

**BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED BY THE  
WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

The Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA** or  
**the Act**)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Hearing of Submissions and Further  
Submissions on the Proposed Waimakariri  
District Plan (**PWDP** or **the Proposed Plan**)

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Hearing of Submissions and Further  
Submissions on Variations 1 and 2 to

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Submissions and Further Submissions on the  
Proposed Waimakariri District Plan by **Mark  
and Melissa Prosser**

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**EVIDENCE OF FRASER ALLAN MILLER  
ON BEHALF OF MARK AND MELISSA PROSSER**

DATED: 5 March 2024

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Fraser Allan Miller.
- 2 I am a Senior Landscape Architect at Rough Milne Mitchell (**RMM**) Landscape Architects Limited.
- 3 I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Lincoln University, and I am a Registered Landscape Architect with the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (**NZILA**).
- 4 I have over 20 years' experience practising as a Landscape Architect throughout New Zealand. I have worked on a broad range of projects in the specialties of both landscape design and landscape planning.
- 5 While this is not a matter before the Environment Court, I have read the Environment Court's Code of Conduct and agree to comply with it. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. The matters addressed in my evidence are within my area of expertise, however where I make statements on issues that are not in my area of expertise, I will state whose evidence I have relied upon. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed in my evidence.
- 6 I have been engaged by Mark and Melissa Prosser (the **Submitters**) of Ohoka Farm Holdings Ltd (**OFHL**) to prepare landscape evidence in relation to the proposed rezoning accompanied by a proposed Outline Development Plan (**ODP**) for a site that is located north of Mandeville.
- 7 It is noted that the site, including adjoining land to the east owned by OFHL, has already been granted resource consent (RC205106 & RC205107) for a 20-lot subdivision. This provides a consented baseline for the site that my evidence refers to.

## SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 8 In my evidence I address the following issues:
  - (a) Present my assessment of the effects on landscape values, visual effects and rural character arising from rezoning of the site from Rural Lifestyle (**RL**) to Large Lot Residential (**LLR**) under the proposed Waimakariri District Plan (**pWDP**).

- (b) The landscape and visual effects of future development deriving from the proposed ODP on the existing and anticipated landscape character and amenity of the site and its receiving environment.
- (c) The rationale behind the proposed landscape treatments for the site's public road frontages to both Dawsons and Ashworths roads.
- (d) The rationale behind the proposed landscape treatment along the site's boundary with the existing San Dona development to the southeast.
- (e) The positive effects associated with the enhancement of waterways with indigenous planting along the eastern boundary and in an eastern and southern Stormwater Management Area (**SMA**) within the site.
- (f) The positive effects associated with the provision of pedestrian/ cycle connections within the site, including a link to the Mandeville Village Centre and a recreational walking loop in the eastern SMA.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE**

- 9 My evidence assesses the rezoning of approximately 74 hectares of land north of the Mandeville Village Centre from RL Zone to LLR Zone under the pWDP, with an ODP applied to the site, which has been designed to align with the LLR provisions.
- 10 At a broad scale, the proposed rezoning of the site presents a logical expansion of the Mandeville settlement, given the majority of site infills a gap between existing development in the absence of a natural barrier and extends the built form of Mandeville out to a road boundary.
- 11 The site is currently a working farm and the RL zoning under the pWDP, along with the consented 20-lot subdivision provides a permitted baseline for how the site (and land to the east) could be developed. In essence, it would compartmentalise the site into 4.0 hectare lots. This would be particularly evident from the site's road frontages and from the San Dona development to the south, given this subdivision excludes any landscape treatment along these site boundaries.

- 12 While the proposed ODP is seeking a more intensive rural residential development of 5,000m<sup>2</sup> lots it has been carefully designed expansion of Mandeville with a larger lot overlay along its southern boundary with the San Dona development, building setbacks and a continuous landscape edge treatment, which will screen the development and integrate it into the existing surrounding pattern of development.
- 13 The potential and actual landscape or visual effects on rural character and amenity of the site and its receiving environment will be avoided and or mitigated by the appropriately designed ODP for the site.
- 14 The proposed ODP includes suitably designed setback and landscape treatments along the sensitive road frontages and southern boundary with the San Dona development that will maintain rural character and amenity.
- 15 The extensive planting of indigenous vegetation in the 10m wide planting strips, two stormwater management areas and enhancement of the channelised waterway and streams with native riparian planting will enhance amenity values, biodiversity, and overall natural character.
- 16 The existing 5m wide native planting strip inside the site, fronting Ashworths Road will be maintained and integrated into the 10m wide planting strip. The new planting within the 10m wide landscape strips will be planted during the subdivision development to provide the earliest mitigation for future construction of dwellings. It will take approximately seven years (following initial planting) for most species to reach a height of 1.8m (above eye-level) where it would start to provide reasonable visual screening.
- 17 The provision of walkway/ cycling connections, including a loop walkway in one of the stormwater management areas, will also enhance amenity values.
- 18 Overall, the proposed LLR Zoning and future development in accordance with the ODP would not change Mandeville's rural village character.

#### **PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY**

- 19 The purpose of my evidence is to assess the effects on landscape values, character and visual effects anticipated from the proposed rezoning of the site and future development in accordance with the ODP. To assist with this, I compare the proposed rezoning and indicative concept lot layout with that of

the 4ha consented subdivision for the site and that anticipated by the proposed Waimakariri District Plan zoning.

- 20 The scope of my evidence is tailored to suit the nature of the proposed rezoning and its context including the framework of the governing legislation. The statutory documents containing provisions relevant to the proposal are found in the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**), National Policy Statement on Urban Development (**NPS-UD**), Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (**CRPS**) and the pWDP. My evidence mainly focusses on the objectives, policies, and assessment matters under the pWDP that give effect to the higher-level statutory plans and documents.
- 21 The methodology and terminology used in my evidence has been informed by the *Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines*<sup>1</sup>.
- 22 Two visits have been made to the site and its surrounds, the last of these being on 07 November 2023. The site visits were undertaken to assist in understanding the landscape character and values within the receiving environment including the outcomes anticipated by the pWDP and assessing the proposed ODP's actual and potential landscape and visual effects.
- 23 My evidence refers to a seven-point rating scale for assessing the proposed ODP's actual and potential landscape and visual effects. The scale is attached in **Appendix A** to my evidence.
- 24 My evidence is formatted as follows:
- A description of the broad scale context of the site, and a description of the receiving environment in terms of the existing landscape attributes and how these contribute to the existing landscape values of the receiving environment considering the proposed RL zoning under the pWDP as the permitted baseline.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

- A description of the site, in terms of its existing landscape attributes, and how these relate to the landscape values of the receiving environment.
- A description of the proposed ODP, specifically the lot layout, internal road network, landscape treatments on the road frontage and site boundary with the surrounding development, as well as enhancement of waterways within the site.
- An assessment of the proposed ODP's actual and potential landscape and visual effects on landscape character and amenity values compared to the outcome resulting from the consented 20-lot subdivision on the site as the consented baseline and the permitted baseline anticipated by the Rural Lifestyle zoning under the pWDP.
- An overall conclusion on the landscape and visual effects.

25 My evidence is accompanied by a Graphic Attachment (**GA**) in **Appendix B**, which includes site context plans, the pWDP zoning map, a site analysis plan, connectivity plan, waterways plan, site photographs, the proposed ODP, including sections illustrating key landscape treatments.

#### **BROAD SCALE CONTEXT**

26 The recent report prepared by Boffa Miskell (**BM**) "Waimakariri District – Rural Character Assessment" (dated 6 June 2018) is helpful in establishing the existing landscape character and amenity of the receiving environment surrounding the proposed site. The BM report identifies a dozen "character areas" that make up the rural areas of the Waimakariri District and provides a commentary on the potential for rural residential development and intensification of the rural land, while considering the provisions of the CRPS and the operative Waimakariri District Plan (**WDP**) (refer to the Rural Character Areas Plan in the GA – Sheet 3).

27 The report identifies the rural context of the Mandeville North settlement as "Lower Plains". This character area includes most of the urban development within the Waimakariri District, including the townships of Rangiora, Kaiapoi Woodend and Pegasus, as well as semi-urban development clusters at Mandeville, Ohoka, Fernside, Tuahiwi and Swannanoa (refer to the Lower

Plains Character Areas Plan in the GA – Sheet 4). It describes the character of the “Lower Plains” under the following headings: (1) Landform, (2) Land Cover, (3) Land Use, and (4) Built Form Character and Patterns, Boundary/ edges. The following is a brief landscape character description, under these headings, relevant to the Mandeville settlement and its immediate surrounding areas.

### **Landform**

- 28 Mandeville is located on a gently sloping fan descending from the mountains, which comprises mainly greywacke glacial outwash gravels and alluvial deposits. It is approximately 4.5 km north of the Waimakariri River, which defines the southern extent of the “Lower Plains” character area.
- 29 The topography of the plains is mostly flat, but gently climbing the further inland one goes from the Pegasus coastline. A few small streams and creeks flow through the area, although much of these have been channelised to make more land available for farming. Much of the area was drained during the early years of European settlement to create farmland. Long straight-lined open ditches are commonplace and follow lot boundaries and internal fence lines.

### **Land Cover**

- 30 The Mandeville settlement generally includes a fragmented vegetation pattern associated with its rural lifestyle developments. This includes mature and establishing trees, roadside shelterbelts, and hedgerows (of differing heights), small-scale orchards, fields, and large domestic gardens.
- 31 The outer lying areas of Mandeville, include larger blocks of land used mostly as grazing with some rotational cropping and pivot irrigation. The vegetation patterns are at a much grander scale and include mature trees and large shelterbelts framing and enclosing views of the open pastoral and cropping areas. The established shelterbelts on the periphery of the farm blocks effectively compartmentalises the landscape. Occasional riparian planting can be found on the margins of waterways and ditches; however, this landscape is largely absent of indigenous vegetation.

### *Land Use*

- 32 The "Lower Plains" are highly modified and encompasses the greatest density of small rural lots in the Waimakariri District.
- 33 The Mandeville village settlement includes a commercial business area (Mandeville Village Town) which was developed to support the growing community. The residential development of Mandeville includes a patchwork of Residential 4A (5,000m<sup>2</sup> lot average), and 4B (10,000m<sup>2</sup> lot average) Zones. Just outside of the Mandeville Growth Boundary is the San Dona development, comprising lots with a lower density of 1.5 to 2.5 hectares. This development is directly adjacent to the Residential 4A and 4B land. It is proposed to be zoned Rural under the pWDP. Many of these properties have been planted with small-scale orchards, such as olive groves.
- 34 The rural land immediately surrounding the settlement of Mandeville includes medium to small lifestyle blocks, larger blocks of pastoral farmland as well as more intensive primary production activities, such as poultry and small-scale commercial activities. This is evident in aerial photography where a cluster of large-scale sheds can be seen to southeast of the Mandeville settlement.
- 35 The land and waterways are of profound importance to Te Runganga O Ngai Tuahuriri and were often used as guidance along travel routes between the mountains and the coast, and for providing mahinga kai. Historically, settlement by tangata whenua was along the coastal plains and eastern edge of the character area. There are no cultural sites of importance found in or around Mandeville, and none of the waterways have been identified as Nga Wai.

#### **Built Form Character and Patterns**

- 36 The Mandeville settlement has fundamentally been demarcated by the centric roading network and density and size of the allotments.
- 37 Along the local roads within the settlement and immediately surrounding Mandeville, the boundary/ edge treatment tends to include smaller shelterbelts, hedgerows of varying height, specimen trees, rural style fencing, such as post and rail and low-key entrance features such as stone pillars and gates. The roads have unformed edges and wide grass berms that have been mown indicating a more domesticated character.

- 38 Tram Road passes through Mandeville on a northwest to southeast alignment. The main roading network comprises four long linear roads (Wards, Bradleys, McHughs and Mandeville Roads), which radiate out from a central area on Tram Road. The Mandeville Village Centre is near the central area where the roads intersect. The centric roading pattern has given rise to centric wedge-shaped patterns of development with alternating Residential 4A and 4B Zones (refer to the pWDP in the GA – Sheet 6). The boundary/ edge treatment between alternating Residential 4A and 4B Zones compromise large shelterbelts, sometimes on both sides of the road, which direct views to confined viewshafts.
- 39 Rural residential development in Mandeville is characterised by large modern homes<sup>2</sup> with large gardens and occasionally pools. Other common traits include paddocks fronting the road with dwellings setback approximately 300m, long curving driveways, and gateway features, such as greywacke stone pillars and post and rail fencing. Houses are mostly screened from the road by intervening vegetation in the foreground, and an open space character prevails.

#### **THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT**

- 40 The receiving environment is defined as that area surrounding the application site, generally within a 300m offset of the site boundaries, potentially affected by the proposed site rezoning and future development in accordance with the ODP. In essence, the receiving environment takes in roads and neighbouring land within the immediate vicinity of the site, and it includes Dawsons and Ashworths roads to the west and north respectively; the Millfield rural-residential development to west the San Dona development to the south and rural land to the north and east that is proposed as RL under the pWDP.

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2 The economics report, prepared by insight Economics, refers to an average dwelling size of 275m<sup>2</sup> in Mandeville.

**Millfield Rural-Residential Development to the West**

- 41 On the western side of Dawsons Road, opposite the site, lies the Millfield Residential 4A development. This is rezoned as LLR under the pWDP. The more intensive Residential 4A Zone development (5,000m<sup>2</sup> lot average), tends to be more urban in character than rural, given the presence of highly managed and modified landscaping, large domestic gardens, sealed driveways ornate entrances and solid timber fencing to some road boundaries.
- 42 There is no direct interface with Dawsons Road from the Millfield allotments, because access is provided by the internal local Warwick Road. This has resulted in a combination of mature, newly planted, and limbed up / pleached Leyland Cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) shelterbelt planting, and 1.8m paling fences forming the outlook from Dawsons Road. Essentially Millfield has turned its back on Dawsons Road.
- 43 It is not clear why the trees have been limbed up, possibly because of daylighting issues with the immediate residences. It is also not clear whether the pleached treatment will be continued along the balance of the shelterbelt planting. However, the presence of pleached trees and a stained solid fence creates an interface that is more urban than rural immediately opposite the proposed site. Daylighting and vegetation maintenance have been duly considered in the landscape treatments along the boundaries for the proposed ODP, which I will discuss in the later part of my evidence.
- 44 There are two formed pedestrian/ cycle linkages to Dawsons Road. One immediately opposite the centre of the site boundary and one opposite the southern corner of the site along Dawsons Road. This provides a link between Dawsons Road and Warwick Road.
- 45 Immediately north of the Millfield development, further north along Dawsons Road, are two larger properties at 125 and 139 Dawsons Road, which are across the road from the northwest part of the site.
- 46 The property at 125 Dawsons Road is approximately 4.0 hectares, and includes a large dwelling, setback some 60m from the road boundary. The dwelling is accessed by a curving driveway lined with trees. Further tree planting is

present in small clusters between the dwelling and road. The road boundary is defined by a post and wire farm fence, with post and rail fencing and greywacke stone columns accentuating the main entrance to the driveway. A small equestrian area is located southeast of the dwelling, immediately adjacent to Dawsons Road. This contains stables and specimen trees surrounded by post and rail fencing.

- 47 The property at 139 Dawsons Road is some 8.0 hectares and appears as part of the property at 125 Dawsons Road, given the same post and rail fencing has been continued along the road frontage. The property is clearly being used to provide a public walkway/ cycleway connection between Dawsons and Wards Roads, through an adjoining Council owned strip of land vested as reserve. Both ends of the public thoroughfare have timber bollards enabling unrestricted access. Both 139 Dawsons Road and the adjoining strip of land vested as reserve are in grass with no formed pathways.
- 48 In summary, views of the site from Millfield to the southeast are highly restricted due to intervening vegetation patterns and because access to Dawsons Road is limited to a pedestrian/ cycle linkage to Warwick Road (not from individual allotments). Views of the site from 125 and 139 Dawsons Road are highly visible, particularly from the equestrian area and entranceways from Dawsons Road.

#### **Rural Land to the East**

- 49 The eastern boundary of the site is a working farm, defined by a shelterbelt of poplar trees. The shelterbelt is fragmented, and the trees are in poor quality within the adjoining lots owned by OFHL. The balance of the OFHL land provides a buffer some 360m wide between the site and neighbouring properties further east. An existing drain arises from two springs within the site and flows south along the eastern boundary before flowing eastwards through Lot 8 DP 314202 within the site.
- 50 Access from the east to the OFHL land is via Aschens Road, a no-exit road intersecting with Ashworths Road. Several stream and water races flow west – east across the OFHL land from the Site as tributaries eventually connecting with the Ohoka Stream

### **San Dona Development to the South**

- 51 The southern boundary of the site adjoins nine San Dona properties, with an average lot size of some 1.6 hectares immediately adjacent to the site boundary (1.46 ha is the smallest lot size), San Dona was consented under the “Economic Farm Criteria” of the (Transitional Plan) Eyre District Scheme in the late 1990’s which allowed for subdivision (with no minimum allotment size) providing that the lots created could provide for an ‘economic farm use’. The land remains zoned ‘Rural Lifestyle’ under the pWDP. This land is zoned RL under the pWDP, which anticipates lots of 4 hectares but historically through the consenting process has been subdivided into smaller lots that are used for rural activities, such as olive orchards. The San Dona development departs from the traditional subdivision where linear road networks have noticeably changed to include a curvilinear roading pattern, like the roading network shown in the proposed ODP.
- 52 The residences within the San Dona lots, have a northern aspect in the direction of the site, and are setback between 23 and 107m from the site boundary, demarcated with a standard post and wire fence. Many of these lots have been planted in orchards, such as olive groves. Some of the tree rows are in the northern part of the lot, between the site boundary and residence. Where this occurs, views into the site are partly screened from the residences.
- 53 In summary, there are partial open views into the site from the south available from residences setback behind existing vegetation patterns such as established gardens, orchards, and shelterbelts.

### **Rural Land to the North**

- 54 North of the site extends as rural land with an open outlook, fronting Ashworths Road. Ashworths Road is unsealed and is described as a local road of low use<sup>3</sup>. The properties north of Ashworths Road comprise large open

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<sup>3</sup> The traffic assessment refers to an estimated average daily trip number of 201 vehicles.

pastoral blocks divided by shelterbelt and hedgerow planting along boundaries and fence lines.

- 55 The nearest residence is setback some 60m from Ashworths Road and is not visible from the road because of dense shelterbelt planting, interspersed trees and a pine woodlot aligning the road boundary. From aerial photography, the residences are oriented north away from the site. Further east is a poultry farm opposite the northeast corner of the site (at 87 Ashworths Road ((Part RS 3979)). It comprises four large sheds, with the nearest shed setback approximately 30m from the site boundary. A pittosporum hedgerow, generally exceeding 1.5m in height, has been planted along the poultry farm road boundary. Views of the sheds are partly obscured by the hedgerow from Ashworths Road and the site.
- 56 In summary, there are filtered views into the site from the north, from an infrequently used gravel road.

#### **LANDSCAPE VALUES OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT**

- 57 Landscape values are derived from the above descriptions relating to the physical, perceptual, and associative attributes of the site and the receiving environment and these form the baseline, along with the pWDP provisions, for an assessment of landscape and visual effects. The landscape values that are relevant to an assessment of the proposed rezoning and ODP are listed below.

#### **Physical**

- 58 'Physical' refers to both natural and human-derived features and the interaction of natural and human processes overtime.
- 59 The physical values are associated with the flat nature of the topography which has enabled a distinct rural residential character to occur displaying a very domesticated rural environment with open pastoral land increasingly compartmentalised by shelterbelts, the presence of driveways, letterboxes, mown road verges approaching settlement nodes such as Mandeville.
- 60 The presence of stock races and farm drains reference the working rural environment in places. The natural character is of low-moderate value and

largely associated with the dominance of vegetation over built form noting that indigenous vegetation is largely absent, except for riparian planting found on the margins of waterways and ditches.

### **Associative**

- 61 'Associative' means the intangible things that influence how places are perceived, such as history, identity, narratives, and activities specifically associated with landscape.
- 62 While I am not a cultural specialist, it is my understanding that the site lies outside of a Wahi Tapu, Wahi Taonga, Nga Wai, Nga Reporepo, or Nga Turanga Tupuna overlay and there are no sites identified of significance to manawhenua (Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga) within the proximity of the site that I am aware of.
- 63 The site and its immediate landscape do not have any special significance for pakeha. It forms part of an expansive area of rural residential development surrounding the Mandeville settlement to the north.

### **Perceptual**

- 64 The perceptual values within the immediate landscape surrounding Mandeville are largely derived from a pleasant verdant outlook over open pasture, long views to distant mountains and relief from built form afforded by open space and vegetation.
- 65 Overall, the physical, associative, and perceptual attributes, within the receiving environment, possess **low to moderate** values with respect to rural character and **low to moderate** values regarding naturalness.

### **THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT ANTICIPATED BY THE PWDP**

- 66 Except for a few remaining large land holdings in proximity of the Mandeville Village Centre, the site being the closest of these, the rural character of the receiving environment comprises an intensive pattern of 4-hectare lot development, which is now anticipated by the RL zoning under the pWDP. Essentially, the consented subdivision within the site reflects and formalises the development pattern that has already occurred over much of the Lower

Plains landscape including the land surrounding the site, which has overtime been subdivided into 4 hectare lots.

- 67 Pertinent built form standards that will contribute to the character of the RL Zone surrounding the site include:
- Minimum allotment size of 4 hectares per dwelling
  - Maximum dwelling height of 10m above ground level and 12m for other buildings and structures.
  - Dwellings shall be setback 20m from either a road boundary or internal boundary.
  - Maximum 20% building coverage of the net area of any allotment.
  - Maximum gross floor area of 550m<sup>2</sup> for any single building or structure.
  - No restrictions on boundary treatment.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**

### **Existing Site**

- 68 The Application Site, comprising some 74 hectares, is legally described as Lot 6 DP 2038 (2 Ashworths Road) and Lot 8 DP 314202 (9 Aschens Road). It is bounded by Dawsons Road to the west, and Ashworths Road to the north. Lots 1 – 7 and 9 DP 314202 totalling some 40 hectares are owned by OFHL to the east and currently remains as a working farm.
- 69 Ashworths Road boundary is defined by a post and wire farm fence, an open ditch, a stream, and a 5m wide native planting strip. The 'ditch' extends along two-thirds of the road boundary from Dawsons Road end, while the stream passes through a culvert under Ashworths Road and extends along 250m of the road boundary at its eastern end (as shown on the Site Existing and Proposed Water Systems Plan in the GA – Sheet 9). The 5m wide native planting strip has only recently been planted, and so most plants are less than 750mm tall but once established will afford screening of the site.
- 70 Dawsons Road boundary is defined by a Leyland Cypress shelterbelt extending along the western boundary of the site with the road. The

shelterbelt is some 8m high by 4m wide. Views into the site are restricted to a handful of locations where there is a break in the shelterbelt for farm gate access. Approximately halfway along the western boundary, there is a large break in the shelterbelt where a small woodlot of pine trees has been felled. During my site visit, I observed the slash remains on site piled up in two large heaps.

- 71 Several other hedgerows are present along the site's eastern and southern boundaries and along internal paddock fence lines. These are formed by a single row of one tree species, including pine (*Pinus radiata*), macrocarpa (*Cupressus macrocarpa*), gum tree (*Eucalyptus* species) and poplar (*Populus nigra*).
- 72 The main access into the site is provided via a farm gate, located approximately halfway along Dawsons Road, and some 40m south of the pedestrian/ cycleway connection between Dawsons and Warwick Roads. A gravel farm track extends through the site, on a northeast alignment, before zigzagging through to the eastern neighbouring lots also owned by OFHL (Lot 6 DP 314202, and Lot 5 DP 314202) and eventually connecting to the end of Aschens Road.
- 73 The larger part of site has been divided into 8 equal sized paddocks observed from aerial photography. The paddocks are currently used for pastoral grazing and crop farming. There are fragmented hedgerows of varying height on the northern boundary but on balance the site has an open character to allow for pivot irrigation.
- 74 The smaller, eastern part of the site has been divided into three paddocks as observed from aerial photography. The paddocks are currently used for pastoral grazing and rotational cropping. There are fragmented hedgerows of varying height on a few of the boundaries of the internal blocks, but on balance the site has an open character. This part of the site is connected to the end of Aschens Road, via a 10m wide strip of land, and a separate right-of-way shared with other neighbouring lots.
- 75 The topography with the site is generally flat with a gentle fall to the southeast.

- 76 A farm ditch, with intermittent flow, extends some 190m along the site's eastern boundary, where it becomes a spring-fed channelised waterway flowing south along the eastern boundary and into a constructed stock pond. It then flows out of the pond, abruptly turns to the east, and becomes a stream flowing eastward along the northern boundary of Lot 8 DP 314202 (9 Aschens Road), in the eastern part of the site. The artificially constructed pond is located 500m along the eastern site boundary (from Ashworths Road) and is used for duck shooting and water storage. Another stream, immediately adjacent to, and parallel with the site's boundary with Ashworths Road, flows northeast inside the road reserve before flowing into a (recently planted) wetland area northeast of the site, adjacent to Ashworths Road. Both the streams, inside and outside of the site, are tributaries of Ohoka Stream to the east.
- 77 A 5m wide corridor of native planting, cordoned off by stock proof fencing, has been recently planted along the site's northern boundary with Ashworths Road. The plant species observed within the native planting corridor include flax (*Phormium tenax*), manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) toetoe (*Austroderia richardii*), mikimiki (*Coprosma propinqua*), karamū (*Coprosma robusta*), mānatu (ribbonwood; *Plagianthus regius*), kōwhai (*Sophora microphylla*), kāpuka (*Griselinia littoralis*), mountain akeake (*Olearia avicenniifolia*), and kōhūhū (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*).

### **Consented Subdivision for the Site**

- 78 In October 2020, a resource consent (RC205106 & RC205107) was granted by Waimakariri District Council (WDC) for a 20-lot subdivision within the site (Lot 6 DP 2038 and Lot 8 DP 314202) including neighbouring land to the east owned by OFHL (Lots 5 and 9 DP 314202). A total of 83.9297 hectares. This forms the consented baseline for the site.
- 79 As illustrated in the Consented Subdivision Plan (refer to the GA - Sheet 10), the lots are accessed from Dawsons Road, some 150m south of the existing site entrance, through an internal 'L' alignment road ending in a cul-de-sac. A pedestrian/ cycleway/ horse trekking linkage provides a connection between the cul-de-sac and Ashworths Road.

- 80 The 20 allotments have a minimum area of 4.0 hectares, to achieve a minimum 120m x 120m shape factor. In general, the consented subdivision is in accordance with the minimum area, dimension requirements, and build-form standards for Rural Lifestyle zoning under the pWDP. It is noted that there are no specific consent conditions with respect to boundary treatment, however, 20m wide building setback and rural fencing is required as per the built-form standards under the pWDP.
- 81 In the decision for the resource consent, the Council was satisfied that:
- No person is deemed to be adversely affected by the proposal;
  - The environmental effects will be less than minor;
  - The activity will not adversely affect the amenity and character of the area; and
  - The proposal is in accordance with the Objectives and Policies in the Operative Waimakariri District Plan (WDP).
- 82 Under the pWDP, the site is anticipated to result in approximately 18 lots, with a minimum area of 4.0 hectares each with a dwelling, accessory buildings, fencing, driveways, amenity/ domestic planting, mixed with small scale rural primary use activities, such as orchards or small paddocks and shelterbelt planting.

### **THE PROPOSAL**

- 83 The Submitters are seeking to rezone 2 Ashworths Road to LLR in the pWDP, with an ODP applied to the site (refer to the Mandeville Northeast Development Area ODP, prepared by Aurecon, in the GA – Sheet 21). 9 Aschens Road (Lot 8 DP 314202) would remain Rural Lifestyle zoned with a portion (approx. 1.5ha) required for stormwater management of the large lot residential are.
- 84 The rezoning would enable development of the land down to a minimum allotment area of 2,500m<sup>2</sup>, with an average allotment area of 5,000m<sup>2</sup>. Accounting for the space required for civil infrastructure including roading, stormwater facilities and greenspace, an approximate yield of 115 households is anticipated (refer to the Indicative Lot Layout Plan in the GA – Sheet 24).

### **Proposed Outline Development Plan (ODP)**

84.1 I have reviewed and provided feedback on the ODP to ensure that the landscaping approach for achieving an appropriate boundary interface. Key features of the ODP relevant to my evidence are detailed below:

### **Intensive Primary Production Setback**

85 An intensive primary production setback area has been provided in the northeast corner of the site restricting dwellings within a 6.34-hectare area radiating 300m from the chicken farm to the north to avoid any potential reverse sensitivity issues.

### **Indicative Road Layout**

86 The indicative internal roading layout is shown in the proposed ODP. A connection to Dawsons Road is located midway along the site's frontage with Dawsons Road, approximately 110m north of the existing site entrance. Similarly, a connection to Ashworths Road is located midway along the site's frontage, approximately 40m northeast and opposite the existing driveway entrance to 41 Ashworths Road. The proposed internal roads will have a swale on each side for managing stormwater runoff. A 1.8m wide footpath will be established on one side of each road. The roads will be formed without kerb and channel.

### **Channelised Waterway and Stream Enhancements**

87 The proposed ODP includes naturalisation of the channelised waterway and stream within the site, including 5m building setbacks to provide further waterway protection. These measures improve the water quality within connecting tributaries of Ohoka Stream.

88 The existing channelised waterway that runs along the eastern boundary will be naturalised, with a 5m wide strip of riparian planting on its western side and integrated into the SMA in the western part of Lot 8 DP314202.

- 89 The existing stream within the SMA in the western part of Lot 8 DP314202, will also be naturalised with riparian planting on both sides, which will be integrated within indigenous planting within the SMA of the proposed ODP.
- 90 The existing stream in the road reserve along Ashworths Road will have a 5m riparian setback within the site, which is already planted with native vegetation. This is shown on the proposed ODP and will be retained.
- 91 The two existing springs will be maintained with a 5m setback and riparian planting within the respective rural residential allotments.

### **Pedestrian Connectivity**

- 92 Pedestrian connections are provided by a pedestrian walkway within the reserve around the eastern SMA (Lot 8 DP314202), and a pedestrian/ cycleway to Dawsons Road, near the southwest corner of the site providing a direct route to the Mandeville Village Centre. A footpath will be established along the eastern side of Dawsons Road to provide connections to the existing pedestrian/ cycleway linkages between Dawsons and Warwick Roads. This will provide recreational opportunities, such as a local walking/ running circuit, for both future residents within the site and the neighbouring Millfield development. Designated pedestrian crossing points on Dawsons Road will also be established as part of these public connections.

### **Boundary Interfaces**

- 93 The boundary interfaces of the proposed ODP have been carefully considered to provide visual screening, buffering, and integration of the proposed ODP with the surrounding pattern of existing development.
- 94 A larger lot overlay of 10,000m<sup>2</sup> is proposed along the southern boundary of the site with the San Dona development to provide transition between the low and higher rural residential densities of the existing San Dona development and proposed LLR Zone development within the ODP. The provision of larger lots along this boundary will provide openness between the foreseeable dwellings along the southern boundary, which is more coherent with a RL character.

- 95 A 20m building setback is proposed within lots fronting the road boundaries along Dawsons and Ashworths roads and a 50m building setback along the San Dona development boundary. This will ensure dwellings are inconspicuous from adjacent roads and the neighbouring properties and affiliated with a RL character, where residences are located behind paddocks and expansive gardens.
- 96 10m wide native landscape strips are proposed along Dawsons Road, Ashworths Road and the southern boundary of the site adjoining the San Dona development to provide visual screening, buffering from any reverse sensitivity issues, and integration of the proposed ODP with the surrounding pattern of existing development (refer to the Proposed Landscape Boundary Treatments in the GA – Sheet 22).
- 97 The native planting will also provide habitat, biodiversity, and ecological linkages to the two SMA's within the site, which will also be planted with indigenous vegetation, and generally increase natural character values that are notably low in the site and immediate vicinity.
- 98 The existing 5m wide native landscape strip along Ashworths Road will be retained and integrated into the proposed 10m wide native landscape strip. Many of the plant species in the existing 5m wide native landscape strip will also be planted in the proposed 10m wide landscape strips because they are considered appropriate for providing visual screening and biodiversity. This will also ensure coherence with the existing 5m wide native plant strip.
- 99 A 10m wide native landscape strips is also proposed along the southern boundary of the site with the San Dona development, except for a 110m section within the southern SMA, which will be a 5m wide native landscape strip. Both 10m and 5m wide native planting strips will provide visual screening and buffering from any reverse sensitivity issues.
- 100 The plant species in the proposed native plant strips will include an informal planting arrangement of medium-sized trees, such as kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*), ribbonwood (*Plaginathus regius*), manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) and cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*); and medium-large shrubs, such as lemonwood (*Pittosporum eugenoides*), kāpuka (*Griselinia littoralis*), mountain akeake (*Olearia avicenniifolia*), flax (*Phormium tenax*), toetoe

*(Austroderia richardii)*, mikimiki (*Coprosma propinqua*), karamū (*Coprosma robusta*), kōhūhū (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*) and Koromiko (*Hebe salicifolia*).

- 101 These plant species have been derived from ecosystem maps<sup>4</sup>, which use soils data and site conditions to determine the historic indigenous vegetation that once existed within the site and lower plains landscape.
- 102 The new native landscape strips within the proposed ODP site, will be planted as part of the subdivision development (along with the roading layout, footpaths, services, etc), and therefore, the plants will likely have a couple of years growth (following the initial planting) before any dwellings are constructed within the site. It is estimated that the planting strips will require several years of growth for some species to reach a height of 1.8m (eye level) at which time they will begin to provide reasonable mitigation benefits.
- 103 The planting strips will be carefully designed, through species selection, distribution, and arrangement, to provide approximately 75% visual screening and 25% filtered views into the site. The intention is not to establish a solid wall of vegetation along the subject site boundaries, which could create daylighting issues for roads and residences, but instead provide screening while maintaining a sense of openness immediately behind the native planting strip, with the 20m and 50m building setbacks and southern SMA.
- 104 Rural style fencing is proposed along the road boundary and on the inside edge of the native plant strip (setback 10m from the boundary) within the respective lots. The fencing will be in accordance with the built-form standards (LLRZ-BFS7 Fencing) under the pWDP. This requires any fencing located on or within 15m from any road boundary shall:
- a) be no higher than 1.2m above ground level; and*
  - b) be a farm-style post and wire or post and rail fence; and*
  - c) achieve a minimum of 40% visual permeability.*
- 105 OFHL will install the fencing along the road boundary, so this is coherent along the entire length of the subject site boundaries. The fencing inside the

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<sup>4</sup> Lucas Associates Christchurch Ecosystems Interactive Map on the Christchurch City Council website.

respective lots will be included as a covenant on the title of the lot, and therefore installed by the individual lot owners. This will ensure the landscape strip is protected in perpetuity from rural activities within the respective lots.

- 106 Overall, a consistent boundary treatment is proposed along the road frontages and the southern boundary with the San Dona development that will enhance natural character, mitigate the increased density proposed with LLR zoning and ensure the outlook from public roads and neighbouring rural residential development remains dominated by broad vegetation patterns with filtered views similar in effect to RL character.

### **Stormwater Management and Wetland Restoration Areas**

- 107 Integration of existing onsite farm ditches, channelised waterways and streams are proposed within the eastern and southern stormwater management areas (SMAs). Indigenous planting, including trees, shrubs, and riparian planting, will be established around the edges of stormwater (grass) basins and along the external boundaries, which will enhance natural character. As described above, the 10m wide native planting strips will connect to the SMA's providing ecological corridors around the periphery of the site.
- 108 Overland flow paths will be captured by a network of grass swales within the roading network integrated with both the eastern and southern SMA's.
- 109 SMA's will provide onsite amenity as part of Local Purpose Stormwater Utility Reserves. The eastern SMA will include a walkway around the stormwater detention basin and will have the potential to provide future pedestrian/ cycleway connections to the east. The southern SMA will have a 100m long road frontage within the proposed ODP roading network enabling openness and indigenous vegetation associated with the SMA to be experienced from the road, enhancing amenity from the street.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING PROVISIONS**

- 110 The statutory documents containing provisions relevant to the proposal are found in the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD), Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS) and the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan (pWDP).

111 My evidence focuses on the statutory provisions under the pWDP, specifically, the objectives, policies, and assessment matters that give effect to the higher-level statutory documents. It also considers landscape and open space recommendations in the Ngai Tahu Subdivision and Development Guidelines.

### **Proposed Waimakariri District Plan**

#### Rural Lifestyle (RL) Zone

- 112 The pWDP, proposes to zone the site RL, which is the permitted baseline for the site and its immediate surroundings as shown in the pWDP in the GA – Sheet 6.
- 113 The purpose of the RL zoning is to provide for primary productive activities, those activities that support rural activities and those that rely on the natural resources that exist in the zone, while recognising that the predominant character is derived from smaller sites.
- 114 The RL zoning comprises the densest residential unit density in the rural areas of the Waimakariri District. This rural area is defined by its fragmented pattern of development and human induced characteristics.
- 115 The character for the RL Zone is defined as:

#### ***Policy RLZ-P1 Character of Rural Lifestyle Zone***

1. *a highly modified landscape strongly influenced by fine grained patterns and processes of human induced activity, including a predominance of small rural lots with a resulting pattern of residential units, buildings, fencing, amenity and domestic planting mixed with smaller scale primary production activities;*
2. *a dominance of human modified open space and vegetation, including paddocks and trees over buildings; and*
3. *a zone supporting activities reliant on the natural and physical resources of the Rural Lifestyle Zone.*

#### Large Lot Residential (LLR) Zone

- 116 The proposal seeks to rezone the site to LLR under the pWDP.

- 117 The purpose of the LLR Zone is to provide residential living on lots typically ten times larger (i.e. 5,000m<sup>2</sup>) than standard residential zonings (i.e. 500m<sup>2</sup>). The intention is to provide for some low-key rural activities where the effects of these activities will not detract from the purpose, character and amenity values of any neighbouring residential zone. Of relevance to the Mandeville settlement, is that there are no General Residential or Medium Density Residential zoned land, with the entire settlement zoned LLR. As a result, locations like Millfield, west of the site, represents the most intensive residential development in this locality, in proximity of the local Mandeville village centre. Given Mandeville's small settlement size, and that it does not have any higher density residential zoning, it has a rural village character.
- 118 The characteristics that contribute to LLR Zone, and maintenance of these, are outlined below:

***Objective LLRZ-O1 Purpose, Character and Amenity Values of the LLR Zone***

*A high quality, low density residential zone with a character distinct to other residential zones, such that the predominate character:*

- 1. is of low density detached residential units set on generous sites;*
- 2. has a predominance of open space over built form;*
- 3. is an environment with generally low levels of noise, traffic, outdoor lighting, odour and dust; and*
- 4. provides opportunities for agriculture activities where these do not detract from maintaining a quality residential environment, but provides limited opportunities for other activities.*

***Policy LLRZ-P1 Maintaining the Qualities and Character***

*Maintain the qualities and character of the Large Lot Residential Zone by:*

- 1. achieving a low-density residential environment with a built form dominated by detached residential units, which other than minor residential units, are established on their own separate sites;*

2. *managing the scale and location of buildings so as to maintain a sense of openness and space between buildings on adjoining sites and ensuring that open space predominates over built form on each site;*
3. *ensuring the built form for all activities is consistent with the low density residential character of the zone; and*
4. *retaining the open character and outlook from sites to rural areas through managing boundary fencing including the style of fencing, their height and visual permeability.*

#### Subdivision Provisions

119 The following subdivision objectives and policies are relevant to the proposed LLR zoning and ODP for the site:

#### ***Objective SD-O3 Urban development***

*Urban development and infrastructure that:*

2. *that recognises existing character, amenity values, and is attractive and functional to residents, businesses and visitors; ...*

#### ***Objective SUB-01 Subdivision design***

*Subdivision design achieves an integrated pattern of land use, development, and urban form, that:*

2. *consolidates urban development and maintains rural character except where required for, and identified by, the District Council for urban development;*

#### ***Policy SUB-P1 Design and amenity***

*Enable subdivision that:*

5. *supports the character, amenity values, form and function for the relevant zone.*

#### ***Policy SUB-P4 Integration and connectivity***

*Achieve integration and connectivity by ensuring:*

2. *subdivision on the boundaries between new and existing development is managed to:*

- a. *avoid or mitigate significant adverse effects, including reverse sensitivity effects, through the use of setbacks, landscaping to achieve screening, and other methods; and*

***Policy RESZ-P12 Outline development plans***

*Use and development of land subject to an ODP shall:*

- d. *achieves a high level of visual and landscape amenity;...*

120 In summary, the main landscape issues, taken from the policies and objectives above, is that the proposed ODP and future development:

- Maintains the character and amenity of rural areas and settlements.
- Avoids significant reverse sensitivity effects with adjacent rural activities.
- Provides long-term maintenance of rural-residential character.
- Manages adverse effects on boundaries using building setbacks, landscaping to provide screening and other methods.
- Retains open character and outlook to rural areas by managing boundary interfaces. This is relevant to the site's neighbouring San Dona development.
- Maintains qualities of large lot residential through a low-density residential environment, where open space predominates between build form.
- Achieves a high-level of visual amenity.

**Ngai Tahu Subdivision and Development Guidelines**

121 The Ngai Tahu Subdivision and Development Guidelines are found within the Mahaanui IMP Papatuanuku document. While I am not a cultural specialist, nor have I talked to the local iwi representative, I have provided a landscape perspective in relation to 'Landscaping and Open Space' recommendations in the guidelines.

122 It is my understanding that the site lies outside of a Wahi Tapu, Wahi Taonga, Nga Wai, Nga Reporepo, or Nga Turanga Tupuna overlay and there are no sites identified of significance to manawhenua (Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga) within the proximity of the site that I am aware of. My comments do not supplement

a Cultural Impact Assessment, nor do they speak for manawhenua, however, they do demonstrate that the that the landscaping and open space recommendations in the guidelines have been considered.

#### Landscaping and Open Space

123 *Sufficient open space is essential to community and cultural wellbeing, and the realization of indigenous biodiversity objectives, and effective stormwater management.*

124 Response: The proposed ODP has been carefully designed to integrate with the existing pattern of rural residential development surrounding the site. The 20m building setback provided along road frontages with Dawsons and Ashworths Roads and the 50m setback with the San Don development will maintain openness around the site's periphery.

125 *Indigenous biodiversity objectives should be incorporated into development plans, consistent with the restoration and enhancement of indigenous biodiversity on the landscape.*

126 Response: The proposed ODP will introduce significant areas of indigenous biodiversity vegetation, into the site mostly through the 10m wide native landscape strips along road frontages with Dawsons and Ashworths Roads and the San Don development boundary, but also within the 5m wide riparian planting along the eastern boundary and within the two SMA's. All the indigenous vegetation is connected providing biodiversity corridors along the edges of the site.

127 *Indigenous biodiversity objectives to include provisions to use indigenous species for:*

*(i) street trees;*

*(ii) open space and reserves;*

*(iii) native ground cover species for swales;*

*(iv) stormwater management network; and*

*(v) home gardens.*

Response: The proposed ODP will include indigenous biodiversity vegetation, within the reserve areas and SMA network and where riparian planting is proposed along the eastern boundary. While street trees will be planted

within the berms in the roading network, the proposed ODP does not specify a particular species. Similarly, the design of the swales within the roading network would be confirmed at a later stage. Respective lot owners will be encouraged to plant indigenous species.

128 *Indigenous species used in planting and landscaping should be appropriate to the local environment, and where possible from locally sourced seed supplies.*

129 Response: The indigenous plant species will be tolerant of the local site conditions and (where possible) will be sourced from Canterbury sourced seed.

130 *Options and opportunities to incorporate cultural and/or mahinga kai themed gardens in open and reserve space can be considered in development planning (e.g. pā harakeke as a source of weaving materials; reserves planted with tree species such as mātai, kahikatea and tōtara could be established with the long-term view of having mature trees available for customary use).*

131 Response: There is opportunity to plant harakeke flax (as a source for weaving) and indigenous trees within 10m wide native landscape strips and the two SMA's.

132 *Developers should offer incentives for homeowners to use native species in gardens, including the provision of lists of recommended plants to avoid, discounts at local nursery, and landscaping ideas using native species.*

133 Response: Respective lot owners will be encouraged to plant indigenous vegetation. Where lots contain a section of the 10m wide native landscape strip along a road frontage, or along the southern boundary with San Dona, they may extend there are opportunities to extend the native planting further into the lot at their discretion.

## **LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT**

134 The following assessment addresses the effects on landscape values, visual effects, landscape character, and rural character arising from the proposed rezoning from RL to LLR and the accompanying ODP.

### Visual Effects

135 *"A visual effect is a kind of landscape effect. It is a consequence for landscape values as experienced in views. Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects. A visual assessment is one method to help understand landscape effects."*<sup>5</sup>

136 As illustrated in the view location plan and site photographs in the GA – Sheets 13 – 20), the actual and potential visual effects of the proposal have been assessed from:

- Dawsons Road fronting the site to the west
- Neighbouring properties on the western side of Dawsons Road
- Ashworths Road fronting the site to the north
- Along the southern site boundary opposite neighbouring lots in the San Dona development

137 The visual effects from neighbouring properties on the northern side of Ashworths Road have been assessed as being low to negligible, because the nearest residence is setback approximately 60m from the road, is oriented north away from the site, and is located behind shelterbelt planting obscuring views of the site, and have therefore, have been excluded from the assessment.

138 The visual effects from neighbouring properties immediately east of the site have also been excluded from the assessment because these properties are owned by OFHL.

#### Visual Effects from Dawsons Road anticipated by the pWDP and / or resulting from the consented baseline

139 The visual effects of the consented subdivision would result in views to four 4.0 hectare lots spaced at similar intervals along Dawsons Road, with one internal road intersection, some 235m from the southern end of the road frontage. As described previously, it is unclear with the existing Leyland Cypress shelterbelt along the site's boundary with Dawsons Road would be

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5 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Page 135.

retained or removed due to daylighting and maintenance issues.

Nevertheless, one would expect four separate: driveways and gateway features; dwellings setback 20m from the road boundary; individual fencing treatments, and letter boxes, etc. along the road boundary. There is no provision for a consistent boundary treatment along the length of the sites interface with Dawsons Road. There is uncertainty whether the four lots would include any vegetation along their road frontage with Dawsons Road.

#### Visual Effects from Dawsons Road to the proposed ODP

- 140 Initially, broad open views into the proposed site would be available from Dawsons Road when the existing shelterbelt is removed, however this would be replaced by the required 10m wide native planting strip. The planting strip would include trees capable of reaching 8m in height and dense shrubs that will afford screening of the proposed development. The proposed rezoning could result in views of 15 dwellings (based on the Indicative Lot Layout Plan in the GA – Sheet 24) setback 20m from the road frontage beyond a farm-style fenced boundary (designed in accordance with LLRZ-BFS7) and a 10m wide native planting strip. As the 10m wide native plant strip establishes, views into the site will gradually diminish overtime as the indigenous planting matures, albeit some filtered views will be available.
- 141 Except for viewing locations in proximity of the proposed intersection between Dawsons Road and the main road in the ODP, visibility into the site from along Dawsons Road will eventually become limited, as the tree species become taller, and the shrub species fill out and reach a height above eyelevel.
- 142 While indigenous vegetation is not widespread within the Mandeville settlement, or the surrounding landscape, large continuous vegetation patterns, especially along site boundaries, are commonplace, and the 10m wide native strip will form a coherent band of vegetation, like a long shelterbelt. However, a 10m wide corridor of indigenous planting will provide a higher level of amenity than exotic shelterbelt planting and enhance natural character values including biodiversity and ecological values.

- 143 It is anticipated the earliest screening benefits provided by the landscape strip will be realised within 2 to 3 years following initial planting, and reasonable screening will be achieved after 7 years of standard growth.
- 144 Overall, following establishment of the landscape strip, together with the 20m building setback, the extent of visibility into the proposed ODP site will be limited to the proposed intersection between Dawsons Road and the main internal road shown on the ODP. The visual effects are initially assessed as being **moderate**, diminishing to **low to moderate** once the landscape strip matures and provides effective screening.

Visual Effects from Neighbouring Properties West of Dawsons Road anticipated by the pWDP and / or resulting from the consented baseline

- 145 Given the Millfield development does not interface Dawsons Road, except for two pedestrian/ cyclist connections, the potential visual effects are limited to the residence and small equestrian area located at 125 Dawson Road and the pedestrian thoroughfare located at 139 Dawsons Road.
- 146 Under the consented subdivision scenario, only one 4.0-hectare lot would be visible immediately opposite the two effected neighbouring properties. This would have a single driveway, a dwelling setback 20m, rural fencing and possibly landscape edge treatment.

Visual Effects from Neighbouring Properties West of Dawsons Road to the proposed ODP

- 147 Based on the indicative lot layout for the proposed ODP, approximately four LLR lots would be visible from the 125 and 139 Dawsons Road. These lots would have a consistent landscape edge treatment along the road frontage with Dawsons Road.
- 148 Following the establishment of the 10m wide native planting strip, together with the 20m building setback, the extent of visibility into the proposed ODP site will be limited. Given the proposed main road intersection is located 160m south of the two effected neighbouring properties, the visual effects are initially assessed as being **low to moderate**, diminishing to **low** once the landscape strip matures and provides effective screening.

Visual Effects from Ashworths Road anticipated by the pWDP and / or resulting from the consented baseline

- 149 The consented baseline and / or development anticipated from the RL zone under the pWDP would result in approximately six 4.0 hectare lots each containing a dwelling with individual boundary treatment, some or no planting, maybe indigenous or exotic trees, driveways, letterboxes and no provision for an intensive primary production setback area.
- 150 A pedestrian/ horse trekking connection would be located approximately 390m from the western end of the road frontage.

Visual Effects from Ashworths Road to the proposed ODP

- 151 Initially views from Ashworths Road will look to a main tree lined entrance road, and potentially eight lots (based on the indicative lot layout plan) each containing a dwelling setback 20m from the lot boundary along 480m of the road boundary. The balance of the frontage will remain as open space to accommodate the intensive primary production setback area. Like above, the 10m wide indigenous planting strip will overtime screen views into the ODP site from Ashworths Road. However, the existing 5m strip of native planting already planted adjacent to the road boundary will give it a head start on the Dawsons Road landscape strip.
- 152 As described earlier, further indigenous planting will be undertaken immediately behind the existing 5m wide native planting strip, so it achieves a total width of 10m.
- 153 If lot access is provided from Ashworths Road to all or some of the lots fronting the road within the proposed ODP, then culverts will be required to bridge the roadside ditch. There is an opportunity to design a culvert that provides a rhythmic rural element along the road frontage, like those implemented in the San Dona development. This would provide a point of difference between the Dawsons and Ashworths Road landscape interface treatments, thereby enhancing amenity values.

Visual Effects from Neighbouring Properties in the San Dona Development

- 154 Eleven rural properties within the neighbouring San Dona development are located along the southern boundary with the site:
- 89, 96 & 104 Vicenza Drive
  - 58, 60, & 67 Velino Place
  - 67, 80, 91, 93 & 100 Siena Place
- 155 Each of these properties within San Dona adjoining the site are approximately 1.4 to 1.7 hectares in size. residences within these lots having a northern aspect in the direction of the site, and setback between 23 and 107m from the site boundary. Many of these lots have been planted in orchards, such as olive groves, and typically have rows of trees in the northern part of the lot, between the site boundary and residence. Many of these lots have shelterbelt planting along the site boundary, which is either inside a respective lot or within the ODP site. Where vegetation is present along the site boundary, views into the site are mostly screened, however, this would change where screening is solely provided by shelterbelt planting inside the site as this will be removed. Nevertheless, even without shelterbelt planting on the site boundary, in most cases, views into the site would be partly screened from the residences by existing vegetation patterns between the residence and site boundary.
- 156 Notwithstanding the above, the proposed ODP does not rely on existing vegetation outside of the site for mitigation, as a 10m wide native landscape strip along the site boundary will be established along the inside of the side boundary to ensure visual screening is safeguarded in perpetuity. The native planting will take approximately 7 years to mature and provide reasonable screening. Therefore, the visual effects will be greatest at the outset and will remain high for a short period while the 10m wide native plant strip establishes, and then the level of effect will diminish overtime.

#### Summary of Visual Effects Assessment

- 157 In summary, the main visual effects of the proposed ODP and its subsequent development are in relation to (1) views from motorists traveling along Dawsons Road; (2) views from residents living at 125 Dawsons Road; and (3) views from neighbouring properties in the San Dona development.

158 The 10m wide native landscape strip will, maintain a long continuous band of vegetation along the road frontage and the southern boundary with the San Dona development, screening views of foreseeable development within the ODP and providing landscape integration. The 20m and 50m setbacks for buildings in the site will maintain a sense of openness between the site boundary and future dwellings. Regarding the San Dona development this will provide a visual transition between the orchard blocks and LLR Rezoning within the ODP.

### **Landscape Effects**

159 "A landscape effect is a consequence of changes in a landscape's physical attributes on that landscape's values. Change is not an effect as landscapes are constantly changing. It is the implications of change on landscape values that is relevant." <sup>6</sup>.

160 It is important to appreciate that change to the character of a landscape is not necessarily adverse. Whether effects are adverse or not depends largely on public expectation of what can be reasonably anticipated to occur in the landscape. Allied to this is the landscape context in terms of its degree of naturalness/modification, existing patterns, scale, visibility, and levels of public appreciation.

### Landscape Effects of the Consented Subdivision and/ or Permitted Development under the PWDP

161 The pWDP anticipates a character and outcome associated with the RL Zoning of the site. Under the RL zoning, a compartmentalised landscape of 4,000-hectare blocks, with a fragmented grain of rural residential development could result. While this contrasts with the existing 74-hectare agricultural land comprising the site, most of the landscape surrounding the site and Mandeville has already been subdivided into smaller rural lots, hence the RL rezoning.

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<sup>6</sup> *'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'*, July 2022.

- 162 As a result of the RL zoning, the landscape character will change from predominantly rural to rural-residential, increased density of dwellings and roads and the substitution of wide-open working agricultural land with compartmentalised rural residential blocks. Essentially the basis from which amenity is derived will come from an alternative source. In essence, this is the replacement of rural amenity with rural-residential amenity.
- 163 The consented subdivision divides the site into 20 smaller rural lots with a minimum area of 4.0 hectares. The greatest degree of landscape change will occur on land immediately adjacent to Dawsons and Ashworths Roads and land adjoining the existing San Dona development to the south as described in the Visual Effects assessment above.
- 164 Dwellings and other buildings within the consented subdivision are required, under the pWDP, to be setback 20m from road boundaries and internal boundaries (RLZ-BFS4) without any specific landscape treatment to provide visual screening or buffering to avoid reverse sensitivity issues. It is only anticipated that these smaller rural lots will be planted to provide shelter, screening, and amenity.
- 165 As there are four consented lots adjoining Dawsons Road, it is unclear whether the existing Leyland Cypress shelterbelt would be retained, and if it is retained whether it would be maintained collectively within the four lots or managed separately. If managed separately, or if all the shelterbelt, or parts of the shelterbelt, is cut down and replaced with alternative roadside vegetation (to improve daylighting and maintenance) for foreseeable dwelling with the lots, then there may be multiple landscape treatment types. These may be relatively similar, or strikingly different, depending on the respective lot owner's preferences. A variety of edge treatments within the four lots fronting Dawsons Road will compartmentalise the landscape into smaller rural lots.
- 166 The waterways within the site, specifically the spring-fed stream flowing south along the eastern site boundary will pass through five lots within the site. There is no requirement for the future lot owners to naturalise the waterways with riparian planting and protect from stock grazing.

167 In summary, the landscape effects resulting from the consented subdivision and permitted development under the pWDP will change the rural character of the last remaining large tracts of farmland to smaller rural blocks with a rural residential character. There are no specific boundary interface requirements other than a generic 20m no-build setback and controls on fencing. There is no requirement to naturalise and protect waterways.

#### Landscape Effects of the Proposed ODP

168 The proposed rezoning and ODP, would result in a compartmentalisation of the existing agricultural land within the site into lots averaging 5,000m<sup>2</sup>, more akin with the LLRZ under the pWDP, with a finer grain of rural residential development because we have ensured that the proposed ODP and indicative concept layout is aligned with the density outcomes sought by the pWDP for LLR.

169 The rezoning of the site is a logical location for an LLRZ expansion of Mandeville because it fills a gap in the existing pattern of development radiating from the centric location of the Mandeville Village Centre. It also means the landscape effects on the surrounding rural character are less as half the site is in proximity to existing rural residential development.

170 The proposed ODP has been designed to integrate with the existing pattern of development surrounding the site to maintain a rural character and amenity consistent with the LLR rezoning for the site and immediate surrounding landscape, particularly around the edges of the site where measures such as a larger lot transition overlay, building setbacks and indigenous landscape strips have been incorporated into the ODP. Given this, the potential effects on landscape values may be **moderate**.

#### Comparison of Landscape Effects between the Consented (Baseline) Subdivision and Proposed ODP

171 While the proposed LLR zoning and development in accordance with the ODP will give rise to a smaller grain of rural residential development than the proposed RL rezoning and consented subdivision, it is a logical expansion of the Mandeville settlement, given most of the site infills a gap between the Millfield LLR development and the San Dona development near the

- Mandeville village centre. The proposed ODP has been carefully designed to integrate with the existing pattern of development surrounding the site to maintain a rural character and amenity consistent with the RL zoning. This includes the requirement for large lots along the site's boundary with the neighbouring San Dona development, landscape edge treatments along road frontages and the southern boundary, pedestrian/ cycleway connections, enhancement of waterways, and SMA's.
- 172 Unlike the consented subdivision there is greater certainty of the resulting character change and outcome of the proposed ODP with benefits associated with the enhancement of natural and rural character.
- 173 While indigenous vegetation does not feature prominently in the rural landscape, there is an opportunity to establish 10m wide bands of indigenous vegetation around the site's perimeter, building on the existing 5m wide band of native planting fronting Ashworths Road, to enhance biodiversity and amenity compared to the consented subdivision.
- 174 Despite the increased density in rural residential development the site boundaries will continue to maintain a broad and continuous vegetation pattern, particularly along the southern boundary with the San Dona development and Dawsons Road. The vegetation band will only have one break along Dawsons Road for a road connection given the ODP excludes direct vehicle access to lots along Dawsons Road. As described previously, the consented subdivision may result in at least four types of landscape interfaces along Dawsons Road. Therefore, from the outside of the site, the consented subdivision will appear more compartmentalised than the than the proposed rezoning and future subdivision to LLR.
- 175 The proposed ODP will result in positive landscape effects associated with naturalisation of the margins of streams with riparian planting and the planting of indigenous vegetation around the edge of basins and along boundaries within the SMA's, which will be connected to the 10m wide native plant strips. These outcomes are not required to be achieved under the consented subdivision.
- 176 The proposed ODP proposes walkway connections to the existing pattern of development surrounding the site (particularly to Dawsons Road), provision

for future walkway connections to the east and the establishment of a loop walkway within the eastern SMA, which will improve amenity and recreational opportunities within the site compared to the consented subdivision.

- 177 Given the above, taken overall, the potential effects on landscape values of the proposed ODP are **low**, after the indigenous planting has matured and is providing sufficient screening and landscape integration.

### **Assessment Against the Relevant Planning Provisions**

- 178 The following is an assessment of proposed LLR zoning and ODP against the relevant landscape provisions of the pWDP.

#### LLR Zone Provisions

- 179 The following LLRZ objectives and policies are relevant to the proposed ODP for the site:

#### ***Objective LLRZ-O1 Purpose, Character, and Amenity Values of the LLR Zone***

Response: The proposed ODP has been designed to ensure alignment with the LLR Zoning and future development. And will provide openness between future dwellings and opportunities for low-key rural activities.

#### ***Policy LLRZ-P1 Maintaining the Qualities and Character***

Response: The proposed ODP maintains the qualities and character of the LLRZ. The large lot overlay, building setbacks and 10m wide landscape edge treatments will ensure open space prevails along the site boundaries. The boundary fencing will comply with the LLR built form standards, which provide for rural style fencing, no higher than 1.2m and with 40% permeability.

#### Subdivision Provisions

- 180 The following subdivision objectives and policies are relevant to the proposed LLR zoning and ODP for the site:

#### ***Objective SD-O3 Urban development***

Response: As described under the Proposal section of my evidence, the proposed ODP has been carefully designed to complement Mandeville's existing rural village character and amenity values. The indigenous planting

proposed in corridors along road frontages, and the southern site boundary, and on the margins of channelised waterways and streams will be highly valued by residents, including the wider community and visitors to the district, for its appearance, biodiversity, and ecological benefits. Once the native planting has established it will require very minimal maintenance for residents where the vegetation extends through their respective lot, as well as easy care for WDC within the SMA's.

***Objective SUB-01 Subdivision design***

Response: The proposed ODP will achieve a comprehensive development well integrated with the surrounding existing pattern of development, while still maintaining the rural village character of Mandeville, given it is located adjacent to existing LLR development, and in the absence of a natural barrier and extends the built form of Mandeville to a logical road boundary.

***Policy SUB-P1 Design and amenity***

Response: The proposed ODP will support the amenity value, form, and function of the LLR zone, while providing landscape edges treatments more akin with the scale and coherence of an RL zoning.

***Policy SUB-P4 Integration and connectivity***

Response: The proposed ODP achieves integration and connectivity through the native planting corridors and building setbacks along the road frontages and along the site's southern boundary with a larger lot rural residential development with north facing views towards the site. The proposed roading network and walkway linkages will enhance connectivity and provide a direct connection to the Mandeville village centre.

***Policy RESZ-P12 Outline development plans***

Response: As described previously, the proposed ODP provides a high level of visual and landscape amenity, especially through provision of long continuous corridors of indigenous planting around the periphery of the site, bolstering and lengthening the existing native planting band fronting Ashworths Road.

**CONCLUSION**

- 181 At a broad scale, the proposed site presents a logical expansion of the Mandeville settlement, given the majority of site infills a gap between existing development in the absence of a natural barrier and extends the built form of Mandeville out to a road boundary. The proposed LLR Zoning and subsequent development in accordance with the ODP would not change Mandeville's rural village character.
- 182 The RL zoning under the pWDP, along with the consented 20-lot subdivision, provides a permitted and consented baseline for how the site (and land to the east) could be developed. In essence, it would compartmentalise the site into 4.0 hectare lots. This would be particularly evident from the site's road frontages and from the San Dona development to the south, given the subdivision excludes any landscape treatment along these site boundaries.
- 183 While the proposed ODP is seeking a more intensive rural residential development of 5,000m<sup>2</sup> lots it has been carefully designed as a well-functioning expansion of Mandeville with a larger lot overlay along its southern boundary with the San Dona development, building setbacks and a continuous landscape edge treatment, which will screen the development and integrate it into the existing surrounding pattern of development.
- 184 The potential and actual landscape or visual effects on rural character and amenity of the site and its receiving environment will be avoided and or mitigated by the appropriately designed ODP for the site.
- 185 The proposed ODP includes suitably designed setback and landscape treatments along the sensitive road frontages and southern boundary with the San Dona development that will maintain rural character and amenity.
- 186 The extensive planting of indigenous vegetation in the 10m wide planting strips, two stormwater management areas and enhancement of the channelised waterway and streams with native riparian planting will enhance amenity values, biodiversity, and overall natural character.
- 187 The provision of walkway/ cycling connections, including a loop walkway in one of the stormwater management areas, will also enhance amenity values.

188 Thank you for the opportunity to present my evidence.

Fraser Miller

5 March 2024

**APPENDIX A:**Table 1: Landscape and Visual Effects Rating Scale<sup>7</sup>

Very Low	Low	Low to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to High	High	Very High
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**APPENDIX B:**

Graphic Attachment of Statement of Evidence of Fraser Miller (Landscape) and Vikramjit Singh (Urban Design) dated 14 December 2023.

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<sup>7</sup> The seven-point scale of very low to very high is in accordance with the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Te Tangi a te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, April 2021.