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SELWYN 2031 - DRAFT DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Submitter: Pinedale Enterprises Ltd and Kintyre Pacific Ltd

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We would like to be heard in support of this submission.

Introduction:

Pinedale Enterprises Ltd and Kintyre Pacific Ltd ('the Submitter') are owned by members of the Paton family who are both residents and farmers in the Selwyn and Ashburton District.

Pinedale Enterprises Ltd and Kintyre Pacific Ltd own 67.94ha of land at Rolleston, bounded by Two Chain Road, State Highway 1, Walkers Road and Railway Road ('the Site') (see location plan attached as **Appendix 1**). There are two existing dwellings on the Site, on Lot 14 (32 ha) and Lot 6 DP 33996). Excluded are two lots at the eastern end (used for grazing) and two middle position blocks currently used for horse training and grazing, and the land at the northwest corner (8ha) which adjoins the Rolleston Prison site.

The Site is zoned Rural Inner Plains. It comprises unirrigated Lismore stoney silt soils which are very light and have limited agricultural potential, and is currently used for grazing of stock.

Land Use Recovery Plan

The Submitter made submissions on the Land Use Recovery Plan (LURP) seeking that the Site be rezoned for residential purposes, and used for affordable housing, including housing relocated from the CERA (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority) red zone. That submission was not accepted by CERA.

Rural Residential Strategy

The Submitter made a submission to the Rural Residential Strategy (RRS) seeking that the Site be identified as suitable for rural residential development. Its proximity to Rolleston would ensure that it would be well connected and its poor soil quality and proximity to both residential and business zones of Rolleston means that farming activities are no longer appropriate.

The Commissioners recommended that the Site not be included into the Strategy based on concerns that the Site was located north of SH1 effectively severing it from the services provided by Rolleston township centre and creating long traffic routes to access these services; concerns around increasing traffic at intersections which provide for crossings across SH1; concerns regarding access only available to an arterial road or a strategic road by being bounded by strategic roads to service the Business zone; infrastructure limitations and potential for reverse sensitivity with the railway line which adjoins the southern Site boundary and the I-Zone Hub in the adjacent Business zone. The relevant part of the Commissioners' recommendation is attached as **Appendix 2**.

Business Zone in Rolleston

Urban Design expert Nicole Laurenstein, who provided extensive expert opinion as to the urban form and function of a number of the sites seeking to be included into the RRS, set out in her evidence in relation to this Site, that given its location between the I-zone and the rest of Rolleston's urban form to the south, the Site naturally lends itself to being part of the urban form of the Township, and that urban form need is not limited to residential and commercial activities but includes business and industrial zones associated with the urban functions of a township.

Given that under the LURP it was not considered suitable for urban residential purposes, and under the RRS it was identified as not suitable for rural residential purposes, and given that it is no longer suitable for agricultural purposes, the only suitable use of the Site is for business purposes in conjunction with adjacent activities in the I-zone. The Site is appropriate for such use, given its location adjoining Izone, the South Island Main Trunk Line Railway, providing opportunity for railway sidings, and SH1. The District Development Strategy provides an opportunity to indicate the appropriateness of the Site for that purpose. Table 1 below identifies the specific areas where amendments could provide for the inclusion of this Site into the business zone.

The Site could be rezoned as a business zone without compromising the provisions of Chapter 6 of the RPS (which SDC's District Plan cannot be contrary to), or in particular Map A of Chapter 6 which sets out future priority greenfield areas for development.

The SDC should initiate a request to Ecan for a review of priority greenfield business areas under Policy 6.3.11 (4) of Chapter 6 (RPS) on the basis that there must be sufficient business zoned land located in the **right locations** (our underlining)¹. Currently it is understood that there is sufficient priority greenfield business land at Rolleston to accommodate business activities but this is not necessarily located in the right areas. For example the former 'Witham' block now owned by Carter Group within the I-Zone and proposed for an inland port is located on premium Templeton silt loamsoils, whereas the Pinedale site is located on poor soils.

Table 1

| Issue/Action | Amendment sought | Reason |
|--|---|---|
| 1 Provision of zoned land for Urban growth | Make provision for zoned land in the right locations. Undertake a Include a district wide review of business zoned land to ensure it is in the right locations including a focus on soil quality, and seek amendments to greenfield priority areas under the Monitoring clause of chapter 6 of the RPS. | Currently good quality soils are being utilised for business activities while the Pinedale site and potentially other sites with poor soils are being uneconomically farmed. |
| 6 avoid the urban development of high quality soils | Undertake a comprehensive review of business and residential zones and potential urban growth locations based on soil quality and productive potential of land (including size of existing farm units/titles) | Soil quality needs to be considered as a tangible constraint to development. Whilst in some cases urban growth of necessity will occur on high quality soils (because there are no other growth options), wherever possible high quality versatile soils should be retained for productive use. |
| 7 monitoring strategic approach to urban development | Include a provision for monitoring the uptake of development on high quality soils. Where development has not yet occurred, the Council shall facilitate discussions and | Council needs to take an active role in managing the District land resource to retain high quality productive land for production. |

¹ **Policy 6.3.11 Monitoring and Review**

In relation to development in Greater Christchurch:

(1) The Canterbury Regional Council, in conjunction with the territorial authorities, shall undertake adequate monitoring to demonstrate both in the short term and the long term that there is an available supply of residential and business land to meet the Objectives and Policies of this Chapter. ...

(4) The Canterbury Regional Council, following relevant territorial authority input, shall initiate a review of the extent and location of land for development if any of the following situations occur:

(a) a shortfall in available land is identified by monitoring under Policy 6.3.11;

Principal reasons and explanation

Relocation, population, household and business growth can be affected by a wide range of variables.

*The policy framework should be responsive to this variation in order to meet any changes in circumstances. Policy 6.3.11 is intended to ensure enough land is available and **in the right locations** (our underlining) to facilitate recovery through to 2028*

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| | negotiations between affected parties and provide incentives as appropriate to achieve the transfer of urban development rights to other more suitable land, including from Izone to the Pinedale site. | |
| 9 Land Use Recovery plan and Regional Policy statement | SDC will seek to amend the priority areas in the RPS based on its comprehensive assessments, monitoring and reporting objectives to ensure that business development occurs in the right/best locations with criteria developed to define 'right/best' locations, including minimizing loss/adverse impact on versatile soils and productive land use. This will include inclusion of the Pinedale Site as a new greenfield business area. | Currently there is ongoing loss of high quality soils, and the strategy signals an opportunity to ensure this trend does not continue. |
| 21 Self-sufficiency of Selwyn | Add that SDC recognizes that one of the limiting factors to self-sufficiency is the inappropriate allocation of urban development to areas where there are high quality soils, and the limiting of urban development in areas of poor soil quality such as the Pinedale Site | Self-sufficiency for the District is important, and the loss of high quality soils, particularly from productive farming units (larger titles) is contrary to this objective. |
| 24 Additional land required for activity centres | SDC seek that the RPS be amended to provide for development of areas outside of Priority areas which are deemed to be suitable for urban business zones including the Pinedale Site. | Land will be required for activity centres such as Rolleston and this should be located in an appropriate place taking into account (among other factors) soil quality. |
| 27 Additional Land for Industrial activity | SDC rezone the Pinedale site and potentially other appropriately located land on poorer quality soils for industrial activity. | Additional land can be provided as long as SDC make a request to amend the priority areas of Chapter 6 of the RPS. |

Housing Choice and Rural Land

Within rural zones there is an opportunity to discourage the intensification of currently undeveloped land for residential purposes by enabling a system of transfer of development rights between titles which have further subdivision potential, to titles which are fully developed (e.g. 4 ha blocks in Inner Plains, 20 ha in Outer Plains) but where further development is sought. For example a landowner who owns a 40ha farm in the Inner Plains zone may wish to transfer 9 of their 10 development 'rights' (for 4 ha titles) to land owners

close to a township on less than 4ha sites. This would then mean that the 40ha farm could not be further subdivided (for example, it could be subject to an open space covenant). Under this system more intensive residential development will be concentrated close to townships or with other existing clusters of unzoned smaller titles, and those larger farms located on productive versatile soils will not be further subdivided, ensuring the ongoing maintenance of the iconic rural character of the Selwyn District and the sustainable management of versatile soils. There could be a 'floating zone' for such higher density development facilitated by transfer of development rights.

This is a solution to the issue of the continued reduction in the size of farming units in the Selwyn District and in particular on the versatile soils in the Rural Zones. There is ongoing need for subdivision of farmland for family succession reasons, to fund further farm investment (for example, purchase of irrigation shares in the Central Plains Irrigation Scheme) and in the Inner Plains, to meet the demand for rural lifestyle blocks given the limited provision made in the District for rural residential development.

The quality of the District's Soils is a resource that appears to be generally undervalued, particularly where subdivision is concerned. Ongoing subdivision of the most fertile soils will have a number of adverse flow on effects including the fact that productive farming units will be forced to utilise poor quality soils, which require large fertilizer inputs to maintain high production levels. This has the potential to increase potential groundwater contamination and long term degradation of already poor quality soils. This is seen particularly clearly in the Dairy farming industry where intensive use of Urea increases the nitrate levels in soils and has a potential flow on adverse effect to groundwater and community individual water supply qualities. This is already having the adverse consequence of Ecan being required to intervene in farming practices to reduce the amount of fertilizer being used, with the potential to force the reduction in productivity in the District, and hence adversely affect the overall District economy.

Table 2 sets out those areas of the Strategy which could be amended to provide for the above submission points

Table 2

| Issue/Action | Amendment sought | Reason |
|---|--|---|
| 6 – avoid the urban development of high quality soils | SDC to investigate a system of transfer of development rights and the ability to limit the development rights of larger landowners transferring their development rights to others | This will secure retention of larger landholdings on high quality soils while providing for more intensive development to occur close to townships where productive use of versatile soils may already be compromised (existing smaller sites) or soils |

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| | | are of a lesser quality |
| 8 Rezoning of land | To require robust assessments of soil quality and productive land potential and ensure high quality soils, particularly where on existing productive farm units, are not being lost to development as part of any new rezoning unless there are no other options available to accommodate urban growth. | Intensification of farming activity especially through dairying is resulting in greater inputs of nitrates into soils with potential for adverse effects on surface and groundwater. Constraints on fertilizer use is one method to reduce such potential effects but has greatest limitations on productive potential in the case of poorer quality soils which rely to greater extent on fertilisers to improve soil quality. Retention of the productive potential of high quality soils and large productive farming units is becoming even more critical as a consequence. |
| 19 – Urban Form | Include opportunity for transfer of development rights (as proposed above) to existing clusters of smaller lots in the rural zones which are not currently zoned for urban use and recognize that such clusters are appropriate locations for further residential 'infill' and small extensions. | As above. |
| 20 Urban/Rural interface | Ensure that priority areas where possible (ie where there are other options) avoid high versatile soils and seek to avoid reverse sensitivity effects with activities occurring on high quality soils | To ensure that farming activities on high quality soils are not forced to move due to conflict at the rural/urban interface. |
| 33 – retain characteristics within the District | Include into the issue consideration of the rural character and identity and the need to preserve this particularly where there are high quality soils. Include in the actions a requirement to undertake a review of development within the District based on the location of high quality soils and productive farming units | High quality soils are a fundamental resource for the District and are currently undervalued throughout the strategy. |
| 38 – housing choice | Consider providing for transferable development rights to retain larger rural titles on high quality soils and enable development close to townships or existing clusters of smaller lots on poorer quality soils or where there are existing small titles which are not economic farming units. | This will provide for a variety of housing choice as well as ensuring greater protection of high quality soils. |

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| All of section 5.1 – Natural Connections | Add a new issue relating to loss of high quality soils and actions to promote the retention of productive farming units. Use of transferable development rights to achieve this should be considered | This will appropriately place greater importance on the finite land resources of the District. |
| 55 – subdivision of the rural area of the Selwyn District | This could consider the use of transferable rights to provide protection for high quality soils. Generally this section needs to place greater weight on the effect of loss of high quality soils through subdivision. | Transferable rights would enable the protection of existing high quality soils in remaining productive units without financially limiting landowners (ie sales of rights) |
| 57 – Impact of urban growth to the rural sector | This section should include specific mention of versatile soils to make the connection between productivity and soil quality | There needs to be an overall greater emphasis on the important relationship between soils and productivity and the economic effect on the entire community. |

Conclusion

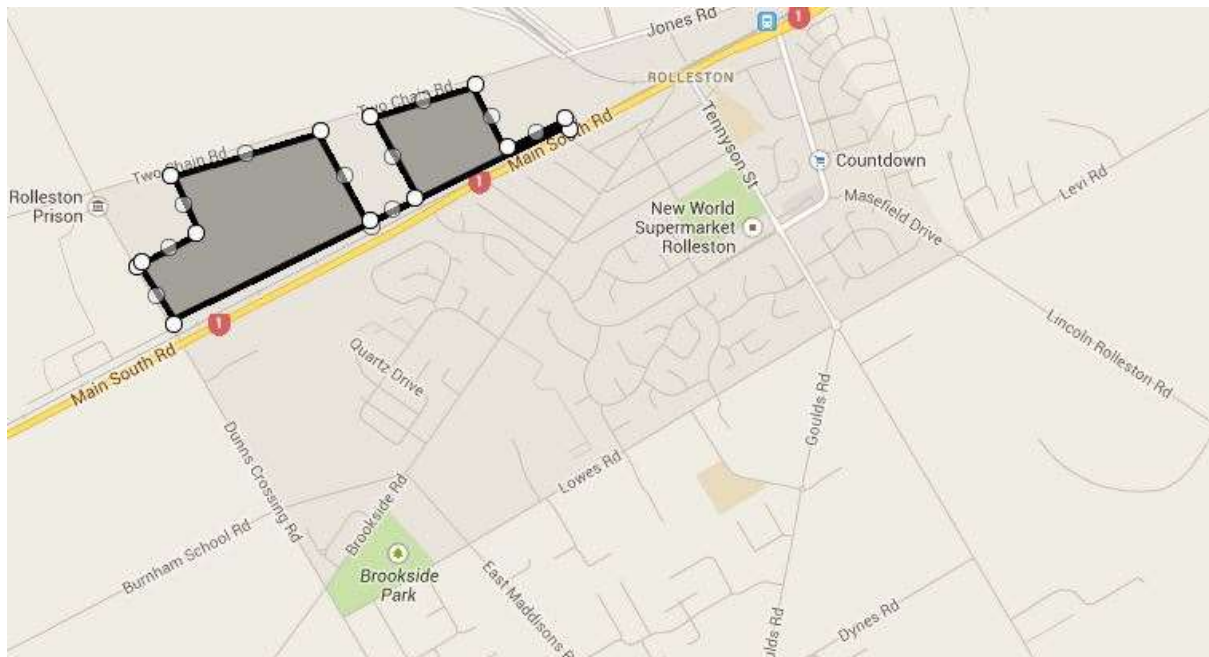
In order to provide for the overall sustainable management and prosperity of the Selwyn District, Council will need to consider innovative and new ideas to ensure that the vital resources of the District are not lost or degraded through inappropriate development. The land and soil resource of the District is perhaps one of the most fundamental resources, and also perhaps one of the most undervalued resources for ensuring longevity and prosperity. While poor quality soils can be 'improved' through use of fertilizer and irrigation, SDC need to consider the potential long term impact this has on our environment. The issue of loss of versatile soils needs to be at the forefront of land use decisions, and urban use of sites such as the Pinedale Site near Rolleston which are strategically located and comprise poor quality soils so are ideally suited for urban development need to be made to ensure that the soil quality of other sites on high quality soils is not compromised.

Date:

Signed: 

For: Pinedale Enterprises and Kintyre Pacific Ltd

Attachment 1 – Location Plan



“Submission 41 Pinedale Holdings and Kintyre Pacific Holdings, Submission 31 R Paton, Submission 55 J Paton

79. This submission was supported by Mr Paton, Ms Fiona Aston and Ms Nicole Lauenstein on 9 April. The site is a large wedge-shaped land, bounded by State Highway 1/ South Island Main Trunk Railway, to the south, Walkers Rd to the west, rural land off Railway Rd to the east and Two Chain Rd to the north. Most but not all of this land is nominated for inclusion in the RSS by these submissions. Excluded are a block on the corner of Two Chain Rd and Walkers Rd, and some rural properties to the west off Railway Rd. Some land in the centre of the block was included although the owners do not appear to be participants in the submission and we were not told if they wished to have their land included. Nearby to the west across Walkers Rd is the Rolleston Prison, while the large Business Park known as the Izone is nearby to the east across Railway Rd and the West Coast Railway line. Access to the bulk of the town of Rolleston is restricted to two intersections across State Highway 1, at Walkers Rd to the south-west and Hoskyns Rd to the north-east through the Izone. The latter is scheduled to be upgraded at some unspecified future time.

80. The RSS as a whole adopts as a key location principle that rural residential areas should be located on the peri-urban fringes of a number of towns and townships close to Christchurch, including Rolleston. This is primarily to enable residents to have good access to the facilities the towns provide, to reduce the length of vehicle journeys and to encourage alternative transport such as walking and cycling. We heard evidence from Ms Nicole Lauenstein, an urban designer, who considered the site suitable as part of a peri-urban area for Rolleston. Throughout the RSS process Ms Lauenstein gave us evidence in support of peri-urban rural development, considering that this provides an opportunity to develop an excellent urban form with a clear edge to the town. Ms Lauenstein prepared some conceptual layouts for the block, including approximately 50 rural residential sites, open space and an attractive off-road walking and cycling route along the railway corridor.

Comment

81. We do not disagree with the peri-urban concept in general terms or doubt its ability to provide an attractive edge to the urban form of towns in appropriate locations. On many of the sites Ms Lauenstein gave evidence about, we found her opinions helpful and persuasive. However we do not agree that this is an appropriate location to apply these ideas. Our primary concern is with the road rail corridor and the lack of access into Rolleston. This corridor provides a very hard edge to the north of Rolleston, which has been deliberately planned to be almost entirely to the south of it. The only exception to this is the Izone, which is a large industrial and business zone. This intention to confine Rolleston except for the Business zones to south of the SH1/SIMT corridor is clearly expressed in the District Plan.⁷ It is also specifically referred to in the location criteria for Rolleston in the RSS. We could not

doubt recommend these provisions be amended as part of the Action 18 process but we are not prepared to do so. These are fundamentally important and very directive policies arrived at through a due process and we would need a great deal more evidence than we have heard to recommend changing or departing from them just to enable the establishment of a single rural residential area.

82. Despite being very close to Rolleston when viewed by maps, parts of the subject site are actually nearly 4 km away by road, which we judge to be too far to be regarded as convenient or realistic for walking and cycling access. Proximity to Rolleston is more apparent than real.

83. The two intersections are also a concern. They are heavily trafficked intersections onto a major State Highway. The northern one is controlled by traffic lights and is to be upgraded at some time in the future. Ms Lauenstein considered that most residents of the area would use this intersection to access Rolleston. Walkers Rd is a 4-way rural intersection, the fourth leg being Dunns Crossing Rd, which forms the western edge of Rolleston, which is a higher-speed rural intersection. A new primary school for the area is to be built off Dunns Crossing Rd, and new residential subdivision is occurring in Dunns Crossing Rd which will provide alternative access into the town. This increases our concern that this intersection would play a greater role in providing access to Rolleston than the submitters anticipate. We think it is likely that the NZ Transport Agency would have concerns about this, but the Strategy process has given them no opportunity to comment on this to date.

84. Other concerns we have with this site are about the practicality of providing infrastructure reticulation which would have to be programmed into the Council's programme, and with reverse sensitivity issues with the Izone Business Park. Finally, we note that all the roads required to provide access to the site, including Walkers Rd, Two Chain Rd, Railway Rd, Jones Rd and Hoskyns Rd are listed in the District Plan as arterial road, because they all provide access to the Izone. Policy 6.3.9 of the RPS states that rural residential areas should not have access to such roads, and while we assume this does not prevent them having access to an internal roading system with properly formed and approved intersections onto arterial roads, however the linear nature of the site with its very long frontage to Two Chain Rd could make this difficult to achieve, particularly as there are sites within the block whose owners do not appear to be engaged with the process.

Recommendation

85. For all these reasons we do not believe this site has the potential to integrate well with Rolleston or for its residents to easily access the facilities there, both prime requirements of the RPS and the Strategy itself. We therefore do not recommend the inclusion of this site in the RSS."