

BEFORE THE WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Independent Hearing Commissioner

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER Resource Consent Application 513399,
New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Charitable
Trust, to erect an electronic billboard to
the existing framework on the roof of the
building

**Statement of Evidence of Hamish Philip Joseph Wesney on behalf of
Boffa Miskell Limited**

29 November 2022

1.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE

- 1.1 My name is Hamish Wesney. I hold the qualifications of Resource and Environmental Planning with 1st class honours from Massey University. I am a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute.
- 1.2 I have 20 years' experience as a planner, working for both a local authority and a consultancy. For the first four years, I was employed as a planner with the Horowhenua District Council, undertaking a variety of planning tasks, including processing land use and subdivision resource consent applications. For the past 16 years, I have been a consulting planner with Boffa Miskell Limited, a national firm of consulting planners, ecologists, urban designers and landscape architects, and have been involved in advising a wide range of clients, including local authorities, corporate entities, central government and individuals on various projects. In particular, I have been involved in preparing and assessing numerous resource consent applications.
- 1.3 I am a Partner in Boffa Miskell, and have been based in Boffa Miskell's Wellington office since starting with the company in 2004. Since 2017, I have held the position of Managing Principal for Boffa Miskell's Wellington office. It is in this role that I have prepared my evidence.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Boffa Miskell has submitted on the application from the New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Charitable Trust for the proposed billboard on the Huddart Parker Building. Accompanying this statement of evidence is the following expert evidence:

- a) Mr Jos Coolen – expert in urban design; and
- b) Ms Katie Maxwell – expert in planning.

3.0 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

3.1 My statement of evidence covers the following matters:

- a) Boffa Miskell's interest in the application; and
- b) A summary of Boffa Miskell's position on the proposed billboard.

3.2 In preparing my evidence I have considered the following:

- a) The application for resource consent, including the attachments and technical reports;
- b) Submissions on the applications;
- c) Section 42A Report; and
- d) Evidence filed on behalf of the Fruitgrowers' Charitable Trust.

4.0 BOFFA MISKELL'S INTEREST IN THE APPLICATION

4.1 Boffa Miskell is a 100% New Zealand employee-owned multi-disciplinary consultancy with the disciplines of planning, urban design, landscape architecture, landscape planning, ecology, Te Hihiri (cultural advisory), technical services (mapping and visualisation support) and biosecurity. We work with a wide range of local and international private and public-sector clients, including councils, central government agencies, infrastructure providers, property developers and owners, and individuals.

4.2 Boffa Miskell has recently marked its 50th anniversary. In reflecting on this milestone, we have looked back on the achievements and influences that Boffa Miskell has made in shaping New Zealand's environment. These achievements and influences include when providing advice to clients to achieve their goals, our advice reflects our company values and our role as independent experts.

4.3 Boffa Miskell has recently developed a new Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2025. This Strategic Plan was developed over the previous two years with input from all levels of the company. Our purpose is

“Together – Shaping Better Places”. One of the four strategic directions to achieve and implement our purpose is ‘leading the way’, with associated actions including “having a point of view” and “having a voice”. This direction and associated actions reflect the desire amongst our team to speak up on matters where we consider our view would contribute to shaping better places.

Huddart Parker Building and the Proposed Billboard

- 4.4 Boffa Miskell has leased Level 4 of the Huddart Parker Building since November 2013. In looking for office space, we were specifically interested in buildings which reflected our company values and the work we do. We were attracted to the Huddart Parker Building for a number of reasons, in particular the architecture and heritage values of the building.
- 4.5 We also sought a building which met (100%) or exceeded the New Building Standard (NBS) earthquake rating. As noted in the evidence of Mr Mackenzie for the Fruitgrowers' Charitable Trust, in 2012, prior to our lease and occupation, the Huddart Parker Building was seismically strengthened. This work also included improvements to the building services and refurbishment. We consider the Huddart Parker Building is an excellent example of sympathetic seismic strengthening of a listed heritage building, and we commend the Fruitgrowers' Charitable Trust/Huddart Parker Building Ltd for this work - we highlight this view to our clients and other parties.
- 4.6 Boffa Miskell first became aware of the application when our team members saw the public notice of the application placed outside the building. Our team then discussed the appropriateness of the proposed billboard. The overall view of our team was that the proposed billboard as proposed was not appropriate for the Huddart Parker Building and surrounds. As I outlined earlier in my evidence about our Strategic Plan and ‘having a voice’, our team considered we should make a submission on this application.

**5.0 BOFFA MISKELL'S POSITION ON THE PROPOSED
BILLBOARD**

5.1 As stated in our submission, we oppose the proposed billboard in its current form. Having read the applicant's evidence, s42A Report and the Council's expert evidence, and based on the evidence of Mr Coolen and Ms Maxwell, we remain of the view that the proposed billboard is not appropriate. The reasons for this view are that the nature, scale and form of the proposed billboard is:

- a) Incompatible with the character and heritage values of the Huddart Parker Building and Post Office Square;
- b) Obtrusively dominates the streetscape and visual amenity; and
- c) Contrary to the objectives and policies, and Design Guide for Signs in the District Plan.

5.2 Boffa Miskell recognises signage has been located on the roof of the Huddart Parker Building previously. In addition, we recognise the submissions in support referring to the time and temperature displayed on previous signage. In principle, we are not opposed to signage on the roof of the Huddart Parker Building.

5.3 We support the suggestions made by the Council's heritage adviser, Ms Stevens¹, as to what could be appropriate signage, being:

- a) Static, non-digital, non-illuminated sign similar in form and size to previous signs; and
- b) Relates to the name or use of the building.

5.4 Accordingly, we seek the present application be declined.

Hamish Wesney

Boffa Miskell Limited

29 November 2022

¹ Paragraph 103 of Chessa Stevens, Heritage Assessment attached to Section 42A Report