

Before an Independent Hearings Panel
Appointed by Waimakariri District Council

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: Submissions and further submissions on the Proposed
Waimakariri District Plan

and: Hearing Stream 12D: Ōhoka rezoning request

and: **Carter Group Property Limited**
(Submitter 237)

and: **Rolleston Industrial Developments Limited**
(Submitter 160)

Summary of evidence of Tony Milne

Dated: 1 July 2024

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SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF TONY MILNE

- 1 My full name is Tony Douglas Milne.
- 2 I prepared a statement of evidence in support of the Submitters' rezoning request on 5 March 2024. My qualifications are as set out in my evidence in chief.
- 3 The key landscape issue of the proposed rezoning relates to potential effects on the amenity of the surrounding environment. This is because the change in density associated with the residential scale development will alter the rural open characteristics that are currently experienced in views from both public places and private residences.
- 4 Essentially, the issue is: will the visual amenity of the landscape as experienced in these views be adversely affected by the proposal? Bearing in mind, change in a view does not necessarily result in an adverse effect.
- 5 Additionally, I consider the change to landscape character that will occur through the application of the Proposed Waimakariri District Plan (*PWDP*) to be relevant. It is considered that a reduction in open rural character is already anticipated by the *PWDP* in the proposed zoning of the Site and the surrounding land to Rural Lifestyle Zone (*RLZ*).
- 6 The continuation of smaller scale rural residential (lifestyle) subdivision throughout the lower Waimakariri District plains needs to be factored into the consideration of effects on character of this receiving environment.
- 7 The outcome on rural amenity of the *RLZ* would be the restriction of all open rural views that are currently afforded by the Site. In a nutshell, the current open rural views that are experienced across the Site cannot be anticipated to remain. Therefore, the restriction of views across the Site is not considered to be a key factor in determining potential adverse landscape and visual amenity effects.
- 8 On the Site, in places, pasture-covered paddocks will inevitably change, through development, whichever form it takes. However, this does not necessarily mean that the resulting level of visual amenity will be lower than at present. A combination of factors such as the proposed pattern of development, lot size, zone rules and integrative planting will create a high amenity environment that is visually sympathetic to its surroundings.
- 9 The alterations to landscape character are considered to be acceptable in the context of the wider existing development pattern due to the existing level of fragmentation that has already occurred through rural residential scale development, along with the positive

effects associated with the increase in local amenity and convenience that will complement the existing Ōhoka Village.

- 10 Overall, I consider the ODP responds appropriately to the Site's attributes, sensitivity and the surrounding environment. It has been developed to integrate with the surrounding locality and also reduce potential adverse effects through its spatial articulation and proposed landscape treatments.
- 11 The landscape treatments around the perimeter of the Site (Landscape Treatments A, B, and C) are considered to be an appropriate response which will assist with implementing higher amenity and ecological outcomes within this Site, while reinforcing a separation between the Ōhoka and Mandeville North localities.
- 12 Therefore, when one considers the lifestyle development that is anticipated by the PWDP, and using the seven point scale drawn from the NZILA's Aotearoa New Zealand landscape Assessment Guidelines to assess the scale of effects of the rezoning request, then in my opinion the impact on both the landscape character and visual amenity would be low – moderate (which I consider to be a 'minor' effect in terms of the RMA). Although this does not necessarily mean that the resulting level of visual amenity will be lower than at present. Instead, the resulting visual amenity will be from a combination of existing and new elements.
- 13 Further there are many positive effects on landscape and amenity resulting from the proposal including the improvement of ecological values of the application site through native planting, introduction of open space corridors through the development, and an increase in general amenity which will be derived from a high-quality landscape setting.
- 14 Overall, the rezoning request will provide for future development that is appropriate and will not result in significant adverse landscape or visual amenity effects that cannot be either avoided or mitigated. While it is inevitable that the existing qualities and characteristics of the Site will change, the proposed rezoning request displays a carefully considered response, integrated, comprehensive, mixed-use development which will result in a high-quality environment.

RESPONSE TO SUBMITTER EVIDENCE

- 15 I have reviewed the evidence of Mr Goodfellow, and nothing was raised in this that I hadn't already covered in my evidence in chief, and therefore it has not changed my opinion on the proposal.
- 16 However, it is useful to reiterate that the presence of open views is only one characteristic that can be associated with rural character and amenity. The purpose of the perimeter landscape treatment is

not intended to hide a “*densely populated island*”¹, rather it is intended to address the interface with nearby properties (both as they currently exist and in accordance with PWDP zoning). This will provide a vegetative edge that is complementary to the existing Whites Road frontage planting.

- 17 I do acknowledge this is not the same for Bradleys Road. However, it is considered there are fewer sensitive receivers along this road with private properties located to the west and orientated so their main views are towards the Canterbury foothills.
- 18 The outlook from the existing Ōhoka urban area (as identified in the PWDP) is already anticipated to be changed through the PWDP’s intention for RLZ. Further to that, as far as I understand there is no rule in the PWDP preventing planting that would restrict views out over rural land.
- 19 In summary, I draw the Commissioners attention to the proposed restoration of natural character to areas within the Site. From a landscape values perspective, an important element of the rezoning request that has received little comment. Essentially the rezoning request will enable the restoration of the values (natural character, ecological diversity) of a currently degraded pastoral land use.

Dated: 1 July 2024

Tony Milne

¹ Statement of Evidence of Kim Goodfellow; Paragraph 17.