



GLASSON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

02 March 2011

Selwyn District Council
c/- Planit R W Batty & Associates Limited
P O Box 1845
CHRISTCHURCH

ATTENTION: Mr Sam Fleweller

Dear Sir

PLAN CHANGE 30 - WEST MELTON COMMERCIAL AREA

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your letter of 04 February assessing the adequacy of the Private Plan Change application and acknowledging that, *"subject to addressing the above request for further information, I am comfortable that there is sufficient information provided within the remaining aspects of the application to advance the notification of this Plan Change"*. Set out below are the responses to your requests for further information.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLANS - COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY SIZE

Selwyn District Council states:

"The application provides three different concept development plans as examples of potential types of development that could occur if the land were rezoned. However, it is acknowledged that these are only potential outcomes and there are numerous different outcomes that could occur given the relatively liberal zone standards for the Business 1 zone compared to the Living zone e.g. no limit on site coverage, 10m height limit, no setback limit.

It is noted that the first paragraph of the Transportation Assessment conclusion (Page 33) bases its conclusions on a day-to-day commercial centre of approximately 2,050m². This is a site coverage of around 24.6%. Taking into account car parking requirements for commercial activities, it is considered that there is potential for a larger commercial premises to be created on the site than the 2050m² indicated. The

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Development Concept Plans suggest possible multiple tenancies of a small scale and whilst this may be a likely scenario, it is also possible to have fewer and larger tenancies establish, such as a small-medium sized supermarket.

Having considered other plausible (but not necessarily worst case) scenarios, it is requested that an additional assessment be provided to consider the potential effects in terms of visual amenity, character, traffic generation, car parking, noise, disturbance, and retail distribution that could result as of right from the establishment of a small-medium supermarket or similar sized commercial development occupying a larger portion of the site and how much such use of the site would better achieve the purpose of the Act than the present zoning.

As an alternative to the above, you may wish to consider whether any controls over tenancy size or site coverage are necessary to prevent larger activities occupying the majority of the site as of right ?”

R D & J R Butt response:

Your letter acknowledges that the three different concept plans attached to the Plan Change application “are only potential outcomes and there are numerous different outcomes that could occur given the relatively liberal zone standards for the Business 1 zone compared to the Living zone...”. The relatively liberal development scenarios that can be developed under the Business 1 zone of the Selwyn District Plan are recognised.

In previous discussions with Council staff, the relatively small population catchment area of the proposed West Melton commercial area has been raised. This same issue has been further discussed in meetings (August 2010) with both Foodstuffs South Island Limited (New World, Pak’n Save, Four Square, On the Spot) and Progressive Enterprises Limited (Countdown, Woolworths). Both companies have examined the future long term population projections for the West Melton urban area and the surrounding rural area and its proximity to existing and other proposed supermarkets. The existing centres of Rolleston (existing New World supermarket, proposed Countdown supermarket); Lincoln (existing New World supermarket); Avonhead (Fresh Choice); Church Corner (two existing Countdown supermarkets); Fendalton (existing New World supermarket); Hornby (Pak’n Save, Countdown); and Darfield (Four Square) are considered to already provide sufficient large supermarket services.

Both companies have therefore indicated that they would not be interested in providing a large supermarket (i.e. Countdown, New World, or Pak’n Save) at the proposed West Melton commercial centre due to the relatively small catchment size. Further discussions were held with Foodstuffs representatives regarding whether the site would be suitable for a smaller Four Square sized grocery store. In response, Foodstuffs have indicated that a “Four Square” grocery store would also be too large, and that it would only consider, at the largest, an “On the Spot” service. Further information on such a grocery store can be obtained at <http://www.foodstuffs->

si.co.nz/banner_ots.asp . Foodstuffs indicated that if this approach was taken, the size of the “On the Spot” would be on the smaller end of their “On the Spot” outlets. An alternative considered to the “On the Spot” franchise is the “Night ‘n Day” franchise which is in effect a (slightly larger) dairy (<http://www.nightnday.co.nz/>).

In discussions with the Council, it has previously indicated that it would be opposed to a large supermarket on this site, and this same opposition appears in your comments. Regardless of the size of the grocery facility finally operated at the West Melton commercial centre, the important consideration is the *effects* of the facility on the surrounding area. The primary effects to be considered of any (grocery) facility will be those relating to visual impact i.e. architectural design, and landscaping; sufficient on-site parking; and traffic movements. At this stage, a commercial development in approximately a similar architectural style as that at the Pegasus township is envisaged. Such a style could incorporate either smaller or slightly larger tenancies without detracting from the overall architectural theme. This is the approach that will be used at West Melton.

It is acknowledged that the 2,050 m² of commercial centre considered in the Transportation Assessment Report (TDG, December, 2010) would allow either several larger tenancies or a larger number of smaller tenancies. However, it is important to retain commercial flexibility at this stage so that a larger tenancy can be provided if required. A larger tenancy may not only be a supermarket – it could also be (for example) a larger restaurant/ café facility.

On the basis that detailed design has not been undertaken at this stage, and commercial leases have not been agreed, it is very important that tenant size flexibility is retained. On the other hand, we do not agree that a small-medium sized supermarket is a plausible scenario, as stated in your letter. As set out above, we have researched the possibility of locating a (small-medium) supermarket on this site and it appears to be commercially unrealistic because of the small population catchment size. You do not state what floor area you consider to constitute a “small-medium” supermarket and whether such a description also includes a “superette” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superette>) or “Mini-Mart” or “Dairy”.

On the basis of the commercially unrealistic scenario of a supermarket being located on this site, it is considered unnecessary to provide an additional assessment relating to visual amenity, character, traffic generation, car parking, noise, disturbance, and retail distribution. The owners of the land proposed for rezoning, R D & J R Butt are very long term residents of West Melton (more than two generations) and live permanently in the Gainsborough subdivision. They, also, are concerned that any commercial development at West Melton is appropriate and is of high quality architectural style.

In summary, controls over tenancy size and site coverage are not considered to be necessary given the quite unrealistic scenario that a large supermarket could be financially viable within such a small population catchment size.

3.0 URBAN DESIGN

Selwyn District Council states:

"It is appreciated that land on the opposite side of the road is not under the ownership of the applicant. However, a brief assessment is requested comparing the benefits and costs of zoning a business strip on side of the road (as proposed) as opposed to the alternative of zoning smaller business areas on opposite sides of the road creating a 'main street' type outcome. This is considered a potential alternative option and it would be helpful to understand the merits and feasibility of this option prior to notification."

R D & J R Butt response:

As stated in the Private Plan Change application, consideration of a small local shopping precinct for West Melton was first put forward during early discussions with the Selwyn District Council during the preparation of the Plan Change application (subsequently not proceeded with) for the rezoning of the rural land to urban. It was on this basis that the present proposed site was retained by the original owners for the purpose of creating a local shopping centre. Therefore the reasoning for the centre has been present for approximately ten years (if not longer).

During that period, the ownership of the land opposite the site has not changed. North of Westview Crescent, on the western side of Weedons Ross Road, the land is occupied by the West Melton Primary School. Considerable financial investment has been made in this site and the school has been expanded, on its present site, since the creation of the Gainsborough subdivision. There are plans for the school to be further expanded on its current site. Given the shortage of surplus land in the centre of West Melton, it is extremely unlikely that this site will ever be available for any other use other than primary school purposes. An assessment of the possibility of the use of this school site for purposes other than its present use is therefore very theoretical and quite unnecessary.

From an urban design perspective, the creation of a two sided 'main street' design is also problematic as the land on the western side of Weedons Ross Road, if it was to be available, is also bisected by the entrance to the southern end of Westview Crescent.

Relevant land on the south western corner of the Weedons Ross Road/ Westview Crescent intersection is in two separate Certificates of Title and two separate ownerships (including the Selwyn District Council Fire Station land). If the property on the corner of Westview Crescent and Weedons Ross Road was able to be purchased and the Selwyn District Council was willing to move the Fire Station, a

commercial frontage facing Weedons Ross Road of approximately 40 metres could be created.

Such a design would have considerable disadvantages with respect to traffic flow along Weedons Ross Road. Pedestrians would have to cross Weedons Ross Road to access shops on both sides of the Road and there may be increased traffic conflict between persons and vehicles accessing the shops, on either side, and the vehicular through traffic on Weedons Ross Road. That potential conflict is considerably reduced by the creation of all commercial shops on the one side of the road.

Conflict between local traffic and pedestrians accessing local shops and through traffic along 'main street' commercial centres is commonly observed in other small towns throughout New Zealand. Hence, the need for the construction of retrospective bypass roads to reduce through traffic flows in main streets. However, in the case of West Melton, a "bypass" would not be practical.

Furthermore, while the 'main street' concept may appear to have advantages from an theoretical urban design perspective, it would be considerably less convenient for shoppers accessing the shops who would have to walk across the road from shop to shop rather than simply park on the proposed eastern commercial portion and undertake all of their shopping on the one side of Weedons Ross Road.

In summary, the 'main street' concept is not a practical option for West Melton for the following reasons:

- Location (permanent) of West Melton Primary School
- Location of southern entrance of Westview Crescent
- Multiple ownership of land on south western side of Weedons Ross Road/ Westview Crescent corner
- Traffic and pedestrian conflict with Weedons Ross Road through traffic
- Lack of convenience for shoppers accessing the shops

4.0 ACCESSIBILITY

Selwyn District Council states:

"It is mentioned (page 24 of the Plan Change, bullet point 7) that the chosen location for rezoning will provide a local service that will help reduce trip travel and increase walking and cycling within West Melton. This point is also made under Paragraph 10.1 of the Transportation Assessment Report. The comment is understood in terms of reducing the need to travel out of West Melton for services that are not presently provided via local commercial activities. However, it would be helpful to clarify if any consideration has been given to how this rezoning promotes accessibility to and from the adjoining residential areas i.e. is it possible to provide a connection through or past the site to the Gainsborough subdivision ? This is an appropriate consideration in

terms of Policy 2.3.1. (Encourage co-ordination between the provision of community facilities, and new residential and business development)."

R D & J R Butt response:

The proposed local commercial centre should be considered in the context of all urban zoned land and to be redeveloped for urban purposes within the greater West Melton township. As set out in the Plan Change application, the major urban growth directions for the West Melton township are to the north west (Preston Downs subdivision); due east (Gainsborough subdivision); and south east (South Block south of State Highway 73 owned by the Wilson family).

The small existing original residential subdivision, consisting of 40 dwellings and accessed from Westview Crescent, lies directly to the west of the proposed commercial centre. The most direct route for residents in the existing Westview Crescent subdivision, to the west of the proposed site, is along Westview Crescent, or across the school playing fields, and then directly across Weedons Ross Road to the shops. The total number of residential lots in this portion of West Melton is 42. Residents in this area may have used such an accessway occasionally if visiting friends located directly east of the proposed shopping centre, but the very occasional irregular use of such an accessway would not justify its construction on that basis alone.

Residents in the Preston Downs subdivision (292 lots), to the north west, will access the shops by walking, cycling, or driving southwards along Weedons Ross Road. A continuous pedestrian footpath will be provided along the western side of Weedons Ross Road all the way from Halkett Road to State Highway 73. It is very unlikely that any of the future residents in the Preston Downs subdivision would regularly use an accessway in the suggested Gainsborough subdivision location.

Within the Gainsborough subdivision, direct pedestrian/ cycle access from the proposed shops eastwards to Rossington Drive cannot be provided as the residential subdivision has already occurred and Certificates of Title issued. However, while such a pedestrian access would have been beneficial it would not have served all of the residents in the Gainsborough subdivision. The Gainsborough subdivision can roughly be divided into a (larger) northern area and smaller southern area on the basis of whether the resident would be likely to use the suggested pedestrian/ cycle access located between the proposed shops and east to Rossington Drive. The alternative route for residents in the larger northern portion is to walk or cycle along Brampton Dr (or down Rotherham Drive) and then across the two main reserves located at the entrance to Gainsborough.

It is estimated that the number of southern portion residents who would use a pedestrian accessway would be approximately 47 (say 50), while the number of residents in the northern portion who would not use the accessway, if it existed, but still use the existing road network instead would be approximately 157 (say 150).

A total of 96 lots are planned for the “South Block” of West Melton, south of State Highway 73. As part of the residential development of the South Block, a pedestrian/ cycle underpass is required to be constructed between 8 and 10 Rossington Drive (Gainsborough subdivision) and under State Highway 73 to the South Block. For future residents of the South Block, the suggested accessway between Rossington Drive and Weedons Ross Road through the shopping centre would have been beneficial and provided a safe, and quieter, route than along the State Highway margin. For the two routes – State Highway 73, or the alternative potential accessway – there would be no distance saving for pedestrians and cyclists.

However, the accessway could have saved a distance of 140 metres (say 150 metres) for residents in either the South Block or the southern portion of the Gainsborough subdivision who would access either the proposed shops or the school if they were to walk through the underpass and otherwise northwards along Rotherham Drive, through the Council reserve, and back southwards along Weedons Ross Road.

In conclusion, while it would have been desirable for a pedestrian/ cycleway to be constructed between Weedons Ross Road and Rossington Drive, through the shopping centre, it is not essential given that the total saving in distance is approximately 150 metres. The layout of the completed subdivision of the land now precludes the construction of an accessway in this location.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

GLASSON RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Peter Glasson

Director