Request for Private Plan Change Dairy Processing Management Area

Statutory Analysis and Evaluation Report
Synlait Milk Limited

16 May 2014

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APPENDICES

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Section 22 (s22) of the First Schedule of the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991 requires that a request for a plan change be made in writing and explain:

- the purpose of the plan change; and
- the reasons for the plan change.

1.2 In addition, the request must contain:

- an evaluation report in accordance with section 32 (s32) of the RMA; and
- where environmental effects are anticipated, a description of those effects taking into account the provisions of Schedule 4, and in such detail as corresponds with the scale and significance of the actual or potential environmental effects anticipated from the implementation of the change.

1.3 This report is intended to address all of the above matters, providing a comprehensive and informative basis for consideration of the request by Synlait Milk Ltd (Synlait) to establish a Dairy Processing Management Area (DPMA).

2.0 Overview of Plan Change

2.1 The full detail of the proposed plan change provisions are contained in **Appendix 1**.

2.2 The proposed Change introduces a Dairy Processing Management Area (DPMA) within the Rural (Outer Plains) Zone of the District Plan. The boundary of the DPMA is shown on Planning Map 007 (included in **Appendix 1**).

2.3 This Management Area is particular to an area of land containing and immediately surrounding the existing Synlait dairy plant at Heslerton Road in Dunsandel.

2.4 The Change introduces a new policy which describes the purpose of the DPMA and a new Appendix containing a specific set of rules for activities and buildings related to dairy processing.

2.5 The DPMA is an overlay within the Rural (Outer Plains) Zone and accordingly, it does not replace the underlying Rural Zone. The current zoning remains in place enabling rural activities to continue on a permitted basis should dairy processing activities and development not achieve the full development envelope.

3.0 Purpose of the Plan Change

3.1 The purpose of the proposed plan change is to recognise the existing dairy plant established by Synlait at Dunsandel in 2005, providing for its continuing efficient use and its future expansion.

3.2 Synlait is a milk processing operation that currently produces value-added ingredient, infant and adult nutritional formulas. It collects milk from approximately 156 Canterbury dairy farms, employs over 180 staff and processes approximately 550 million litres of milk per year. The plant at Dunsandel was constructed in 2007, began operating in 2008 and has been subject to further extensions over the past 5 years.

3.3 The basis of the plan change is to enable continued growth of the Company in both, the volume and/or value of milk product by providing an appropriate planning framework. Accordingly, further development of dairy processing may involve more of the infant and nutritional formula currently produced by the Company or it may involve expansion into other dairy based products e.g., cheese manufacture.

3.4 This growth in dairy processing is anticipated to occur over a period of decades and will progress in response to a variable range of factors. These include the market demand for dairy products, developments in the dairy industry, the operational requirements for a dairy plant and the size of the catchment area serviced by the dairy plant, including travel distances from farms to plant. Accordingly, a maximum optimal scale of development has been defined based upon the above considerations.

4.0 Reasons for the Plan Change

4.1 The dairy plant is a rural based industrial activity as defined in the Selwyn District Plan (Rural Section) and while it is recognised as a legitimate activity that could be anticipated in the Rural Outer Plains, there are no applicable rules enabling development or activities without a resource consent and there is limited policy guidance.

4.2 As an activity reliant on resource consents, the development and up-grading of a plant therefore requires considerable lead-in-time and finance to prepare applications, with the accompanying uncertainty as to whether or not the application will be successful.

4.3 Continuous and ad hoc consenting creates uncertainty for the community, Council and stakeholders as to the maximum development envelope of the site. The Plan Change seeks to address this uncertainty by providing an indication of the maximum development potential with a site. This assists the Council as administrator of the District Plan, the community and stakeholders such as NZTA or Runanga who are similarly required to expend time and money in on-going reviews of landuse consents.

4.4 It is noted that to date, the use and on-going development of the Synlait plant has been subject to a rolling sequence of resource consents. Eighteen resource consents have been lodged and granted since 2006. In addition to the time and costs involved in processing consents, the conditions on each consent for matters such as landscape planting, can quite quickly become superceded, creating uncertainties for monitoring and enforcement.

4.5 In the ten years up to 2013, employment in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors within Canterbury has declined, with the exception of dairying which has seen a doubling of the sector[1]. The Canterbury Region (including Mid and South Canterbury) now account for 18% of New Zealand's milk production with dairy production, by herd size and milk fat production, fastest growing in Selwyn and Ashburton Districts. The rapid growth in dairy farming and the opportunity this creates for employment and related economic activity, is consequently a resource management issue of importance for Selwyn District.

4.6 A resource consent led process for the on-going development of milk processing activities, with its inherent costs and uncertainties, undermines the potential efficiency of the rural production continuum. Given the scale and economic importance of the dairy industry within the Rural Outer Plains environment, a primary reason for this plan change is to reduce the time, cost and uncertainties associated with consenting for what is consolidation of an established dairy plant.

4.7 It is acknowledged that dairy plants are typically large and of industrial appearance. A plant also represents a significant multi-million dollar capital investment, and is typically located on a site where buildings and activities are expected to be concentrated to provide efficiencies in operational systems. The District Plan rules have been created with a focus on controlling building development on individual farms, where dwellings, milking and farm sheds are replicated across the Plains. As a consequence many of the District Plan standards for building density, coverage and height are inappropriate when

[1] Economic Impact Assessment, Harris Consulting, page 2

considering a dairy plant and unduly penalise what is a legitimate and important activity in the context of the district.

4.8 Due to the growth in dairy farming within the Selwyn District it is a reasonable expectation that a milk processing plant will be required. The Economics Assessment in **Appendix** 8 notes that as Canterbury was not traditionally a dairying area, most of the agricultural support and processing industry has been based on arable, meat and wool sectors, contrasting with regions such as Taranaki and Waikato where dairy infrastructure is well-established. Accordingly, the increase in dairying requires a corresponding growth in dairy infrastructure to service production. The report notes that Selwyn District is a key location for dairying infrastructure due to its central location within the region and accessibility to Lyttelton Port.

4.9 The Synlait plant is an established feature within the environment and it is appropriate that this provide a node for the future dairy processing activities, similar to the provision made in other districts eg Southland and Waikato. Although resource consents to date have been approved, the policy context of the District Plan does not recognise the significance of dairying and the nature of development associated with this industry. The existing policy emphasis on rural character creates uncertainty that over time, the scale of dairy infrastructure and processing facilities will not be consented unless there is more explicit policy support in the Plan.

5.0 Plan Change Provisions

5.1 The proposed Plan Change applies to an area of 113.4ha on the southern side of SH1 approximately 7km south west of Dunsandel. The site is generally located in the south east corner of SH1 and Heslerton Road and is also bordered by the Main Trunk Railway Line on its northern side.

5.2 The proposed Management Area includes all of Lot 1 DP 414579 (48.5117ha) and a portion of Lot 2 DP 414579 being 64.5ha. The area of land concerned represents a sufficient area to encompass future development potential of the Plant (see Sections 6.1 to 6.3 which describes the factors and assumptions underpinning future development), an open space buffer and incorporates existing on-farm dairy facilities which are considered complementary to the activities of the Plant.

5.3 Lot 1 DP 414579 is in the ownership of the applicant, Synlait Milk. Lot 2 DP 414579 is owned by Synlait Farms. Synlait Milk is in the process of securing an agreement with Synlait Farms in respect of the proposed plan change which addresses matters related to access, landscape planting and future subdivision/building developments. Copies of the Certificates of Title are attached as **Appendix 10**.

5.4 The scope and content of the request for Plan Change are explained as follows:

Section A4.5 Introduction to the Plan

5.5 Section A4.5 provides an Introduction to the Rural Area and its Zones. The Plan Change adds further explanations to this section as follows:

5.6 The Change describes:

- The growth in the dairy industry within the Outer Plains environment and the need to provide for efficient processing of milk.
- The density of built development at a processing facility, whilst exceeding the scale and density of typical on-farm development, is at a scale which is optimal relative to the farm catchment it serves and operational and economic efficiencies.
- The need to integrate development of the dairy processing plant with mitigation in respect of rural amenity, landscape and traffic effects.
- The DPMA is added to the list of activities for which a particular management regime is provided.
- The value of the dairy industry is acknowledged in respect of value added and growth in farm production.

Section B3.4 – Quality of the Environment

5.7 Section B3.4 sets out the objectives and policies in respect of the Quality of the Environment. The Plan Change introduces new text to the Explanations, Reasons and Methods as follows:

- New wording to acknowledge dairy processing activities on established sites and where continued development is to be provided for, enabling economic efficiency.

– New wording to describe that adverse effects from activities on amenity values in rural areas may be mitigated through specific rules and an ODP.

– New wording to identify a DPMA as a method for integrated management of effects.

5.8 A new policy, with accompanying Explanation, Reasons and Methods is added. This is proposed to be Policy B3.4.5. The new policy seeks the enablement of continued and enhanced efficiency of the established dairy plant through the DPMA whilst ensuring integrated management of environmental effects of the DPMA on the surrounding environment.

5.9 The following Explanation and Reasons note that a dairy plant has a direct connection with working dairy farms and there are significant economic and operational benefits from the concentration of processing activities on a site within the Rural environment. Whilst the DPMA provides for a concentration of built development, standards are still proposed beyond which resource consent approval would be required.

5.10 The Explanation is very clear that the DPMA is only intended to apply to established dairy processing facilities.

5.11 The DPMA provides certainty for the owner of the Plant, the community and Council on the pattern and possible potential extent of development.

5.12 Further new wording is then added to the Explanation and Reasons for Policy B3.4.6 and Policy B3.4.7 in respect of the DPMA. A new Anticipated Environmental Result is also added specific to the identification and management of existing dairy processing plant sites.

Amendments to General Rules

5.13 Only one change is made to the General Rural Rules. This is to Part C, 3 Rural Rules – Buildings and is concerned with the setback of sensitive activities.

5.14 Surrounding the proposed DPMA, Synlait has identified a Noise Control Boundary. Within this Boundary line some adverse noise effects from plant activities may potentially be experienced by sensitive receptors i.e., houses. Beyond this boundary line noise effects from processing activities will comply with the general rural noise standards.

5.15 A new clause added to the existing rule requires any new dwelling within the Noise Control Boundary to be designed to achieve a specified outside to inside noise level. The design is to include provision for a ventilation system that enables windows to remain closed and the design is to be accompanied by a report from a suitably qualified acoustic consultant. It is anticipated that the specified noise level difference would be achieved through the adoption of standard current residential construction materials.

5.16 Acknowledging the concentration of activity within the DPMA, the value of the capital investment and importance of its role in the rural processing continuum, it is appropriate that this investment is protected from encroachment and potential reverse sensitivity effects.

New Rules

5.17 The rules for the DPMA are proposed to be grouped together within a single appendix (Appendix 26). As the users of the DPMA rules are anticipated to be largely limited to the dairy plant operator and Council staff, it is considered efficient to group the rules in

one location in the Plan, avoiding the dispersal of the various standards throughout the General Rules. This provides easy reference and ensures the rules are read as a package, with the potential to miss particular rules greatly minimised. This approach is also consistent with the approach adopted for rules relating to other complex or comprehensive sites.

5.18 At the commencement of Appendix 26 it is noted that unless expressly advised, none of the Rules in Part C, 1 to 10 of the Rural Volume of the District Plan will apply i.e., all of the relevant provisions will be contained within Appendix 26.

5.19 It is relevant to note that a number of the provisions are triggered by development which involves an increase in the capacity for milk processing or storage. The reason for this threshold is that the existing plant is already a high volume traffic generator and built development is already intensive and large scale. From experience gained by the large number of consents already prepared and approved for the site, and from the assessments undertaken for this plan change request, developments or activities which make no difference to the capacity of the processes or storage on site have minor or no effects on traffic, landscape values or the noise environment. Accordingly, it is appropriate that it is only where the proposed development is of a scale that capacity within the DPMA is further increased that consideration of the management of the site is required. This is explained further in respect of access, intersection design, hazardous substances, earthworks etc below.

5.20 Appendix 26 contains the following:

Permitted Activities

- Permitted activities within the DPMA are listed. This list is fundamentally based on the processing, testing, storage, handling, packaging and distribution of milk and dairy products, related by-products and ancillary activities.
- An explanatory note to the list of permitted activities advises that the processing and use of milk is the purpose of, and principal use within the, DPMA.
- Other listed activities offer further clarity as to the nature of permitted activities eg rail infrastructure, utility services, laboratory, offices which would typically be part of a processing plant.
- Activities which are provided for as permitted activities in the Rural Zone remain as permitted activities.

Outline Development Plan

5.21 An Outline Development Plan provides an overview of the development and identifies the main features of the DPMA development that are essential to the mitigation of effects experienced at the boundary of the DPMA. These include:

- Control over the number and location of access points into the DPMA;
- A landscape strategy for the DPMA setting out the location of planting, staging, typical cross-sections and suitable species. Reference should be made to Section 4.0 of the Landscape Assessment in **Appendix 4** which sets out the details of the planting areas within each Stage and the mitigation intended to be achieved by the planting in each area.

– Identification of the buildable area for plant and the heights of buildings within different parts of that area. In particular, taller structures are required to be located within a more central location of the DPMA.

– Identification of parking and vehicle manoeuvring areas

– A rural buffer between the built area and the DPMA boundary.

– Provision for a rail siding.

– Limitation on built development within an area of the DPMA close to the Heslerton Road/State Highway corner to preserve options for an up-graded intersection.

– A Noise Control Boundary.

– Requirement for up-grading of Heslerton Road prior to commissioning of the second vehicle access.

Rules

5.22 Proposed rules cover the following:

– Compliance with the Outline Development Plan.

– A requirement for all buildings, parking and DPMA activities to be located within the Height Control Area except for signage, road and rail infrastructure, utilities and permitted rural activities which may also be located within the Rural Buffer shown on the ODP.

– A setback requirement.

– Conformity with the landscape strategy specified in the ODP.

– Building height (conforming to the heights specified in the ODP).

– Building colour.

– Lighting.

– Signage – the provisions of the Rural Zone have been applied, with a larger provision for the area of signage based on the size and scale under existing resource consents.

– Landscape – the provisions requires compliance with the landscape strategy and staging as specified on the ODP (see **Appendix 4** for a more detailed explanation of the strategy).

– Earthworks

  Earthworks can proceed where the works comply with standards for maximum cut/excavation depth, the maximum height of temporary stockpiles and a total volume of 5,000m^3. These standards are consistent with those that already apply in the Rural Zone. When the earthworks exceed those limits, the rule requires the submission of an Earthworks Management Plan detailing the management of the works for the protection of waterways, re-vegetation and accidental discovery protocols. It is relevant to note that these are all matters that can be effectively managed through application of well understood and commonly applied practices.

Where cut material is removed out of the DPMA a resource consent for a restricted discretionary activity is required. Discretion is limited to management of transportation effects.

– Access

Where new large buildings are proposed (those which will increase capacity for milk processing or storage), the rule requires the applicant to have pro-actively discussed the safety and efficiency of the intersection of Old South Road and SH1 with the road and rail controlling authorities (being NZTA and KiwiRail). If no change is required to the intersection, a written statement to that effect from the road controlling authority is all that is required to meet the standard. If an up-graded intersection or access design is required, written agreement would need to be reached with the road and/or rail controlling authority on the nature and timing of the up-grade, before the written approval is obtained. If written approval cannot be obtained, the proposal becomes a restricted discretionary activity.

Access from the local road into the DPMA must comply with the design requirements specified in Appendix 10 of the District Plan.

– Parking

All parking and manoeuvring areas are to be located in accordance with the ODP and comply with the operative District Plan requirements in terms of design and layout. Parking and manoeuvring associated with buildings which increase storage and processing capacity must be constructed and sealed prior to use of the buildings.

– Noise

Noise is required to meet specified noise limits. These are lower than the limits that otherwise apply in the Rural Outer Plains Zone and have been derived from the limits applied through earlier resource consents.

To give further assurance of on-going compliance with the noise standards, the rules require that prior to the construction of any new building which will increase processing or storage capacity, a report from an acoustic engineer is submitted to Council confirming that all activities will cumulatively meet the noise standard. Additionally, a Noise Management Plan is to be submitted to Council each year outlining the management practices that will be applied to noise from new activities and include provision for noise monitoring. This provision captures activities which may generate noise but do not involve buildings.

Rail movements into, within and out of the DPMA are excluded from compliance with the noise limits. The reasons for this exclusion are set out in Section 3.6 of the Noise Assessment (**Appendix 7**). In summary, rail noise, by virtue of being intermittent, can falsely affect the noise control boundary and noise from rail movements does not change significantly over time. Unexpected noises such as wheel squeal are maintenance issues that can be successfully addressed through a management plan. Trying to separate the noise from the rail corridor designation with the movement of the train into and out of the ODP area would be extremely difficult, as would monitoring of rail noise in the context of an adjoining State Highway.

– Hazardous Substances

  The proposed rules require a Hazardous Substances Management Plan to be prepared for the DPMA confirming compliance with relevant legislation, maintenance of a schedule of substances stored and used, emergency and accidental spill responses and annual reporting. The Management Plan is to be up-dated prior to any increase in the volume or type of substances stored.

– Construction Activities

  This rule requires that prior to the commencement of any construction works that increase the capacity of milk processing or storage, a Construction Management Plan is prepared. This Plan is to detail the management of traffic, dust, sediment, noise and vibration, as well as the implementation of an Accidental Discovery Protocol. This Plan is complementary to the requirement for an Earthworks Management Plan, and would integrate wider construction related matters where the activity involved more than earthworks.

Activity Status

Failure to meet the majority of the rules above requires a resource consent for a restricted discretionary activity. The matters of discretion are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

The exception is for buildings and activities not located in accordance with the ODP i.e., buildings and activities locating within the Rural Buffer Zone. In this circumstance a resource consent for a discretionary activity is required.

Any other activity not provided for as permitted, restricted discretionary or discretionary is a non-complying activity. This rule, combined with the clear policy foundation for the DPMA is intended to discourage the co-location of an activity which is not associated with the processing of milk.

6.0 Assessment of Environmental Effects

6.1 The area of land within the DPMA is intended to provide sufficient space for the future development of the dairy plant. As previously described in Section 3.5 this growth is anticipated to occur over a period of decades and will progress in response to a variable range of factors. These include the market demand for dairy products, developments in the dairy industry, the operational requirements for a dairy plant and the size of the catchment area serviced by the dairy plant, including travel distances from farms to plant. Accordingly, an optimal scale of development has been derived based upon the above considerations.

6.2 Whilst the ultimate development scenario for the plant is undefined, for the purposes of this Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE), the DPMA is generically based upon a scenario which is informed by the existing plant layout and activities. As previously noted however, it is possible that alternative types of dairy processing may be pursed in the future which may result in different buildings and processes on site e.g., cheese production. Accordingly, the development scenario which has been used to inform the AEE cannot be treated as a site specific development proposal, but indicative only in terms of anticipated, maximum building scale.

6.3 Assumptions for the purpose of informing these Assessments include:

- Up to 8 dryers with associated reception, drystores, roading, infrastructure etc.
- All major buildings and activities required for processing are located in accordance with the ODP i.e., within the Height Control Zone in the ODP and with the tallest structures in the centre of that Zone.
- The maintenance of open space, predominantly in pastoral activities, in the area identified as a Rural Buffer Area in the ODP.
- A tanker depot is maintained on site.
- The current pattern of vehicle movements continues. Whilst the number of heavy vehicle movements increases with the increase in milk processing capacity an increase in efficiency of 3% associated with collection has been incorporated and 25% for product movement.
- A total of 594 staff of which 455 will be day shift and 139 on the night shift.
- Vehicle generation is based on an existing observed vehicle occupancy of 1.25 people per vehicle.
- Industry best practice for noise control is applied to all new plant.
- The loading of activities will be located between the existing dryers and the state highway as a result of the existing layout of activities and the ease of access to the state highway and the railway line.
- A rail siding would only occur generally in the position identified on the ODP.
- There is no direct vehicular access to SH1.

- Use of the DPMA is limited to the processing of milk into a range of dairy based products and activities associated with this.
- The critical views of the DPMA are from SH1 between Sharlands Road and Parkins Road and directly adjacent to the existing factory.
- Landscape planting is established in 2 stages and maintained to a high standard.

6.4 The purpose of this section is to provide an Assessment of the potential Environmental Effects from the implementation of the DPMA and those provisions of the request for Plan Change as attached in **Appendix 1** over time.

6.5 This AEE provides:

- An overview of the existing environmental values and features of the site and its locality;
- An assessment of the effects of implementation of the DPMA on those existing values and features over time; and
- Recommendations for the avoidance, remedying or mitigation of any adverse environmental effects.

6.6 An AEE is required to accompany any request for a private plan change in accordance with s22 of the First Schedule of the RMA. This AEE has been prepared in accordance with the Fourth Schedule of the RMA and is intended to be a high level summary of the proposal. Further detail of environmental values, features and effects is provided in technical reports attached as appendices.

6.7 The scope of this AEE includes:

- Landscape (see **Appendix 4** – Landscape/Visual Assessment: Beca)
- Cultural Values (see **Appendix 5** – Dyanna Jolly)
- Traffic (see **Appendix 6** – Transportation Assessment: TDG)
- Noise (see **Appendix 7** – Noise Assessment: Marshall Day)
- Economic Impact (see **Appendix 8** – Harris Consulting)
- Stormwater (see **Appendix 9** – Stormwater Disposal Feasibility: Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd)

Existing Site – Overview

6.8 The Synlait site currently operates two milk dryers capable of processing a total of approximately 2,800,000 litres of milk per day. A small Special Milk Products dryer is also operated for special milk and product development. The milk supply is seasonal, with the raw milk processing peak occurring during October. Milk is transported directly from farms in the region by contracted milk tankers.

6.9 The processing activity involves a complex of buildings and facilities including boilers, milk reception and wash down areas, parking, services and roading. Dry stores service both inward and outwards goods and landscape treatment has been established in response to the views from outside the site of particular built developments.

6.10 As well as staff employed on-site associated with the engineering, manufacturing, and warehousing, Synlait's administration is located at the dairy plant. Most of the

engineering, manufacturing and warehouse staff cover seven days, while administration personnel generally work from Monday to Friday.

6.11 Based on data from the 2012 processing season, approximately 135 staff work at the Plant on a day shift, with approximately 30 staff on a night shift. Staff live throughout the Canterbury region, with approximately 81% living in locations to the east and north (Christchurch, Rolleston, Lincoln, West Melton, and Darfield). Approximately 16% of the current staff is based in Ashburton and Methven, and the remainder are from other areas.

Additional Consented Development

6.12 Synlait has consents for expansion of the dairy plant which are yet to be given effect to on-site. These consents will allow the installation and operation of:

- a third dryer and associated plant;
- a canning and blending plant;
- manufacture of butter;
- establishment of a cold store;
- a truck depot; and
- a new administration building and laboratory.

6.13 Consents are also held for a Lactoferrin plant, third drystore and enclosed loading areas which have recently been completed.

6.14 The addition of the third dryer will increase the milk processing capacity at peak time of the season from 2.8ML per day to 3.7ML per day. The primary purpose of many of the growth projects is to enable greater product control. The dry store expansion is to enable Synlait products to be stored on-site and distributed direct to Port for export, while the cold store will support the storage of perishable products on-site. The loading of containers on-site also supports improved product control by Synlait. An increase in heavy vehicle movements and additional staff will occur as part of the consented expansions.

Landscape Values

6.15 Beca has completed a Landscape and Visual Assessment of the DPMA on landscape values at the site, within the immediate locality and the wider environment. A copy of the Assessment can be found in **Appendix 4**. The following provides a summary of the key points from the Assessment.

Existing Landscape Values

Wider Landscape

6.16 The Canterbury Plains have a characteristic flatness which is dissected by the braided river sequence of the Rangitata, Ashburton, Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers. This absence of variation in topography, back-dropped by the lower foothills and the Southern Alps, creates a "big sky" identity. The Plains are recognised for their geometric attributes created by the criss-crossing of roads, railway lines, regular field patterns, irrigation and shelterbelts. Settlements are dotted along the state highways with Dunsandel being the closest settlement to the Synlait site.

6.17 Overall, the character of the wider landscape is that of a 'working' environment characterised by arable/ pastoral land use.

Local Landscape

6.18 The local landscape is characterised by open pasture crossed by a geometric pattern of shelterbelts, fences, hedges and roads. The paddocks are a distinctive mosaic created by rectangular and circular landuse patterns with State Highway and the Main Trunk Railway Line being predominant features. Although rural, the working landscape contains a range of unnatural features such as large pivot irrigators, a substation (on the corner of Heslerton Road and State Highway 1), milking sheds and the Synlait Milk plant. Farm houses and ancillary buildings are widely dispersed.

6.19 Overall the local area has a sense of openness, with views compartmentalised by intervening vegetation. The aesthetic of the environment is typical of the modified working Plains reflecting high levels of human modification.

The DPMA Site

6.20 The plan change site is visually dominated by the existing milk processing Plant. This consists of a cluster of purpose-built, large-scale buildings with an industrial appearance occupying approximately 20% of the DPMA total area. The buildings are of variable height and dimension with taller towers rising above structures which include:

- Drystores located to the south approximately 110m from SH1.
- Dryer towers and various plant adjoining the drystores to the south.
- Boilers, milk reception, wash down areas, pump shed and water storage adjacent to the southern site boundary.

6.21 There is currently a waste water treatment plant and storm water ponds adjacent to the southern site boundary, and an office block with adjoining staff and visitor car park areas located to the west of the Plant.

6.22 There is an earth bund along the SH1 boundary which was constructed and planted as mitigation in response to the visual effects of the initial drystore. The planted bund to the southwest of the access road was constructed as part of the original development for acoustic and amenity purposes (refer to photographs in the Landscape and Visual Assessment in **Appendix 4**).

6.23 Landscaping and planting consists of rows of Oak and Pine trees, established primarily along the northern and north-eastern boundaries adjacent to the Plant, as well as an existing Hawthorn hedge that grows along the SH1/Railway boundary between Heslerton Road and Sheats Road.

6.24 The areas between the existing planting and the site boundaries to the north-east and south-east are open pasture, with an existing shelterbelt that extends along the length of the southern boundary. This shelterbelt ranges in height from 6 to 15 metres in height.

6.25 The land to the north-east is dominated by open pasture and is owned by Synlait Farms Ltd. It is used for dairy farming/waste water discharge. There is also a substation to the northwest that whilst outside the plan change boundary is perceived as being part of the Synlait Plant.

Landscape Character

6.26 The landscape of both the local and wider area, while described as “typically rural” with natural elements, is clearly modified. There is a predominance of pasture and shelterbelts that have been created through human intervention. The Synlait Plant itself is a physical feature with large scaled buildings and activities of an industrial nature. It is typical of large processing facilities or utilities found within a working rural landscape, such as power stations, timber mills, freezing works or other industries which rely upon rural resources. It is also adjacent to the state highway, the main trunk railway line and a substation, which are clearly modified physical features. The Plant occupies approximately 20% of the DPMA with the balance characterised by undeveloped open pasture.

6.27 Accordingly, the character of the locality is considered to be consistent with a rural working landscape or a modified cultural landscape as opposed to a truly natural one. Although a contrasting feature, the Synlait plant does not detract from the overall sense of openness and rural aesthetic in the locality and its purpose is clearly related to a rural production system.

Natural Character

6.28 In terms of natural character, the site itself is heavily modified and is largely devoid of natural features with no indigenous vegetation. Consequently, it has a very low degree of natural character.

Visual Characteristics

6.29 Beca has described the site as a contrasting landscape. The open pasture has a high degree of visual continuity interrupted by the existing plant. The Plant is viewed in association with other ‘built’ features such as the existing substation, SH1 and rail corridors, and the recently constructed Vodafone cell tower on the corner of Old South Road and Parkins Road. Despite the Plant’s connection to surrounding rural activities

and the open pasture on the site, people's overriding perception of the DMPA will be of a rural-industrial development.

6.30 The visibility of the plant is variable depending on the viewing distance and presence of intervening vegetation or buildings and the viewing position i.e. when travelling past in a vehicle or if viewing from a nearby property. Overall, it creates a landmark feature and its prominence is most notable when both the vertical and horizontal profiles of the plant are in view. However, the appearance of the local landscape will continue to reflect the visual character of the surrounding rural landscape, being open pasture and "big sky" views punctuated by shelterbelts and large stands of trees.

Visual Amenity

6.31 Beca states that the key aspects of amenity relevant to the DPMA are its visual qualities arising from a combination of the built form, the combined effects of visual structures and activities, and the retention of surrounding open, undeveloped land.

6.32 There are no privacy issues related to the plant as the tallest buildings i.e. the dryers are used to house plant and are not occupied by people avoiding the potential for occupants to overlook adjoining properties.

6.33 The Plant is a highly recognisable, dominant feature in the otherwise relatively open and under-developed local landscape. Dairy plants such as those at Darfield and Clandeboye are generally recognised as being connected to rural activities. The majority of 'local' people experiencing the Plant are associated with rural activities. These people are likely to be more tolerant of its appearance even if it does not enhance the overall pleasantness of the area. For others, it may detract an otherwise pleasant rural experience.

6.34 In summary, the presence of the existing Plant forms part of the visual quality of the plan change site and local landscape. The visual amenity of the locality is considered to be moderate.

Effects on Landscape Values

6.35 This section summarises the effects of the proposal on rural character and rural amenity, acknowledging that it is the visibility and visual qualities of the proposal which will have the most significant effect on rural amenity values. Beca has considered the landscape effects of this proposal in conjunction or combination with the existing Plant as people perceive the site "as a whole".

6.36 The assessment adopts a scale to describe the significance of the effect ranging from very low, to low, to moderate, to high or very high.

Rural Character

6.37 The proposed DPMA will cause the Plant to increase in size and scale and become a more prominent feature in the local, rural landscape. However, it is proposed to limit building coverage to 40% of the DPMA and retain the majority of the site (to the west and south) in open pasture. This will be complemented by a planting framework, as described in Beca's assessment that will assist in mitigating adverse visual impacts of the DPMA. The proposed planting will include shelterbelts that are characteristic of the

surrounding rural area and native plantings that are intended to support/improve biodiversity.

6.38 It is considered that retention of open pasture, restricting building coverage and the implementation of the planting framework will assist in reducing adverse effects on rural character of the plan change site and local landscape to a low to moderate degree.

6.39 In terms of the wider rural landscape, it is considered that the DPMA will not adversely affect rural character because the Plant is already part of an established rural-industrial component in the landscape. Furthermore, even as the Plant expands, typical rural characteristics will continue to dominate as the DPMA applies to a defined geographical area with future development managed by a policy and rules which are specific to the nature and scale of development anticipated.

6.40 In conclusion, the proposed DPMA will have a low to moderate effect on the plan change site and local landscape, and will not adversely affect the wider rural landscape.

Effects on Rural Amenity – Visual Amenity

6.41 In assessing effects of the DPMA on visual amenity, Beca has acknowledged the opportunity provided by the plan change to implement strategic planting rather than planting to mitigate a specific building and there being a time lag between the planting occurring and full mitigation being achieved. It is acknowledged that vehicles travelling along SH1 provide the key viewing audience. Therefore, the early implementation of the strategic planting means that medium to long term visual effects of Stage 1 development and the full spectrum of visual effects of Stage 2 development will be notably reduced.

Views from houses

6.42 Views from the majority of houses are across open pasture. This has the effect of increasing the visual prominence of the existing plant and the potential visibility of future dryer towers and boiler stacks. The vertical profile of these buildings mean that the upper portion is often visible above intervening vegetation when viewed from existing houses.

6.43 The majority of houses are located more than 500 metres from the DPMA with the exception of one house to the northeast on the corner of State Highway One and Sharlands Road, and one to the southeast on Irvines Road.

6.44 It is likely that development of the Plant will occur over a 30 year timeframe with the number of dryers and boiler stacks increasing over that time. However, views from houses (>500 metres) are generally orientated to the north and where views do exist, they will be screened or obscured by existing or proposed vegetation. Additionally, future development will be viewed in the context of the existing Plant. The occupants/owners of these houses are likely to be farm workers and therefore more tolerant of its appearance. Beca concludes that for the reasons discussed above, the effect of the DPMA on visual amenity experienced from houses > 500 metres from the Plant will be low to moderate over the short to long term.

6.45 The house to the southeast, on the corner of Irvines and Helslerton Roads, is 60 metres from the DPMA boundary but 250 metres from the edge of the proposed buildable area. In the short term, it is considered that the future development (Stage 1) will add to the clearly visible, busy development at the rear of the Plant, meaning that visual effects on

this property will be high to medium in the short term. However, proposed planting will eventually screen views of existing and future development to the extent that visual effects will be low over the medium to long term. In addition, Synlait has assisted this neighbour with the provision of on-site fencing to provide effective screening.

6.46 The house to the northwest on the corner of SH1 and Sharlands Road is surrounded by mature trees, which restrict views of the existing Plant. However, it is anticipated that views of the rooflines of future drystores and a large proportion of any future dryers will be obtained from this property. Beca concludes that given the long term development timeframe and the proposed planting of Area D, it is anticipated that visual effects on this property will be low in degree.

Views from local roads

6.47 The visual effects on local road users have been assessed from a range of viewpoints. Beca's assessment concludes that the proposal will increase the vertical profile of the Plant, and it will be visible from several locations along the local road network.

6.48 Views of the DPMA from local roads are generally over 500 metres away, and whilst the overall scale of the Plant will increase, future development within the DPMA will be viewed in the context of the existing plant and existing and proposed vegetation.

6.49 The Sharlands Road/State Highway One intersection is in close proximity to the DPMA and unobstructed views mean that Stage One development is likely to result in visual effects of a high degree in the short term until proposed planting in Area D becomes established. However, despite the planting proposed, the increase in the visual prominence of the upper portions of future dryers will result in a moderate to high degree of visual effect in the medium to long term.

6.50 Views from Parkins Road are generally not screened by vegetation but future development will be distant from the road and sit behind existing development on the site. It will therefore be viewed in the context of the existing Plant and the lower portions of drystores and dryer towers will, over time, be screened by proposed planting. Furthermore, the existing Plant is highly visible from this road and viewed in the context of the SH1/Railway corridor, power and light poles and the substation. As such, these contribute to an industrial aesthetic and the quality of the view is low. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed DPMA will result in visual effects that are moderate to low when viewed from Parkins Road in the short, medium and long term.

6.51 The removal of vegetation to provide for the rail siding, should it be commissioned, will not change the nature of views or degree of potential effect from either Parkins or Sharlands Roads. In addition, it is noted that due to the angle of the view and the combined effect of the bund, existing vegetation and proposed planting that any trains on the rail siding will be screened from view.

6.52 The Plant is highly visible from Irvines Road albeit viewed in the context of open pasture and distant shelter belts. Consequently, future development will also be highly visible until such time as the proposed landscaping along Irvines Road becomes established and forms an effective screen. Therefore visual effects from Irvines Road will be high in the short term and of a moderate to low degree over the medium to long term.

6.53 The existing shelterbelt along Heslerton Road will continue to offer mitigation of short to long term visual effects. It is proposed to establish additional native and shelterbelt planting as part of further construction in the area identified as Stage 1 on the ODP to ensure that close-up views from the west/southwest continue to be screened/obscured.

Short to medium term visual effects of the DPMA will be of a low degree due to distance, expansive views, backdrop vegetation and the existing Plant.

Views from State Highway 1

6.54 The Plant is visible to both north and south-bound traffic travelling along SH1. Additional development within the proposed DPMA and lack of intervening vegetation will increase the visual prominence of the plant when viewed from more than 1.5km. The viewing distance to the Plant however provides some mitigation in addition to the fact that it is viewed in the context of an expansive panorama and 'big sky' setting. Overall effects on visual amenity when the proposal is viewed from a distance are assessed as low.

6.55 When viewed from middle to close distances (1.5k to opposite the Plant), it is anticipated that the proposed DPMA will increase the overall visual prominence of the Plant.

6.56 When viewed by southbound traffic, proposed dryers and boiler stacks will be the most visually prominent features as they will project above the existing Hawthorn hedge. The established shelterbelt and proposed planting will only partially screen future dryers and stacks due to its location and the effect has been assessed as moderate. This view is only available for a duration of approximately 90 seconds for south-bound drivers. It is also noted that southbound traffic will have passed any "gap" in vegetation created by the installation of a rail siding and there is no consequential effect on the nature of this view or degree of effect.

6.57 For north bound traffic, future development particularly dryers will increase the visual prominence of the plant but views will generally only be available for only 20 to 30 seconds. Furthermore, the growth of existing vegetation will screen large portions of any future development.

6.58 In combination, SH1, the rail corridor, power and light poles, the substation and existing Synlait Plant creates a highly modified environment and the proposed DPMA will not result in any significant change to the visual and aesthetic qualities of existing views from the State Highway. While future development may increase overall prominence the cumulative effect has been assessed as remaining moderate to low in the longer term (once the existing shelterbelt reaches maturity), but may be moderate in the interim due to the proximity to the road and vertical profile of any proposed dryers and boiler stacks.

Mitigation measures

6.59 The Landscape Assessment supports a range of mechanisms for addressing potential adverse landscape and visual effects. The key mitigation measure is the ODP which provides a comprehensive plan for development on the site, defines maximum scale and is complemented by rules which:

- Control building location, colour and height within the DPMA
- Ensures the retention of open rural land surrounding the built development
- Requires implementation of 2.6 ha planting framework for the DPMA. A landscape strategy which defines the location, composition and scale of shelterbelt and native planting is required to mitigate potential adverse effects over time.

Traffic

6.60 TDG has prepared a Transportation Assessment of the proposed DPMA. A copy of the Assessment can be found in **Appendix 6**. The following provides a summary of the key points from the Assessment.

Existing Traffic Environment

Road Network

6.61 SH1 to the north of the site is a Strategic Road providing a national and regional function. This is a two-lane road with standard highway geometric characteristics, including wide sealed shoulders and dedicated passing lanes. Running parallel to and immediately south of the State Highway is the Main South Railway Line. The average daily traffic volume on the State Highway is 10,285 (vpd), comprising 14.3% heavy vehicles. The average traffic volume growth has been 1.8% for 10 years (2003-2012), although during the period 2008-2012 traffic growth has been at a lower rate of 0.9% per year.

6.62 Local roads in the vicinity include the Old South Road, Parkins Road, Sharlands Road and Irvines Road. Traffic volumes on these roads are low, reflecting their rural access function with the average daily traffic volumes ranging between 28 and 329. The effect of Synlait traffic on Heslerton Road south of Old South Road is reflected with a higher average of 1,574 vpd.

6.63 Old South Road and the railway line were both realigned as part of the original Synlait plant development and Old South Road now forms a give-way controlled, T-intersection with SH1. Dedicated left turn slip lanes are provided for traffic moving onto and off the State Highway. The intersection is designed to a high geometric standard specifically to accommodate heavy vehicles and has good visibility with a deceleration lane and right turn bay for movements from SH1.

6.64 Access to the site is provided through a stop-controlled vehicle access on Heslerton Road.

6.65 Heslerton Road is a two-lane rural road with a sealed width of approximately 7.3m south of Old South Road, before widening out at the Synlait access.

6.66 The railway line intersects Old South Road 26m south of the SH1 intersection and can accommodate a queuing truck. The rail crossing is controlled by lights and bells.

6.67 There is no specific infrastructure provided in the vicinity of the site for public transport, walking or cycling.

Levels of Service

6.68 Based on observed peak traffic conditions, TDG has undertaken an assessment of the SH1/Old South Road intersection performance using Sidra Intersection. This assessment shows that the intersection operates with acceptable performance. The right turn movement from Old South Road into SH1 operates at Level of Service C, reflecting the need to decelerate, stop and then negotiate the intersection. The assessment concludes that the intersection does not adversely impact traffic on the

State Highway which continues to operate below its traffic carrying capacity and with a good level of service.

Road Safety

6.69 A search of the NZTA Crash Analysis System does not show any safety related concerns with the operation of the site access, or the route via Heslerton Road and Old South Road to SH1.

6.70 There have been no reported accidents at the railway crossing.

Site Access

6.71 The existing site access is a two-lane, stop-controlled T-intersection on Heslerton Road located approximately 250m south of State Highway 1 (SH1) and 220m south of the Main South Railway Line. The access has been designed in a manner to enable the unimpeded movement of two milk tankers in opposite directions.

Existing Site Layout

6.72 All of the on-site roads have been designed to accommodate internal circulation and manoeuvring for vehicles accessing the site. The primary internal site roads are sealed and operate in a two-lane manner with a posted speed limit of 15km/h. TDG observes this layout works efficiently.

6.73 Car parking for 153 vehicles is provided in a formal sealed and marked parking area on-site with 2 allocated to visitors and 4 for disabled persons. Overflow parking for approximately 50 vehicles is available on the site. Synlait informally monitors parking as part of its internal site management, ensuring parking is provided in safe and convenient locations. No parking occurs on the main access route or on the surrounding road network.

Traffic movements

6.74 To understand existing traffic movements TDG considered NZTA survey data and commissioned its own traffic turning movement survey.

6.75 A full seven-day count on State Highway 1 (SH1) east of Sheats Road was undertaken by NZTA in August 2012. This section of SH1 operates within acceptable levels of service, well below its traffic carrying capacity. The data indicates a high volume of traffic using this road (average daily weekday volume of 9,200vpd), with the highest number of vehicle movements generally occurring on Fridays (11,770vpd) and the least number on Saturdays (9,040vpd).

6.76 The TDG survey was conducted at the Old South Road / SH1 intersection, and at the Synlait site access on Heslerton Road. The hours surveyed were from 5am to 9am and from 4pm to 7pm on 25th September 2012. These hours were selected as they represent a period nearing peak production at the site with all shifts operating.

6.77 TDG notes that the peak hours of both the road network and site access coincided and occurred at 8am to 9am in the morning, and 5pm to 6pm in the evening. The site access peak is clearly related to administration arrivals and departures rather than shift changeover reflecting the higher number of staff in administrative roles. Heavy vehicle peaks are primarily associated with milk tankers departing at the start of their shift.

6.78 The TDG survey found that the peak traffic generation for the site in the morning was 56vph of which 7% was heavy traffic. The evening peak involved 79vph, of which 19% was heavy traffic. At these times, almost 90% of traffic was entering the site in the morning peak, and only 20% of traffic was entering the site in the evening peak.

6.79 The majority (95%) of the traffic entering the site at peak times enters from the north of the site access and there is very little traffic on Heslerton Road which passes the Synlait site, being only 1 or 2 vehicles. Survey results showed that between 5am and 9am, 10 heavy vehicles made the right turn from Old South Road into SH1 (all between 7am and 8am) and in the late afternoon there were two right turning heavy vehicles between 4pm and 5pm and three between 5pm and 6pm. These evening movements involved product related trucks.

6.80 In terms of traffic turning off the State Highway, approximately 85% of vehicles travelling to the Synlait site will turn into the Old South Road from the north and in the evening 77% of traffic will be turning onto the State Highway to head north.

Vehicle occupancy

6.81 TDG has conducted a recent survey (September 2013) to better understand vehicle occupancy for vehicles travelling to and from Synlait. That survey revealed that during the afternoon peak period (5pm and 6pm) the average light vehicle occupancy was 1.25 people, with some car sharing occurring.

Parking

6.82 Based on the results of the site access traffic survey undertaken in November 2013, TDG has estimated the existing day time peak parking demand for existing activities at approximately 90 parking spaces. However, recent observations have shown an increase in parking demand, with approximately 125 cars parked on the site.

6.83 The car parking near the existing administration currently allows for approximately 153 spaces (83 in the existing administration area and 70 spaces within the extension). There is scope within this area to expand the parking area by a further 50 parking spaces to accommodate increased daytime parking demand generated by future consented expansions.

6.84 There are also 35 spaces consented at the transport yard, although these will typically be utilised by HHT staff and tanker drivers

6.85 This provides a total of 238 existing consented and unformed carparks available on site. It is relevant to note however, that on days where carparking is at capacity, Synlait does have the ability, due to the large area of the site, to direct cars to less formalised overflow parking areas and other spaces.

Effects on the Traffic Environment

Parking

6.86 Adopting the parking demand ratio of 0.88 spaces per staff, TDG has calculated the number of additional parks that would be required for the DPMA at full development. Having regard to the anticipated additional staff and visitor numbers, TDG considers that an on-site parking supply of approximately 400 spaces is required, although this

would reduce if car sharing increases. This requires an area of dedicated car park land of 1.0ha to 1.2ha based on 25m^2 to 30m^2 per parking space including aisles. It is concluded that there is sufficient land area within the Height Control Area to provide car parking on-site but flexible parking rules are desirable to allow responsiveness in parking supply and location.

6.87 Currently, staff parking is accommodated in large parking areas near the site entrance but as the Plant expands, it is likely that car parking will be located closer to different activities/work areas within the site. The design and layout of new parking areas will be required to comply with Appendix 10 of the District Plan.

Traffic generation

6.88 The Assessment of traffic generation has assumed full development of the DPMA without any product movement by rail. This represents a worst case scenario in terms of effects on the road network with heavy traffic generation relating to milk tankers delivering raw milk and produce movement from the site as well as ancillary services.

6.89 Key findings of the assessment include:

- Additional heavy vehicle traffic generation will mainly relate to milk tankers delivering raw milk to the Plant, product movements from the site, and ancillary services truck movements.
- The primary change in the light vehicle traffic generation is related to the increase in the number of staff and their associated travel.
- Full development is estimated to generate 1,776 vehicle movements per day, of which 790 are associated with heavy vehicles and 985 are staff and visitors.
- 6.7% of milk tanker movements would occur during the PM peak hour, and about 5% of the daily product movement is estimate to occur during the PM peak hour.
- 279 vehicles will be generated during the PM peak: 50 heavy vehicle movements and 229 light vehicle movements.
- If rail is used to move freight, it is estimated that daily product movement could be reduced by 90%. This is expected to reduce full development daily vehicle movement to approx. 650 vpd.
- Approximately 1,800 vpd generated on weekdays during the peak of the milk processing season. This would consist of 800 heavy vpd and 1,000 light vpd.

Transport Network Performance

6.90 TDG concludes that at full development the provisions of the DPMA will successfully provide for the additional traffic generation. No upgrading of the local road network would be required except to seal the additional length of Heslerton Road at the time the proposed second access is commissioned, as shown on the ODP. Additionally, there is sufficient land within the DPMA Height Control Area to accommodate all parking and manoeuvring requirements.

6.91 TDG notes there are no residential dwellings on Heslerton Road between the DPMA access and SH1. The increase in traffic generation does not therefore generate adverse effects on amenity values.

6.92 No cycle or pedestrian infrastructure is required as no cyclists or pedestrians have been observed in the local vicinity.

6.93 The increases in traffic generation could however adversely impact on the SH1 and Old South Road intersection, particularly the right turn into SH1 which is a critical movement. This intersection currently operates at Level of Service (LOS) C. With the proposed DPMA an expanded Plant has the potential to cause a reduction in the LOS at this intersection.

6.94 TDG has modelled various site traffic generation scenarios, taking into account average traffic volume growth on the state highway (the average between 2003 to 2012 being 1.8%).

Daily traffic volume on SH1 at Sheats Rd (vehicles per day)	Year reached	Level of Service
13,500	2023	C/D
15,500	2034	E

6.95 The Assessment shows that any change to LOS D at current state highway growth rates (1.8%) is anticipated to be 10 years away, or at 2033 at a lower growth rate of 1%. (It is noted that this rate of change is consistent with the expectations for growth over a typical Plan Change period as expressed in the Transportation Assessment Guidelines). There is a low likelihood of PM peak period traffic assessment performance reducing to LOS E within next 20 years regardless of Synlait development. On the basis that any reduction in LOS may be at least 10 years away, it is considered that no significant change in peak performance at this intersection will occur during the assessment period.

6.96 An analysis has been undertaken to determine the delays that may be experienced by right turning heavy vehicles out of Old South Road, which currently operates at LOS D or LOS E. This movement generally only involves a few vehicles per hour and is highest in the morning peak with milk tankers departing on their shift. The delay experienced by heavy vehicles making the right turn could be expected to deteriorate as the DPMA develops. A maximum heavy vehicle average delay of approximately a minute is expected by 2024 with SH1 growth at 1.8% and about 50 seconds with 1.0% growth. This could be managed through a Freight Transport Management Plan. Physical improvements to the intersection could be made. There are potentially a number of possible different types of up-grade that could be implemented, depending on the traffic scenarios at the time. Due to the uncertainty around traffic growth on the state highway and the rate at which additional development within the DPMA occurs, TDG recommends that the primary consideration is that the provisions of the DPMA do not preclude future up-grade options at the SH1 intersection.

6.97 To achieve this end the proposed rules put in place a process which requires the written approval from NZTA in respect of the design of the intersection each time the processing or storage capacity of the Plant is increased. If written approval is not obtained, the Council will have the discretion to assess the ability of the intersection to operate safety through a consent process. The ODP identifies an area for a major capacity upgrade of the intersection.

6.98 A preliminary assessment of the DPMA by KiwiRail suggests that barrier arms may be required when daily traffic volume is 2,800vpd. Given estimated daily traffic generation of 1,766 vpd at full development, the plan change is unlikely to justify barrier arms but the ultimate decision lies with KiwiRail and is outside the scope of this RMA process.

6.99 With regard to queuing across the railway line, there is adequate distance between the railway line and SH1 to accommodate 3 vehicles. It is therefore considered that current provisions are acceptable, however, the rules proposed within the plan change will provide the opportunity to monitor the ability of the railway crossing to accommodate changes in traffic with written approval required for increases in storage or processing capacity.

Site Access

6.100 To provide for improved internal circulation, particularly or heavy vehicles as the Plant expands, it is proposed to construct an additional primary access off Heslerton Road, just south of the existing access. This will allow traffic to spread across two access ways whilst both are separated from nearby intersections and are located on a straight road affording good visibility. The new access would be designed in accordance with the standards in the District Plan, including localised widening to accommodate the paths of heavy vehicles and sealing of Heslerton Road until just passed the proposed access. No change is considered necessary to the existing access.

6.101 A secondary site access is proposed off Irvines Road to provide emergency access to the site or as a temporary alternative to Heslerton Road should this be unavailable for any reason. No direct access is proposed to SH1.

Recommendations - Mitigation Measures

6.102 In summary, TDG recommends that the DPMA provisions include:

- Appropriate site access locations to service the future site, primarily from Heslerton Road, together with requirements for upgrading of Heslerton Road between the primary accesses. This will allow the site to operate efficiently, and provide safe access to the local road network;
- Provisions to control the location of parking within the Height Control Area, and requirements to design parking and manoeuvring areas in accordance with existing District Plan standards;
- Rule provisions relating to access to ensure that the road controlling authorities retain the opportunity to confirm access and intersection design as development occurs and the capacity of the site is increased;
- The ODP restricts building areas to ensure that any long term changes to the SH1 intersection or future capacity improvements are able to be implemented.

Noise

6.103 Marshall Day has prepared a Noise Assessment of the proposed DPMA. A copy of the Assessment can be found in **Appendix 7**. The following provides a summary of the key points from the Assessment.

Existing Noise Environment

6.104 Marshall Day has noted a number of noise generating features within the existing environment. These include the existing plant, the adjoining State Highway and the main trunk railway line. Sources of noise from the DPMA will include continuous plant such as pumps, cooling towers and fans, vehicle movements (particularly tankers) and any future rail activities. Noise monitoring has established that plant noise levels at existing dwellings is only just audible during late evening lulls in traffic on the state highway.

6.105 Several resource consents apply to this site, many of which have conditions imposed to manage noise. The most recent condition of consent (Resource Consent 135590) which has been applied to development on this site is:

> *8 The cumulative noise from all activities on the site shall not exceed 50 dBA L_{10} at any of the following positions (SDC R125380 Sheet 4 attached (Figure 4 of Marshall Day report dated 17 October 2013):*
>
> - *Any point along the boundary of the site across State Highway 1 within 480m of the State Highway1/Old South Road corner. This excludes noise from any construction activities; and*
> - *Any point along the boundary of the site across Heslerton Road between the corner of Heslerton Road and Old South Road and 20m to the south east of the site access. This excludes any construction activities and the noise of vehicles on the site entrance road.*
>
> *Noise shall be measured and assessed in accordance with NZS6801:1999 and NZS6802: 1991.*
>
> *9 Except where covered by condition 8 above, the noise from all activities on site shall not exceed 45 dBA L_{10} at the noise assessment boundary shown on plan SDC 135590 (Figure 3 of Marshall Day report dated 17 October 2013). This excludes any construction activities and the noise of vehicles on the site entrance road.*

6.106 When considering noise limits, Marshall Day has also been guided by the following documents:

- The World Health Organisation guidelines recommend limits of 55 dB L_{Aeq} daytime to avoid serious annoyance, and 45 dB L_{Aeq} night-time to allow sleep with windows open for ventilation,
- New Zealand Standard 6802 also recommends limits of 55 dB daytime and 45 dB night-time (L_{Aeq}).

6.107 Both of these guidance documents are consistent with the existing Selwyn District Plan and existing Synlait consents for night-time noise, but are more stringent than the daytime District Plan rule of 60 dB L_{A10}. Marshall Day consider that a noise limit of 55

dB L_{Aeq} daytime and 45 dB L_{Aeq} at night is appropriate and provides for residential amenity in a rural area. Rail noise has been excluded from the proposed noise standard as it is intermittent, does not change significantly over time, monitoring is difficult and where trains move into and out of the DPMA from a designation where District Plan rules do not apply. Noise will be managed through a Noise Management Plan. The loading and unloading of trains will be required to comply with the DPMA noise limits. This is because it is of longer duration than train movements, occurs entirely within the DPMA and may potentially occur at night.

6.108 Marshall Day supports the use of a Noise Control Boundary to manage noise from the DPMA, which is common practice in New Zealand around airports, ports and dairy processing plants. This boundary is represented by a line on the ODP beyond which noise from a site or activity must not exceed a set value.

6.109 Marshall Day's recommendation is that the Noise Control Boundary represent the 55 dB L_{Aeq} daytime and 45 dB L_{Aeq} night-time noise levels and this has been adopted by Synlait in the provisions. The Noise Control Boundary has been developed taking into account additional noise effects from future expansion within the DPMA, and is to be complemented by on-going monitoring and assessment of new developments to ensure that increased noise levels are within the available noise budget.

Effects on the Noise Environment

Neighbouring Properties

6.110 Marshall Day has identified one existing dwelling and three sections of land within the Noise Control Boundary (the triangular land bordered by Main South Road, Old South Road and Sharlands Road, a corner of farmland to the north and a strip of farmland on Heslerton Road). In these locations some adverse noise effects at night may be experienced. Of particular concern is if the currently undeveloped land is developed for residential use however a proposed new rule would require new dwellings to incorporate appropriate noise attenuation and ventilation to ensure that the outside to inside noise level difference is minimised and adverse effects avoided. Marshall Day also notes that future development within the DPMA will occur over a period of years.

6.111 The assessment concludes that daytime noise levels will remain sufficiently low such that no adverse noise effects are anticipated on neighbouring properties, even within the Noise Control Boundary during the day. No adverse noise effects are anticipated in other locations.

Noise contours

6.112 Marshall Day has also prepared a detailed model of likely noise emissions from the full development scenario. The model shows that the predicted 45dB (L_{eq}) noise contour is within the proposed Noise Control Boundary. Whilst it does not prove that Synlait will comply with the proposed noise rules, it does show that it is possible for the DPMA to be developed and used without generating adverse noise effects.

Rail Noise Effects

6.113 There is no standard for assessing rail noise in New Zealand and activities such as rail sidings can generate noise that is distinctive from un-interrupted trains passing.

Marshall Day has considered potential noise effects from rail activities. Residents on the opposite side of SH1 already experience rail noise and frequent loading and unloading activity. A rail siding will reduce truck movements while the location of the siding exit and entry points are some distance from existing dwellings.

6.114 The existing dwelling within the proposed noise contour boundary will experience some adverse noise effects if the rail siding is constructed and operated at night.

6.115 At the dwelling located 400 metres from the proposed siding, based on measurements taken at another dairy plant siding, Marshall Day anticipates noise from shunting experienced at this property to be 40 dB L_{eq}. Impact noise may be 60dB L_{AFmax}. These noise levels are below general guidance for night time residential noise levels and even if shunting occurred at night, Marshall Day does not anticipate adverse noise effects.

Recommendations - Mitigation Measures

6.116 Marshall Day has concluded that the plan change provisions represent a simple, easy-to-understand approach to noise management. The combined ODP with a Noise Control Boundary will provide certainty and effective management of noise effects with the exception of adverse noise effects on the existing dwelling within the Noise Control Boundary at night-time. On this basis Marshall Day supports following measures as part of the Plan Change provisions:

- A requirement for a Noise Management Plan to manage noise effects including monitoring and management practices/protocols for addressing rail noise effects.
- Application of a Noise Control Boundary on the ODP.
- A requirement for acoustic reporting prior to construction of new buildings to confirm achievement of noise budgets is achieved.
- Activities, except construction activities, required to meet noise limits of 55dB L_{Aeq} daytime limit and 45dB L_{Aeq} night-time limit.
- A requirement where new sensitive activities are proposed on non-DPMA land within the Noise Control Boundary to achieve an appropriate internal noise level that incorporates a ventilation system.

Stormwater Feasibility

6.117 A report has been prepared by Pattle Delamore and Partners (PDP) assessing the feasibility of future stormwater discharge to land within the DPMA. Whilst the report is not an assessment of effects, it does inform understanding of the site's ability to accommodate future built development with respect to impacts on groundwater resources.

6.118 The PDP report assumes an ultimate development scenario informed by the existing plant layout and calculates a theoretical built and hardstand percentage of site coverage. It then considers the physical characteristics of the site i.e, depth to groundwater and soil strata to assess if there is sufficient area within the DPMA to manage run-off from future development.

Hydrogeological Setting

6.119 The hydrogeological setting of the site and surrounding area is characterised by zones of highly permeable, well-sorted gravels which provide a source for high-yielding abstraction bores, separated by lower permeability sands and silts which transmit water but may not support a high yielding abstraction bore. Based on ECan GIS data, it is inferred that groundwater lies approximately 11 to 18 metres below the surface of the site. This depth to groundwater is sufficient to provide opportunity for stormwater to undergo further treatment as it passes through unsaturated gravel strata before entering groundwater.

Soil Strata

6.120 The main soil type that underlies the site is Lismore, with Mayfield soil found around the eastern and western sides of the site. Lismore soil is a well-drained soil whereas Mayfield soils are moderately well-drained due to the relatively higher clay content. This soil type is considered to be sufficiently permeable to allow stormwater to infiltrate through the strata without resulting in ponding on the ground surface.

Treatment System

6.121 There is an existing consented stormwater management system on the site that treats stormwater from hardstand areas via a sediment forebay and infiltration basin. Runoff from the truckwash, milk reception, ash storage and wastewater treatment plant areas, is collected and separately treated through the wastewater treatment plant. Runoff from roofs is discharged directly to ground via soakage pits. Stormwater from further development will be treated and discharged into a new treatment system.

Conclusion

6.122 Assuming full development within the DPMA, and having regard to the hydrogeological and soil characteristics of the site it is concluded that there is sufficient land area within the DPMA to effectively manage stormwater. This assumes all runoff is required to be treated for the critical duration (24 hours) 50 year rainfall event. Run-off from some hardstand areas may need to be diverted to the wastewater treatment facility or treated separately. This is consistent with current management and will further reduce the risk of contaminants entering the stormwater management system. Accordingly, assuming

adoption of standard best practice there are no physical constraints that introduce uncertainty in the ability to effectively manage stormwater longer term within the DPMA.

Economic Impact

6.123 A memorandum prepared by Harris Consulting describes the economic context of the dairy industry within Selwyn District and the impacts of Synlait's activities on the economy.

6.124 A typical dairy operation in the Canterbury Region in 2012 produced a revenue of $10,900/ha compared with a breeding/finishing operation which produced $1400/ha. Wages for a dairy farm (2011/12) were approximately $1200/ha compared with $70/ha for sheep and beef. Dairying is the only farming activity which has increased employment in the past decade with a doubling of jobs from 2300 in 2003 to 4600 in 2013. The Canterbury Region now produces 18% of New Zealand's milk production and Selwyn and Ashburton Districts are the fastest growing districts within the region in terms of dairy production by herd size and milk fat. The area of land in dairying has grown by 70% over the past decade and milk solids production has risen by 100%. In Ashburton District the area of dairying has increased by 128% and milk solids production by 195%.

6.125 Synlait's existing Plant makes a significant contribution to both the local and regional economy. This is both through its employment and in-directly through the purchase of inputs from other regional businesses, increasing their income and employment. Over 780 non-farm suppliers and 141 farm suppliers are connected to the Plant. It is relevant to note that a significant proportion of Synlait's employees live in Selwyn District or Christchurch City and all work from the Dunsandel site.

6.126 Synlait also plays an important role in providing competition to Fonterra and Induced effects are also created by additional household spending. It is noted that Synlait receives supplies and services from over 1500 businesses. The administration budget for the existing Dunsandel plant is $15 million and $216 million is forecast to be spent on expanded facilities within the next 2 years.

6.127 Synlait currently employs 200 FTE and in 2013 it generated $420 million in revenue. This provides for approximately $60 million in direct value added and $10 million in household income. The Company also made payments of $290 million to farm suppliers. This is significant for Selwyn District as 50% of the milk supply base is within the District and more than 95% is within the Canterbury Region.

6.128 The total regional impact for 2014-2015 is estimated at 340 FTEs, $80 million in value added and $20 million in household income. In terms of farm suppliers, the effect on direct employment is 1,620 FTEs and 3,660 FTEs total employment across the region. When translated into household income this amounts to $20 million/annum from the plant, $210 million /annum from the supplier operation and $60 million for construction.

Economic Effects of the DPMA

6.129 Based upon achievement of a full development scenario the DPMA could employ up to 600 FTE's and its annual economic impacts would increase 2 to 4 times its current impact as described above. The FTE positions are primarily skilled positions including manufacturing plant operators, management, administration, technical support, research, development, sales and marketing. In summary, the economic effects both directly for employment and indirectly on the regional economy are significant.

Cultural Values

6.130 A Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) has been prepared by Dyanna Jolly on behalf of the Te Taumutu Runanga.

6.131 The CIA has been informed by a review of the Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan with respect to the proposed provisions and direct engagement with representatives of the Runanga to identify the issues of importance.

6.132 The Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan 2013 (IMP) is a collaborative manawhenua planning document prepared by Te Taumutu Runanga, along with 5 other Runanga in the region from the Hurunui to the Hakatere. It identifies the resource management issues of significance for Manawhenua and provides a values-based policy framework for addressing issues.2.

6.133 Whilst there are no identified sites of significance in the proposed DPMA, the CIA describes that Ngai Tahu travelled and lived throughout the Selwyn District and have a responsibility as kaitiaki to maintain and protect the land, water and air for current and future generations. The importance of Te Waihora as a tribal taonga and its place in the catchment is acknowledged.

6.134 The CIA notes benefits from the proposal. These include:

- Certainty as to what future development can occur, and under what conditions.
- Early engagement is consistent with giving effect to Kaitiakitanga and the building of a strategic relationship.
- Consistent management approach is preferred to ad hoc consents applied for in isolation.

6.135 The CIA notes that whilst Te Taumutu Runanga is generally supportive of the proposed DPMA, there are further matters on which they may have issues or questions in respect of cultural values. These matters are currently being addressed by Synlait in discussion with the Runanga. The outcomes of this further engagement in respect of matters relevant to the Plan Change provisions will be reported back to the Council through the Plan Change process.

Earthworks

6.136 Runanga policy focuses on the management of earthworks to avoid or minimise erosion and sedimentation, effects on water quality, and damage or destruction of sites of significance.

Landscape

6.137 The Runanga has clear policy positions on landscape planting and would like the Landscape Plan and ODP to recognise and provide for the restoration of indigenous biodiversity.

[2] A full assessment of these polices has not been undertaken for the DPMA and instead the CIA relies upon the comprehensive review of relevant policies undertaken by Boffa Miskell in November 2013 for Synlait's Stage 4 expansion application.

Lighting

6.138 Runanga policy is to support the use of light suppression or limitation measures as a means to reduce light pollution and enable stars and landmarks to be viewed at night. A particular concern is if the plan change enables development of additional plants closer to Te Waihora.

Stormwater

6.139 The construction of buildings or the expansion of existing buildings may require the development of new stormwater treatment facilities but these may not need to be consented. The discharge of stormwater has the potential to affect water quality and the Runanga seek an integrated and comprehensive approach to stormwater management within the DPMA.

Discharges to air, land and water

6.140 The Runanga is concerned about the effects of discharges as dairy processing produces high volumes of waste that are generally discharged off-site and are high in nitrogen and phosphorus. Of concern is that:

- The provisions may add weight to support dairying activities, outweighing cultural and environmental considerations.
- Cultural and cumulative effects will not be considered if a new consent is not triggered by a particular discharge proposal.
- Ensuring an integrated and comprehensive approach to managing district and regional matters.

Establishment of Additional DPMA

6.141 Concern has been expressed that the proposed DPMA be applied to new processing plant.

Low Impact Design

6.142 As part of mapping out the future development vision for the DPMA the Runanga encourage the incorporation of low impact building design and sustainability measures to reduce the impact of the plant on the environment.

Recommendations - Mitigation Measures

6.143 Te Taumutu Runanga has made 8 recommendations to align activities within the DPMA with the policies in the Mahaanui IMP as follows:

- The Landscape Plan for the DPMA should reflect:
  - A commitment to re-instate indigenous biodiversity values and to improve amenity values on the site.
  - The use of native species that were originally found in this part of the Canterbury Plains.

- Planting as part of stormwater management.

- Earthworks over 5000m^3 are classified as a controlled activity or that Rule 26.11 includes explicit provisions stipulating that the Earthworks Management Plan is to include:

  - Clear and effective measures to avoid sedimentation, and other discharges to drains or other waterbodies.
  - Clear and effective measures to manage stormwater and run-off during earthwork activities to prevent run-off, including minimising the extent of land to be cleared at any time.
  - Requirement to use the ADP provided in the Mahaanui IMP.

- Ensure that Rule 26.21 is written to identify and enable light suppression techniques to minimise impact on landscape and views.
- Investigate opportunities to incorporate low impact design and sustainability options into the new rules/standards for permitted activities.
- A stormwater management plan should be developed and included as part of, or sit alongside the ODP showing the design concept for stormwater collection, treatment and disposal. The Plan should reflect the need to manage stormwater in an integrated and comprehensive manner as the plant develops and grows.
- Consider an integrated approach to managing discharges to air, land and water, particularly nitrogen given the proposed nitrogen limit set for the Selwyn-Waihora catchment.
- Apply the same zoning and rules to the Synlait Plant and Fonterra Plant at Darfield to ensure a consistent approach to managing continuing development.
- The proposed plan change should not facilitate the establishment of new processing plants without a rigorous impact assessment process.

6.144 Synlait has now initiated a process to review and discuss these recommendations with Runanga. It has already specifically amended the plan change by altering the Earthworks Rules 26.9 to 26.12 to explicitly avoid sedimentation, discharges and run-off entering water-bodies and to specifically require the adoption of the Accidental Discovery Protocol from the Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan.

6.145 The remaining recommendations are already addressed through the Plan Change eg the existing lighting rule is considered appropriate and the landscape planting makes provision for indigenous species. The adoption of low impact design and sustainability are matters outside the District Plan, more specifically addressed through management of the Plant operations, whilst wastewater discharges are addressed through regional consents. This Plan Change does not facilitate new processing plants.

Summary of Effects

6.146 The above Assessment has considered those effects with the potential to affect land at the interface of, and beyond the DPMA boundary. These cover effects on:

- Traffic safety and efficiency from increased vehicles.
- Rural amenity values arising from noise from additional activities, and visual change from the additional buildings, signage and lighting.
- Groundwater quality from the discharge of stormwater.
- Cultural values as identified through the policies in the Mahaanui IMP.

6.147 Each of these elements has been appropriately assessed in a manner relative to the scale and significance of the potential effect.

6.148 In summary, where potential adverse environmental effects have been identified, Synlait has worked with the respective experts to adopt recommendations and integrate appropriate provisions into the DPMA. Accordingly, the potential adverse environmental effects of the proposal have been addressed individually and cumulatively as part of a comprehensive plan and translated into District Plan provisions. It is acknowledged that the existing dwelling within the Noise Control Boundary is an exception, where the potential adverse effect experienced during night-time hours is unable to be addressed through district plan provisions. Synlait is in discussion with the owner on this matter.

6.149 In addition to environmental effects, this Assessment has identified positive effects on employment and the district and regional economy. These matters will be further considered as part of an assessment of achievement of Part 2 of the RMA in Section 8.0 below.

7.0 Evaluation

7.1 Section 32, in summary, requires the following matters to be incorporated into and examined in the evaluation report:

- The extent to which the objectives (purpose) of the proposal are the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act.
- Whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate to achieve the objective (purpose) of the proposal by:
  - Consideration of other reasonably practicable options for achieving recognition of the existing dairy plant and its continuing efficient use and expansion.
  - Assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions in achieving the objective of the proposal. This assessment should identify the benefits and costs of environmental, economic, social and cultural effects, including opportunities for economic growth and employment.
- Whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate to achieve the objectives of the existing District Plan, to the extent that those are relevant.
- Assessment of the risks of acting or not acting.

An examination of the extent to which the objectives (purpose) of the proposal is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act.

7.2 It is relevant to firstly note that this request for plan change does not propose any new objectives for the District Plan. In this circumstance s32(6)(b) states that references to objectives means the purpose of the proposal.

7.3 Section 3.0 of this report sets out the purpose of the proposal. The purpose is to recognise the existing dairy plant established by Synlait at Dunsandel, and to provide for its continuing efficient use and future expansion. Accordingly, the evaluation must consider the extent to which recognition of the existing dairy plant and its continuing efficient use and expansion achieves the purpose of the Act.

7.4 The purpose of the Act is to promote sustainable management of natural and physical resources. This means:

Managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while-

(a) sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and

(b) safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and

(c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

7.5 The proposal achieves the purpose of the Act for the following reasons (a full assessment of Part 2 of the RMA is provided in Section 8.0):

- It pro-actively and specifically manages the use and development of land for dairy processing activities.
- Dairying is a growing and increasingly significant land use within the Selwyn District. At the scale of production and the transportation involved it is reasonable to anticipate that specific provision be made for this industry.
- Optimises transport links - it is efficient for milk to be processed close to source and at a location where buildings and activities can be concentrated.
- The concentration of processing buildings and activities enables operational efficiencies to be optimised and the needs of international markets to be fulfilled through co-location of processing and packaging.
- The proposed DPMA provides a mechanism for management of the environmental effects of dairy processing to be considered comprehensively with an overview of the ultimate development of the site.
- It enables the community to provide for its economic wellbeing, and thereby contribute to its social wellbeing.
- Providing for existing dairy processing activities in a more efficient manner will reduce uncertainty and time/cost delays for the applicant. This will assist in achievement of employment and economic benefits to the district, region and nation.
- Health and safety issues are addressed through rules relating to traffic access, management of traffic related to construction, the management of earthworks and limits and controls on noise.
- The proposed DPMA will effectively provide for integrated management of effects at the boundary of the DPMA with the rural environment. Effects can all be effectively avoided or mitigated through compliance with the ODP and standards, including requirements for management plans that are up-dated on an annual or project basis. An exception relates to noise impacts on a single, existing dwelling within the Noise Control Boundary. Synlait is in discussion with the owner of the dwelling on this matter.
- The life-supporting capacity of water and soil is addressed through requirements for earthworks and construction management. Information accompanying the proposal demonstrates that stormwater can be effectively managed.

Examine whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate to achieve the objective of the proposal by:

- identifying if there are other reasonably practicable options for achieving the proposal.

7.6 The provisions of the proposal are described in Section 5.0 above and a full copy of the provisions are contained in **Appendix 1**.

7.7 In addition to this request for plan change, other reasonably practicable options for achieving the proposal include:

- the status quo i.e., applying for resource consents on an as required basis;
- relocating the plant to an alternative location; or
- waiting for the District Plan review and seek a new zone either through a request to Council to implement a new zone as part of the notified Plan or through a submission.

7.8 These options are discussed as follows:

Status Quo

7.9 A process of applying for resource consents on an "as required basis" may potentially deliver the outcome of additional development and activity on the land concerned. This approach does however involve a high degree of uncertainty for the applicant. There is no certainty that any application will be approved with only limited, non-specific policy support within the District Plan for rural industrial activities and rural character policies which Council may interpret as reason to avoid intensification of rural processing activities such as those associated with dairy processing. Preparing applications involves cost and time delays. This repetitive process also incurs on-going costs and administrative time from Council. Similar repetition in time and cost reviewing each application is similarly experienced by neighbours, statutory organisations such as NZTA, KiwiRail and ECan, as well as Runanga and neighbours.

7.10 In addition, it is noted that this ad hoc process provides no overview of site development, and over time conditions on subsequent resource consents will supercede or cancel each other out. This adds to administrative uncertainty and complexity.

Alternative Location

7.11 A location within an industrial zone, such as IZone, is unlikely due to the very large land area required, the demands the activity that would place on urban services and the increased transportation costs with increased distance from farms.

7.12 In addition, the cost and scale of the established plant is such that it is prohibitive to decommission this site and seek a new location elsewhere.

District Plan Review

7.13 The Council has not yet formulated a programme for its District Plan Review.

7.14 A District Plan review is typically a lengthy and time consuming process. Whether this is a rolling review or undertaken on a comprehensive basis, timeframes may stretch over a period of years to accommodate consultation, notification, submissions, further submissions, hearings, decisions, and appeals. Accordingly, seeking to incorporate the content of this request for plan change into a District Plan review may result in a waiting period of years for a decision. As well as uncertainty around time frames, there is also uncertainty in respect of process. There is no guarantee that Council would incorporate a DPMA into a new generation District Plan. The alternative is for Synlait to lodge a submission seeking a DPMA.

7.15 The time delay and uncertainty involved with a Review process presents no advantage over making this request for Plan Change.

Conclusion

7.16 This request for Plan Change has been prepared based on sound information about the nature of existing dairy processing activities and buildings that could be anticipated. Robust assessments of the landscape, noise and traffic effects of these activities and buildings have also been completed. A policy and rule package has been devised that is specific to management of identified effects and in response to the particular characteristics of this site. This combination of an overview of the site and specificity in management of effects is not replicated or improved upon in any of the above options. In conclusion it is submitted that this request for Plan Change is the most reasonably practicable option.

Examine whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate to achieve the objective of the proposal by:

- assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions in achieving the objective of the proposal.

7.17 Assessing efficiency and effectiveness requires consideration of the benefits and costs of the provisions in respect of their environmental, economic, social and cultural effects. These matters are evaluated below:

BENEFITS	COSTS
Environmental	
Concentration of built development and activity, avoids dispersal of development. Provides comprehensive overview of full site development with integration of mitigation relating to traffic, noise and landscape effects. Traffic effects can be effectively managed with provision made for long term transport	Loss of open rural land. Reduction in rural landscape values in medium term. Loss of productive potential of soils within buildable area. Reduced amenity values in proximity of DPMA.

BENEFITS	COSTS
considerations e.g., provision for state highway intersection up-grading, future up-grading of Heslerton Road, provision for rail siding. Greater detail of long term landscape treatment and staging. Noise limits more stringent than operative District Plan with new requirement for management plans with monitoring provisions and compliance checks with new development. Removes uncertainties for community in processing perishable milk product.	Increase in traffic volumes including heavy traffic numbers. Some anticipated noise effects on adjoining land within Noise Control Boundary with potential for adverse noise effects during night-time hours on a single, existing dwelling. Cost of noise insulation and ventilation additional for new houses within Noise Control Boundary. Potential for new noise effects from rail siding.
Effectiveness The proposed provisions have been informed by knowledge of the existing operational plant, conditions on previous consents and robust environmental assessments of a particular site. Provisions are therefore specific to well understood effects, demonstrated practice from established activity and incorporate appropriate mitigation mechanisms. The provisions are assessed as effective at protecting the environment, acknowledging that the physical and visual change in the site will contrast with the open and pastoral qualities of the surrounding rural land. The potential effect from noise on adjoining land is limited in effect to one house on adjoining land.	
Economic	
Enables development of dairy processing activities with less cost and delay compared with status quo. Provides for up to 600 jobs within DPMA. An additional 1,620 FTEs created for farm suppliers and 3660 FTEs for the total region. 1200FTE years of work associated with construction. Household income from the existing plant operation is $20million/annum, $210 million/annum for supplier operations with a further $60 million for construction over next 2 years. Direct and In-direct value added to regional economy more than doubled at full DPMA development.	Administrative cost to the Council in terms of processing the plan change (noting that costs can be recovered from applicant). Loss of income from rural activities previously undertaken on land that is ultimately developed within the DPMA.
Effectiveness – The provisions are effective at providing for economic benefits.	

Social	
Increased opportunities for economic, and thereby social wellbeing, to be achieved.	Visual change to the locality. Increase in lighting effect at night. Increased traffic in proximity of plant. Increase in intensity of industrial activities in locality.
Effectiveness The change in the nature and intensity of landuse within the DPMA will be significant should the DPMA develop to its fullest capacity. The provisions will be effective in limiting these costs to a defined geographic area. The costs to this locality will need to be considered in the context of the potential benefits for the wider community.	
Cultural	
Provides certainty as to future development envelope on site. Reduces on-going administrative role on Runanga reviewing ad hoc applications.	Uncertainty as to the nature of future dairy processing activities and the nature and extent of future infrastructure for discharges to air and in respect of wastewater.
Effectiveness The provisions will be effective in managing potential effects on cultural values within the DPMA in respect of earthworks, landscape planting and avoidance of sedimentation of waterways etc. Costs in respect of discharges can only be addressed once particular processing activity is known and at the time of detailed design for regional consents.	

7.18 The provisions of the plan change have been developed based upon actual known effects of a dairy processing plant in this location, robust assessments of the effects of possible expansion of the existing plant, and the development of rules, incorporating mitigation measures which are specific to those effects on this particular site. Consequently, the provisions of the plan change are more effective in providing for dairy processing activities and mitigating the effects of those activities than the operative provisions of the District Plan.

7.19 With respect to efficiency, it is considered that the provisions would result in a high degree of benefits (economic/social) while maintaining a relatively low level of costs (environmental/cultural).

7.20 In summary, the provisions of the Plan Change would be efficient and effective in achieving the objective of the proposal i.e., recognition of the existing dairy plant and its continuing efficient use and expansion.

Risk of acting or not acting

7.21 The Act requires assessment of the risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information. In relation to this request for plan change there is no reason for not acting on the basis of insufficient or uncertain information. Sufficient information is available regarding the characteristics and values of the site and surrounding area, and

analysis has been undertaken into any actual or potential effects of future development under the proposed DPMA. Whilst the exact nature and form of future development is not prescribed, the provisions of the proposed zone provide appropriate parameters to future activity and development.

Examine whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate to:

- achieve the objectives of the existing District Plan to the extent that those are relevant

7.22 An assessment has been made of the objectives of the existing District Plan, to the extent that only those relevant to the matter of recognising and providing for the use and expansion of an existing dairy processing plant have been considered.

7.23 The relevant objectives are contained in **Appendix 2**. In respect of each objective an assessment is provided which discusses the provisions of the plan change request and the manner in which they achieve the relevant objective.

7.24 It is noted that all Plans contain potentially competing objectives and policies. This reflects the complexity of the environment, the need to protect important values and the need for people to use resources to provide for their wellbeing. These competing values (expressed through objectives and policies) already exist within the Selwyn District Plan. Accordingly, the fact that a Plan Change alters the status quo, enabling a different outcome from that envisaged from the previous provisions does not in itself make a Plan Change inappropriate. Rather, the Plan Change represents a new or additional interest or value that needs to be addressed and provided for through the Plan. The appropriateness of this needs to be evaluated in the context of the purpose of the Act and the functions of the Council.

7.25 In summary the proposed plan change is consistent with the intent of the relevant strategic objectives and policies for the District. In particular it is aligned with those objectives and policies that seek to integrate land use and transportation, provide for rural based business in the rural zones and impose methods which avoid or mitigate environmental effects.

Summarise reasons for decisions on provisions

7.26 The provisions are considered the most appropriate for the following reasons:

7.27 The provisions are:

- Particular to the scale and characteristics of a dairy processing plant, therefore they are more relevant than the operative provisions of the plan which do not anticipate a dairy industry within the district of the existing scale.
- Have been informed by assessments of the environmental effects anticipated by the nature and scale of development and activity.
- Provide a comprehensive and integrated approach to development and use of the land and management of environmental effects.

- Enable an activity which provides significant employment and economic benefits.
- Relevant to a significant land use/industry within the Selwyn District.

8.0 Statutory Considerations

Section 74 – Matters to be Considered

8.1 Section 74 of the RMA prescribes that the District Council must prepare and change a district plan in accordance with:

- Its functions under s31: see paragraphs 8.7 and 8.8 below.
- The provisions of Part 2: see paragraphs 7.2 to 7.5 above and paragraphs 8.40 to 8.54 below.

8.2 The District Council must also have regard to an evaluation report prepared in accordance with s32: see Section 7.0 above.

8.3 Section 74(2) requires the District Council to also have regard to proposed regional plans, management plans, the Historic Places Register, regulations or the Plans of adjoining territorial authorities to the extent that these may be relevant.

8.4 It is noted that the proposal does not involve any cross territorial issues, any matters of historical reference or matters addressed by management plans or strategies prepared under other Acts.

8.5 With respect to Regional Plans, these are identified and addressed under paragraphs 8.20 to 8.33 below.

8.6 Section 74(2A) also requires the Council to take into account relevant planning documents recognised by an iwi authority, to the extent that its content has a bearing on resource management issues. Reference should be made to paragraphs 8.34 to 8.39 below and **Appendix 5** containing the Cultural Impact Assessment.

Section 31 – Functions of Council

8.7 Any plan change must assist the Council to carry out its functions so as to achieve the purpose of the Act. The functions of a territorial authority are set out in s31 of the Act and include:

- establishing, implementing and reviewing objectives, policies, and methods to achieve integrated management of the effects of the use and development of land; and
- controlling actual or potential effects of the use and development of land.

8.8 The request for plan change as described in Sections 3.0 to 6.0 in this report clearly accords with these stated functions. The proposal provides for the use and development of land for dairy processing activities. The proposed ODP and its accompanying set of rules provide the methods for Council to manage potential effects of this activity and demonstrates an integrated management approach. The ODP provides a high level overview of the parameters to development and sets in place those matters which must be implemented as mitigation measures e.g., access points to the DPMA, landscape treatment.

Section 75 – Contents of District Plans

8.9 Section 75 requires a District Plan to state objectives for the District, policies to implement the objectives and rules to then implement the policies.

8.10 The proposal does not introduce any new objectives for the District, but does introduce a new policy and accompanying set of rules. In the plan change, reasons are provided for the rules and the nature of information required for particular resource consent applications is specified. This content is also consistent with s75(2) and the current format of the Selwyn District Plan (Rural Volume).

8.11 Section 75 requires a District Plan to not be inconsistent with Regional Plans. These are identified and discussed in paragraphs 8.20 to 8.33 below.

8.12 Section 75(3)(a), (b) and (c) also requires a District Plan to give effect to any National Policy Statement, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Regional Policy Statement. These are discussed as follows:

National Policy Statements (NPS) and New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement

8.13 There are three NPS to which consideration must be given. These are:

- NPS for Electricity Transmission
- NPS for Renewable Electricity Generation
- NPS for Freshwater Management

8.14 The proposed DPMA has no impact on Electricity Transmission, being some distance from transmission lines. Similarly there is no direct connection or geographic proximity to renewable electricity generation activities.

8.15 The proposed DPMA similarly does not involve practices or effects that are inconsistent with the NPS for Freshwater Management.

8.16 With respect to the Coastal Policy Statement, the DPMA is not part of the Coastal environment.

Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (RPS)

8.17 The RPS provides an overview of the Resource Management issues in the Canterbury region, and the objectives, policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the Region. The methods include directions for provisions in district and regional plans.

8.18 The relevant chapters of the Regional Policy Statement are as follows. The full text of the relevant provisions are detailed and discussed in **Appendix 3**:

- Chapter 5 Land Use and Infrastructure
- Chapter 7 Fresh Water
- Chapter 11 Natural Hazards

- Chapter 14 Air
- Chapter 16 Energy
- Chapter 18 Hazardous Substances

8.19 In summary, the request for Plan Change gives effect to the provisions of these chapters, as follows:

- Potential effects on regionally significant infrastructure i.e., State Highway 1 and the Main Trunk Railway Line are able to be effectively avoided or mitigated.
- The location of the DPMA in the Rural Outer Plains provides for efficiency in energy by reducing transportation costs
- The DPMA does not impact any outstanding or amenity landscapes.
- The DPMA is not located in an area subject to increased risk of natural hazard.
- Provisions in the plan change address the management of hazardous substances in order to avoid or mitigate potential adverse effects.
- Information accompanying the request demonstrates that the quality of the groundwater resource can be maintained in respect of the stormwater run-off from increased hardstand and buildings within the DPMA.
- The DPMA accords with those objectives and policies which support development of primary production in Canterbury's rural areas and developments which enhance the economic and social wellbeing of the community.
- Matters related to air discharge and additional water requirements can be effectively managed through resource consents as required in the future.

Natural Resources Regional Plan and Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan

8.20 Relevant regional plans include the operative Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP) and the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan (LWRP).

8.21 The operative NRRP is concerned with the sustainable management of air, land and water resources in an integrated manner across the Canterbury Region. The Plan manages and controls a range of activities including earthworks, storage of hazardous substances, discharges to land and water and discharges to air for the purpose of soil conservation, maintenance and enhancement of water and air quality, management of water quantity, maintenance and enhancement of ecosystems, avoidance and mitigation of natural hazards and management of the storage, use, disposal and transportation of hazardous substances.

8.22 The objectives and policies of this Plan do not introduce any new issues that have not already been addressed through the assessment of the objectives and policies of the RPS as considered in **Appendix 3** of this report. For example, the Air chapter (Chapter 3) seeks to protect and maintain air quality by managing air discharges. For this plan change the relevant objectives and policies relate to protection of localised air quality, and avoidance or mitigation of effects such as dust nuisance (e.g. during construction activities) or discharge of contaminants. Chapter 4 (Water Quality) is concerned that

discharges to land of stormwater or other potential contaminants do not degrade groundwater resources.

8.23 Typically, the provisions of the NRRP are applied to resource consents and are more directive in respect of the detail of how measures will be applied to specific development proposals. Synlait holds a number of consents under the NRRP for its existing plant in respect of earthworks, discharges to air, discharges to land for stormwater, treated wastewater and sewage as well as the storage of hazardous substances. It is acknowledged that these consents may need to be varied or new consents obtained as the DPMA develops over the coming decades. These consents will require detailed design of the particular systems involved to demonstrate compliance with the relevant Plans and over time can be expected to incorporate improved technologies and practices.

8.24 Additionally, it is noted that the nature of future activities within the DPMA is not defined and these may change in response to changes in the industry and markets. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the integration of matters relating to wastewater, air discharge and water takes are addressed through subsequent resource consent processes.

8.25 The proposed LWRP is a new planning framework for the management of land and water within Canterbury. It is concerned with six key issues relating to competing demands for water in Canterbury, the need for integrated and consistent management of water and land uses, soil conservation, gravel resources, biodiversity and natural hazards. In particular, it is concerned with setting of water quality and quantity limits and meeting the requirements of the NPS for Freshwater Management 2011 and principles and targets in the Canterbury Water Management Strategy. Whilst covering prudent management of water resources, the LWRP also recognises that water as a resource is important an enabler of economic and social wellbeing, and land uses should continue to develop and change in response to changing socio-economic and community demand.

8.26 Decisions on the proposed Canterbury LWRP were released in February 2014 and these decisions are subject to a number of appeals. Accordingly, the NRRP remains the operative Plan, although it is assumed that it carries less weight than those parts of the proposed LWRP which have not been challenged.

8.27 Synlait holds consents under the LWRP for earthworks and discharges to land for stormwater. As noted above, any new activities within the DPMA over time, will require existing consents to be varied or new consents. On this basis, the integrated management of activities within the DPMA will be achieved on the consideration of those specific detailed proposals.

8.28 In summary, the proposed DPMA is not inconsistent with the relevant Regional Plans.

Land Use Recovery Plan (LURP)

8.29 The purpose of the LURP is to achieve the vision of the Recovery Strategy for Greater Christchurch. It sets the short and medium term actions that will be required to co-ordinate land use decision making, identify who is responsible and the timelines for achieving agreed outcomes. It relates to both residential and business activities, and directs the territorial authorities to make specific changes to their Plans.

8.30 When applied to the Selwyn District, the LURP directs business activities to locate in existing business zones or those identified as priority areas in the RPS. This reflects the concern that the dispersal of business will undermine the recovery of Christchurch City as a thriving business hub.

8.31 The LURP does however provide for rural activities in the rural areas of Greater Christchurch and more particularly, the definition of rural activities includes 'businesses that support rural land use activities'. As a dairy processing plant, Synlait clearly supports surrounding dairy farming. It is also located beyond the boundary of what is defined as Greater Christchurch. Accordingly, the proposed DPMA cannot be considered to be contrary to the direction of the LURP. The policy underpinning the DPMA and its provisions are also very clear that the management area is not intended to be available as a general industrial zone, and is specific to an established dairy plant.

Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy 2012-2042 (RLTS)

8.32 The Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS) sets the strategic direction for land transport within the Canterbury region over a 30 year period. The role of the RLTS is to contribute towards the government's overall vision of achieving an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. It also takes into account other government transport objectives and strategies. The RLTS identifies the region's transport needs, the roles of land transport modes along with the planning, engineering, education, encouragement and enforcement methods that will be applied in the achievement of objectives.

8.33 The provisions of the DPMA accord with this Strategy, specifically providing for future changes to access, potential upgrading of the intersection of Old South Road and State Highway 1 and increases in traffic movements. Accordingly, the safety and efficiency of local roads and the state highway will be protected and can respond, as necessary, to any changes to the RLTS.

Iwi Documents

8.34 Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu represents Ngāi Tahu as an iwi authority for the purposes of the RMA, and the Papatipu Rūnanga for the area is Te Taumutu Rūnanga. There are no statutory acknowledgement areas, silent file areas or Waahi Taonga areas identified in the District Plan that could be affected by this plan change.

8.35 The relevant iwi document for the area is the Mahaanui Iwi Management Plan 2013 (IMP). This document provides a values-based policy framework for the protection and enhancement of Ngāi Tahu values, and for achieving outcomes that provide for the relationship of Ngāi Tahu with natural resources, for the hapū who hold manawhenua rights over lands and waters within the takiwā from the Hurunui River to the Hakatere River and inland to Kā Tiritiri o Te Moana.

8.36 The Cultural Impact Assessment (**Appendix 5**) refers to the planning framework within the IMP but notes that a full assessment of the plan change request against the IMP policies is not required within the report, instead referencing a recent and comprehensive review of the relevant policies undertaken in November 2013 for Synlait's Stage 4 expansion. That policy review included all of the policies relevant to this plan change. A copy of this policy assessment is included as part of **Appendix 5**.

8.37 The CIA identifies the key policy issues as follows:

- Early and effective involvement of Papatipu Runanga.
- Consideration of the relationship between land use activities and potential effects on Te Waihora.
- The need to protect resources for future generations, and the availability and limits of fresh water and soil resources.
- Consideration of district and regional planning issues in an integrated manner.
- Incorporation of low impact urban design principles and sustainability options.
- On-site solutions for stormwater management and avoidance of the discharge of contaminants to water.
- Earthworks managed to avoid damage or destruction to sites of significance and indigenous biodiversity.
- Incorporation of indigenous biodiversity into development plans.

8.38 As identified in Section 6.0 paragraphs 6.132 to 6.147 above, the CIA sets out a number of recommendations for Synlait to consider. The CIA concludes it is supportive of the purpose of the Plan Change, but also identifies opportunities to further align activities within the DPMA with the IMP. These matters are currently being reviewed by Synlait. Some amendments have been made to the Plan Change in respect of the recommendations for earthworks e.g., the wording of the earthworks rule has been clarified to ensure that the need for measures to avoid sedimentation and discharges to drains or waterbodies is explicit and reference to the Accidental Discovery Protocol in the Mahaanui IMP is also made explicit. A process for further discussion of the recommendations between Synlait and Te Taumutu Rūnanga has been initiated. Synlait proposes to provide an up-date on those discussions to the District Council through the Plan Change process.

8.39 In summary, whilst there are matters within the request for plan change that can be further optimised in respect of cultural values, the CIA does not identify any matters of significance that would suggest the plan change is more fundamentally inconsistent with the IMP.

Part 2

8.40 Part 2 sets out the purpose and principles of the RMA. The purpose of the Act is to promote sustainable management of natural and physical resources. This is defined to mean:

Managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while-

(a) sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and

(b) safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and

(c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

8.41 This definition encapsulates a number of elements that may compete or conflict. An assessment as to whether s5 is achieved therefore requires a judgement to be formed. The key matters for this assessment are:

- Will the proposed Plan Change (in terms of the management of use, development and protection of natural and physical resources) enable people to provide for their wellbeing, health and safety?
- Will the potential of natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations be sustained?
- Will the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems be safeguarded? and
- Are the adverse effects of this enablement capable of being avoided, remedied or mitigated?

8.42 In order to achieve the purpose of the Act, it is necessary to:

- recognise and provide for the matters of national importance in section 6;
- have particular regard to the other matters in section 7;
- take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (section 8);

8.43 For the reasons set out in paragraph 7.5, the proposal is able to achieve the purpose of the Act. The Economics report appended to this Statutory Analysis and Evaluation describes the scale and significance of dairying within the Selwyn District and Canterbury Region. It is not only a reasonable anticipation, but also economically appropriate that the processing of milk is provided for within the District. This will optimise the efficiency of the milk processing industry, as well as provide employment and ensure that the benefits or value of production are realised within the district in terms of household expenditure and contribution to the economy.

8.44 Section 4.0 and paragraphs 7.6 to 7.16 in this Report clearly set out the reasons why the status quo in terms of the District Plan provisions is not efficient. The absence of policy guidance and rules which are more particular to the scale and nature of activities and buildings required for milk processing has resulted in considerable time and cost delays to the operation and development of an established milk plant, the costs of which are replicated by all parties, including the Council, in considering and processing those consents.

8.45 The provisions of the plan change clearly enable the use and development of physical resources for existing dairy processing sites. This will assist the community to provide for its economic and social wellbeing.

8.46 Informed by experience with the established Synlait plant, knowledge and conditions on previous resource consents and technical reports on traffic, noise and landscape effects, the provisions of the plan change have been developed to specifically provide for the health and safety of the community. The rules developed are particular to this management area and the characteristics and values of the locality. In this respect the proposed provisions better provide for the health and safety of the community than the current operative provisions.

8.47 Adverse effects are able to be avoided, remedied or mitigated. There will be a significant change in the landscape values of the locality in the short term but this is not out of context considering the significance of dairying within the District, the expectation that processing is an anticipated activity in rural areas and that the locality is already dominated by an established processing plant. Some adverse noise effects during the night-time may potentially be experienced at a single house on the opposite side of the State Highway. Synlait and the home-owner are currently in discussion on this matter. This potential adverse effect is outweighed by the significant benefits that are otherwise gained through the DPMA.

8.48 The information contained within and appended to this report demonstrates that the life supporting capacity of the air, water and soil will be safeguarded. The Stormwater Feasibility Report confirms that stormwater run-off can be expected to be appropriately managed in the future. Matters related to air discharge can be appropriately managed through future resource consent applications which are particular to the nature and scale of future activities, detailed design and adoption of best practice at that time.

8.49 There are no matters of national importance considered relevant to this application. The area of land subject to the plan change does not include an outstanding natural landscape or feature and there are no impacts on the margins of a river or stream.

8.50 Those “Other Matters” of relevance to this Plan Change are:

- s7(b) the efficient use of natural and physical resources
- s7(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values
- s7(f) the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.

8.51 The formulation of this Plan Change has had regard to these matters. The ODP and accompanying rules provide an overview of how the site will be developed over time and will achieve the integrated management of effects at the DPMA boundary with the Rural Zone. As acknowledged in paragraph 8.47, the DPMA will result in development which contrasts with the wider, open rural plains, however this is not of context and provisions relating to the location of buildings and activities and implementation of the landscape strategy will provide for the management of effects on amenity values.

8.52 The DPMA makes efficient use of infrastructure related to the existing dairy plant, and the area is highly accessible to the State Highway and main trunk rail line. In this context the proposal represents a very efficient use of the natural and physical resources of the land providing a range of benefits for the wellbeing of the community.

8.53 With respect to s8, the development of this proposal has sought the guidance of Te Runanga o Taumutu through the provision of a CIA and commitment to further engage with Runanga on the recommendations of that report.

8.54 In summary, having regard to the content and analysis contained within this report, it is concluded that the proposal achieves Part 2 of the RMA and is a more efficient and effective mechanism than the existing provisions of the Operative District Plan.

9.0 Consultation

9.1 This request for plan change has been discussed with the following groups and individuals. This has involved dialogue early in the plan change development process and/or with sufficient time for feedback to Synlait before finalising.

Fonterra

9.2 Synlait recognises that as the proposed DPMA and its provisions are limited to an established dairy plant, that the Fonterra plant at Darfield is a similar facility. Accordingly, Synlait has maintained an open dialogue with Fonterra on the provisions of the Plan Change.

Westland Milk

9.3 Westland Milk does not have an established plant in the Rural Zone, being located within IZone. Synlait has informed Westland Milk of its proposal.

Te Rūnanga o Taumutu

9.4 Synlait engaged the services of Dyanna Jolly to assist with facilitation of a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) on the proposed plan change. A copy of this Assessment is attached as **Appendix 5**. In summary, the CIA is supportive of the plan change request to recognise the particular requirements of dairy processing activities at the Synlait site.

9.5 The CIA does include a number of recommendations to further align the proposal with the IMP. Synlait has reviewed these recommendations and is now considering how it may further align its activities and provisions within the request for plan change. Some of the recommendations relate to matters that can be addressed outside of the plan change process whilst some involve further clarification of wording to address effects of earthworks for example. Synlait has now initiated a process to work through the recommendations of the CIA with Mahaanui Kurataaio on behalf of the Runanga. The outcomes of this process will be reported to Council.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu

9.6 Both Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and its advisory agency MKT have been kept informed of the request for plan change and the CIA. Both agencies verbally advised they are supportive of the CIA process and they were invited to participate in discussions of issues and options. Te Rūnanga indicated that its interest in this CIA was limited to providing advice if requested by Te Taumutu Rūnanga.

Adjoining Property Owners

9.7 Synlait has contacted its immediate and adjoining neighbours to the proposed DPMA. Information on the plan change has been included in two editions of its neighbour's newsletter (December and March) delivered to 50 households in the vicinity of the Plant. Synlait has held individual discussions with those landowners directly adjoining or opposite the DPMA.

KiwiRail

9.8 Synlait representatives have discussed the request for plan change with engineering and planning staff within KiwiRail. A draft ODP and outline of the relevant provisions was supplied.

9.9 KiwiRail has advised that based on the draft information provided it considers the existing flashing light and bell alarm system at the level crossing to be adequate to cope with the anticipated increase in traffic movements. If more detailed information is provided, either at the time of lodging or at another point in time, KiwiRail will review this position.

9.10 The issue of direct rail access has been discussed. This is a commercial issue relating to rail traffic volumes at the site. However the DPMA preserves and enables the possibility of direct access and the physical space for a siding to be developed.

NZTA

9.11 Synlait has met with traffic engineering and planning experts within NZTA. Draft provisions relating to traffic, and in particular, requirements for review of the intersection performance and design at the time of building consent which result in an increase in storage or processing capacity have been provided. Based on this draft information NZTA has advised it has no additional comments or changes to the request for plan change.

Environment Canterbury (ECan)

9.12 A meeting was held between a consultant planner acting for Synlait and planning staff at ECan, where draft provisions were tabled and discussed. ECan has not provided formal feedback to date, but did verbally indicate that it's primary interest was that the DPMA was specifically limited to existing dairy processing activities, and would not provide the basis for more generalised industrial activity.

10.0 Conclusions

10.1 In conclusion, this Statutory Analysis and Evaluation Report with accompanying AEE and appendices presents all of the relevant information required by the Selwyn District Council to process the request for Plan Change.

10.2 The information provided is at a level of detail that is appropriate to the scale and significance of the issues concerned. Potential environmental effects have been identified and appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated through the proposed provisions.

10.3 All of the matters of policy concern and all matters of statutory consideration have been identified and addressed. Consultation with stakeholders has been initiated and will be on-going as required in order to respond to issues and as part of Synlait's commitment to good corporate citizenship.

10.4 On the basis of the analysis provided, Synlait requests that this application for plan change be approved and the provisions proposed be incorporated into the Selwyn District Plan (Rural Volume).