

Canterbury Fields Management Ltd
Request for Plan Change to the
Waimakariri District Council

WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
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To:

**Development at No. 10 Road, Swannanoa:
Proposed Change of Zoning from
Rural to Residential 4B**



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Proposed Change of Zoning
from Rural to Residential 4B**

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Table of Contents

1.	Purpose and Reason	5
2.	The Plan Change Request	8
2.1	The Proposed Change.....	8
2.1.1	Outline Development Plan	8
	Traffic provisions	9
	Rural amenity.....	9
	Effluent disposal/Utility lot.....	9
2.2	Amendments to the District Plan Required	10
3.	Description of the Site and Surrounding Environment.....	11
3.1	General Locality and Wider Environment.....	11
3.2	Current Use and Features	13
3.3	Landscape and Character Description of the Wider Environment.....	13
3.4	Traffic Environment.....	13
3.5	Surface Water Features	14
3.6	Groundwater Features	14
3.7	Natural Hazards.....	15
4.	Consideration of Location and Alternative Uses of the Site.....	15
4.1	Option 1 – Continued Rural Land Uses and Lifestyle Block	16
4.2	Option 2 – Low Density Residential Development	17
5.	Consultation.....	17
5.1	Waimakariri District Council Staff	17
5.2	Environment Canterbury	17
5.3	Te Ngai Tuahuriri Runanga.....	18
6.	Assessment of Actual and Potential Effects on the Environment.....	18
6.1	Visual effects and Potential Effects on the Environment	19
6.2	Effects on the Existing Traffic Environment	19
6.2.1	Car Parking, Vehicular Access and Circulation	19
6.2.2	Daily and Peak Traffic Generation.....	20
6.2.3	Traffic Distribution.....	20
6.2.4	Road Network Effects	21
6.3.	Servicing of the Site	22
6.3.1	Sewage.....	22
6.3.2	Stormwater.....	24
6.3.3	Water Supply	27
6.3.4	Electricity and Telecommunications Services.....	28
6.4	Positive Effects	28
6.5	Conclusion	28
7.	Consistency with Other Plans	29
7.1	Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (RPS)	29
7.1.1	Canterbury Regional Policy Statements Change 1 – Inclusion of Chapter 12.A	29
7.2	Natural Resources Regional Plan.....	32
7.3	Long-Term Council Community Plan (2006 – 2016).....	33
7.4	Regional Land Transport Strategy ('RLTS')	34
8.	Monitoring	34
9.	Section 32 Assessment	34
9.1	Introduction.....	34
9.2	Section 32 Evaluation.....	35
9.2.1	The Extent to Which the Objectives are the Most Appropriate Way to Achieve the Purpose of the Act	35
9.2.2	Section 32 (3)(b): Whether the Policies, Rules, or Methods are the Most Appropriate for Achieving the Objectives	44
9.2.3	Appropriateness of the Alternative Options.....	47
9.2.4	The Risk of Acting or Not Acting	48

9.3 Conclusion	48
Appendix 1	49
Appendix 2.....	52
Appendix 3.....	53
Appendix 4.....	54
Appendix 5.....	55

1. Purpose and Reason

1. Canterbury Fields Management Limited ('CFML') are requesting a private plan change to the Waimakariri District Plan for the purpose of changing the zoning of a 10.119ha site on No. 10 Road from Rural to Residential 4B to enable development of the site for residential purposes.
2. CFML have intensified the cut flower business since its take-over and invested heavily into a state of the art packhouse in late 2002. Packaging of cut flowers has now become the core of the business and predominantly services other growers, largely due to the severe and increasing economic pressure as a result of high exchange rates especially against the US-Dollar and Yen. Therefore, CFML would like to concentrate on the core element of flower packaging and export for a consortium of nearby flower growers and sell off the surplus land no longer required for the growing of flowers while retaining some specialty crops.
3. From a business perspective sourcing flowers from other growers effectively spreads the risk profile for CFML, while providing a valuable business opportunity for lifestyle block owners in the Waimakariri District. From a wider industry perspective this facilitates growers investing directly in new varieties and growing rather than capital-intensive packhouses which, overall, are under-utilised on an individual grower basis.
4. Furthermore, the ability of channelling cut flowers through one central packhouse facilitates streamlined handling and superior quality control processes and provides lifestyle block owners access to the export market – these are critical factors for success in the export flower growing business.
5. Recently, in New Zealand, the export cut flower business has come under increasingly severe economic pressure to survive due to continuing high exchange rates especially against the US-Dollar and YEN. The proposed plan change will ultimately provide capital for CFML, which can then be used to adjust or expand the flower packing and exporting business to survive changes in economies.
6. Simultaneously, with the growing pressure of cut flower export, during the past fifteen years the Waimakariri District has experienced population increases that have been among the highest in New Zealand with the population having nearly doubled. The Census in 2006 confirmed population numbers of a total of 42834 usually living in the District, with approximately one third living in rural areas¹. The number of people working in Christchurch while living in the Waimakariri District has increased proportionally. Further increases in population for the District are projected for the next twenty years.

¹ The LtCCP for the Waimakariri District states that by 30 June 2005 the population increased to 42,100 from 25,600.

7. Changes in the occupations of people living in the Waimakariri District reflect the changing character of the District, from one largely dependent on agriculture to one in which many of its people are involved in administration and management, clerical work and sales and service activities. Today only 11% of the District's labour force is involved with agriculture, forestry and fishing.
8. The increasing population is attributed to a number of factors including:
 - Its proximity to Christchurch City, which offers employment and/or business opportunities;
 - Its natural features particularly the beaches, rivers and foothills recreation areas,
 - Its small communities and opportunities to participate in community life; and
 - The desire to live in a rural environment close to Christchurch (LtCCP).

A change in zoning from Rural to Residential 4B will be consistent with the above-mentioned trend.

9. It is considered, that, aside from urban development, further provision for rural-residential development needs to be made. The provision of rural-residential sites enables a choice of living environments and provides a rural living environment which is more space conserving than the four hectare minimum allotment area of the Rural Zone.
10. A survey of the small holding owners in the Waimakariri District showed that despite the desire for rural living, hobby farms and rural outlook, a considerable proportion of small holding owners consider that the site area of 4ha is too large (approximately 20% as described in the small holdings survey). To accommodate the desire for rural living and outlook it is believed that smaller blocks in specific locations would be sufficient and would protect the objectives and policies of the Waimakariri District Plan, the LtCCP and the Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement to a greater degree than infinite subdivision of farms into 4ha lifestyle blocks. Therefore, the proposal to change the zoning of a site from Rural to Residential 4B to provide for small sites on a condensed area is considered appropriate.
11. The location of the site subject to this application is considered suitable for Residential 4B zoning given that the site largely forms a continuation of this zoning. The site is in close proximity to an existing Residential 4B zone and a large number of existing rural zoned small titles (less than 4ha). A small commercial or retail activity was proposed and an application for resource consent made in relation to a site along Tram Road just east of the site. It is understood that this application was declined as the overlying Rural Zone provisions of the District Plan, despite the changing character of the area, did not provide for such an activity to establish.
12. Despite nearby residential uses, low-density residential development is not presently considered a conceivable use under the current rural zoning of the site due to the requirements of Council to administer the District Plan consistently. Subdivision consent applications to subdivide

land within the Rural Zone into lots of less than 4ha in area are generally declined by the Waimakariri District Council. Therefore, it is considered that the development of additional small lifestyle blocks in this location and generally in the Waimakariri District is possible only through requesting a plan change to the operative Waimakariri District Plan. The reasons for this lie in Waimakariri District Council's consistent administration of the Waimakariri District Plan, which to date, as is understood, has not allowed the creation of lots in the Rural Zone which are smaller than 4ha in area. Furthermore, the Waimakariri District Plan provides specifically that further Residential 4 zones (both A and B) can only be created by way of a plan change (Chapter 17 of the Waimakariri District Plan).

13. This private plan change request has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the First Schedule and the Fourth Schedule of the Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA'). It comprises an Outline Development Plan ('ODP'), and contains a description of the proposed change, a description of the site and the surrounding environment, an assessment of potential alternative uses of the site, and an assessment of actual and environmental effects of the proposed change on the environment. To support this plan change request, a traffic assessment, a landscape assessment and a wastewater report have been commissioned which are attached in full as appendices to this request.
14. The Section 32 evaluation establishes that the plan change request is consistent with the existing provisions of the Waimakariri District Plan ('the District Plan') and the provisions of Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement ('RPS') in that it applies a number of the key growth management considerations for Greater Christchurch. These considerations include controlling the sprawl of residential development into adjoining productive land, which often comprises high quality soils, limiting the loss or potential of such land.
15. It is considered that low-density residential development is the most appropriate option for use of the site in terms of economic, social and environmental costs and benefits for the Waimakariri District.
16. An alternative option for long-term use of the site is the maintenance of the status quo, retaining the rural zoning. It was considered that the 10.119ha block cannot be used economically or efficiently in the future for farming purposes, given its overall small size for farming purposes and the surrounding lifestyle blocks, most of which containing dwellings. A more intensive use has the potential to trigger the intensive farming rules of the District Plan, which require significant setbacks and would likely trigger reverse sensitivity issues from surrounding land owners. Resource consents for intensive farming activities near a residential area (despite the area being used predominantly for lifestyle blocks) and up gradient of a community water supply well are considered to be difficult to obtain.
17. Alternatively, under the Rural Zone provisions of the District Plan, the site could be subdivided into two lifestyle blocks. Two lifestyle blocks would not provide sufficient opportunity for growth near already existing developed and serviced areas and could force residential

development into other areas of potentially higher rural character than at this location in Swannanoa, opposite the Residential 4B zone.

18. Therefore, in consistency with the objectives and policies for the Swannanoa/Mandeville area as currently contained in the District Plan and the recommendations for further development of PC1, the development of a Residential 4B zone was considered the most appropriate option for the site.

2. The Plan Change Request

2.1 The Proposed Change

19. It is proposed to change the existing rural zoning of Lot 1 DP 43607 to Residential 4B to enable the site to be developed for low-density residential purposes. Residential development in accordance with the provisions of the Residential 4B zone would allow development of the site conceptually and in compliance with the rules for subdivision into nine rural residential allotments, with access from No. 10 Road.

2.1.1 Outline Development Plan

20. The plan change request is accompanied by an Outline Development Plan ('ODP'), attached as Appendix 1, to provide certainty of development to immediately surrounding neighbours. The ODP is simple in nature given the low profile of the existing development layers of the Swannanoa/Mandeville area, which, at the time of the preparation of this request, consisted of:
- the main road link, being Tram Road, a two way two lane road without provisions for pedestrians or cyclists;
 - a main rural residential "settlement" south of Tram Road, bounded by No 10 Road and McHughs Road with smaller subdivisions around its perimeter. The development of the settlement followed an Outline Development, requiring link roads, amenity strips, specified access points etc;
 - a community facility network consisting of Swannanoa School and Preschool, Swannanoa Community Hall, the church and the domain, with Mandeville Sportscentre on the eastern outskirts of Mandeville. There are no pedestrian links to these facilities. At present pedestrians use the wide grass berm to walk to these facilities with cyclists using the road.
21. On the basis of the existing layers the proposed Outline Development Plan is limited to a small range of structuring elements, which will enable the development of the site taking into account the need to create opportunities for development of social, environmental and economic well-being of its future community. The structuring elements of the ODP include:
- provision of traffic management;
 - an amenity strip; and
 - preliminary provisions for effluent disposal from the future subdivision of this site.

Traffic provisions

22. The traffic provisions include controls on the location of access points, footpaths connections and the potential for (pedestrian links) links to neighbouring sites should rezoning of neighbouring sites be contemplated in the future.
23. Access points to the property will be provided at two locations, one being the existing accessway to the property just north of the Tram Road/No 10 Road intersection, and the second access point being located approximately 215m north of the Tram Road/No 10 Road intersection. Further vehicle crossings may be required for sites fronting No 10 Road, if access cannot or would be undesirable to be gained over the accessways provided.
24. A footpath will be provided along the secondary accessway only, the reasoning for this being that this accessway would provide access to multiple lots, whereas the existing accessway would serve one property only (or a maximum of two). Therefore, a footpath along this accessway is considered to not be required.
25. A pedestrian link to adjoining properties in the east will also be provided to allow a future connection to adjoining properties should these be further developed in the future.

Rural amenity

26. The ODP requires an amenity strip of 3m in width to either be retained or replanted along the road to minimise the visual perception of this site from No 10 Road. This strip is in accordance with the ODP set out in the Waimakariri District Plan for the Residential 4B area in Mandeville south of Tram Road.

Effluent disposal/Utility lot

27. While there is no capacity in the existing Council effluent disposal plants for Mandeville, alternative effluent disposal methods need to be considered to enable development to proceed, taking into account constraints such as the community water supply in Mandeville. The most feasible options assessed, in the absence of Council reticulation, are those of (a) individual treatment and disposal on each site and (b) on-site treatment with disposal to land in a common effluent field on the site. These options are supported by an assessment of effects on groundwater quality by Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd, attached as Appendix 4.
28. Having superimposed the community water supply protection zone over the well, only one area on the site was left unaffected by this zone and therefore deemed most suitable for use a common effluent disposal field. This location will ensure that the water supply would not be adversely affected in terms of the relevant rules of the PNRRP as a result of effluent disposal to land on the site. This area is shown on the ODP.
29. The Wastewater Report by Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd concludes that, provided recommended mitigation and monitoring measures, similar to other land disposal systems, will be implemented, *'the adverse effects to the groundwater underneath the site, the community supply well and the down-gradient bores are considered*