

Before a Christchurch City Council
Hearings Panel

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: An application for resource consent by Halo Media Ltd
(RMA/2017/1276)

Statement of evidence of Andrew William Craig

Date: 5 December 2017

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STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW WILLIAM CRAIG

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Andrew William Craig.
- 2 I am a qualified landscape architect. I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree and a post graduate diploma in Landscape Architecture. I have been practising since 1987, and now operate my own landscape architecture consultancy. For 5 years until mid-2009 I was employed by Peter Rough Landscape Architects Ltd. Before that I was employed by the Christchurch City Council for 13 years, working in the area of environmental policy and planning. Prior to that I worked for a short time with the Department of Conservation based in Hokitika. Most of my work since graduation and to date has involved landscape assessment and the development of landscape policy. On an ad hoc basis I also teach landscape architecture at Lincoln University.
- 3 I have twice visited the application site and the wider setting.
- 4 In preparing my evidence I have reviewed:
 - 4.1 the s.42A report prepared by Council Officers and consultants; and
 - 4.2 the seven submissions lodged in respect of the application.
- 5 Although this is a Council hearing, in preparing my evidence I have reviewed the code of conduct for expert witnesses contained in part 5 of the consolidated Environment Court Practice Note (2014). I have complied with it in preparing my evidence. I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

SCOPE

- 6 The purpose of this report is to assess the landscape and visual effects arising from a proposal to establish a LED billboard at 65 – 67 Victoria Street Christchurch.
- 7 I understand that:
 - a) The proposed 9.6m x 4.8m LED sign will be 46.08m².

- b) That under the Christchurch District Plan¹ zoning is Central City Business.
- c) The Christchurch District Plan applies, as all of the related signage and zoning provisions are operative.
- d) The relevant development standard breached is:
- *Rule 6.8.4.2.4 (b) Signs attached to buildings:* The proposed sign will exceed the maximum 8.215m² size permitted by 37.865m².
- e) On account of the above breaches activity status is therefore discretionary. Consideration is therefore given to the landscape / amenity relevant District Plan assessment matters and objectives and policies.
- 8 Prior to the preparation of my evidence I read that of Mr Clease. In it he comprehensively describes the site and its setting. Although focussing the design recommendations incorporated in the 'LED Billboard Research' technical review, he refers to the assessment matters as part of that discussion.² In an effort to avoid repetition I will not cover these matters, although I will make some brief additional comments regarding the landscape character and amenity of the application site setting.
- 9 The focus of my evidence will therefore be on the operative City Plan assessment matters where they are relevant to character and amenity.
- 10 Although relationship to site is an issue I understand this concerns content and its application to site related activity. I do not consider this an amenity issue as the visual effects in graphic terms at least, are the same irrespective of content.
- 11 The relevant assessment matters are comprehensive where they prompt consideration of overall site character and detailed descriptions of the proposal and its effects. Accordingly these matters are addressed in consideration of the assessment matters and objectives and policies where they are relevant to effects on landscape amenity.

¹ It is understood that this proposal is to be assessed under the Christchurch City Plan as the provisions for the Central City in the replacement district plan are not operative.

² Boffa Miskell Partners: *LED Billboard Research - Technical Review of Visual Effects* Prepared for Christchurch City Council, 10 August 2016

ASSESSMENT MATTERS

- 12 In the discussion to follow, the operative District Plan³ assessment matters are addressed prompted by the aforementioned plan standard departures. Only those matters affecting landscape and visual amenity outcomes are addressed. It is also evident that some of the assessment matters are repetitive due to the various headings they come under.

6.8.5.1 All signs and ancillary support structures

Whether the scale, design, colour, location and nature of the signage will have impacts on the architectural integrity, amenity values, character, visual coherence, and heritage values of:

- i the building and the veranda on which the signage is displayed and its ability to accommodate the signage;*
- 13 The size of the building upon which the sign will be located best informs any discussion on the proportion or scale of a billboard.⁴ It is estimated that the sign will occupy approximately 14% of the building's north western façade. While this is a reasonably high proportion, it is still significantly less than the overall extent of the building façade. It would be even less if the street façade is taken account of, as appreciation of the sign will invariably involve the two facades – see **Graphic Attachment Photo – montage 1**.
- 14 The architectural style of the receiving façade is simple and generally free from any significant modulation. It has no door and window openings and is essentially a two dimensional concrete surface. Given that the adjacent building to the north is single storey, it is possible that in the future this site might be redeveloped for a more intensive landuse, as anticipated by the underlying zoning, and therefore the northern façade of the application site is essentially blank. As a consequence, the relatively simple and unadulterated façade is favourable to the relative size of the sign. That is, the façade comprises just two design elements: the façade itself and the proposed sign. Notwithstanding its 200mm depth, the sign will appear to the viewing public as being essentially two dimensional. As a result it will appear part and parcel of the façade. Assisting this effect, the applicant further seeks to extend the street façade finish or vertical dish channel cladding to the internal boundary façade upon which the proposed billboard is affixed.

³ The replacement Christchurch District Plan

⁴ Scale is synonymous with proportion which is the comparative size of one element with another – in this case a sign with the building. Scale is not the same as size. Size arises from the dimensions of an object or element – in this case the size of the sign.

- 15 So in this sense the physical sign is fundamentally an architectural feature. The only distinction therefore, arises from the sign's content. Or to put it another way, if there were no content, would the structure of the sign board offend architectural integrity of the building on which it is placed? The answer is clearly no, as in its rectilinear form, proportions and materials it is consistent with the modern design of the building whose composite elements exhibit similar traits.
- ii. the surrounding area (including anticipated changes in the area);*
- 16 The surrounding area is entirely made up of commercial buildings of a similar size and scale as that receiving the proposed sign. Most of these buildings accommodate signs of various sizes. There are no existing residential buildings in the vicinity, although a consented high rise apartment block is proposed nearby – see **Graphic Attachment Map 1**. I will comment on the effects of the proposal in response to a submission made by the building's owners. Business activity in the area is varied where it includes offices, retail, and hospitality. More or less directly opposite the application site is Christchurch Casino.
- 17 Most of the buildings are of a similar size, although that immediately north of the application site building is relatively low – see **Graphic Attachment Photograph 4**. Generally all buildings in the vicinity are modern in character, although further afield there exist some heritage buildings – namely Victoria Mansions and Victoria Clock Tower. Apart from these, the overall built environment is largely consistent in its character, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the application site.
- 18 Other features contributing to overall site character are empty lots, two of which are located in the immediate vicinity of the application site. One is the proposed residential apartments. And across the road from the site is a very large expanse of open space currently devoted to car parking. This occupies most of the block between Peterborough, Salisbury and Durham Streets – see again **Graphic Attachment Map 1**. Subject to what the zoning permits, it is possible this site will be developed some time in the future.
- 19 The roading environment is also a prominent contributing feature of the application site setting. As the **Graphic Attachment Map 1** shows, the site is located alongside and in proximity to Victoria and Peterborough Streets. Allied to these is a triangular reserve adjoining the Casino directly opposite the sign site. Within this and other similar reserves along Victoria Street are reasonably large trees. Their presence contributes significant amenity to the overall street environment.

20 Further afield is the high rise backdrop of the central city. As the sign can only be seen from vantage points toward the city centre, this forms part of the visual environment that includes the proposed sign – see **Graphic Attachment Photograph 2**.

21 Overall the character of the surrounding is variable, although buildings are reasonably similar. Amenity is also variable. Apart from the trees in the reserves, the street amenity is low to moderate. Currently empty lots in the vicinity of the diminish amenity quite significantly. Aesthetically therefore, the surrounding environment is not especially significant compared to others in the Central City such as Worcester Boulevard, Cashel Mall and New Regent Street.

iii. residential activities; and

22 As mentioned there are currently no residential activities potentially affected by the proposed sign's presence. The high rise apartments will however introduce residential activity. Judging from the publicity photograph of these - **Graphic Attachment Photograph 9** - future residents are likely to see the proposed sign when looking eastward. Views from the apartments will likely comprise the mixed commercial environment in which they are located. Given this context, a 'natural' part of this is the presence of signs. So in this regard views of signs as an expected feature of setting, and notwithstanding the issue of size, views of that proposed are not going to be out of keeping with residents' expectations of the setting in which they are located.

23 Size is in my opinion not a significant issue as in this case as the proposed sign is for all intents and purposes integrated with the façade upon which it is attached. That is, it is part of the façade finish or to put it another way, a form of cladding, albeit illuminated. In this regard it is not all that different from internally luminated glazing which is a common feature on commercial buildings.

iv. heritage items or heritage settings, open spaces, protected trees or areas possessing significant natural values.

24 There do not appear to be any heritage buildings in the immediate setting (within 50 metres) of the application site. The nearest heritage buildings and features are Victoria Mansions and Victoria Clock Tower located on the corner of Montreal, Victoria and Salisbury Streets. As **Graphic Attachment Photograph 7** and **Map 1** shows however, it will not be possible to see the proposed sign in association with these heritage features.

25 There do exist the aforementioned reserves with their trees. As mentioned these contribute amenity to the Victoria street

environment. It is noted that these trees are not shown to be protected.⁵ While not protected or considered significant they are nonetheless subject to a suite of rules⁶ controlling their potential removal. The presence of the proposed sign will not directly affect these reserves, although people will be able to see the sign from them – see **Graphic Attachment Photograph 10**. From this vantage point it is evident just part of the proposed sign will be visible and due to the presence of an intervening foreground building. The large plane tree also contributes screening, although this varies depending on the time of year.

- 26 There are no natural sites or features of significance in the vicinity of the proposed sign.

b. Whether the extent of the impacts of the signage are increased or lessened due to:

i. the design, dimensions, nature and colour of the sign or support structure;

- 27 Refer to previous discussion concerning assessment matter *a (i)*.

ii. the level of visibility of the sign; and

- 28 **Graphic Attachment Photographs 1- 8** show the visibility of the proposed sign when viewed from multiple vantage points along Victoria Street. As mentioned the sign can only be seen when approaching the City and at a somewhat oblique angle when travelling westward along Peterborough Street at the point where it nears Victoria Street.

- 29 As evident in these photographs, visibility of the sign is highly variable. Generally, the sign will only be visible when viewers are in proximity to it – at most around 120m from the east side of Victoria Street - see again **Graphic Attachment Photograph 2**. Beyond that the sign will be either partially or fully obscured by trees and intervening buildings as is evident in a number of the photographs. The visual catchment therefore is quite confined and small – see **Graphic Attachment Map 1**. Most of this involves the public realm of Victoria and Peterborough Streets.

iii. vegetation or other mitigating features.

⁵ Christchurch District Plan Chapter 9 Appendix 9.4.7.2 Schedule of significant trees in road corridors, parks, reserves and public open space

⁶ (9.4.4.1.1 (P6); 9.4.4.1.3 (RD4))

- 30 See preceding discussion and **Graphic Attachment Photographs 1- 8.**
- c. *Whether the signage combines with existing signage on the building, the site or in the vicinity, to create visual clutter or set a precedent for further similar signage.*
- 31 As the **Graphic Attachment Photograph 2** shows, there is one vantage point involving a similar sign that can be seen simultaneously within full view of that proposed. While there are other signs further north along Victoria Street, these cannot be seen collectively with the proposed sign to its full extent – see for example, **Graphic Attachment Photograph 5** where two bill boards are evident in the fore and middle grounds but not the proposed sign. This is due to the presence of an intervening tree. The further one travels north on Victoria Street the less visible the sign becomes – again due to the presence of the intervening tree - see **Graphic Attachment Photograph 6.**
- 32 Conversely, while travelling south along Victoria Street views of the sign are confined to the envelope shown on **Graphic Attachment Map 1**, which represents a relatively small visual catchment. **Graphic Attachment Photograph 3** shows best the visual cumulative effects, where three signs are simultaneously visible. It is apparent from this however, that it is not possible to see the entirety of all these signs as one or more are partially obscured by intervening vegetation or parts of buildings. Further contributing to the lessening of cumulative effects is the fact that all signs in the vicinity are attached to buildings as opposed to free standing signs. This means that the physical fabric and integrity of the built environment remains coherent and visually intact. The construction of buildings in adjoining lots, such as that now occurring at 'The Bog' may also lessen the visibility of signs, and potentially obscure them altogether – a point that the Council's urban designer also makes in his S42A report. In this regard it cannot be ruled out that the presence of some signs are temporary⁷. Consequently any cumulative effect may not be enduring.
- e. *Whether the signage:*
- i. *enlivens a space or screens unsightly activities;*
- 33 While the sign will not screen unsightly activity, it will definitely enliven what is currently a blank, grey, monolithic and featureless concrete wall. Currently this wall has no aesthetic merit at all and is entirely unrelieved by any feature of interest. The sign will counteract that effect in a positive manner. It will introduce colour,

⁷ Prepared by Mr David Hattam. See Section 4 page3

light and interesting images very much in contrast with the façade to which it is attached.

- 34 Further, the sign is located in an area where at night there is a reasonably high level of illuminated interest, namely from the Casino and nearby restaurants and bars. The proposed sign will not be out of keeping with this. But during the day this is quite a drab environment, which the LED sign will enliven.

6.8.5.3 Static and digital billboards

- a. *Whether the scale, design, colour, location and nature of the billboard will have*

impacts on the architectural integrity, amenity values, character, visual coherence, and heritage values of:

- i. *the building and the veranda on which the billboard is displayed and its ability to accommodate the signage;*
 - ii. *the surrounding area (including anticipated changes in the area);*
 - iii. *residential activities; and*
 - iv⁸. *heritage items or heritage settings, open spaces, protected trees or areas possessing significant natural values.*
- b. *Whether the extent of the impacts of the billboard are increased or lessened due to:*
- i. *the design, dimensions, nature and colour of the sign or support structure;*
 - ii. *the level of visibility of the billboard; and*
 - iii. *vegetation or other mitigating features.*
- c. *Whether the billboard combines with existing signage on the building, the site or in the vicinity, to create visual clutter or set a precedent for further similar signage.*
- d. *Whether the billboard:*
- i. *enlivens a space or screens unsightly activities; and*

⁸ Item iii is not included as it is not relevant to landscape and visual amenity matters

- 35 These matters repeat those addressed earlier in response to assessment matter 6.8.5.1.
- e. *Whether the extent of the impacts of the billboard are increased or lessened due to:*⁹
 - iii. *the prominence of the billboard due to its illuminated or animated nature and ability to draw the eye;*
- 36 The proposed bill board will be prominent due to its illuminated nature – where the degree of luminosity will be addressed by Conditions of consent. Other than that, the very purpose of a bill board is to catch the eye. In design terms this is achieved via the combination of illumination, considerable size and contrast with its support – in this case the blank concrete wall. Elevation – between 6.575m and 9.6m also contributes prominence.
- 37 So while prominent, due to the sign’s setting on a large blank wall and given its elevation, it will not appear dominant. Dominance occurs when appreciation of surrounding landscape is usurped by the presence of the dominant object. It is largely a function of proximity of viewers to an object, whether it is a building or a tree or some other feature in the landscape. As viewers cannot get overly close to the bill board and given its setting on a much larger wall, they will not experience dominance. But as stated, the sign will appear prominent, albeit within a relatively small visual catchment.
- iv *the nature of surrounding land use activities;*
- 38 This matter is also a repeat of that addressed earlier in response to assessment matter 6.8.5.1.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- 39 A number of objectives and policies (Christchurch District Plan) are relevant to landscape and amenity outcomes. These are addressed as follows.

Objective 6.8.2.1 Signage

- a. *Signage collectively contributes to Christchurch’s vitality and recovery by:*
- iii *enhancing the visual amenity values and character of the surrounding area, building or structures.*

⁹ Items i and ii are not relevant to landscape matters

- 40 Clearly this objective recognises that signage can be positive and is necessary to the liveliness and wellbeing of the city. Notably the objective refers to collective effects. As discussed, the proposed sign will contribute enlivenment to a setting already informed by entertainment and hospitality. Such enlivenment is prerequisite to such activity as it signals vitality that in turn draws people to the area. In this regard the proposed sign is entirely in keeping with its setting where it will contribute and underscore its character. In so doing, the proposed sign is consistent with the outcomes anticipated by the objective.

Policy 6.8.2.1.3 - Managing the potential effects of signage

- a In considering Policies 6.8.2.1.1 and 6.8.2.1.2, ensure that the size, number,*

height, location, design, appearance and standard of maintenance of signs:

- i do not detract from, and where possible contribute to, the character and visual amenity of the surrounding area and public realm;*
- ii integrate within the building façade, do not detract from the integrity of the building design, and maintain the building as the primary visual element;*
- iii are in proportion to the scale of buildings and the size of the site; and*
- iv enhance the Central City*

- 41 **Policy 6.8.2.1.1 states: Enabling signage in appropriate locations** where it sets out to enable signage (of relevance) *'...as an integral component of commercial and industrial environments...throughout the Christchurch District.'* In my evidence and response to the S42A report I give reasons as to why the proposal is located appropriately, particularly with regard to the Central City typology of its setting. The same applies to Policy 6.8.2.1.6 concerning the management of off site signage. In particular the policy canvasses the compatibility of signage to its setting, that is; context while taking into account the effects of potential visual clutter and those which are cumulative.

- 42 All of the above policy matters have been addressed in response to the assessment matters. To reiterate, the proposed sign:

- i is in keeping with its currently commercial setting, where existing signs and those otherwise permitted inform the character and amenity of the existing environment,
- ii will integrate well with the building upon which it is attached, where the building is modern, incorporates rectilinear elements, and is considerably larger than the sign and as such will remain the primary visual element,
- iii will be in proportion¹⁰ to the surrounding built environment in that it will not materially alter these proportions, especially given that it is essentially a two dimensional element incorporated into a much larger wall,
- iv will enhance the Central City given that the presence of signs are encouraged by Objective 6.8.2.1.

SECTION 42A REPORT

- 43 In responding to the S42A report I focus on the comments made by the Council's urban designer, Mr David Hattam.
- 44 I agree with Mr Hattam's observation (in Section 5 of his report) that there exists a generally good human interface between the private and public realms of the street environment. Mr Hattam also concludes that a key contributor to this is the articulation and modulation of building facades, and I agree with that as well. The presence of the proposed billboard will contribute further articulation and modulation.
- 45 Mr Hattam concludes on the one hand '*... that the existing character (of the application site setting) is a high amenity and human scale environment...*',¹¹ but on the other hand he concludes that '*The present street environment is not of especially high quality...*'.¹² He then later concludes that the '*...receiving environment is of high quality...*'.¹³ . In my evidence I conclude that amenity is variable ranging from low to moderate due to the wide range of localised environmental conditions prevalent in the receiving environment.
- 46 Concerning potentially affected parties Mr Hattam concludes '*...that people in the vicinity will be affected by visual effects that may be generated by the billboard*'. Notwithstanding that he does not identify whether these effects are adverse, I agree as the very

¹⁰ Note that the policy nor assessment matters do not indicate what appropriate proportion is in terms of the ratio between sign dimensions and those of buildings

¹¹ Section 5

¹² Section 5.1

¹³ Section 7

purpose of the billboard is to generate visual effects – that is, it is designed to be seen. He does however go on to conclude that the visual effects are indeed adverse, and summarises the reasons at the beginning of Section 6 of his report.

- 47 Very fundamentally it appears Mr Hattam’s view is that the proposed billboard is too big, as he intimates that smaller (complying) ones would be acceptable. In this regard he concludes that the proposed billboard will ‘...undermine the human scale elements in the street.’¹⁴
- 48 I do not agree with his conclusion in this regard. The façade on which the billboard is to be attached is significantly larger and therefore more domineering. The billboard will reduce this by contributing modulation to the façade. As stated, Mr Hattam considers modulation desirable.
- 49 Secondly, in its purest design sense, the billboard is simply a design element appearing as part of the building fabric. If for example an architect had incorporated a similar element – that is; a coloured panel or illuminated glazing, then the effects will be indistinguishable from those arising from a billboard with regard to its form and scale. The only difference is one of content arising from a certain arrangement of letters and images – essentially pictorial elements.
- 50 Thirdly on the matter of human scale Mr Hattam observes that the proposed billboard will detract from this on account of its size. Scale, as opposed to size, is the proportion of one thing to another. Generally in design terms elements that are similar in size to humans are considered in keeping with ‘human scale’. In my opinion this is an important consideration where primary interaction between the public and private realm occurs – namely at ground floor level with the street. There is an implication that effects are unacceptably adverse if elements are not at human scale. I do not agree with this as there are numerous exceptions. For example, both the Catholic and Anglican cathedrals incorporate very high ceilings that are well beyond human proportion, and are yet necessary to the experience and function of those buildings. Further afield, if the human scale argument were applied to the Eiffel Tower it would be little more than 3 or 4 metres tall. The same would apply to the Sydney Opera House.
- 51 The more important consideration in my view rests on context and design quality. As always, context informs scale – that is, the proportions between elements such as buildings, trees and open space. As described the receiving environment comprises a variety of different sized buildings including quite large multi-storey ones as

¹⁴ Section 6.1.2

well as low rise. Because the proposed billboard is essentially two dimensional and is affixed to an existing building there will be no appreciable alteration to bulk and therefore proportion. As mentioned, if anything the presence of the billboard will help reduce proportions by modulating the façade it will be attached to. The proposed billboard, in purely elemental terms, in by no means the largest element in the receiving environment.

- 52 Mr Hattam also addresses cumulative effects. This is a matter that I have traversed in my evidence. To reiterate, while billboards exist elsewhere along Victoria Street, none in their entirety can be seen in combination with that proposed. I accept however that there will be a sequential cumulative effect in that people will appreciate the presence of bill boards along Victoria Street. In my opinion this will accord with peoples' expectations of what occurs with the CBD of major metropolitan centres. That is, people will not be surprised to see billboards, including that proposed, in such an environment as it aligns with the typology of what can reasonably be expected in city centres. Further, it is apparent in Mr Hattam's report that a billboard may be acceptable should the size of that proposed is made significantly smaller. So from that I take it that the number of billboards is not the issue with regard to cumulative effects, but rather their size. As I have discussed in evidence the size of the proposed billboard, while large, is mitigated by the circumstances of its setting.
- 53 Regarding enlivening of the street Mr Hattam concludes that due to the size of the proposed bill board and its eye catching nature be'... *distracting and detract from the environment.*' It is my opinion that the presence of the bill board will not preclude appreciation of all other activity contributing liveliness to the street. Or to put it another way, the sign will not have a cancelling effect on existing and future activity. In large part this is due to its elevation above and beyond the critical ground floor level street interface.

SUBMISSIONS

- 54 Five submissions either fully or partially oppose the proposal, where among other matters they express concern that visual and amenity effects will be adverse, and that by implication these will be more than minor.
- 55 One submission in support considers the proposed bill board will enliven this part of the CBD setting. This matter I discussed earlier in response to some assessment matters.
- 56 In summary the adverse visual and amenity effects identified by submitters are:
- a. Visual pollution;

- b. Destroys character;
- c. Diminished residential amenity;
- d. Light emission affects residential amenity;
- e. Cumulative effects - too many billboards; and
- f. Adversely affects outdoor amenity for diners in nearby restaurant (71 -73 Victoria Street).

57 Most of these issues I have addressed in the preceding discussion prompted by the relevant assessment matters. Nonetheless, I reiterate in summary my response to each of the above issues as follows.

Visual pollution

58 In aesthetic terms visual pollution occurs where elements in the landscape appear incongruous or out of keeping with their setting. As discussed, I conclude that the proposal is in keeping for the following reasons:

- a. The application site is located in a central city environment where signage, both illuminated and otherwise, is a common typological feature.
- b. The proposed billboard is architecturally incorporated into the building which supports it, and as such is in keeping with signage in the surrounding environment.
- c. The character of the existing environment is diverse and as such can accommodate a variety of design elements, including varying modes of light emission.
- d. The size and scale¹⁵ of the proposed billboard is in keeping with other elements – buildings for example - in the existing environment.
- e. The proposal is not located in an area that I consider especially sensitive – such as a low density residential setting, natural environment or suburban park.

Destroys character

59 The preceding comments address matters of character; suffice to say that context is the key consideration in this regard. As intimated, the context of the application site setting is informed by

¹⁵ Scale being the proportion of one element to another

the existing environment. This I have described in the preceding discussion.

Diminished residential amenity

- 60 As described the existing environment predominantly comprises business activity which includes retail, hospitality, office and recreational premises. The consented apartments to be constructed alongside the application site will contribute a residential component. Despite this, the environment is by no means exclusively residential - instead being one that is quite diverse. Or to put it another way, compared to a suburban residential setting the environment is not homogenous.
- 61 Further it is located within the Central City whose character is informed by large scale activity and high degrees of contrast - the latter for example including large buildings and structures juxtaposed alongside green open space. Relatively large blocks of illumination comprising for example display windows, office windows, foyers, street lighting, signs, traffic, up-lit trees and heritage features are also characteristic of central city environments. Consequently it is this character in which Central City residential activity finds itself.

Light emission effects on residential amenity

- 62 Although the degree of illumination is outside my area of expertise, as noted in the preceding discussion I observe that various forms of lighting is a prevalent characteristic of central city environments. It is also apparent that light sources are diverse, emanating from both the public and private realms. Street lighting is perhaps the most aggressive in this regard, whose purpose is to illuminate entire street environments which occur throughout the city. The point is that urban environments are illuminated and extent of this is greater in business districts - more so in the CBD. This will incur corresponding effects on the various residential environments throughout the city.

Cumulative effects - too many billboards

- 63 This matter I have addressed earlier. I should point out however, that the presence of many of the billboards along Victoria Street is transitory. The reason is that all are attached to the internal boundary facades of buildings. Consequently, the development of some neighbouring sites will render the billboard inoperable. As a result it will have to be removed. The cumulative adverse effects threshold therefore may never be reached, assuming such development occurs.

Adversely affects outdoor amenity for diners in nearby restaurant (71 -73 Victoria Street)

- 64 I assume the adverse effect referred to in the submission relates to illumination of the outdoor dining area. Again the degree of illumination and its effects are beyond my area of expertise; suffice to reiterate the preceding comments.

CONCLUSION

- 65 As is always the case regarding any activity potentially affecting landscape and visual amenity, context is the key consideration. Fundamentally this comes down to whether a proposal is in keeping with its setting in terms of what people might reasonably expect to occur. Additionally congruity is informed by the character and amenity of the existing environment where this comprises the landscape of the moment, that permitted by the District Plan provisions and any consented but as of yet implemented activity. The residential apartments are an example of the latter.
- 66 As described, the built environment is varied in both character and amenity. Also as described, signs are relatively common in the area where virtually all are attached to buildings. The proposed sign will be consistent in this regard and so the possibility of clutter is minimised. While large signs are not especially common in the area, most businesses display them. Apart from Council banners attached to lamp posts, there are no free standing signs in the area. The proposed sign will not therefore detract from this established pattern and so is in keeping with it.
- 67 As discussed, the proposed sign will be located on the simple north façade of the building that supports it. Essentially the proposed sign is a two dimensional feature attached to a building. Strictly speaking with regard to landscape and visual effects, content is the only thing distinguishing the sign from any other architectural feature affixed and integrated with the building that supports it. In effect the sign therefore appears as an integrated component of the building fabric. As a result it contributes very little to building bulk, fundamentally being an illuminated graphic.
- 68 If the architectural feature involved a graphic, as is reasonably common in the city, then there is little to differentiate that from sign content. That is, content is not going to be offensive within the context of this particular setting where existing signage informs character.
- 69 The environment in which the sign is located also mitigates by way of circumstance any potential adverse cumulative effects and those arising from excess size. Like all signs in the area, it will be affixed to a building where the proportions are very much in favour of the

latter. The integrity of the building's visual bulk and form upon which the sign is attached will clearly be maintained. This is especially so given that the space occupied by the sign is less than 14%.

- 70 Finally with regard to context and as the **Attachment Photographs** show, combined views of the signs are highly variable depending on vantage point location and the presence of intervening trees and buildings. As a result the cumulative effects threshold of acceptability will not be breached. Additionally, the visual effects of the sign will be confined to a relatively small area of the view catchment. Overall I therefore conclude that the proposed sign will not be inconsistent with the outcomes inherently anticipated by the assessment matters and that as a result the proposed sign will be in keeping with environment of its setting. It is further concluded that the visual effects arising from its presence are significantly less than minor as is demonstrated on the Graphic Attachment photo-montages.

Dated: 5 December 2017



Andrew William Craig
Landscape Architect

Before a Christchurch City Council Hearings Panel

under: the Resource Management Act 1991
in the matter of: An application for resource consent by Halo Media Limited at 65-67 Victoria
Street Christchurch (RMA/ 2015/2026)

Statement of evidence of Andrew William Craig

GRAPHIC ATTACHMENT

Date: 20 December 2017

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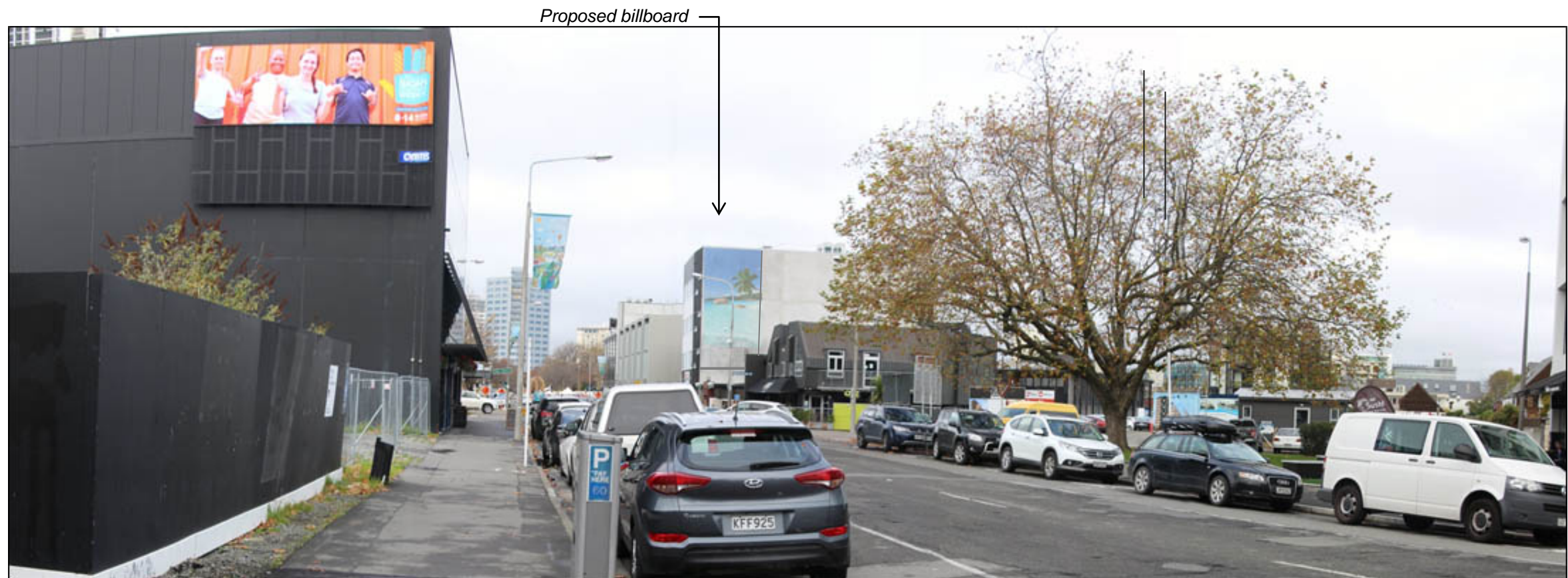
245 Blenheim Road
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Christchurch





Photograph 1 From the west side of Victoria Street the proposed sign is fully apparent. Note that it occupies a relatively small portion of the façade to which it is attached.



Photograph 2 As seen from Victoria Street in combination with an existing LED billboard



Photograph 3 From the east side Victoria Street near Salisbury Street intersection. From this vantage point the presence of the sign is dominated by foreground buildings



Photograph 4 View from west side Victoria Street at Peterborough Street intersection



Photograph 5 View from the corner of Peterborough Street



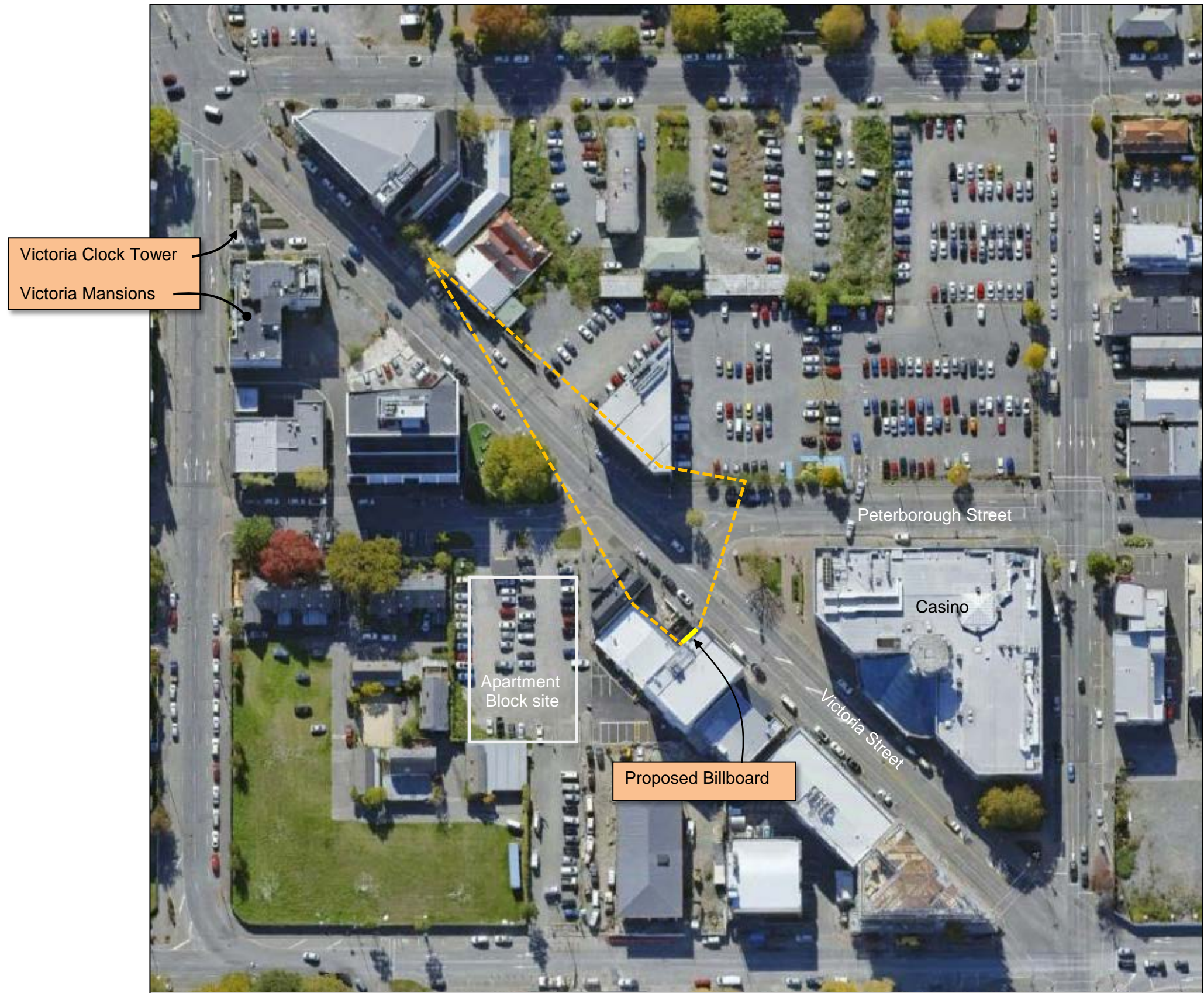
Photograph 6 From the south bound lane on Victoria Street the sign is barely visible behind trees.



Photograph 7 A driver's eye view of the sign looking toward the central city backdrop where the sign is largely obscured by trees



Photograph 8 View from Victoria Street west where the proposed billboard is fully obscured by foreground buildings and trees. Note the presence of two existing billboards.



Map 1 Showing the full un-obscured visible extent of the proposed billboard within dashed yellow line.



Photograph 9 *The yet to be constructed apartment block located in the vicinity of the proposed billboard.*

Proposed billboard – behind tree



Photograph 10 *The application site as viewed from the park and café opposite.*



Map 2 Photo-point locations