

Springfield Township Committee

Submission 2036

22 Additional

3 June 2014

The Mayor and Councillors
Selwyn District Council
P O Box 90
ROLLESTON 7643

Attention: Tim Harris (District Planning Manager)

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Dear Members of the Council

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE SUBMISSION RE-INSTATING A RURAL RESIDENTIAL ZONING FOR SPRINGFIELD

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Further to the recent Selwyn 2031 (Draft District Development Strategy) meeting held in the Springfield Community Centre on Monday evening 5 May 2014, this is the submission to the Selwyn District Council from the Springfield Township Committee ('the Committee'). It is seeking for the reinstatement of a rural residential zone at Springfield being essentially the same as that which existed in the former Malvern County District Scheme.
- 1.2 The Committee is of the view that this will provide a further residential development option for Springfield and for which a demand appears to exist.

2.0 The Need for Such a Zone

- 2.1 The Committee is of the opinion that the continued growth of the Springfield township could be significantly affected in a negative way with the continued absence of such a zone. At present the only residential development options for Springfield are within the Living 1 Zone (that essentially comprises the entire township and has an 800 m² minimum allotment area subject to undertaking on-site effluent disposal), and in the immediate rural surroundings; primarily the Rural (Outer Plains) Zone that requires a minimum land area of 20 ha per dwelling.
- 2.2 There is at present no other residential development options available and therefore the need at this time to provide for Springfield a hybrid opportunity that a rural residential zone that fulfil. There are numerous other townships within the Selwyn District that have such a zone and on this basis the Committee is of the opinion that Springfield should be offered the same development opportunity.
- 2.3 In recent times the Committee is becoming more aware of changing economic conditions that is likely to translate to a greater demand for residential development than what has occurred over the past few years. The recently completed Fonterra milk processing plant north of Darfield, the granting of planning approvals for the Crystal Valley ski/resort development at Porters, and the commencement of the Central Plains Water irrigation scheme; are three significant factors of a bigger, and very positive, picture that is evolving in this part of the Selwyn District. Springfield is also seen as being the gateway to the Canterbury high country, the Southern Alps and the West Coast beyond. Being located on State Highway 73 on the outer edge of the Canterbury Plains,

and being the last township before heading into the High Country, this is seen as providing a wide scope of potential economic development and the benefits that this brings.

- 2.4 And in order to convert this potential into real economic growth, a range of residential development options for Springfield needs to be available; including a rural residential option.

3.0 Recent Past Planning History

- 3.1 In 1991 with the enactment of the Resource Management Act, the Malvern County District Scheme became part of the Selwyn District Transitional District Plan (the Malvern Section) until the new Selwyn District Plan become operative. In 1991 the Rural R Zone in respect of Springfield still existed, but by the time the new Selwyn District Plan had become operative this zone had been deleted.

- 3.2 The extent of the former Rural R Zone is highlighted below in the marked up aerial photograph. It was bounded by Annavale Road to the north and east, extending southwards down Tramway Road to opposite Albert Street, heading across country to West Coast, and finally extending northwest along West Coast Road to the intersection with Annavale Road.

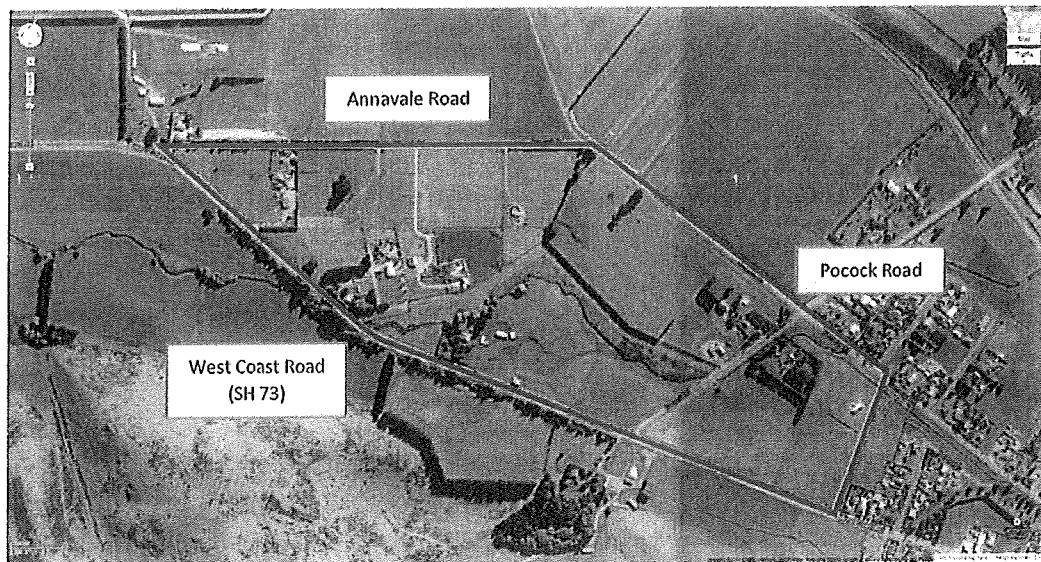


Photo 1: Extent of the former Rural R Zone.

- 3.3 Attached as Appendix A is the Springfield Planning Map (#16) that shows the entire Springfield township, including the Rural R Zone as noted above. The 'Urban' zone depicted on this planning map roughly corresponds with the Living 1 Zone that now applies to Springfield in the District Plan.

- 3.4 This Rural R Zone has instead in the District Plan become part of the much wider Rural (Outer Plains Zone) that specifies a maximum dwelling density of 1 per 20 ha. The ability to undertake a subdivision of land also requires a minimum allotment area of 20 ha.

4.0 Current Selwyn District Plan Growth Provisions for Springfield

- 4.1 The Townships Volume of the Selwyn District Plan ('District Plan') has three existing policies that pertain directly to the growth of the Springfield township.

- 4.2 The Committee firstly wishes to advise that it generally supports the District Plan policy approach as noted above for Springfield. It is seen to provide a sound framework around which the various growth options can be assessed and critiqued against. The containment of much of the township located between State Highway 73 (generally to the southwest) and the Midland

Railway Line (to the northeast) are two significant physical barriers that have in the past, and will continue into the future to strongly influence its growth patterns. It is in this overall context that the Committee is of the view that the re-instatement of a rural residential zone similar to that as existed in the former Malvern County District Scheme is in accord with the above stated policy ideals.

- 4.3 Those policies, together with the accompanying reasons are as follows, together with an assessment of each in the context of re-establishing a rural residential zone:

Policy B4.3.86

Encourage new residential or business activities to use sites in the existing Living 1 Zone, if sites are available and appropriate for the proposed activity.

Explanation and Reasons

There is land not used for residential or business activities in the existing Living 1 zone at Springfield. Using land in the existing zone is consistent with Town Form Policy B4.3.4.

(Note: Policy B4.3.4 referred to in the above 'Explanation and Reasons' is:

Encourage new residential or business development to occur on vacant land in existing Living or Business zones, if that land is available and appropriate for the proposed activity).

- 4.4 In respect of Policy B4.3.86, the Committee agrees with its sentiment in terms of providing higher density residential in the Living 1 Zone as contemplated. It is seen as being appropriate to restrict the spread of the Springfield urban area if it can be shown that there is adequate vacant land that is available for development in the foreseeable future in the context of the rate of land take up.
- 4.5 It is understood that there is a proposed residential development on the north side of Tramway Road that will comprise in the order of 15 existing allotments. The undertaking of this single development will make a significant dent in the remaining amount of vacant land within the Living 1 Zone. Should there be a significant spurt in house building within the Springfield urban area (which is very feasible as noted earlier), a shortage of available land in the near future is a distinct possibility.
- 4.6 In the context of such future growth scenarios, the better long term outcome may well be the extension of the Living 1 Zone to extend out to Pocock Road to provide an adequate buffer of vacant land for residential purposes.
- 4.7 But in respect of re-establishing a rural residential zone similar to the one that previously existed, it is considered by the Committee that in the meantime that the extent of it should correspond with the former Rural R Zone. This will at least indicate the overall suitability of this land for residential development in the interim with any further refinement being the subject as part of a future District Plan review
- 4.8 When taking all the above factors account, and given the lack of any low density dwelling options within the existing Springfield township, the Committee is of the opinion that re-establishing the rural residential zone will be in accord with Policy B4.3.86.

Policy B4.3.87

Encourage any new Living zone to occur on the north side of SH73 and avoid new Living or Business 1 Zones:

- East of the existing Living 1 zone;*
- On the south side of SH73; or*
- North of the Midland Railway Line.*

Explanation and Reasons

Springfield Township is currently confined to one side of a Strategic Road (SH73) and the Midland Railway Line. Policy B4.3.86 is consistent with Policy B2.1.17, in keeping the township confined to one side of both transport routes. The Russell Range is identified in the Plan as having special landscape values. Confining new residential or business development to the north side of SH73 is consistent with Policy B1.4.13.

- 4.9 Being on the north side of West Coast Road (SH 73) and south of the Midland Railway Line; this land is seen as being ideally suited to provide a low density residential expansion to the Springfield township as intended by Policy B4.3.87.

Policy B4.3.88

Ensure that any land rezoned for new residential or business development north of Springfield does not create or exacerbate potential "reverse sensitivity" issues in respect of the Midland Railway Line.

Explanation and Reasons

Springfield Township is "sandwiched" between SH73 and the Midland Railway Line. There is some land zoned "Rural" between the Living 1 Zone and the Railway Line. The land was designated for railway purposes but this designation is not now required. This area may be suitable for the expansion of Springfield. However, potential "reverse sensitivity" effects with noise, dust and vibration from trains using the Midland Railway Line would need to be addressed.

- 4.10 With the subject land being on the south/west side of Annavale Road, this will ensure that the chance of any reverse sensitivity issues arising in terms of the Midland Railway Line will be extremely remote. This is on the basis that there is a separation distance in the order of 420 metres between Annavale Road and the railway line as measured along Pocock Road. This separation distance is greater than a significant portion of the existing Springfield urban area is setback less than this from this same railway line.

5.0 District Plan 'Preferred Growth Options'

- 5.1 The District Plan includes within its objectives and policies section for various townships the 'Preferred Growth Options'. In respect of Springfield the following is noted:

'There may be more than one area for the future expansion of Springfield that complies with all relevant provisions in the Plan'.

- 5.2 In this context it is noted that there is further land to the west of the current Springfield urban area that is also located between the state highway and the Midland Railway Line. That land may well be subject to separate plan change applications and is beyond the scope of this submission.

6.0 Potential Re-zoning

- 6.1 In seeking the introduction of a new rural residential zone, the Committee is of the opinion that a variant of the Living 2 Zone would be the most appropriate.
- 6.2 The former Rural R Zone provided for a maximum dwelling density of 1 per 0.5 ha with the undertaking of subdivision within this zone also limiting new allotments to a minimum area of 0.5 ha, and a maximum of 2 ha. In consideration of this past planning provision, the establishing of a Living 2 Zone also allowing for a 0.5 ha dwelling provision is seen as being sustainable and would suit the purposes for the Springfield township.

- 6.3 The majority of the townships in the Selwyn District having a Living 2 Zone have a 0.5 ha dwelling site area. The only variants of this are as follows:
- 0.3 ha: Lincoln
 - 1 ha: Coalgate, Dunsandel and Kirwee.
- 6.4 The 0.5 ha dwelling requirement for Springfield is also seen as restoring the development potential that existed prior to the formation of the District Plan in its current form since becoming operative.

7.0 Potential Issues.

- 7.1 With the undertaking of any zone change there are invariably issues that arise. In respect of re-introducing the sought-after Living 2 Zone, the following fundamental issues will need to be addressed:
- a. The existing Springfield reticulated water supply limitations.
 - b. Access onto West Coast Road (SH 73).
 - c. Funding of the plan change process.
- 7.2 The above matters are assessed as follows:

The existing Springfield reticulated water supply limitations.

- 7.3 It is widely accepted that there are supply issues associated with the existing Springfield reticulated water supply scheme. This is especially in the summer months when the demand for water from this scheme is at its highest but the supply from the Kowai River tends to be at its lowest. It is also understood that there are also water-take issues from this river in terms of Environment Canterbury's requirements.
- 7.4 With all of these issues, the Committee is of the view that suitable outcomes can be achieved by the application of improved engineering inputs and the Council negotiating with Environment Canterbury to have the water-take consenting matters resolved.

Access onto the West Coast Road (State Highway 73)

- 7.5 Invariably the New Zealand Transport Agency ('NZTA') would wish to be assured that the creation of any additional dwelling entranceways on this road will not compromise the safety of other road users. State highways are designed, and intended to provide, for primarily 'through traffic' while controlling the number of access points onto it.
- 7.6 The Committee is of the opinion that by introducing traffic-related rules into the District Plan (if needed) as part of any plan change application in consultation with NZTA; then traffic safety can be assured along this stretch of road. An example of this could be the need for adjoining property owners to form joint entranceways so limiting the overall number of entranceways that could be established along this road. The ability for Annavale Road to provide the required legal and physical frontage to a formed Council road is a further mechanism to achieve this traffic safety outcome.

Funding of the plan change process

- 7.7 It is generally accepted that undertaking a plan change application can be 'financially challenging'. On this matter the Committee is of the view that the costs associated with such a plan change application to re-establish a rural residential zone should be borne by the Selwyn District Council. This view is held largely on the basis that prior to the District Plan formation

process post 1991 (when the Resource Management Act 1991 was enacted) Springfield had an existing rural residential zone. There is no recollection at that time of there being any objection by the affected land owners to having that zone rescinded.

- 7.8 While there is no suggestion that the notification of the proposed District Plan by the Council was in any way legally deficient, there is a general view now held that the deletion of this zone at Springfield occurred at the time when there was also host of other matters that the District Plan that would have created a wider public interest. It appears that this Springfield zoning issue somehow 'flew under the radar' and was missed by many people at that time. It has only been subsequently to this that the landowners directly affected have become more aware of what property development potential has been lost/taken away.
- 7.9 It is in this general context that the Committee is of the opinion that the costs that will invariably be incurred by a plan change to re-introduce this rural residential zone should be borne by the Council. While there is also the option of dealing with such a matter as part of a District Plan review process, in this case it is considered that this alternate process may take many years before any zoning becomes a reality.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Up to the time when the Selwyn District Plan was notified in 2001, the former Malvern County District Scheme (which post 1991 became the Malvern Section of the Transitional District Plan) contained for Springfield a rural residential zone. When the District Plan eventually became operative this zoning had totally been removed and replaced with the Rural (Outer Plains Zone). Whereas the Rural R Zone provided for a maximum dwelling density of 1 per 0.5 ha, the Outer Plains Zone specifies a maximum dwelling density of 1 per 20 ha.
- 8.2 Now in 2014, the Committee is seeking for a re-establishing of a similar rural-residential zone (probably a Living 2 Zone) in the current District Plan. This is seen as important matter to ensure that Springfield can capitalise on what is seen as being an opportunity to provide a supply of adequately zoned land to meet an anticipated demand.
- 8.3 Members of the Council, please do not hesitate to get in contact with myself (or indeed any other member of the Committee) should you wish at this time to discuss any of the matters that have been raised as part of this submission.

Yours truly



Robert (Bob) Yaxley

Chairperson: Springfield Township Committee.

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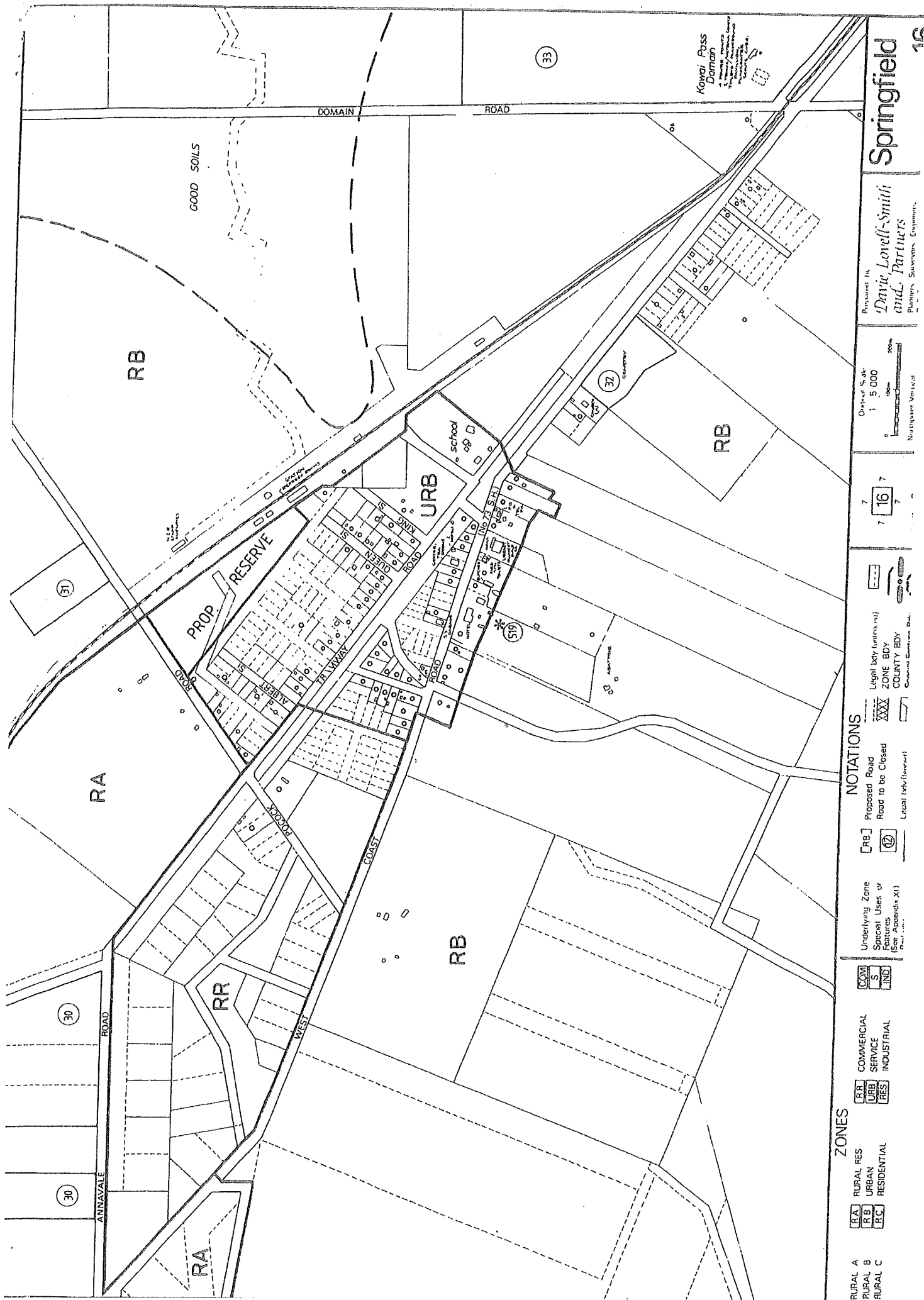
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- David Ward (Council Chief Executive). Email: David.Ward@selwyn.govt.nz
- John Christensen (Council Environmental Services Manager).
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Appendix A

Planning Map 16 (Springfield)
from the Malvern County District
Scheme.



RURAL A
RURAL B
RURAL C

RA
RB
RC

RR
URB
RES

COM
S
IND

Underlying Zone
Special Uses or
Provisions
(See Appendix XI)

[RB] Proposed Road
Road to be Closed
Local Infrastructure

Legal Bay (where not)
ZONE BDR
COUNTY BDR

Original Scale
1:5000
Northward Vertical

Prepared by
David Lovell-Smith
and Partners
Planners, Surveyors, Engineers

Springfield