



## **STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Environment & Planning Committee

**FROM:** Rose Biss, Policy Planner  
Jeremy Butler, Hearings Coordinator

**REFERENCE:** L335

**SUBJECT:** **NELSON TASMAN URBAN DESIGN PANEL - REPORT EP11-03-05** - Report prepared for meeting of 10 March 2011

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The Nelson Tasman Urban Design Panel was established in November 2009 as a joint initiative of the Tasman District and Nelson City councils. The terms of reference provide for it to be established on a trial free of charge basis for the first twelve months. This report reviews the Panel's first year of operation and recommends how it should proceed.

### **2. THE PANEL'S ROLE**

The Urban Design Panel provides free independent design reviews for significant building projects from both private developers and each of the councils. Its role is to provide expert advice and clear recommendations on the design of a proposal and how it might be improved well before a resource consent application is made.

### **3. NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS**

In 2010 the Panel reviewed six proposals in the Tasman District (see Appendix 1) and five in the Nelson City Council area.

### **4. STRUCTURE AND PROCESS**

The 11 Panel members are leading architects, landscape architects, urban designers and planners from Nelson, Wellington and Christchurch. At each Panel meeting there are usually three members present from the pool of 11. After a site inspection by the Panel the applicants present their proposal which has been pre-circulated to the Panel. The council planner provides a short written summary of any relevant rules and policies. The Panel then clarifies any outstanding matters and makes suggestions to the applicant. This is followed by a written assessment with recommendations sent to the applicant within five days of the panel meeting.

## **5. OUTCOMES**

Some of the outcomes sought from having an urban design panel in the region have been to improve the quality of urban design and eliminate, at an early stage, poorly designed proposals from further consideration.

The Panel Chairperson has commented that the success of the panel will be determined initially by the response of the applicants (both architects and developers) and finally by the quality of the built work. As most projects are still being built feedback has been sought from applicants.

A survey form was sent to all applicants for their opinion of the process. The two replies received from applicants in the Tasman district area said the recommendations from the panel were useful and expected to add value to the project.

## **6. COST RECOVERY**

There has been no charge for the use of the Panel in the first twelve month trial period.

One applicant considered that a fixed fee towards costs may be a fair approach. Another noted that it is important that an early appearance before the design panel is to be encouraged. This could be done by charging if the proposal goes to the Panel after the resource consent stage.

## **7. MEMBERSHIP**

There are 11 members who are all design professionals (listed in Appendix 2). The makeup of a particular Panel varies depending on the nature of the proposal and to avoid conflicts of interest.

Because Nelson City Council has included subdivision proposals in developments that may be submitted to the Panel it has been suggested that Panel membership should be broadened to include a surveyor. At this stage Tasman District has not included subdivision applications as a type of development that can be submitted to the Panel because it is building design that is of primary interest. It is likely this Council would remain neutral about such an appointment.

## **8. PANEL COSTS**

The Panel's costs for the six proposals considered in 2010 have not exceeded the \$10,000 budgeted for it.

## **9. SUMMARY**

The staff view and endorsed by the Council's Urban Design Champion, Mayor Kempthorne, is that the Urban Design panel concept has value. While at an early stage in terms of seeing built developments it is proposed that the scheme be carried forward for a further year on the current arrangements, which is provided applicants submit their proposals at an early stage (before formally lodging building or resource consent applications) we should continue to meet the cost.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that the Environment & Planning Committee accepts report REP11-03-05 and agrees to the following recommendations:**

- 1. The Nelson City/ Tasman District Urban Design Panel continues provided costs can be met from within existing budgets; and**
- 2. The existing membership of the Panel is retained and**
- 3. The Council continues to pay the Panel costs if the proposals are presented to the Panel prior to the resource or building consent being lodged and require the applicant to pay the Panel costs post application lodgement.**

**Rose Biss  
Policy Planner**

**Jeremy Butler  
Hearings Coordinator**

### Proposals to Urban Design Panel

Applicant	Proposal	Location	Changes after Review
Lower Queen St Medical Centre	Medical centre	Richmond	✓
D&C Ewers Family Trust	Mixed office /residential	Brightwater	✓
Holy Trinity Parish Centre	Community building	Richmond	HNP
Goldpine Properties Limited	Offices	Richmond	HNP
Mike McLean Homes Ltd	Medium density residential	Motueka	✓
H&U Kokcu	Office /retail	Richmond	✓

HNP - has not proceeded at time of writing

### Nelson Tasman Urban Design Panel Members

Graeme McIndoe - Chairperson  
 David Sheppard - Deputy Chairperson  
 Ian Athfield  
 Jane Black  
 Grant Edge  
 Ian Jack  
 Liz Kidson  
 Jackie McNae  
 Robin Simpson  
 John Tocker  
 David Wallace