

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of the proposed Waimakariri District Plan

**Hearing Stream 10A: Wāhanga Waihanga – Development
Areas (DEV)**

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF STEPHANIE STYLES

FOR

SUMMERSET RETIREMENT VILLAGES (RANGIORA) LTD

30 January 2023

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1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This evidence relates to the submission lodged by Summerset Retirement Villages (Rangiora) Ltd (“**Summerset**”), submission number 207. This planning evidence focusses on responding to matters raised in the Hearing Stream 10A in relation to the Wāhanga Waihanga – Development Areas (DEV), and specifically in relation to SBT – South Belt Development Area. Subsequent planning evidence will be prepared for other hearing streams as required.
- 1.2 The recommendations of the Council officer are acknowledged, and it is noted that some recommendations have not flowed through to the amendments indicated to the Plan.
- 1.3 The assessment matters for retirement villages under DEV-SBT-R3 should be amended to relate to these activities and not to typical suburban subdivision.

2.0 QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERTISE AND INVOLVEMENT

- 2.1 My name is Stephanie Styles. I hold the position of Senior Resource Management Planner with the environmental consultancy firm Boffa Miskell Limited, based in the firm's Christchurch office. I have been employed by Boffa Miskell since 2004.
- 2.2 I hold a Bachelor of Planning (Hons) from Auckland University. I am also a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have over 25 years' experience in planning and resource management. I am an accredited commissioner and hold a IAP2 International Certificate in Public Participation.
- 2.3 I have been a planning consultant based in Christchurch for over 25 years, providing consultancy services for a wide range of clients around New Zealand, including local authorities, central government, land developers, and the infrastructure and power sectors. Prior to that I worked in local government.
- 2.4 My experience includes applications for and processing of resource consent applications, statutory planning and policy preparation, and public consultation processes. I have provided advice on a broad range

of developments and resource management issues to Councils and a range of clients, a number involving presenting evidence before councils, and the Environment Court. I also have extensive experience in assisting with, and advising on, plan preparation under the Resource Management Act 1991 ("RMA").

2.5 I have assisted Summerset with the review of the proposed Waimakariri District Plan ("WDP") and in making submissions on the proposed WDP. I have provided both policy and consenting support to Summerset throughout the South Island since 2016 and have been involved in the plan change and consenting for their retirement village in Rangiora which is currently under construction. This evidence provides a planning assessment in relation to the matters raised in the Summerset submission, as is relevant to this hearing topic.

3.0 CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note. I agree to comply with this Code. The evidence in my statement is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

4.0 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

4.1 Summerset develops and operates retirement villages across New Zealand.

4.2 As set out in the submission, Summerset owns a site of nearly 14ha located at 141 South Belt, Rangiora. This site was the subject of Private Plan Change 29 which rezoned the land to Residential 2 under the operative District Plan and applied an Outline Development Plan to the area.

4.3 A land use consent was granted in May 2021 for the comprehensive development of a retirement village on part of the site and that village is currently under construction. Associated resource consents were also

obtained from ECan based on the approved design for that consent process and in accordance with the Outline Development Plan.

- 4.4 A portion of the land at the western end of the site is not part of the retirement village and will be the subject of further decisions on what form of development may occur in future. At this time there has been no decision made on whether this will be detached residential dwellings, retirement village units or something else.
- 4.5 The proposed District Plan proposes a General Residential zoning to apply to the Summerset land including the land to the west which is not part of the retirement village. In addition, this land is identified as being within the SBT South Belt Development Area, under the Development Area provisions.
- 4.6 Summerset has an interest in ensuring that the outcomes achieved through the earlier rezoning and resource consent are consistently applied within the proposed District Plan. Whilst the Village is currently under construction these provisions would apply to any subsequent resource consents required (e.g. any changes to the village layout). In addition, Summerset needs certainty over what provisions will apply to the western portion of the land and what can be developed there in the future. Summerset is also interested in provisions that apply to retirement village development generally, with a view to considering potential new village sites throughout the district.

5.0 HEARING STREAM 10A: DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- 5.1 A number of the submission points within Summerset's submission relate to hearing stream 10A¹. For some of these², the section 42A reporting officer has recommended that the point be accepted, with which I concur, and I have not prepared evidence on those points.
- 5.2 The following assessment relates to the remaining submission points in relation to three provisions within the DEV-SBT section.

¹ Submission points S207.38, S207.39, S207.40, S207.41 and S207.42.

² Submission points S207.41 and S207.42.

DEV-SBT-R1 Finished ground levels as part of subdivision

- 5.3 The submission point³ from Summerset relating to this rule raised the concern that the rule is different to the rule that applied to the development area in Plan Change 29. The operative rule was based on technical assessment of flood risk to that land during the plan change process. In addition the rule wording of the rule was unclear.
- 5.4 The reporting officer has noted Summerset's concern in respect to the rule not containing any reference to depth and has recommended linking this rule to the Natural Hazards provisions⁴. I agree that this is a good way of ensuring clarity, will provide the required connection to depth to enable the application of the rule, and will ensure consistency across the plan provisions.
- 5.5 However, I note that the amended provisions provided in Appendix A to the Officer's report do not appear show this amendment to the wording. I consider that it would be appropriate to ensure this correction is made to the text.

DEV-SBT-R2 South Belt Development Area Outline Development Plan

- 5.6 The submission point⁵ from Summerset relating to this rule sought that it be retained as notified. The Officer's report does not appear to assess this point but recommends it be accepted⁶ which is acknowledged.
- 5.7 However, I note that the amended provisions provided in Appendix A to the Officer's report appear to show this whole clause as being struck out. I have not been able to find anything in the Officer's report that would indicate why this clause would be deleted. I consider it is appropriate to retain this clause within the section relating to this development area, to provide clarity around the intent for development

³ Submission point S207.38.

⁴ Officers report on Proposed Waimakariri District Plan: Wāhanga Waihanga – Development Areas (DEV), Peter Wilson, dated 12/01/2024, paragraph 153, page 32.

⁵ Submission point S207.39.

⁶ Officers report on Proposed Waimakariri District Plan: Wāhanga Waihanga – Development Areas (DEV), Peter Wilson, dated 12/01/2024, paragraph 156, page 33 and Appendix B, page 306.

of this land and consistency with the anticipated use of the land for residential purposes generally. This will also ensure that aspect such as appropriate connections to the existing roading are located in the appropriate places.

DEV-SBT-R3 Retirement village⁷

- 5.8 The submission point⁸ from Summerset relating to this rule sought alignment with the provisions from Plan Change 29 that currently relate to this land. This related to the application of assessment matters to retirement villages. I note that this submission point was connected within the submission to other submission points made on the residential zone provisions where it was sought that the provisions relating to retirement villages within the whole Plan are made consistent and relevant.
- 5.9 During the course of Plan Change 29 there was considerable discussion about the difference in character, appearance and management of retirement villages as compared to typical owner occupied residential dwellings. There was discussion on the ability for retirement villages to be developed comprehensively and to be managed holistically over considerable site areas. There was also recognition that retirement villages will look different but that this does not make them incompatible with residential development, and that they need to function differently to meet the needs of residents.
- 5.10 This discussion led to the inclusion of a set of bespoke matters of control (or matters of discretion depending on the rule triggered) for consideration of a retirement village on this site under that plan change and which are now part of the Operative District Plan (see **Appendix One**). These assessment matters recognise that many of the typical assessment matters applied to general residential subdivision or to comprehensive developments often are not relevant to a retirement village. They are intended to ensure that retirement villages consider their context with a focus on the interface with surrounding land.

⁷ Noting that this rule was mistakenly referenced as R2 in the submission.

⁸ Submission point S207.40.

5.11 The proposed District Plan, instead of bringing across these bespoke assessment matters for retirement village development, has linked the controlled activity status under rule DEV-SBT-R3 to the matters of discretion for general residential design principles (RES-MD2), see **Appendix One**. Those provisions apply to all residential development and contain a number of matters that do not align well with retirement village development. For example, Clause 1 of those principles states:

1. *Context and character:*

b. *The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:*

i. *includes, where relevant, reference to the patterns of development in and/or anticipated for the surrounding area such as building dimensions, forms, setback and alignments, and secondarily materials, design features and tree plantings*

5.12 In my opinion a retirement village is unlikely to replicate the patterns of development in the surrounding area or have buildings that match the dimensions, form etc of the suburban residential dwellings that are likely to be in the surrounding area. This does not in itself mean that the village is incompatible with a residential environment or will cause adverse effects but simply that it is different as was accepted in the Plan Change 29 decision. I do not think it is appropriate, or necessary, to apply the same tests to both 'traditional' detached residential dwelling development and retirement villages.

5.13 In my opinion, the bespoke assessment matters in the Operative District Plan provide a more appropriate test for such a retirement village activity. I recommend that those provisions be included within the proposed District Plan for retirement village development, and applied to this rule as set out in the submission.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 I consider that it is appropriate to amend the assessment matters that relate to retirement villages under DEV-SBT-R3 to ensure appropriate

consideration of such activities and to not apply inappropriate tests that relate to a different form of development.

Stephanie Styles

30 January 2024

APPENDIX ONE: Comparison of assessment matters between Operative and Proposed District Plans in relation to retirement villages in SBT

Plan Change 29 and Operative District Plan: Matters of control for Rule 31.2.2

31.2.2 A retirement village, in the Residential 2 zone subject to South Belt Outline Development Plan as shown on District Plan Map 184, that meets all applicable conditions for permitted activities under Rule 31.1 shall be a controlled activity.

In considering any application for resource consent under Rule 31.2.2, the Council shall in granting consent and in deciding whether to impose conditions, exercise control over the following matters:

Whether the development, while bringing change to existing environments, is appropriate to its context, taking into account:

- whether the proposal would cause significant loss of sunlight, daylight or privacy on adjoining residential properties.
- the ability of the proposal to provide engagement with, and contribution to, adjacent streets and public open spaces, with regard to:
 - fencing and boundary treatments;
 - connectivity, including the configuration of pedestrian accesses.
- the mitigation measures proposed, including landscape planting, to mitigate any adverse effects of loss of trees from the site or openness of the site, and to assist the integration of the proposed development within the site and neighbourhood.
- the location and design of vehicle and pedestrian access and on-site manoeuvring to cater for the safety of elderly, disabled or mobility-impaired persons.
- integration of internal accessways, parking areas and garages in a way that is safe for pedestrians and cyclists, and that does not visually dominate when viewed from the street or other public spaces.
- the degree to which the village design demonstrates that the design has had particular regard to personal safety of the occupants, both in the sense of injury prevention and crime prevention.
- creation of visual quality and variety through the separation of buildings, building orientation, and in the use of architectural design, detailing, glazing, materials, colour and landscaping.
- where practicable, incorporation of environmental efficiency measures in the design, including passive solar design principles that provide for adequate levels of internal natural light and ventilation.
- the proposed stormwater management within the site.
- the appropriate provision of esplanade reserve land.

Proposed District Plan: Matters of Discretion for all Residential Zones

RES-MD2	Residential design principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Context and character: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The extent to which the design of the development is in keeping with, or complements, the scale and character of development anticipated for the surrounding area and relevant significant natural, heritage and cultural features. b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. includes, where relevant, reference to the patterns of development in and/or anticipated for the surrounding area such as building dimensions,
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- forms, [setback](#) and alignments, and secondarily materials, design features and tree plantings; and
- ii. retains or adapts features of the [site](#) that contribute significantly to local neighbourhood character, potentially including existing [historic heritage](#) items, [Sites](#) of Ngāi Tahu Cultural Significance shown on the planning map, [site](#) contours and mature trees.
2. Relationship to the street and public open spaces:
 - a. Whether the development engages with and contributes to adjacent streets, and any other adjacent public open spaces to contribute to them being lively, safe and attractive.
 - b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:
 - i. orientates [building](#) frontages including entrances and windows to habitable rooms toward the street and adjacent public open spaces;
 - ii. designs [buildings](#) on corner [sites](#) to emphasise the corner;
 - iii. needs to minimise south-facing glazing to minimise heat loss; and
 - iv. avoids street façades that are blank or dominated by garages.
 3. Built form and appearance:
 - a. The extent to which the development is designed to minimise the visual bulk of the [buildings](#) and provide visual interest.
 - b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:
 - i. divides or otherwise separates unusually long or bulky [building](#) forms and limits the length of continuous rooflines;
 - ii. utilises variety of [building](#) form and/or variation in the alignment and placement of [buildings](#) to avoid monotony;
 - iii. avoids blank elevations and façades dominated by garage doors; and
 - iv. achieves visual interest and a sense of human scale through the use of architectural detailing, glazing and variation of materials.
 4. Residential amenity:
 - a. In relation to the built form and residential amenity of the development on the [site](#) (i.e. the overall [site](#) prior to the development), the extent to which the development provides a high level of internal and external residential amenity for occupants and neighbours.
 - b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:
 - i. provides for outlook, sunlight and privacy through the [site](#) layout, and orientation and internal layout of [residential units](#);
 - ii. directly connects private outdoor spaces to the living spaces within the [residential units](#);
 - iii. ensures any communal private open spaces are [accessible](#), usable and attractive for the residents of the [residential units](#); and
 - iv. includes tree and garden planting particularly relating to the street frontage, boundaries, [accessways](#), and [parking areas](#).
 5. Access, parking and servicing:
 - a. The extent to which the development provides for good access and integration of space for parking and servicing.
 - b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:
 - i. integrates access in a way that is safe for all users, and offers convenient access for pedestrians to the street, any nearby parks or other public recreation spaces;
 - ii. provides for [parking areas](#) and garages in a way that does not dominate the development, particularly when viewed from the street or other public open spaces; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">iii. provides for suitable storage and service spaces which are conveniently accessible, safe and/or secure, and located and/or designed to minimise adverse effects on occupants, neighbours and public spaces. <p>6. Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The extent to which the development incorporates CPTED principles as required to achieve a safe, secure environment.b. The relevant considerations are the extent to which the development:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. provides for views over, and passive surveillance of, adjacent public and publicly accessible spaces;ii. clearly demarcates boundaries of public and private space;iii. makes pedestrian entrances and routes readily recognisable; andiv. provides for good visibility with clear sightlines and effective lighting.
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