

APPENDIX 8.7 ADVICE FROM URBAN DESIGN TEAM, CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL ON PROVISION FOR BONUS HEIGHT

DPR Commercial Fringe Zone – Potential Bonus Height Provision

Introduction

Discussion has been ongoing in relation to the provision of a height/floor bonus for corner sites in Commercial Fringe zone as part of the District Plan Review, including the rationale for this provision. The following is a brief study undertaken to assess the likely visual and physical impacts of a potential bonus height. The study included modelling various scenarios to identify the potential extent, or limitations, of a bonus height. This included instances where for example, the lot size stretched across the full width of block or the commercial centre has a very fine street pattern with frequent intersections, thus many corner sites within a relatively limited area.

Rationale for bonus height

Increasing legibility within the commercial centres is the key rationale for considering a bonus corner height provision. In context of a very flat city such as Christchurch, where many of the previous significant marker buildings were lost as a result of the earthquakes, creating opportunities to increase the legibility of the city, including as a means of way finding, is very important to residents and visitors. Changes in height and greater articulation of the building form increases the variety in the urban fabric creating more understandable centres and better public spaces, as well as strengthening the centres' character.

Discussion

There are a number of ways in which to provide increased legibility and greater definition including:

- Using variety in the materials to provide vertical and or horizontal articulation adding emphasis to the verticality of the corner.
- Increasing the height of building at the corner.

In respect to the level of articulation, the DPR proposes additional provisions to address design matters in terms of rules and assessment matters that specifically address articulation of corner sites. These provisions also provide the opportunity to increase building height to create marker buildings but do not provide a lot of clarity as to the extent to which they might utilise this. But there is an opportunity to indicate to developers at the outset the intent of what is trying to be achieved through the provision of the corner height bonus. This is perhaps the simplest means of achieving the legibility wanted and clearly indicates an expectation that something special should be achieved for corner sites.

Bonus height modelling

To assess the potential impacts of bonus height modelling was undertaken to ground truth the assumptions made and assess concerns that were raised, particularly in respect to the loss of impact where there was a fine grain street pattern; if every corner had a bonus definition and merged the advantage to legibility might be lost. Riccarton Road and Papanui Road commercial centres were modelled (see the attached images for the differences when using a bonus height).

Conclusion

As such it is proposed that a bonus height be available to corner sites in the Commercial Fringe Zones with some provisos including:

- Limitations on the extent of gross floor area – to allow for a viable floor area without being so large that it stops being a corner definition and becomes a heightened building block. As an average 500m² is a floor area that is commonly developed and can provide the mass needed in a corner.
- The continuous length of bonus height used should not be over 25 linear metres so it's unlikely to be able to use the bonus height from corner to corner on a single block.
- The bonus height can only be used if there is an activity/use within the floor area of the added height i.e. residential, office space, hospitality.
- The facades of the bonus height provision cannot be used for advertising or branding.

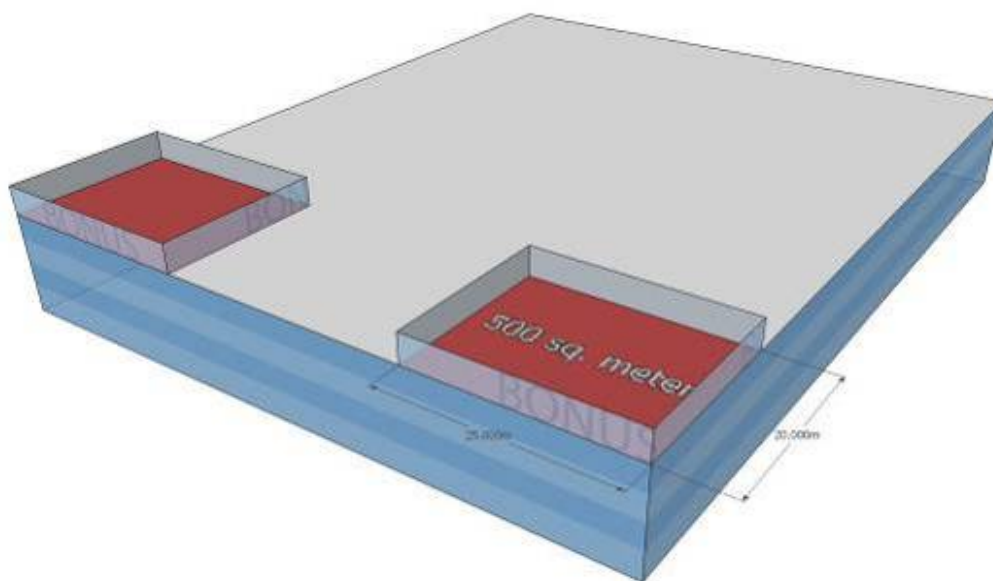


Figure 1: proposed extent of the corner bonus height provision.

Overall from the modelling, the bonus height was assessed as greatly improving the legibility and the diversity of the streets. Even though all corner sites were modelled with the bonus height, which in reality is relatively unlikely, it did not appear that legibility and potential diversity would be negated if the full extent of the bonus provision was taken up.

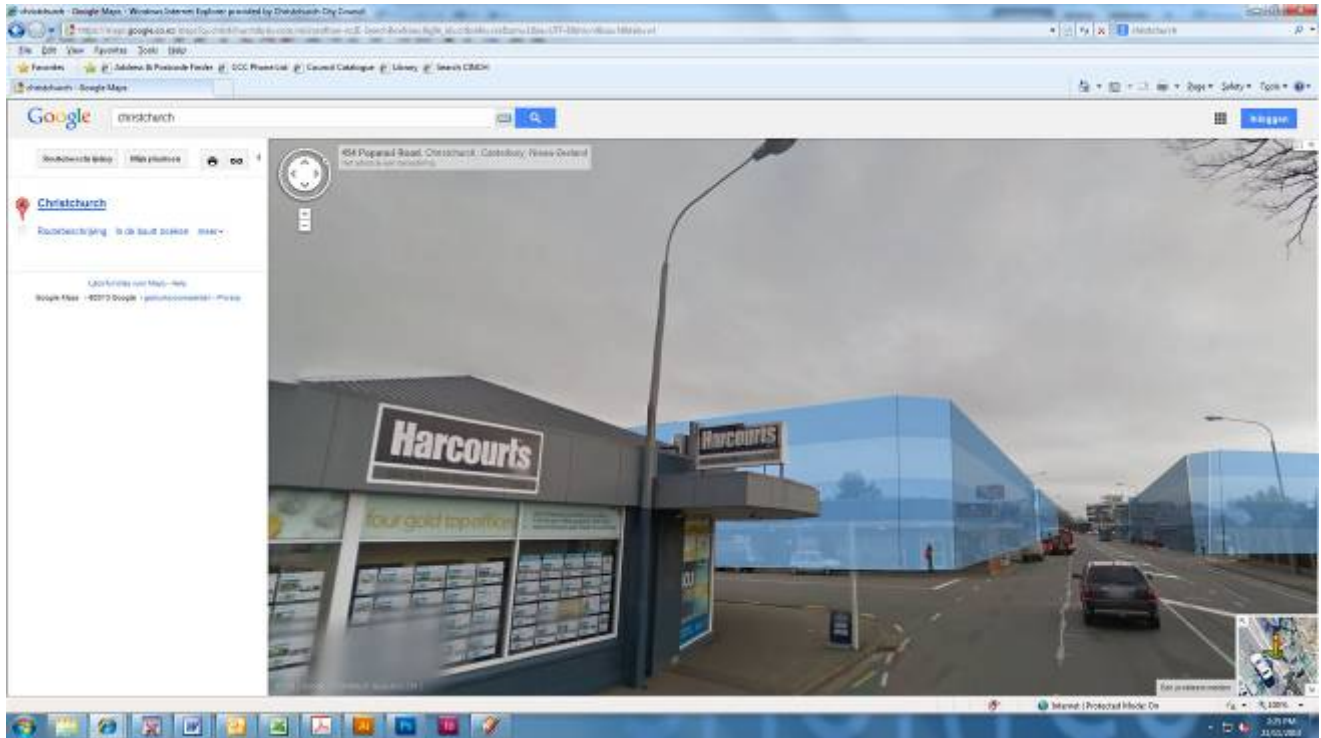


Figure 2: Corner of Papanui Road and Blair Avenue; maximum building height, no bonus

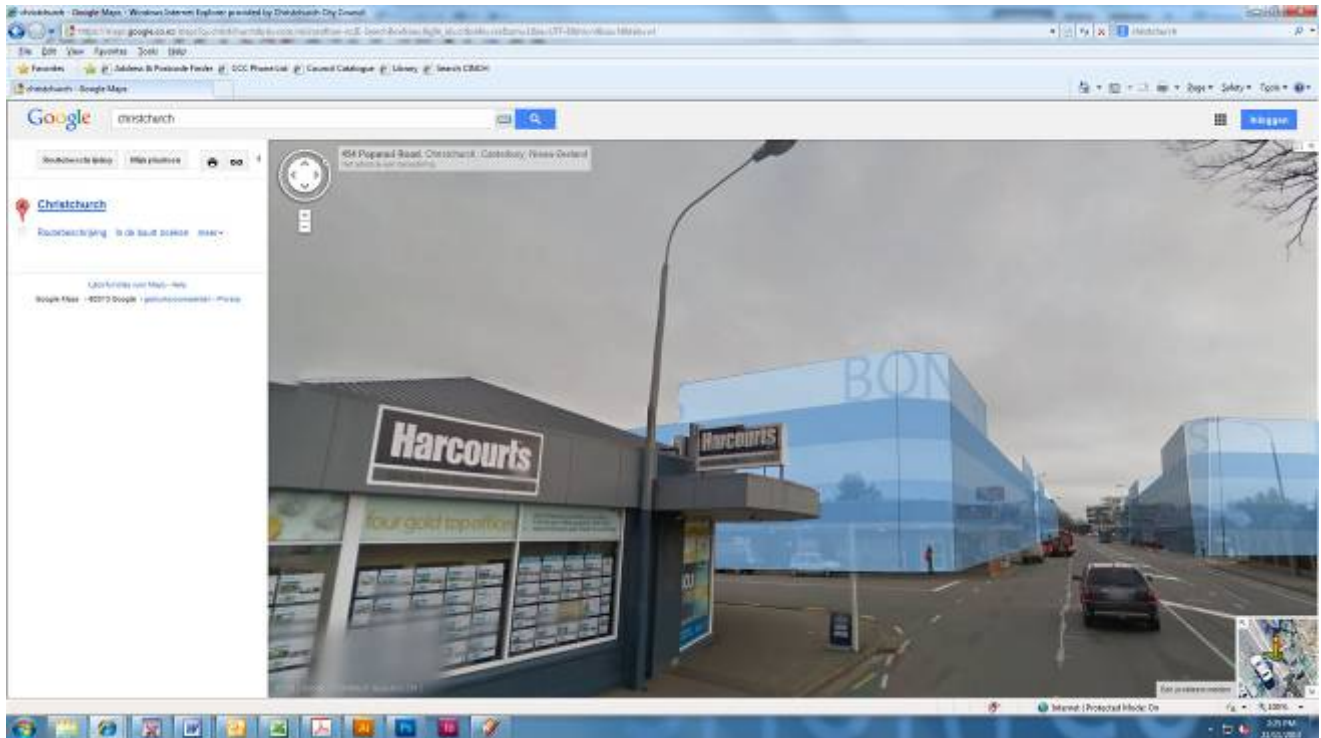


Figure 3: Corner of Papanui Road and Blair Avenue; maximum building height, with restricted corner bonus



Figure 4: Corner of Main North Road and Horner Street; maximum build height, no bonus.



Figure 5: Corner of Main North Road and Horner Street ; maximum build height, with bonus



Figure 6: Corner of Riccarton Road Picton Avenue, no bonus



Figure 7: Corner of Riccarton Road Picton Avenue, with bonus



Figure 8: Corner of Riccarton Road and Kauri Street, no bonus



Figure 9: Corner of Riccarton Road and Kauri Street, with bonus

