



Submission on Resource Consent application by the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand for development of 202 Parnell Road, Parnell

The Administration Officer
Resource consents, Regulatory Services
Auckland City
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Parnell Inc. (the business association representing more than 440 businesses along Parnell Road and Parnell Rise)

Opposes the application by the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand to demolish the existing office building and construct a commercial building with associated carparking and earthworks and to erect three apartments on its property at 202 Parnell Road, being the block abutting Denby Street to the south and Scarborough Tce to the east. (Lot 1 DP 65151)

Parnell Inc.'s submission is as follows

Parnell Inc. opposes the utilitarian design of the development to be constructed on the property and also has concerns regarding parking arrangements, layout and traffic generation.

Our primary opposition to the proposed office building on Parnell Road is that is not in keeping with the area.

Parnell Inc. asked Nicholas Stevens, an award-winning architect and business member of Parnell Inc., to put forward his concerns about the architectural quality of proposed building for inclusion in this submission. Mr Stevens' views reflect the association's grave concerns of the damaging aesthetic impact the proposed building would have on Parnell Road's landscape well into the future.

Comments on the Architectural Quality of the Proposed Building at 202 Parnell Rd
- provided by Nicholas Stevens, Director Stevens Lawson Architects, Parnell, Auckland

- The proposed building design is of poor quality and lacks character and vision. It has an inappropriate scale, uninspired aesthetics, unappealing materiality, and an absence of distinctive detail.
- It is lacking in sensitivity to its context and is disrespectful, even hostile, to the much-loved historic church. It is important that this Parnell icon is not obscured by the new building or canopy. The present REINZ building set-back allows the church this space, enabling the tower to be viewed from several hundred metres down Parnell Rd. A building set-back on Parnell Rd would also encourage the continuation of the outdoor café/bar character which has developed in Parnell.
- The quality of the urban space in the proposed 'Plaza' is very poor, shaded by unattractive buildings on three sides. This appears to be merely an attempt to gain bonus floor area for the space over the car park
- The defence of the proposed building's scale and aesthetic by comparison to the Heard Building is spurious and disingenuous.
- The Residential component of the proposal has a scale, materiality and design aesthetic which is totally inappropriate to the small scale historic character of Scarborough Terrace. It has the appearance of a third rate commercial building.
- There is a great opportunity to build an outstanding piece of architecture on this prominent Parnell site that contributes to the character and vitality of the area. The proposed building diminishes the quality of the built environment on Parnell Rd.
- Parnell's logo is the 'Creative Quarter' and it is a hub for creative enterprises. All new developments should express this ethos.* The proposed development is cynical and mean-spirited and shows no pride in Parnell. The desecration of Newmarket should not be repeated in Parnell.
- It is extremely disappointing that the REINZ should set such a bad example of architectural and urban design, when surely they should be promoting high standards within their own field. The REINZ should show leadership and commitment to improving the quality of the built environment. This project should be designed by a leading architect. There is no excuse for mediocrity.

* Samson Corporation has resource consent to develop an Andrew Patterson-designed building on Parnell Road at the corner of Garfield Street. This building is an excellent example of the inspired design Parnell Inc. would wish to see in future developments on Parnell Road.

Further comments:

Parnell Inc. also supports comments made against the application by the Real Estate Institute, as submitted by Parnell First as follows:

- The proposal will have more than minor adverse effects on the environment, will call into question the purpose and integrity of the Parnell Centre Plan, the heritage provisions of the District Plan and under these circumstances will create an unacceptable standard of urban design for Parnell.
- The proposal is of too great a height and bulk thereby compromising the heritage qualities of the St John Catholic church on the opposite street corner, (a scheduled heritage building,) and the 'character defining' buildings (as defined by the Parnell Centre Plan, Section C4 Operative District Plan, Isthmus section) opposite on the corner of Gibraltar Cres, the character supporting buildings and the character generally of Parnell Road, and Scarborough Tce (Res 1 character zone)
- The proposal fails to meet the assessment criteria for construction of new buildings in the Parnell Centre Plan (Appendix B Planning Maps C4 p11) in particular criteria a-e.
- The proposal creates significant vehicular traffic on a difficult intersection and has the potential to impose traffic effects on the adjoining character residential street to the rear.
- The position of the building up to the Parnell road boundary, and the inclusion of a verandah, overwhelms the smaller scale buildings in the vicinity, alters inappropriately the streetscape which is open in nature south of the Heard building and is unnecessary.

The height of the building is inappropriate in relation to its shadowing effect on the neighbourhood, visual dominance, and utilitarian design

- The location of the plaza is on the "cold side" of the building, between the multi level residential apartments and office block and if used will bring the intensity of business activities closer to the residential neighbourhood.
- The proposal shows a lack of understanding of how Parnell Road operates - with the eastern side of the road being an "afternoon" street-friendly environment and therefore public spaces should be on the street rather than behind, also there are no verandahs in the vicinity for continuous shelter and one on this site would be inappropriate and just interfere with the sight line to Heard Park and the Catholic church.

Parnell Inc. does not oppose further development of the property. However, this proposal needs to be reduced in its dominance of the site, its generated effects beyond the site. Its bulk and its design is flawed in its disregard for the design criteria applying to developments which will impact on important heritage sites and the functioning of a dynamic street-sunny and street-friendly Parnell Road.

We seek the following decision from Council:

Decline consent to the application in its current form

Parnell Inc. DOES desire to be heard in support of our submission; and

We would be prepared to present a joint case at the hearing with others making a similar submission