

**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**)

**SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE OF RORY MCLEAN LANGBRIDGE
ON BEHALF OF DANIEL SMITH INVESTMENT LIMITED**

DATED: 7 AUGUST 2024

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Rory McLean Langbridge.
- 2 I have prepared a statement of evidence dated 11th March 2024 regarding Hearing Stream 12F in support of the submissions of Daniel Smith Investments Limited (**DSIL**). DSIL seeks to rezone 106.08ha of land in the vicinity of the Rangiora Airfield from from Rural Lifestyle Zone (**RLZ**) to Special Purpose Zone (Rangiora Airfield) (**SPZ-RA**) through the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan (**PWDP**).
- 3 I confirm that this supplementary statement of evidence is also prepared in accordance with the Environment Court's Code of Conduct.
- 4 On 22 July 2024 the Waimakariri District Council (**Council**) released an Officer Report for Hearing Stream 12F prepared under section 42A (**Officer Report**) of the RMA.
- 5 The Officer Report recommends that the DSIL rezoning submission be rejected in its current form¹. My supplementary evidence responses to elements of that Report within my area of expertise.

SCOPE OF SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE

- 6 In my supplementary evidence I address the following matters:
 - a) Those parts of the Officer Report that address matters within scope of my expertise (landscape and visual), with particular emphasis on matters where there is a difference of view between myself and the evidence of Mr Hugh Nicholson contained within the Officer Report.
- 7 In preparing my supplementary evidence I have:

¹ Refer Officers Report [13]

- a) Reviewed the Officer Report by Mr Bryce Powell and the Appendices to that Report relevant to my area of expertise;
- b) Reviewed my evidence in chief (EIC) filed earlier on behalf of the Submitters; and
- c) Reviewed other materials specifically mentioned in my supplementary evidence discussed below.

CONTEXT AND APPROACH

- 8 As mentioned, the Officer Report does not recommend acceptance of the DSIL rezoning submission. A range of reasons are given for this recommendation, some of which relate to my area of expertise. However, the overriding reason is a perceived lack of information provided to support the requested rezoning provisions.
- 9 The approach I have adopted in this supplementary statement of evidence is to identify those parts of the Officer Report (including Appendices² attached to that Report) within my area of expertise where I either disagree with the Officer Report and to explain my reasons for disagreement, and/or simply seek to provide clarification.
- 10 I address these matters raised in the Officer Report in the order that they have been raised, not in the order of importance.

RESPONSE TO OFFICER REPORT

Effects on Landscape Character and Rural Amenity

- 11 Regarding effects on landscape and rural amenity, the main question being asked in the Officer Report is:

h. "Whether effects on the landscape and rural amenity resulting from the enabled intensity of activities and built form can be

² Appendix G – Expert Evidence of Hugh Nicholson

*adequately avoided and mitigated by the proposed SPZ(RA) provisions and district-wide Proposed Plan provisions'*³

- 12 Further to that, the conclusion reached in the Officer Report regarding landscape effects is..."*the question is not whether the land should be developed for purposes relating to the airfield, it is rather whether the scale and intensity of activities and development is appropriate to ensure that the adverse effects on the environment (including the landscape and people) are avoided, remedied, or mitigated.*"⁴
- 13 The Officers Report relies upon the evidence of Hugh Nicholson⁵. For this reason, it is important to point out that there are a number of misunderstandings that appear to have informed the conclusions drawn by Mr Nicholson. Most notably:
- a) At [5.7] Mr Nicholson agrees that Activity Area B with minimum lots sizes of 5000m² would retain openness but raises concerns regarding the "*two hard surfaced movement networks and ... and minimum site coverage of 20% which would allow for a large house and aircraft hangar to be constructed*". To clarify, all 30m wide plane taxi corridors will be grass in keeping with the profile of Rangiora airfield as a grass runway and taxiway airfield. Such a treatment will retain and in fact enhance an open space character and provide a foil for the clusters of denser development that would result from the smaller sections in this area.
 - b) In the same paragraph, Mr Nicholson states that "taller vegetation will also be restricted on the airfield side of the subdivision. I consider that Activity Area B could have a significantly more urban

³ Officer Report [25 h] page 3

⁴ Section 42A report [135].

⁵ Ibid [327]

character (which higher percentages of built form and hard surfaces) than the semi-rural character of the RLZ." In making this statement, Mr Nicholson references [60] of my EIC.

- 14 It is important to note that the limitation referred to by Mr Nicholson only applies to Area A, with constraints on planting height within Area B far less limiting. The statement quoted relates to a discussion on Area A where I observed that the scale and industrial quality of the buildings and the proximity that they have to the road boundaries would make mitigation difficult due to the proximity that buildings in this zone would have to the public roads. I qualified this statement by pointing out that "*there are however strategies that can be utilised to ensure the buildings appear integrated within the wider landscape*⁶". Such strategies could include;
- a) Planting of trees selected from the recommended list of species and located streetside of the buildings.
 - b) The development of a boundary treatment strategy that would have rural references while at the same time providing a wider perimeter treatment to the aviation precinct in general.
 - c) In addition to the above, controls on colour palettes used for the buildings and proposing a themed development with all aspects of the development being related directly to the aviation industry, can contribute towards a harmonious and environmentally compatible outcome.
- 15 Within Area B the restrictions on planting height will only apply in the area within 20m of a taxiway and between the hanger and its access point onto the taxiway.

⁶ R Langbridge EIC [60]

- 16 In his assessment, Mr Nicholson does not appear to have fully factored in what I consider to be important character values of the existing receiving environment and values that will ultimately provide some mitigation for the impact that is anticipated by the proposed zone change, and in fact will make the SPZ-RA appropriate and well suited to this location.
- 17 At no point does he appear to place weight in his assessment that:
- a) The proposal is adjacent to an expanding regional airfield where further development in the Priors Road area on the Airfield designation is enabled and virtually unrestricted. The ongoing development and operation of which he appears to support.
 - b) Hanger and other aviation related buildings currently occupy the receiving environment.
 - c) The receiving environment is currently impacted to a reasonable degree (adverse or otherwise) by the consequences of the aviation activity.
 - d) The baseline comparison for development in this area are large domestic houses and farm sheds (A GFA of up to 8000m² per section and a buildings size limit of up to 550m² per building) located within in an open landscape with a very low absorption capacity. Development of that scale in this location would have a presence that is moderate to high.
 - e) The airfield is a 'destination' location. The airfield and this location are regionally known as the Rangiora Airfield, and aviation related activities are anticipated to occur within the area. As such, there will be a public expectation and acceptance that it may 'appear a little different' to its RLZ surroundings.
 - f) It is a location that is reasonably isolated and not generally experienced 'in passing', it is not an area that one comes across by

accident. It is not a secluded rural location suited only to a Rural Lifestyle Zone, it currently has a prominent aviation character values.

- 18 An important point to stress is that the ambition or outcome of mitigation is not, in my opinion, a requirement to screen the development or to pretend that the development is in some way 'rural'. The intention would be to make it an attractive and locally compatible and sympathetic aviation precinct. To achieve a level of integration that can make future development appear 'appropriate' or, in other words, an accepted or supported part of a growing aviation precinct and to establish a sympathetic 'transition area' that will buffer the character and functions of the airfield from the RLZ and GRUZ surrounding it.
- 19 When considering the RLZ, it is important to note that under RLZ, there are no requirements to address impacts that stem from a 4ha development. This makes the baseline comparison 'large domestic houses and farm sheds (up to 8000m² per section) located in an open landscape with a size limit for any building to be 550m²'. It is however acknowledged that, typically amenity arising from RLZ development is generally high resulting from the combination of open space and vegetation that develops over time.
- 20 In order to provide certainty of a comparable outcome I recommend that additional landscaping provisions, as set out at [28] below, are included in the SPZ-RA provisions.

Insufficient Information

- 21 In regard to concerns around insufficient information and therefore a lack of certainty of outcome under the SPZ-RA I understand that an overall master plan was prepared by Mr Groome in 2023 that illustrates the future development of the Rangiora Airfield. This has been endorsed

by the Council and the Rangiora Airport Advisory Group. The master plan is appended to the supplementary evidence of Mr Groome.

- 22 Regarding landscape and visual amenity outcomes, at [327] in the Officers Report the suggestion is that there is not enough information provided for them to assess with any certainty whether Area B (or Area A for that matter) would be developed as a reasonable transition between the airfield and the surrounding RLZ land.
- 23 Looking at the provisions prepared for the SPZ-RA, consideration has been given to the control of buildings, in terms of height, their setback from boundaries, and the control and screening of outdoor storage areas⁷. Notably there are no requirements for the landscaping of the residential properties in Area B or the proposed more industrial and residential sites within Area A.
- 24 I note here that under the RLZ, there are no requirements to address any impacts that stem from a 4ha development.
- 25 It is anticipated that as large lot residential sections, the residential sections within Area B would develop in the same manner, with boundary planting, shelter belts, amenity trees and planting around the houses being developed overtime. One of the main reasons for planting within the locale is to address and mitigate the consequences of the winds experienced in this area. Therefore, it is certainly not fanciful to expect a similar outcome within Area B. A secondary benefit would be the amenity aspects of this.
- 26 However, while expected and likely, such an outcome cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, in response to the concerns regarding this raised in the Officer Report and to provide assurance that such an outcome (as

⁷ Evidence in Chief – Mr Dean Chrystal

described in [20] above) will be realised, I have recommended additional landscape provisions be added to the provisions for SPZ-RA.

- 27 The landscaping of the public face of Area A is considered equally important to address.
- 28 The ODP provides for tree plantings along the various access roads anticipated within the zone and along the realigned Priors Road (except off the end of the runway vectors) and tussock planting along the taxiways. This will result in a pleasant parkland outcome with high street appeal. This however alone will not sufficiently address or soften the impact that development at a relatively higher density would have the locality.
- 29 In addition to the street trees, I have recommended that within Area B:
- a) boundary/hedgerow plantings be required along all internal boundaries to reduce the openness of the landscape and replicate the typical planted character of the RLZ. Boundary/hedgerow should use species selected from the recommended list of species⁸ suitable for planting in proximity to an airfield and be able to achieve a height of 4-5m. All boundary plantings to extend to a point a maximum 20m back from of any taxiway.
 - b) A landscape strip of 2.0m be required along the street frontages using species, the majority of which have the potential to grow to 2.0m or more.
 - c) A boundary treatment is recommended to visually identify and isolate the aviation precinct while at the same time locate it within a semi-rural or rural residential context. To this end I recommend a rural inspired post and rail fence (1.2m high) along the Prior and Mercers Road boundaries that in combination with boundary

⁸ For approved species refer Appendix A.

planting will establish a sympathetic public face to the aviation precinct.

- 30 Within Area A, I recommend adopting the landscape provisions of the proposed Light Industrial Zone being:

Road boundary landscaping

1. Landscaping shall be provided and maintained along the full length of the road boundary apart from vehicle or pedestrian crossings. This landscape strip shall be a minimum of 2m deep.
 2. The landscape strip required in (1) shall include a minimum of one evergreen tree for every 10m of road frontage or part thereof, with a minimum of one tree per site frontage, with the trees to be a minimum of 1.5m in height above ground at the time of planting.
- 31 It is recognised that limitations on planting heights must exist within the area 20m setback from all taxiway boundaries to avoid any consequences with operational aircraft. To this end the height of all planting in this area should be limited to 1.2m in height. Furthermore, planting must be comprised of species that do not attract birds.
- 32 It is noted that trees species selection is an important aspect in the control of bird strike. It is understood that a particular selection of species has been developed by Christchurch International Airport for use in proximity to the airport. This list has been adopted in the provisions and I propose that all tree species planted within either Area A or Area B be selected from this list.

CONCLUSION

- 33 The location of an airpark in this location from a landscape perspective is logical in my opinion. The question asked by the Officers Report is whether "*the effects on landscape and rural amenity resulting from*

enabled intensity of activities and built form can be adequately ... mitigated by the proposed SPZ(RA) provisions."

- 34 Development comprising domestic dwellings and large rural buildings clustered on each property is a baseline impact that can be anticipated by the RLZ zone. Furthermore, this zone does not rely on landscaping to mitigate or soften the impact of the anticipated development on this locality.
- 35 The proposed zoning will enable a greater density of similar type buildings to be developed, namely domestic dwellings located proximate to larger shed (hanger) structures. While density of the development within Area B will be greater than what would be anticipated within the RLZ that is an outcome of the proposed zoning and a reflection of the airfield and what it provides for. I noted that providing grass taxiways within Area B will serve to reduce the perceived density of any resulting development in this area.
- 36 Within Area B, the establishment of shelterbelts, perimeter plantings and fences as required along with any resident developed gardens will ensure that the visual impact of the increased density will be addressed and gradually reduced. Such an outcome will ensure this land use serves as an ideal buffer for the airfield, being a reasonably vegetated transition area that includes overt aviation related development and uses interspersed within a low-density residential context and occupied by people who have an affiliation with the aviation industry.
- 37 Area A will be more visible in the long term but will serve a number of purposes. This area has the potential of becoming the public face to the airfield. To provide much needed industrial/aviation related development land and create an entrance statement for the wider complex consistent with the airfields expanding function and importance.

- 38 The rezoning will result in change to this location and while change will occur, the visual effects on rural character and amenity will be mitigated to some degree by the
- proximity to the Rangiora Airfield,
 - the public expectation that typically comes with that proximity
 - by the isolated nature of the site,
 - the themed development, with all aspects of the development being related directly to the aviation industry and
 - by a uniform treatment of the perimeter boundary that will reinforce the area as a considered expansion of the aviation precinct.
- 39 I believe that should my recommendations be adopted they will suitably mitigate the impacts of development and provide for an effective and sympathetic buffer to the wider airport precinct.
- 40 I am happy to answer any questions.

Rory McLean Langbridge

7 August 2024

Appendix A: Recommended Plant species (drawn from the list as approved for planting in the vicinity of the Christchurch Airport.⁹

NATIVE TREE SPECIES:

Dicksonia fibrosa	Fibrous Tree fern
Dicksonia squarrosa	Rough Tree fern
Dodonaea viscosae	Akeake
Hoheria species	Lacebark
Kunzea ericoides	Kānuka
Olearia paniculata	Golden akeake
Pittosporum species	New Zealand pittosporum
Plagianthus regius	Ribbonwood
Podocarpus totara var.	New Zealand tōtara
Pseudopanax arboreus	Five finger
Pseudopanax crassifolium	Lancewood
Pseudopanax ferox	Toothed lancewood
Pseudowintera colorata	Pepper tree
Sophora species	Kōwhai

NATIVE SHRUB PLANTINGS

Arthropodium cirratum	Rengarenga, rock lily
Asplenium bulbiferum	Hen and chicken fern
Astelia species	Astelia
Blechnum discolor	Crown fern
Blechnum novae-zelandiae	Kiokio, palm leaf fern
Brachyglottis greyi 'Sunshine'	Bright eyes
Carex Testacea	Orange Sedge
Chionochoa flavicans	Miniature toetoe
Clianthus puniceus	Kaka beak
Coprosma species	Mirror plant
Corokia species	Corokia
Dianella nigra	New Zealand blueberry
Griselinia littoralis var.	New Zealand broadleaf
Hebe species	New Zealand lilac
Libertia species	New Zealand iris

⁹ Commercial Development Design Guidelines February 2023 10 Landscape – Recommended species

Lobelia angulata
 Lophomyrtus obcordata
Myosotidium hortensia
 Olearia paniculata
Pachystegia insignis
Phormium var.
Pimelea prostrata
 Pittosporum species
Poa cita
 Pseudopanax lessonii var.
 Pseudowintera colorata

Pānakenake
 New Zealand myrtle
Chatham Islands forget-me-not
 Golden akeake
Marlborough rock daisy
New Zealand flax
New Zealand daphne
 New Zealand pittosporum
Silver Tussock
 Five finger
 Pepper tree

EXOTIC TREE SPECIES:

Acer species
 Aesculus hippocastanum
 Alnus species
 Carpinus betulus 'Fastigiata'
 Cercis canadensis
 Cornus species
 Fagus species
 Fraxinus species
 Ginkgo biloba
 Liquidambar var.
 Liriodendron var.
 Magnolia grandiflora
 Phebalium squameum
 Platanus species
 Prunus species
 Quercus species
 Sorbus aria
 Tilia species
 Ulmus species
 Zelkova serrata

Maple (Japanese)
 Horse chestnut
 Alder
 Upright hornbeam
 Forest pansy
 Dogwood
 Beech
 Ash
 Maidenhair tree
 Sweet gum
 Tulip tree
 Evergreen magnolia (Little Gem)
 Satin wood
 Plane
 Flowering cherry
 Oak
 Whitebeam
 Lime tree
 Elm tree
 Japanese elm

EXOTIC PLANT SPECIES

Abelia grandiflora var.
Agapanthus (dwarf var.)
 Ajuga reptans var.
 Aristeia
 Armeria maritima
 Glossy abelia
African lily
 Carpet bugle
 Blue iris
 Sea thrift

Aucuba japonica

Azalea species

Bergenia

Buxus species

Camellia species

Canna

Choisya species

Cistus var.

Coleonema pulchellum var.

Convolvulus cneorum

Daphne odora var.

Dichroa versicolor

Dietes grandiflora

Erica carnea

Euonymus japonicus

Euphorbia

Euryops pectinatus

Felicia amelloides

Gazania

Heuchera var.

Japanese laurel

Azalea

Pig squeak

Boxwood

Camellia ☐

Bush lily ☐

Mexican orange blossom

Rock rose

Breath of heaven

Silverbush

Winter daphne

Blue sapphire

Wild iris

Winter heath

Japanese spindle

Spurges

Golden daisy bush

Blue marguerite

Treasure flower

Coral bells

Bold plants are plants that would comply to be planted within the height restricted areas. It is important that the suitability of species is considered in all landscape plans to ensure the plants' survival and long-term health. This means assessing the soil type, soil moisture, topography and localised climatic conditions.