

Before the Independent Hearings Panel
at Waimakariri District Council

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: Proposed private plan change RCP31 to the Operative
Waimakariri District Plan

and: **Rolleston Industrial Developments Limited**
Applicant

Summary of evidence of Tony Milne (Landscape)

Dated: 3 August 2023

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SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF TONY MILNE

- 1 My full name is Tony Douglas Milne.
- 2 I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Canterbury and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture Lincoln University. I am a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architect (*FNZILA*) and founding Director of Rough Milne Mitchell Landscape Architects Ltd (*RMM*) which was established in 2010.
- 3 *RMM* is currently involved in a range of landscape design and planning projects throughout New Zealand, and I am regularly preparing landscape and visual effects assessments to accompany rezoning applications. I am currently involved in Plan Change projects in Nelson (PC28), Cromwell (PC14), Ravenswood (PC30), Queenstown (Homestead Bay and Ladies Mile) along with Bellgrove (Rangiora) that have similar landscape and visual issues as PC31.

SUMMARY

- 4 The key landscape issue of the proposed rezoning relates to potential effects on the amenity of the surrounding environment. This is because the change in density associated with the residential scale development will alter the rural open characteristics that are currently experienced when travelling past the site.
- 5 However, the alterations to landscape character are considered to be acceptable in the context of the wider existing development pattern due to the existing level of fragmentation that has already occurred through rural residential scale development, along with the positive effects associated with the increase in local amenity and convenience that will complement the existing Ōhoka Village.
- 6 A further consideration, which has not previously been expanded upon, is the anticipated reduction in open rural character that is provided for by both the Operative Waimakariri District Plan (*OWDP*) or the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan's (*PWDP*) rezoning to Rural Lifestyle Zone (*RLZ*).
- 7 The landscape treatment around the perimeter of the site (Landscape Treatments A, B, and C) is also considered to be an appropriate response which will assist with integration of the PC31 area.

RESPONSE TO SUBMITTER EVIDENCE

- 8 I have now reviewed the submitter evidence which directly relates to my landscape evidence. A brief response is provided in relation to points raised in the following statement/briefs of evidence:

- 8.1 Statement of Evidence of Kim Thomas Goodfellow on behalf of Waimakariri District Council (WDC) (as Submitter) – Landscape;
 - 8.2 Brief of Evidence of Richard John Knott on Behalf of WDC (as Submitter) – Urban Design;
 - 8.3 Brief of Evidence of Nick Boyes on behalf of WDC (as Submitter) – Planning;
 - 8.4 Statement of Evidence of Ainsley Jean McLeod on behalf of Transpower New Zealand Limited; and
 - 8.5 Statement of Evidence of Dr Greg Burrell on behalf of the Canterbury Regional Council.
- 9 A notable point of contention appears to be the inclusion of the 'Anticipated District Plan Development'¹ and the theoretical Rural/Rural Lifestyle development concepts². Mr Goodfellow has stated that these are "of marginal relevance"³, Mr Knott has referred to them as "being in no way comparable"⁴, and Mr Boyes agrees with both Mr Goodfellow and Mr Knott in this regard⁵.
- 10 The preparation of an anticipated outcome comparison (being the two development scenarios within Attachment 1 to my evidence in chief) is considered to be a useful analysis tool which illustrates an unfanciful scenario for the future of this land under the current operative and proposed WDP framework. The primary purpose of which is to demonstrate that:
- "The loss of open rural views is possible under either the PWDP Rural Lifestyle Zone or the PC31 development and therefore, restriction of views across the PC 31 site is not considered to be a key factor in determining potential adverse landscape and visual amenity effects"*⁶
- 11 The presence of open views is one characteristic that can be associated with rural amenity, noting that the effect on 'rural outlook' was a common topic amongst the submitters⁷, with Mr Goodfellow having

¹ Statement of Evidence of Tony Milne; Paragraphs 16-23.

² Statement of Evidence of Tony Milne; Attachment 1 – p3 & p4.

³ Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Paragraph 16.

⁴ Brief of Evidence of Richard Knott; Paragraph 45.

⁵ Brief of Evidence of Nick Boyes; Paragraph 38.

⁶ Statement of Evidence of Tony Milne; Paragraph 23.

⁷ S42A Report – 6.9.2.

also recorded 'expansive views' within three of his four site photograph descriptions⁸.

- 12 The purpose of the perimeter landscape treatment is not intended to hide a "*densely populated island*"⁹, nor is it "the applicant's desire to screen all new development"¹⁰, rather it is intended to address the interface with nearby properties (both as they currently exist and in accordance with the OWDP and PWDP zoning). This will provide a vegetative edge that is complementary to existing Whites Road frontage planting.
- 13 In relation to the retention of character, it is important to clarify that PC31 does not intend to retain rural character within the PC31 site boundaries. The intention of PC31 is to undertake a rezoning which will allow for development consistent with that of a Residential Zone, in an appropriate location that responds to the surrounding Ōhoka setting.
- 14 Mr Goodfellow suggests that the proposed PC31 "*is of a density that would fail to protect the rural character of Ōhoka*"¹¹, and that the amenity enhancements are still "*insufficient to protect the rural character of the Ōhoka Settlement*"¹². While PC31 undeniably represents residential growth, it is my opinion that the density still represents that of a village scale (noting that, for example, Oxford is significantly more urbanised than the PC31 proposal, yet is still identified as a Village).
- 15 In relation to the evidence of Ms McLeod (on behalf of Transpower), I confirm that there is no issue with the PC31 development implementing the required Hazards from Tree regulations and that an Advice Note (as suggested¹³) is considered sufficient to address this.
- 16 Finally, Dr Burrell (on behalf of Canterbury Regional Council) has suggested that some direction be included in the Outline Development Plan in relation to "*the placement of objects and plants within the waterbody setbacks*"¹⁴. It is my understanding that the same outcome is intended by the proposed Outline Development Plan requirements, which provide for landscaping plans to be signed off by WDC in a manner which meets all relevant freshwater policy standards.

⁸ Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Attachment 1 – Photo 2, 3 & 4.

⁹ Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Paragraph 20.

¹⁰ Statement of Evidence of Richard Knott; Paragraph 50.

¹¹ Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Paragraph 16.1.

¹² Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Paragraph 22.

¹³ Statement of Evidence of Ainsley McLeod; Paragraph 53

¹⁴ Statement of Evidence of Dr Greg Burrell; Paragraph 40.

CONCLUSION

- 17 Overall, I consider PC31, including the proposed Outline Development Plan responds appropriately to the application site's attributes, sensitivity and the surrounding environment. From a landscape and visual perspective PC31 has been designed so that its size and future population are located in a way that seeks to emulate how existing rural-residential development is generally set back behind vegetation.
- 18 I consider adverse effects on visual amenity for the assessed representative viewpoints will generally be in the range of low to moderate. Although this does not necessarily mean that the resulting level of visual amenity will be lower than at present. Instead, the resulting visual amenity will be from a combination of existing and new elements.
- 19 Further there are many positive effects on landscape and amenity resulting from the proposal including the improvement of ecological values of the application site through native planting, introduction of open space corridors through the development, and an increase in general amenity which will be derived from a high-quality landscape setting.
- 20 Overall PC31 will provide for future development that is appropriate and will not result in significant adverse landscape or visual amenity effects that cannot be either avoided or mitigated. While it is inevitable that the existing qualities and characteristics of the application site will change, PC31 displays a carefully considered response, integrated, comprehensive, mixed use development which will result in a high-quality environment.

Dated: 3 August 2023

Tony Douglas Milne