

Submitter Presentation:

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Date:

28 March 2022

Private Plan Change 68 Hearing

Hello everyone, My name is Helen Urquhart and I am speaking on behalf of my Husband Roger and myself. I am sorry I can not attend today as I am a household contact of a Covid case with one of my sons testing positive. I work in Deaf education so my qualifications are in Education holding a Bachelor of Science Degree, (Plant and Microbial Sciences) Diploma of Teaching, Higher Diploma of Teaching and Diploma of Teaching the Deaf and hearing impaired. As you can see I have no experience with urban planning , land development and the legal ins and outs of such. I have never made a submission to Council on anything previously and this process and been a steep learning curve. Therefore , my apologies if I am not as accurate or as precise as others or can not pinpoint a policy reference. Last week you heard from many experts who spoke and referred to their reports. Today I hope to give a more personal experience on how this process and proposal have impacted on us and raise some concerns of which many have been glossed over or brushed aside by the experts.

We live at 335 Trents Road, opposite the proposed development site along with our two sons. We moved here coming up 14 years ago, making a conscious decision to live in a rural location. My husband having grown up on a farm values open spaces. Previously we lived in a subdivision near Yaldhurst with paddocks opposite us. When we learnt these were to be developed into residential housing we decided perhaps it was time to us to move on and we fortunate enough to find our current property. We felt reassured , perhaps naively that the zoning at our property , Existing Development Area and the Inner Rural plains opposite us gave us protection from any

development occurring. If we wanted to live surrounded by houses in a subdivision we would have stayed where we were.

While for many of you it is your day to day job to interpret policy, prepare and present reports and attend hearing such is this, it is not ours. Most of us here today are working, raising families or running a business. This process has been a stressful and time consuming process trying to digest reports full with Jargon and policy for something we never wanted in the first place. The need to defend what we currently have and are zoned for while trying to carry on our normal lives in this most abnormal time has been tiresome. We do not have the same resources to fund reports by experts on everything associated with a Private Plan Change (PPC) so while we can equally partake in this process, we are not on an equal playing field when it comes to collating, accessing and interpreting information to present as the applicants have. It was also very challenging to find any experts to help us as many have a conflict of interest either having worked with the parties in the past or have or currently working on other Private Plan Changes in the district. Once again, not an equal playing field. Thank you to Nick Williamson for the work he has done.

Many who made a submission but chose not to appear at this hearing were in opposition to the development. While they are not here, we think it is worth keeping their opposition to this development in our minds.

1.Me too

When considering the “Me too” group we think careful consideration needs to be given to their original submissions and more importantly their motivation for any changes. Many (properties) have outwardly stated their preferred option is to oppose the plan change. It would appear to us that those who say, “I’m opposed but if it goes ahead to include me too”, would indicate that so great is the impact of this development on their lifestyle or business the only viable option they feel is to sell up and move. How can that be right or fair on those owners?

Much the reporting to date has been based on 820 sections. It has not been based on the “Me too” and “The Gap”. If these were to be included then 820 sections is yesterday’s news.

2.Urban rural boundary/ Urban Rural form

Photo 1 and 2: The rural urban boundary has been treated harshly by this developer in the past. You need not look further than the photo included which shows the existing boundary between Stirling Park and the adjoining lifestyle block at 414 Trents Road. The photo would suggest that no care was really taken in good design here because the developer was and is playing a waiting game and eventually sees themselves extending this part of Stirling Park into this property. This idea is supported by Patricia Harte as she reports in her evidence summary dated 21 March that, *”to the east PC68 adjoins Sterling Park which is now a fully developed residential area sitting between Hamptons, Springs and Trents Road. Connections between Sterling Park and new residential development to the west, such as PC68, have already been planned and created in the form of a connecting road (Guilder Drive), two greenspace cycle routes and a further road connection through Guinea Place.”*

A Further example of poor rural urban planning is shown on Hamptons Road. Photos 3-5 As you can see by the photo a boundary fence has been built parallel with the road. You can see the land is neglected ,full of weeds, out of sight out of mind for the property owners while the rural land sits opposite . It is a harsh transition, one side of the road residential, one side rural with paddocks.

In addition to this it is noted in one report the development area is lacking in significant landscape features and shelter belts are common. “ *In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural-residential properties will experience a change in the openness of views across the space although in many locations views are restricted by existing shelter belts or plantings. Adjoining suburban residential properties, current and future, overlooking the Plan Change areas will have a mix of open, partial, and screened views of future development. Changes to the experience of these residents is considered low given the character of existing views and existing boundary treatments on their properties, with the Plan Change viewed as a natural extension of existing residential areas”.*

Who decides our experiences will be considered low? That is very assuming to be kind.

It is hardly surprising regarding the shelter belts when currently it is rural and shelter belts are common place so to use that as a negative in support of the proposal is weak. It also notes that many of the existing properties will not be visually impacted by the development because of those shelter belts. We are hardly going to remove these as they serve a function, (shelter) and as

correctly stated, will reduce the visual impact of housing opposite us should this Plan Change go ahead. Collectively, these shelter belts provide that rural sense and add a “greenness” to the area. However it is more than that. As soon as we step out our gate it feels like peace, we are in the country or so it feels. The same can be said when arriving home, I get a sense of relief for lack of a better word when the road opens up away from residential housing into the rural part of Trents Road. The visual amenity we are losing simply isn’t just shelter belts.

Note the points in bold below,

” The purpose of Selwyn 2031: District Development Strategy (Selwyn 2031) is to provide an overarching strategic framework for achieving sustainable growth across the District to 2031. The key outcomes anticipated by the Selwyn 2031 actions that are relevant to the housing density and typology workstream are:

Protection of our existing character

- *provision of a range of housing types to meet the diverse range of social, cultural and economic*
- *retain the district’s sense of **rural identity by adopting a consolidated approach to urban growth;**”*

Photo 6 - shows Trents Road with some of the properties in “The Gap”. Note the greenery the trees give. Would these remain? As mentioned earlier individually they may not have value individually but collectively they do.

3. Education

It would appear that the Ministry of Education is no longer opposing this with land being set aside for a school from my understanding. Do we know how much land? There have been no reports provided in regard to noise assessment of this nor the traffic movements and traffic a school would generate. None of the traffic reports discussed a school as far as I am aware and it’s impact. It would also increase the flow of traffic on these interactions in the block of Spring, Trents, Shands, and Hamptons. You only need to look at Prebbleton School to see the amount of traffic

and parking issues a school can generate which local residents experience. While cycle routes and footpaths will be provided, many, many children get a ride to school by a parent or caregiver on their way into work . How does land being set aside for a school impact on the density of housing in the area? Whereabouts in their concept plan will the school be positioned? Has any thought been given to the follow on impact to Lincoln High School bearing in mind the growth there?

4.Housing supply ,Population growth and Urban growth.

In Mr Colegrave's evidence on Monday 21 March, he said demand for housing was insatiable. By the very use of the word, there will never be enough sections. Everyone who wants to live in Prebbleton does not need to find a section and build a house. There is housing stock on the market currently along with a at least 8 sections available for sale this past weekend.

Much has been made of population growth in the area which no-one can deny but caution needs to be taken when looking too far into the future. Predictions of population growth beyond 10 years are fraught with issues.

“Unfortunately, long term predictions (more than ten years) for population growth are almost always wrong. Simply because there are too many factors and variables that impact on different aspects of the drivers behind the modelled numbers”, Mike Blackburn, May 2021, Blackburn Management reporting for Birches Village, Prebbleton.

Not a lot of attention has been given to the population growth the two rest homes will provide, Bupa and Summerset. *“Between these two developments it is estimated that there will be as many as 700 new residents in Prebbleton within the next two to three years, although this is in a different demographic age bracket from proposed new residential developments”, Mike Blackburn, May 2021, Blackburn Management reporting for Birches Village, Prebbleton.* I add this to make the point population growth does not always equate with sections available on the market.

Mr Colegrave also stated that properties in and around Prebbleton are mostly new housing stock on large sections. People who move here are looking for larger houses on larger sections. If people want to smaller type housing they tend to live closer to the city. If this is the case the why on earth are 65% of the sections in the PPC less than 600 square metres according to Core Logic. This is completely out of step with the surrounding area. The share size and proportions of the

land area is massive which I believe will result in something like an 80% increase in population. The Domain and new recreation reserve are all on the other side of Spring Road as are the local sports clubs. How does have a development this size contribute to a well functioning town when people are crossing Springs Road for recreation?

Mr Colegrave also provides this insight, *"This, in turn, reflects Prebbleton's proximity to, and easy accessibility from, Christchurch City. In short, because Prebbleton is located so close to the City, it benefits from the growth and development of nearby areas there (such as Halswell). In addition, Prebbleton is well serviced by relatively frequent and reliable public transport services to/from the City. Plus, it has an urban outlook to the east but a rural one to the west, so it effectively gets "the best of both worlds."* Yet our rural one is potentially being compromised. It is ironic that the selling point of rural is what he sees as an asset is the very thing that is at risk with this development.

The comment in regards to the easy commute to Christchurch is important as we are being told how people will not need to commute to the city , with job opportunities in the local and surrounding area, yet he sees the commute as a positive factor for the development. A bus route that takes you to the city is good but that is the only place it can take you. There are no services that connect with Hornby or Halswell directly from Prebbleton.

While they have stated that people may not need to commute to town, the majority of people do so.

"Currently, Selwyn District residents rely heavily on centres in Christchurch City to meet their daily household needs."

At some stage someone needs to draw the line literally and thankfully this has already been done by the policies already in place. There are boundaries. Not only are we now talking about a residential development now but also I see commercial has been added to it, *"Plan Change 68 (PC68) seeks to rezone approximately 67.5 hectares of land in Prebbleton to accommodate around 820 dwellings and a small amount of supporting **commercial activity**".* Since when I ask? There is no other reporting done around a commercial development or the implications and once again, traffic impacts a commercial development might have. The PPC change has now gone from a

residential development of 820 sections to a residential development 820 sections plus, with a school and a commercial area. Talk about goal posts moving.

5.Pollution

CO2 emissions- Much has been discussed over recent times about reducing our Carbon footprint. One of my initial concerns we raised in our submission was around pollution. There are no clean air provisions in Selwyn as in Christchurch. Many new homes, including in the existing Stirling Park have log burners. Will there be covenants around clean air burner log burners with at least 820 sections? If this PPC was approved it could be used as an opportunity to make this a sustainable, low Carbon footprint, use of solar power, reusing grey water, a one of a kind subdivision which would make it stand out and set an example for those to follow.

5aPollution and traffic movement - Despite what has been said around creating employment opportunities that do not require people to commute to Christchurch, the majority of people living in Prebbleton do. Houses in Prebbleton are marketed with the proximity of the Southern Motorway as an advantage. Just from this weekend alone several properties were marketed this way. How would this development be any different? The roundabouts when complete will provide access to Shands Road, connecting to the motorway will be used as a selling point so the Christchurch to Prebbleton commute will continue to grow. With slower speeds being implemented and more traffic the travel times will increase and pressure on bottlenecks ie Brougham Street over bridge will also increase. Already we get traffic from Lincoln and Rolleston on our local roads and more will cut through Hamptons or Trents to get to Shands Road. This does not even take into account the cumulative effects of the multiple plan changes happening within Lincoln and Rolleston specifically. There is talk of electric bikes and scooters in one report. We are not too sure how many people will do their supermarket shopping using their bike. Bikes and scooters are mostly a leisure activity and you need only to look at traffic in the morning and evening to see this. People will still use their cars. From the Shands Road end of Trents Road to Springs Road it is approximately 1.4 kilometres. 1/3 of vehicle trips are less than 2 kilometres and the majority less than 6 kilometres, many as single occupant. Conveniently a graphic is provided for electric car use by David Smith from Abley. It is only in 2041 electric cars will slightly outnumber petrol so what happens over the next 19 years with emissions from cars? Traffic has

not been normal for years in this area with continuous residential building and roadworks in the area so traffic counts are never going to be a true reflections of what really is happening.

As an aside, the current Stirling Park does not have any driveways connecting with Trents, Springs or Hamptons Road. (See Photo 7) Access to all properties is from within the subdivision. Why then are driveways coming onto Trents Road now okay?

Noise pollution - No assessments have been carried out relating to noise pollution. This is even more relevant now since there is a provision for a school going in, at least 820 sections, potentially more when considering “ The Gap” and the “Me too’s” should the plan be approved. There has been talk about traffic movements but none around the noise generated from the traffic. Trents road is a coarse chip seal and no matter the type of fuel a car uses the road noise is still there, more traffic equals more road noise.

Light pollution- Currently we do not have street lighting on Trents Road and do not have many neighbours. The ability to see clearly into the night sky and see the Milky Way, Constellations and the Red Moon last November are also why we enjoy living where we do. 820 sections , roading plus will produce light pollution which we are learning more about how it impacts human health. While LED’s are better in reducing some issues they are related to other concerns. *“A ground breaking report recently released by the American Medical Association (AMA) Council on Science and Public Health affirms known and suspected impacts to human health and the environment caused by light emitting diodes (LEDs) that emit excessive amounts of blue light,”* International Dark Sky Association

In Summary, this PPC has been a hurried cut and paste job from the start with inaccuracies right from the very beginning with referring to it as Sovereign Palms and still at the hearing referring to Rolleston in one report. Many concerns have been glossed or brushed over with no clear indications of who is responsible for what and when ie sewer. It is ironic that this hearing is being held here at Tai Tapu due to Prebbleton Community Hall not having good internet. What does that say about existing infrastructure? Wording in the reports is non committal with loose phrasing allowing for very wide interpretation. It is very short sighted to look at each PPC in the area as an individual development. These developments do not happen in isolation from one another but somehow get treated that way. What we really need to know is the impact, the cumulative effect

of all of these PPC's together are having on infrastructure and roading. It really concerns me that this is the approach taken. When I first started teaching, my tutors said, "take care of the little things and the big things will look after themselves". The little things haven't been taken care of here so how will we know the big things will look after themselves . We remain in opposition to this development and if it does proceed we think some serious thought be given to much larger sections in keeping and sympathetic to the surrounding rural environment.

Helen and Roger Urquhart

March 2022



Photo 1 (above) and Photo 2 (below). The boundary between Stirling Park and a lifestyle block- 414 Trents Road.



Photos 3-5 -A residential/ rural boundary plus no drive way access onto Hamptons Road.







Photo 6 -Trents Road Shelter belts





