecting the sensitivity of receptors for evaluation of visual effects include the value and quality of existing views, the type of receiver, duration or frequency of view, distance from the proposal and the degree of visibility. For example, those who view the change from their homes may be considered highly sensitive. The attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook from their home will have a significant effect on their perception of the quality and acceptability of their home environment and their general quality of life. Those who view the change from their workplace may be considered to be only moderately sensitive as the attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook will have a less important, although still material, effect on their perception of their quality of life. The degree to which this applies also depends on factors such as whether the workplace is industrial, retail or commercial. Those who view the change whilst taking part in an outdoor leisure activity may display varying sensitivity depending on the type of leisure activity and a greater sensitivity to those commuting. For example, walkers or horse riders in open country on a long-distance trip may be considered to be highly sensitive to change while other walkers may not be so focused on the surrounding landscape. Those who view the change whilst travelling on a public thoroughfare will also display varying sensitivity depending on the speed and direction of travel and whether the view is continuous or occasionally glimpsed.
- Identification of potential mitigation measures: These may take the form of revisions/refinements to the engineering and architectural design to minimise potential effects, and/or the implementation of landscape design measures (e.g. screen tree planting, colour design of hard landscape features etc.) to alleviate adverse visual effects and generate potentially beneficial long-term effects.

[1] Reference: NZILA Education Foundation - Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management/ Best Practice Guide – Visual Simulations (2.11.2010)

- Prediction and identification of the effects during operation without mitigation and the residual effects after the implementation of the mitigation measures.

5.0 EFFECTS METHODOLOGY

Analysis of the existing landscape and visual environment is focused upon understanding the functioning of how an environment is likely to respond to external change (the proposal). In terms of the receiving environment, this is the environment upon which a proposed activity might have effects. It is permissible (and often desirable or necessary) to consider the future state of the environment upon which effects will occur, including:

- the future state of the environment as it might be modified by the utilisation of rights to carry out permitted activities
- the environment as it might be modified by implementing resource consents that have been granted at the time a particular application is considered, where it appears likely that those resource consents will be implemented.

The assessment evaluates the resilience of the existing character, values or views and determines their capacity to absorb change. The proposal is assessed in its 'unmitigated' form and then in its mitigated form to determine the likely residual effects. The analysis identifies opportunities, risks, threats, costs and benefits arising from the potential change.

Assessing the magnitude of change (from the proposal) is based on the Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines (May 2021)[2] with a seven-point scale, being:

VERY LOW / LOW / MODERATE-LOW / MODERATE / MODERATE-HIGH / HIGH / VERY HIGH

The guidelines provide the following table which is a useful comparison for analysis of the magnitude of change (NZILA) with the likely effects (RMA).

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE – LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE - HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH
RMA LEVEL OF EFFECTS	LESS THAN MINOR		MINOR	MORE THAN MINOR			

The Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Guidelines however do not quantify 'what' the Magnitude of Change is. Below is a guide to how we have assessed the Magnitude of Change for this proposal:

(a) Very Low – the change is negligible or are not readily discernible. For example the proposal may not be visible to the receptor or the change in character is negligible when compared to the permitted baseline and/or receiving environment.

(b) Low – the change is discernible but do not adversely affect the viewer experience. For example it may be possible for the receptor to see the proposal but the effects are not considered adverse due to the quality of the current view or the oblique nature of the view.

[2] https://nzila.co.nz/media/uploads/2021_07/210505_Te_Tangi_a_te_Manu_Revised_Final_Draft_as_approved_5_May_2021.pdf

(c) Moderate-High – the change is discernible and changes the quality of the existing view, potentially with the loss of views.

(d) High – the change is discernible and there is a loss of views or the changes greatly affect the quality of the view so that the character of existing view is fundamentally changed.

(e) Very High – the change is discernible and there is a total loss of views or the changes significantly affect the quality of the view so that the character of existing view is fundamentally changed.

In determining the extent of adverse effects. taking into account the sensitivity of the landscape or receptor combined with the Magnitude of Change proposed, the level of effects is along a continuum to ensure that each effect has been considered consistently and in turn cumulatively. This continuum may include the following effects (based on the descriptions provided on the Quality Planning website – Determining the Extent of Adverse Effects[3]):

- **Indiscernible Effects** No effects at all or are too small to register.
- **Less than Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are discernible day-to-day effects, but too small to adversely affect other persons.
- **Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are noticeable but will not cause any significant adverse impacts.
- **More than Minor Adverse Effects** Adverse effects that are noticeable that may cause an adverse impact but could be potentially mitigated or remedied.
- **Significant Adverse Effects that could be remedied or mitigated** An effect that is noticeable and will have a serious adverse impact on the environment but could potentially be mitigated or remedied.
- **Unacceptable Adverse Effects** Extensive adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

6.0 PHOTOGRAPHY METHODOLOGY

All photos are taken using a SONY ALPHA A7 II digital camera with a focal length of 50mm. No zoom was used. In the case of stitched photos used as the viewpoint images, a series of 4 portrait photos were taken from the same position to create a panorama. The photos were stitched together automatically in Adobe Photoshop to create the panorama presented in the figures.

Reference: NZILA Education Foundation - Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management/ Best Practice Guide – Visual Simulations (2.11.10)

7.0 STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Relevant statutory documents in terms of Landscape Values and Visual Amenity are referred to in the LVIA.

[3] https://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/node/837