



**To:** Selwyn District Council  
PO Box 90  
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**Submission On:** Selwyn 2031 Draft District Development Strategy

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## GENERAL

David and Anna Abbott appreciate this opportunity to submit on the Selwyn District Council's Selwyn 2031 Draft District Development Strategy.

David and Anna Abbott wishes to be heard in support of this submission and if others make a similar submission, will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.

## SUBMISSION

This submission is ordered in the same manner as the question layout on the Council submission form.

**1. Overall, do you agree with the 5 Strategic Directions for managing population growth in Draft Selwyn 2031?**

The five strategic directions are supported in general.

It is considered that the proposed implementation of these five strategic directions are skewed in favour of large townships close to the Christchurch urban area (i.e. Rolleston, Lincoln, Darfield and Lincoln), with minimal focus on rural townships such as Springfield, Dunsandel and Kirwee. An example of this is found in strategic direction 2.2, identified on page 27. This strategic direction item aims to “ensure that appropriate land, advice and assistance are available for business activities”.

It is believed that economic growth of business activities in rural townships such as Springfield, are currently hindered by the exclusion of business zoned land. The draft strategy does not consider this. Excluding small townships from the strategy isolates communities and prevents further development, thus restricting the economic growth of Selwyn District as a whole.

Additionally, strategic direction 1.4, identified on page 27, aims to “promote consolidation and intensification within existing townships to maintain a clear urban/rural interface, retain rural outlooks and minimise the loss of productive farmland”.

In the case of Springfield, resource consents for land development within the existing township are being declined, going against this very aim. The District Council should be promoting consolidation and intensification within and around existing townships.

The current zoning patterns in Springfield also prevent the maintenance of a clear urban/rural interface. Smaller blocks on the edge of township, which were historically zoned as lifestyle blocks, are currently zoned Outer Plains. Consents for dwellings on these allotments are being declined, as they do not meet the minimum allotment size for the Outer Plains zone, which prevents a variety of property sizes being made available. Due to the size of these allotments and the fact that many are in separate ownership, there is no ability to productively farm the land or utilise in a sustainable manner. The land is instead left unattended, leading to the township fringe being unusable. This does not allow for a clear urban/rural interface sought by the strategic direction. Again, the draft strategy does not consider this issue.

## **2. What do you think the priorities are for the future development of Selwyn?**

Priorities for the future development of Selwyn are considered to be:

- Promoting economic growth in the district, including in rural townships such as Springfield. Sufficient business zones are needed (and provided) in order to encourage commercial development in these locations, especially along major arterial routes including State Highways. In the case of Springfield, no Business zoned land is provided and any commercial development would require resource consent for a Living zoned site. Restrictions to economic growth such as this prevent further development in the township.
- Introducing the Inner Plains zone to the fringes of rural townships, such as Springfield, where the land has historically been zoned for rural residential development. This would not reduce productive farmland, as the allotments are too small and owned by different individuals to be sustainable. The current Outer Plains zoning is inefficient as it prevents low density residential development (of one dwelling per allotment). This leaves a ring of allotments surrounding townships that are unable to be utilised for rural or urban purposes. The rezoning of this land would allow for a stronger rural/urban interface.
- The enhancement of water quality and quantity in the wider Selwyn area. Providing reticulated services in established townships to provide for their intensification and economic growth.
- The consolidation of growth within all existing townships. The extents of these townships need to be more efficiently defined by zoning. There is an obvious dichotomy between those areas identified as high growth and outlying rural townships. Townships such as Lincoln and Rolleston have been permitted to expand considerably, largely outside of the historical extent of those townships. This is compared to Springfield, where developments within the historical extent of the townships are being declined and zoning patterns do not provide for any permitted urban expansion, thus preventing growth.

It is understood that growth demands are higher in these larger centres; however, current practice is prohibiting the consolidation of growth within existing rural townships while promoting urban sprawl in major townships. This is neglecting the growth of rural townships.

**3. On the basis that most growth will happen in townships of Selwyn close to Christchurch, is there a need to undertake strategic planning to manage growth in the remainder of the District?**

Yes, strategic planning does need to be undertaken to manage growth in the remainder of the District. Selwyn District Council's focus on these townships close to the Christchurch urban area has been largely due to the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury earthquakes; however, this has led to outlying rural townships being neglected.

The housing shortage in Christchurch and the related high rental prices are leading to young families seeking cheaper rental properties in smaller townships. The majority of rural townships in the Selwyn District are within commuting distance of Christchurch. However, current zoning and strategic planning has prevented growth in these areas. Strategic planning (through the use of Outline Development Plans) should be undertaken to allow for sustainable urban growth and promote economic growth in smaller townships.

The larger townships close to the Christchurch urban area, such as Lincoln and Rolleston, have been allowed by Selwyn District Council to sprawl considerably. The strategic direction to consolidate growth of townships will see these areas soon reaching their capacity. Growth within other townships therefore needs to be provided for. In particular, services such as water and sewage systems will need to be provided to allow for growth and also for the betterment of current residents' lifestyles.

**4. On the basis that most growth will happen in townships rather than rural areas, is there a need to address subdivision or housing development in rural areas?**

There is a need to clearly delineate rural areas, such as the Inner Plains, Outer Plains, and/or other rural zones. Additionally, there is a need to address appropriate areas for subdivision and/or housing development within these zones. At present, the District Plan Rules appear to be ad hoc.

In a number of rural townships, including Springfield, there are a number of existing small lots that were historically zoned Rural Residential. These provided a natural boundary between residential and rural allotments. Under the Selwyn District Plan, this area is currently zoned Outer Plains. The Outer Plains density requirements prevent the establishment of one dwelling on each allotment as originally intended by Council and the local community.

A recent resource consent decision has set a precedent to deny all applications for dwellings on similar sized allotments within 500 m of rural township centres. These allotments are too small to farm individually as this would be uneconomic.

The inability to provide residential activities taking place on such allotments has led to the value of the land decreasing significantly, which has not yet been reflected in the rating value. Reduced rates will reduce Council's income, inhibiting the Council's ability to support the growth of such townships by providing essential services.

In Springfield, developers have been required to pay development contributions for reserves and roading for each lot through the subdivision consent process, as well as pay to have power, telecommunication and water supply connections extended to new boundaries. However, the current planning ethos is preventing residential development occurring, resulting in a significant financial loss for developers. By allowing this, Council are discouraging future developers from investing in rural townships; thus preventing rural townships from being self-sufficient. Consequently, those living within the rural townships are required to rely on Christchurch City for employment and external income. Therefore, one of the five key directions promoted in this strategy is unable to evolve. This concept needs to be built on and expanded.

By zoning these allotments Inner Plains, or an equivalent, rather than Outer Plains, these rural townships will be encouraged to grow and provide a greater variety of housing options. Lifestyle living would be provided for, while productive farmland will not be decreased. Rating values will be retained, securing an income for Council, and there will be increased opportunities for economic growth in the townships.

**5. Do you have any comments on the following?**

- a. Township network concept, which categorises townships according to their projected population size and their overall role within the District (e.g. District Centre, Sub-District Centre, Service Townships, Rural Townships and Special Character Areas);**

It is accepted that Council does need to categorise towns. However, the list provided on page 34 of the draft strategy is again focussed on the larger towns and resorts to "lumping" the majority of smaller townships together under the same category. Springfield is not even mentioned.

This method does not define how each of the rural townships fit within the wider Selwyn District and this draft strategy. To ensure this draft strategy is all encompassing, it is vital that all rural townships are mentioned and catered for. Each township is unique, and each have different needs that need to be considered and addressed.

**b. Activity centres network, which categorises townships according to their specific role of providing a focal point for business and community services (e.g. Key Activity Centres, Service Activity Centres and Rural Township Centres).**

The activity centres network, shown in the table on page 48 of the draft strategy, only identifies 10 centres across the Selwyn District. This approach focuses economic growth on these few specific locations rather than across the entire District.

Excluding rural townships continues to prevent the economic growth in rural areas such as Springfield, as the provision of Business zoned land would not be a priority. The township of Springfield is wishing to grow their business environment, but this activity centres network do not allow for this.

**6. What do you think of the district-wide self-sufficiency concept included in this strategy?**

The district-wide self-sufficiency concept is agreed with.

It is considered essential that the concept of self-sufficiency is extended to include rural townships such as Springfield. At present, there are no business zones provided for in small townships such as in Springfield. As a consequence of this, services such as medical centres, petrol stations, supermarkets, pharmacies and local businesses are unable to establish. The residents of Springfield are then reliant upon other townships and Christchurch City for employment and basic services. Therefore, the concept of self-sufficiency is prevented from occurring. The provision of business zoning in all rural townships will allow for greater self-sufficiency and is encouraged.

**7. Do you think that the Council should encourage a greater range of housing options in Selwyn in the future?**

Yes, there is a need for Selwyn District Council to encourage a range of lot sizes and housing options. In particular, it is considered that the Council should encourage the development of lifestyle blocks where suitable allotments exist on the periphery of rural townships. This would increase the range of housing options in these townships, which current Outer Plains zoning prevents from occurring.

**8. What do you think of the section sizes, subdivision layout, pedestrian or cycle-ways or types of houses within the new growth areas?**

These are provided for in the larger towns but have not been considered for smaller rural township. Current regulations restrict a number of services from occurring in small rural areas.

Outline Development Plans for these rural townships need to be provided, which consider section sizes, subdivision layout, types of houses and pedestrian and cycle-ways, in order to enable business and residential growth.

**9. How do you think the Council should help to create a strong and resilient community?**

Selwyn District Council should allow for all existing townships, including rural townships, to provide a range of housing options and encourage economic growth through increased business zoning. This growth will assist Council in funding essential services such as water and wastewater facilities. This will enable for townships to grow and be more self-sufficient.

**10. Do you have any further comments?**

Selwyn District Council must allow for growth within existing rural townships as well as in and around larger towns. The draft strategy's strategic direction for consolidation of growth does not limit this to only larger towns.

Page 14 of the draft strategy aims to provide for 80% of the district's growth to occur within urban boundaries. This is not considered realistic if all of this growth is captured in the sprawl of larger townships. Rural townships need to also be able to expand in order to provide for this predicted urban growth. Business zoning in this location and the increase and introduction of services by Council will allow for growth in these townships and help support Council in funding these services.

In regards to Springfield, lifestyle block housing should be allowed on the current subdivision pattern north to Annavale Road. The Outer Plains zoning on the block south of this road is not an efficient use of the land.

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David and Anna Abbott thanks the Selwyn District Council for considering this submission to the Selwyn 2031 Draft District Development Strategy