

# AUCKLAND URBAN DESIGN PANEL

## RECOMMENDATIONS



<b>Project:</b>	Auckland Domain WW1 Centenary Memorial
<b>Location:</b>	135 Albert Street, Level 14, Meeting Room 10
<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday 5 July 2017
<b>Time:</b>	1.30pm to 7.00pm
<b>Panel Members:</b>	John Hunt (Chair), David Mead, Diane Menzies, Will Thresher
<b>Reporting Landscape Architect:</b>	Leo Jew
<b>AUDP Advisor Heritage:</b>	Graeme Burgess

### **Introduction**

The panel thanks the applicant for their presentation.

The panel considers that the proposed design for the WW1 Centenary Memorial is a carefully considered and well balanced response to the Design Brief (July 2015) and convincingly addresses a number of high level aspirations attached to this project. These aspirations are clearly defined in sections 2 (Purpose of the Project) and 3 (Spirit of the Feature) of the Design Brief.

The intention to have a commemorative feature which is different and provides an alternative future for Auckland people seeking to contemplate the issues of conflict and peace is strongly supported in this location. In the panel's view the form, scale and design intent of the proposal represents a convincing response to this intention. The size of the proposal is well judged and any reduction in size would weaken the visual relationship between the WW1 Centenary Memorial and the Museum.

The panel supports the proposal for a single tangential approach to the point of entry for the WW1 Centenary Memorial as being consistent with the larger design intent. This can be achieved by providing universal access from The Crescent. The panel notes there are proposals to develop The Crescent as a pedestrian friendly avenue.

Specific issues relating to this project are addressed below:

### 1. Axial Connection

The panel notes that the Design Brief “seeks to connect the new feature or place to the Museum, using a visually recessive pedestrian linkage or way along the Museum’s central axis”. In the panel’s view this could be achieved without the need for a formally defined pathway. Such a pathway would conflict with both the high level aspirations as defined in sections 2 and 3 of the Design Brief and as realised in the design proposal. The panel notes that the design consultants have proposed improving the drainage and grass surfaces of the Close to enable multiple usable routes.

### 2. Integrity of the Close

The panel notes that within the Design Brief there is a potential conflict between the desire to retain the Close as a “substantially intact and empty space” and the request for a visually recessive pedestrian linkage between the Museum and the proposed WW1 Centenary Memorial. Should a defined axial pathway be considered, the full significance of the Museum and its setting would be compromised. Furthermore, the open space of the Close would be bisected and this would work against the stated desire for the Close to remain “substantially intact and empty”. A formally defined axial pathway would be conspicuous and potentially intrusive and would also diminish the potential of the Close to accommodate significant gatherings and informal use at other times.

### 3. Relationship between the Museum and the WW1 Centenary Memorial

The panel suggests that the visual strength and symmetry of the main façade to the Museum is sufficient in itself when viewed from the proposed WW1 Centenary Memorial to achieve a relationship between the two. The panel also notes that the proposed circular WW1 Centenary Memorial sits on the axis established by the Museum and that this establishes a convincing and sufficient connection.

The panel is aware that there was an historic proposal for a sloping plaza leading northwards from the Museum forecourt (proposed by City Engineer James Tyler in 1932) but considers that this was of its time and is no longer an appropriate gesture.

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The panel considers that it is essential that any pedestrian connection between the Museum and the proposed WW1 Centenary Memorial provides for universal access, particularly given the nature of some commemorative occasions. The required gradient would preclude an axial pathway through the Close.

#### Further development of the proposal

The panel considers that there is significant scope for further refinement of the proposal. This would include continued involvement of Mana Whenua in the development of narrative details, detailing of lighting and the possibility of a fire element. The panel considers that the design concept based on the notion of Te Takuahi - The Hearth, is both appropriate and resonant.

