

**The Resource Management Act 1991**

**Selwyn District Council**

**Selwyn District Plan**

**(Volume 1: Township & Volume 2: Rural)**

**Proposed Plan Change 7**

**Growth of Townships, Urban Development and  
Implementation of the Lincoln Structure Plan**

A Proposed Plan Change to provide for the strategic residential growth  
of townships and to introduce new subdivision  
and medium density provisions.

Date of Notification:

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the evaluation undertaken by Selwyn District Council (the Council) in accordance with Section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) in relation to proposed Plan Change 7 (PC7) to the Selwyn District Plan.
- 1.2 It should be read in conjunction with the proposed amendments to the District Plan, attached as **Appendix 1** and the explanation accompanying those amendments.

## **2 Overview of Proposed Plan Change 7**

- 2.1 Proposed Plan Change 7 introduces substantial amendments to the Selwyn District Plan, particularly the Township Volume. In particular, it seeks to provide for the strategic residential growth around townships within the Greater Christchurch Area, including Rolleston, Lincoln, Prebbleton and West Melton, with particular emphasis on Lincoln as a result of the recently adopted Lincoln Structure Plan. In addition, District-wide and Township specific provisions are proposed within the subdivision section along with provisions relating to medium density housing to support the consolidation of townships while achieving good urban design outcomes.
- 2.2 For ease of understanding, this Plan Change is broken into different sections, each focussing on a particular topic with its own analysis. However, the Plan Change is to be read as a single document with each topic being interrelated on some level. A brief summary of the topics is noted below.

### ***Strategic Approach and Outline Development Plans***

- 2.3 In order to address the issues arising from a continuing population growth rate over the next 35 years, including the availability of, and ability of Council to provide appropriate affordable infrastructure; difficulties in integrating new development with existing townships; and retaining the open rural spaciousness identity and character of the District, the Council needs to take a directive role in determining where, and in what fashion, urban growth is to occur (i.e. a change from a 'market-led' to a 'community-led' approach).
- 2.4 The Council is party to the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS) which establishes a settlement pattern for residential, commercial, business and rural residential growth for the Greater Christchurch area to 2041. The purpose of the UDS is to enable integrated long-term community and infrastructure planning across Christchurch City and Waimakariri and Selwyn Districts.

- 2.5 It is also recognised that the UDS has led to the formulation of the Greater Christchurch Transport Vision, which forms part of the UDS Transport Communications Framework for informing statutory planning processes. In brief, the Transport Vision is to create a transport system for the Greater Christchurch area that provides travel options for bringing people and communities together to sustain healthy, vibrant, lifestyles, and economic wellbeing, by 2041. The key themes that underpin this vision include matters associated with connectivity, travel choice, community life, economic prosperity, and quality of life. The basis of the strategic transport response to be provided over the Greater Christchurch area is detailed within the Christchurch, Rolleston and Environs Transportation Study (CRETS), which was adopted by Council in November 2007.
- 2.6 In addition, the Council is developing a Five Waters Strategy (5Waters) to define a strategic vision for the sustainable management of the five water services – predominantly community water, wastewater, land drainage, water races and stormwater services, over the next 60 years.
- 2.7 This section of PC7 therefore amends and introduces new objectives and policies to support the strategic approach to urban development within the Greater Christchurch area.
- 2.8 In order to facilitate development of Greenfield areas in an integrated and orderly fashion, PC7 requires the preparation of an Outline Development Plan (ODP) prior to subdivision occurring. Each ODP area is to be identified on the Planning Maps and based on land areas that are sufficiently large so as to ensure the integration and provision of key infrastructure and facilities. Any requirements relating to the staging or sequencing of development will also be shown on the Planning Maps.
- 2.9 The provisions of PC7 require each ODP to be prepared for the entire ODP area (shown on Planning Maps) and in accordance with the relevant policy criteria for that ODP area. In summary, each ODP is required to include matters such as the principal through roads, connection and integration with the surrounding road network; any land to be set aside for community facilities, reserves, business activities, low and medium residential density areas, stormwater treatment, retention and drainage paths, walkways and cycleways etc. It will also be necessary to demonstrate how any required residential density for each ODP area is to be achieved.

### **Medium Density Housing**

- 2.10 The UDS sets the framework for managing urban growth in greater Christchurch through a combination of staged urban expansion around the rural fringes of

Christchurch and neighbouring towns such as Rolleston and Lincoln, and an increased emphasis on accommodating a growing proportion of urban growth through more intensive use of the existing urban areas, especially in close proximity to township centres. If this intensification is to occur, and is to result in attractive, vibrant communities that provide a range of housing choices, then it is vital that medium density dwellings are well designed and appropriately located so that they provide a good level of amenity for both occupants and the wider neighbourhood.

- 2.11 PC7 therefore seeks to achieve a high standard of design, amenity, and local infrastructure, whilst concurrently ensuring that built densities are at a level that is sufficient to accommodate a substantial increase in the number of households in Selwyn. These key objectives are to be realised through the introduction of new objectives, policies and rules for development within those areas identified on an ODP for medium density housing. These provisions reflect the key principles of a non-statutory "Design Guide for Medium Density Housing" that will be developed separately and will sit outside of the District Plan.

#### ***Subdivision Design***

- 2.12 All subdivision applications within the Township Volume of the District Plan are presently restricted discretionary activities with the matters of discretion focused on factors such as the minimum residential density, servicing and utility standards, rather than quality design outcomes. Design outcomes that are now sought include matters such as improved connectivity, variable and innovative design layouts, strong connections for allotments with the street frontage and reducing rear lots serviced by individual driveways.
- 2.13 PC7 therefore introduces new district wide objectives to place emphasis on innovation and quality of subdivision design; policies to set out how improved design in subdivision can be achieved e.g. ensure strong connections between allotments and the street; and design criteria into subdivision assessment matters to assess whether the subdivision achieves a suitable design outcome. Reference is also made to the "Design Guidelines for Residential Subdivision in the Living Zones" that will be developed separately and will sit outside of the District Plan.

#### ***Proposed Amendments to the District Plan***

- 2.14 All of the proposed amendments to the District Plan arising from each of the topic areas of PC7 noted above are contained in Section 9.

### **3 Statutory Requirements of Section 32 of the Resource Management Act**

- 3.1 Under Section 32 of the RMA, before the Council publicly notifies a plan change, it must carry out an evaluation to examine:
- the extent to which each objective is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA;
  - and
  - whether, having regard to their efficiency and effectiveness, the policies, rules, or other methods are the most appropriate for achieving the objectives.
- 3.2 The evaluation must take into account:
- The benefits and costs of policies, rules, or other methods; and
  - The risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information about the subject matter of the policies, rules, or other methods.
- 3.3 A Section 32 report is part of an on-going process of understanding the costs and benefits associated with a proposed plan change. The Council is required to undertake a further evaluation of costs and benefits prior to making a decision on a Plan Change, taking into account further matters raised in submissions and any hearing.

#### ***Efficiency***

- 3.4 An evaluation of 'efficiency' takes into account and balances the benefits and costs of the proposed policies, rules and other methods.

#### ***Effectiveness***

- 3.5 'Effectiveness' measures how successful a particular option is in addressing the issues and achieving the desired environmental outcomes described in the District Plan. Effectiveness is also relevant when considering how successful the proposed policies, rules and other methods would be in achieving district plan objectives. Only provisions that are effective in achieving objectives should be adopted.

### **4 Methodology**

- 4.1 Each section of PC7 includes a Section 32 Assessment that sets out the following:
- An overview and/or background of the topic;

- Description of the scope of the proposed Plan Change, including a description of the relevant objectives and policy framework of the District Plan and an outline of the issues;
- A cost/benefit assessment of options, including a consideration whether each objective is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA, the efficiency and effectiveness in achieving such objectives and the anticipated environmental results of the District Plan.

## **5 Background**

### ***Strategic approach to managing the effects of urban development***

- 5.1 Selwyn District continues to be one of the fastest growing districts in New Zealand and the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS) forecasts that by 2041, the Selwyn District's population will double. Growth rates in the Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts have exceeded Christchurch City's over the past 11 years, and are two of the fastest growing Territorial Authority areas in the country<sup>1</sup>. The Selwyn District has grown from a 1991 population of 21,300 to 33,700 (2006 census). The Selwyn Growth Model<sup>2</sup> projects further growth will increase Selwyn's population to approximately 67,593 by 2041.
- 5.2 Issues arising from this rapid growth rate include the availability of, and ability of Council to provide appropriate affordable infrastructure; difficulties in integrating new development with existing townships; and retaining the open and spacious rural identity and character of the District. Residents have also raised concerns over an increasing lack of cohesiveness in townships and that these residential environments are largely becoming dormitory suburbs of Christchurch City.
- 5.3 On the basis of the forecasted growth rates for the District, and in line with the UDS, the containment of townships is necessary to achieve community aspirations to maintain rural amenity and sense of openness relative to the urban environment of the City. Another key component of the UDS settlement strategy is to develop as Key Activity Centres within the larger settlements of Rolleston and Lincoln so that they are better able to meet the needs of the surrounding communities.
- 5.4 For these reasons, the Council is to take a more directive role in determining where, and in what fashion, urban growth is to occur (i.e. a change from a 'market-led' to a 'community-led' approach). This change in approach has

<sup>1</sup> UDS, page 28; Statistics New Zealand, Demographic Trends: 2007, 9 Subnational demographic projections, pages 156-157.

<sup>2</sup> The Selwyn Growth Model was adopted by SDC in 23 April 2008 to provide a common basis for all forward planning, and underpins the LTCCP. It expresses growth in household, population and labour force terms and has a horizon to 2041, so as to be consistent with the UDS.

already been initiated through its involvement in the UDS (and now Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement (RPS)), the commissioning of structure plans for Lincoln, Rolleston and Prebbleton townships, and the removal of the '1km rule' in favour of appropriately located rural-residential areas<sup>3</sup>.

- 5.5 As noted previously, the UDS is a growth management strategy for the Greater Christchurch area, which was adopted by all strategy partners (including Selwyn District) in June 2007. The strategy establishes a settlement pattern for residential, commercial and business growth through to 2041 to enable long-term infrastructure planning and to promote integrated and sustainable development. The strategy concludes that Rolleston and Lincoln will become the largest towns in the Selwyn District (18,000 and 12,000 population respectively). The Council has committed to a series of actions to implement the strategy including changes to the district plan.
- 5.6 Proposed Change 1 (PC1) to the RPS was notified on 28 July 2007 as a key implementation tool for the UDS. One of the main techniques employed in PC1 to achieve an integrated planning approach across the Greater Christchurch area include the identification of Urban Limits around existing settlements and to allocate where and at what rate growth should occur. The setting of urban limits is intended to promote efficient development through a more compact urban form, including sufficient provision of housing to meet the projected population growth and to cater for business land development. The sequencing of development is also intended to encourage intensification within Christchurch City and the larger towns in the surrounding area so as to:
- reduce urban sprawl;
  - create efficiencies with regard to the provision of infrastructure and operation of transport networks;
  - reinforce existing commercial centres;
  - provide a range of living environments and housing opportunities, including opportunity for rural residential living; and
  - improve living spaces by bringing urban design into all aspects of planning.
- 5.7 While the District Plan must give effect to the RPS, incorporating the (operative) provisions of PC1 that apply to the Greater Christchurch area, the Council seeks to move away from a 'market-led' approach across all of Selwyn District. The existing District Plan adopted a growth strategy reliant on developer

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<sup>3</sup> The provision of rural-residential growth is to be subject to a separate plan change to the District Plan.



initiated private plan changes in order to avoid the potential inefficiencies associated with Council zoning land. Such inefficiencies were identified as whether the same opportunity and process would be available to all landowners; whether the land rezoned was appropriately located from a housing demand perspective; and whether the landowner who benefited from the rezoning paid the costs of rezoning the land. In addition, a market-led approach enabled the Council to assess the suitability of each private plan change request on a 'case by case' basis.

- 5.8 However, it has become apparent that a reliance on a market-led approach has resulted in poorly integrated developments and an inefficient provision of servicing and transport infrastructure. This is primarily due to the piecemeal ad hoc manner in which private plan changes have been formulated and adopted in the absence of any overarching strategic direction to managing urban growth. Establishing a clear picture of the rate and scale of development that is likely to occur enables the costs of this growth to be identified and managed from the beginning. As such, the implementation of a 'community-led' approach will mean that development can be planned and carried forward logically, while integrating land use and funding with associated infrastructure and transport needs.
- 5.9 The change to a community-led approach is being initiated through the preparation of structure plans for those larger townships within the Greater Christchurch area, being Lincoln, Rolleston and Prebbleton. The purpose of each structure plan is provide a strategic framework to guide development, including the setting of urban limits, which will then be used as a basis for future changes to the District Plan. It is anticipated that new development within these townships will occur in accordance with an approved outline development plan (ODP), which demonstrates how the key principles of the structure plan are to be implemented. The preparation and subsequent implementation of each ODP area will also enable the Council to ensure that the development of these Greenfield areas incorporates the principles of good urban design.
- 5.10 The Council also intends to adopt a strategic approach to managing growth in other townships in the district (outside the Greater Christchurch area) in order to promote an integrated land use pattern and the efficient provision of infrastructure. In these townships, the Council will continue to manage the design and layout of subdivision, and the availability of services, within existing zoned areas. Any private plan change request to re-zone land for residential or business purposes will be assessed against the policy framework for rezoning land specific to each township, together with the broader objectives and policies of the Plan relating to the overall strategic provision of infrastructure,

and the Selwyn Growth Model. The Growth Model, adopted in April 2007, is a set of population and household projections with a planning horizon of 2041. It is based on known infrastructure capacity constraints and will be reviewed regularly as infrastructure is upgraded or replaced. This approach is to be applied until such time as a structure plan (or other strategic planning tool) has been prepared for these townships, either individually or collectively.

#### ***Lincoln Structure Plan & Integrated Stormwater Management Plan***

- 5.11 The Lincoln Structure Plan (LSP) and associated Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP) were adopted by Council in May 2008. The purpose of the LSP is to outline an integrated urban design framework for the future development of Lincoln Township. A range of 'networks' (movement, open space, waterways, social and land use) were mapped and assessed to identify opportunities and constraints. The resulting land use pattern provides for a range of housing densities, sufficient land for the community and business activities needed in a Key Activity Centre and reinforces the primacy of the town centre supported by neighbourhood centres.
- 5.12 The LSP also established a staging strategy to enable the logical and cost-effective provision of infrastructure. Residential expansion beyond existing zones is directed northwards toward Tancreds Road and to the east towards Ellesmere Road to avoid constraints of land ownership by the Crown and the high water table south of the town. Servicing is envisaged to progress from the south to the north to take advantage of landfall to the south, and to enable the orderly and logical provision of infrastructure.
- 5.13 The structure plan is not intended to act as a blueprint. The ultimate form of development will not look exactly like the structure plan but will be guided by the concepts and approach of the structure plan.
- 5.14 The purpose of the ISMP is to identify the most appropriate means of treating and disposing of stormwater in a catchment, particularly in existing and new urban areas. It is a stormwater management tool that considers and balances a range of catchment values and provides certainty to the Council, Environment Canterbury, developers, stakeholders & the community. The LSP incorporates the findings of the ISMP and considers the way in which residential and commercial activities should be developed.
- 5.15 The draft Lincoln Structure Plan Issues and Options Report June 2007 (draft LSP) was based on the projected figures from the UDS, which identified Lincoln as one of the south-western sector growth centres, and a key commercial/business activity centre which has the ability to act as a node for transport and a location suitable for more intensive development. Lincoln was

earmarked to potentially serve a catchment of 23,000 people (within the wider area) with the ability to accommodate approximately 3,500 additional households by 2041. The UDS gives priority to mixed use developments and retaining the village/rural character through target densities of 10 households per ha.

- 5.16 The notification of Proposed Change 1 (PC1) to the RPS reduced the projected population figures for Lincoln to 3,125 households by 2041 (excluding rural-residential development) and introduced a three tier staging regime, instead of the two tiers as contained in the draft LSP. Corresponding "Urban Limits" are also identified on Map 1-15 of PC1, within which "Greenfield Outline Development Plan Areas" for both residential and business development are contained. Of particular note is the requirement for residential subdivision and development to achieve a minimum of 10 households per hectare in Greenfields Areas.
- 5.17 The Council subsequently lodged a submission on PC1 requesting a reallocation of households from rural-residential<sup>4</sup> to residential and clarifying that existing undeveloped but zoned land is included in the projected population figures. The final Structure Plan is therefore based on the Council's submission, being the most up-to-date information available at the present time. The overall household figure for Lincoln is therefore 3,900.
- 5.18 The LSP has been formulated around a number of boundaries designed to cater for the outward spread of growth to 2041, based on current projections. This is a direct consequence of the desire to prevent continuous residential encroachment onto rural land to preserve the rural, open space character of Lincoln and to protect the environment and natural drainage systems. These boundaries are highly desirable to the successful management of growth in Lincoln and the edge of development forms the urban limit within PC1. In this respect, it is noted that the north-eastern boundary of projected growth was based on a landform rather than cadastral boundaries. The final structure plan, adopted by Council in May 2008, amended this to follow cadastral boundaries and it is anticipated that this will be amended as per Policy 12 of PC1.
- 5.19 The **broad principles and key features** of the Structure Plan are as follows:
1. The structure plan should provide for consolidated, sustainable coordinated development and the staged provision of services (sewer and stormwater) in a logical direction. A compact urban form incorporating urban design principles is sought.

2. Cadastral boundaries have been used to define the growth areas, but also take into account natural growth boundaries such as the Halswell River catchment to the northeast and high water tables to the south.
3. Non natural boundaries have also been included such as CRI & Lincoln University land to the west and northwest and roads such as Tancreds and Ellesmere.
4. Medium density development is located primarily outside of the existing urban area in order to maintain its character, particularly inside the four belts. The medium density areas are concentrated around the outskirts of existing residential development and as close as practical to existing and proposed services. Medium density areas are provided for in all three stages. An average of 15 households per hectare has been adopted for the medium density areas.
5. Conventional residential has been assumed at 10 households per hectare.
6. A large Neighbourhood Centre (to be deferred until stage 2) of approximately 1.5-2ha, a school site of 2.5ha and community facilities/large reserve of 2.5ha, are located within the main Dairy Block area.
7. A small Neighbourhood Centre (to be deferred until stage 2) of approximately 0.5ha is provided for on the north side of Edward Street opposite Southfield Drive.
8. Provision for a 3rd school of 2.5ha and a 2.5ha reserve area within the Stage 3 area north of Edward Street.
9. Separate business park and industrial areas.
10. An integrated transport and walking network, including walking and cycling and public transport with main roads being provided in a seamless manner through development areas.
11. Buffering at the rural road interface.
12. Decommissioning of the sewage ponds in association with the development of the Eastern Selwyn Sewerage Scheme (ESSS).
13. An area to the north-east of the sewage pond not previously in the urban area has been included as a natural extension of the urban area once the sewage ponds are decommissioned, providing for a more compact urban form. A building buffer zone will still be required as a wastewater holding tank will be constructed in this area as part of the ESSS.

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<sup>4</sup> Following the notification of PC1, the Council considered that the 2,400 rural-residential households was excessive and reallocated 1,800 households to Greenfield areas in Rolleston and Lincoln.

14. A potential area for some rural-residential development has been added around the eastern edge as a buffering, which will be required to be serviced<sup>5</sup>.
15. All major stormwater retention will generally be outside of urban areas, primarily around the existing wastewater treatment pond. The indicative areas shown have been calculated as being equivalent to the area needed for retention. Indicative flow paths are also shown. The industrial area and a residential area south of the proposed boundary road will require a separate stormwater retention area due to existing land levels.
16. An allowance of 1.5% of overall development area has been made for the drainage of stormwater other than via road reserve or recreation reserve land.
17. The total number of hectares is 380 excluding the industrial and business park areas. The net area is approximately 360 hectares.
18. On the basis of the above, the structure plan achieves an overall density ratio of 10.7 households per hectare.

5.20 The LSP also contains a **staging plan** that enables and shows the following

- The growth of the town centre and neighbourhood centres in logical increments that allow for the continuity of the social, employment and retail function of the town centre and enables Lincoln to develop in an integrated manner.
- Development of a full range of uses concurrently in new neighbourhood centres.
- How the initial development stages can occur without undue interference from construction of future stages.
- How environmental impacts have been limited (e.g. through the successive development of adjoining land so as to avoid reverse sensitivity effects at the rural/urban interface, requiring connectivity within and through outline development plan areas).
- The provision of infrastructure (roading, stormwater, water, wastewater) in a logical and cost effective manner.

5.21 In terms of staging of residential development, it is noted that the following assumptions were used to establish the staging plan, while taking into account the definition of 'net density' in PC1 to the RPS.

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<sup>5</sup> As mentioned previously, the provision of rural-residential development will be addressed through a separate plan change to the District Plan.

1. Where possible existing zoned land has been included in Stage 1 due to its ability to be developed as of right at present, subject to servicing requirements.
  2. The need to ensure that infrastructure is developed in a coordinated and logical fashion. In that regard servicing of eastern Lincoln will progress generally from the south to the north.
  3. A need to ensure that there are reasonable levels of medium and conventional density land available in each stage.
  4. A need to ensure there are different land ownerships available in each stage so that there is competition and the avoidance of "land banking", whereby one landowner controls the release of land for development.
- 5.22 For the development of residential areas a three staged release of land is provided for (including the rezoning of existing residential zoned areas), beginning with that land immediately surrounding the existing urban area and in close proximity to the Lincoln town centre.
- 5.23 In line with the Council's submission on PC1, it is proposed that Lincoln develops incrementally over an extended time period in a staged process as follows:
- Stage 1 from 2007-2017 (10 years) 1300 Households;
  - Stage 2 from 2017-2026 (10 years) 1100 Households;
  - Stage 3 from 2026-2041 (15 years) 1500 Households.
- 5.24 The challenge to implementing the LSP is to carefully manage the supply of land to ensure it is used effectively and the required service, community and employment-related infrastructure is provided in an integrated way, while ensuring that options are offered to the market place. The staging plan for residential development has been formulated with the following principles in mind:
- Provide for housing choice;
  - Enable a reasonable degree of competition within the land market; (e.g. development opportunities not cornered by one land owner);
  - Support the provision of needed community infrastructure; (e.g. new school site, playing fields, community centre);
  - Develop required transport infrastructure, including long term bus routes (e.g. a Lincoln shuttle), new local routes and arterials, Park N Ride facility, and walking and cycling linkages;
  - Support development of the town centre and neighbourhood centres, ensuring that growth in new residential areas is consolidated prior to

development of neighbourhood centres so that they do not become stand alone, isolated, single use retail areas;

- Promote effective use of existing urban land, as well as the land to be released.
- The establishment of service infrastructure in a logical and cost effective manner.

5.25 The LSP maps, including the residential staging plan are contained in **Appendix 1**.

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## **6 Strategic Approach and Outline Development Plans**

### **Overview**

- 6.1 Proposed PC7 amends the District Plan in relation to three main topic areas, namely:
1. Implementing a strategic approach to managing urban development within the Greater Christchurch area, including the requirement to prepare Outline Development Plans for development within Greenfield areas (covered in this section of PC7);
  2. Making provision for medium density housing in specific locations (see Section 7 of PC7); and
  3. Introducing subdivision design guidelines (see Section 8 of PC7).
- 6.2 PC7 changes the existing reliance on a 'private plan change' or 'market-led' approach within the District Plan, which has, in some cases, resulted in poorly integrated developments and an inefficient provision of servicing and transport infrastructure with no comprehensive lifecycle or integrated management approach. The purpose of PC7 is to introduce a framework for managing the growth of townships within the Greater Christchurch area, so as to achieve the integrated settlement pattern set out in the Urban Development Strategy (UDS) (and subsequent Proposed Plan Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement (PC1)). In doing so, changes to the Plan include the introduction of new objectives, policies and rules so as to enable and guide development of future township growth areas as identified within structure plans e.g. the Lincoln Structure Plan. In particular, Proposed PC7 incorporates a requirement for development of Greenfield areas to be in accordance with an Outline Development Plan (see Chapter 2 in Section 7 of PC7 for further details in relation to ODPs).
- 6.3 A flow chart illustrating how this approach is to be applied to Lincoln Township, as a means of implementing the Lincoln Structure Plan (LSP) is contained in **Appendix 2**.

### **Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement**

- 6.4 As described within Section 5 of this plan change, the first key regulatory implementation method that has been promulgated to give effect to the UDS is PC1 to the RPS. In broad terms, PC1 sets out the objective and policy framework for how urban growth is to be accommodated over the next 35 years within the Greater Christchurch area. At the time of writing, submissions and further submissions on PC1 had been received, but hearings had not been held and decisions on those submissions had not been released. As such, PC1



is still subject to modification and amendments in response to submissions and therefore only moderate weight can be placed on the current provisions. However, consideration of the provisions of PC1 remains a key matter to have regard to in undertaking this S.32 assessment as the District Plan is required by the RMA to give effect to the RPS. Any proposed District Plan amendments considered in this assessment therefore have to be examined in the light of whether or not they give effect to the provisions of PC1. The relevant PC1 objectives and policies, especially as they relate to the strategic approach of managing urban development and the use of outline development plans are noted below.

#### Strategic Approach

- 6.5 One of the primary methods of PC1 to achieve an integrated planning approach across the Greater Christchurch area is to consolidate existing urban areas (**Objective 1: Urban Consolidation**) through the identification of Urban Limits around existing settlements (**Policy 1: Urban Limits & Policy 2: Intensification**) and to allocate where and at what rate growth should occur (**Policy 6: Urban Form, Infrastructure & Sequencing within Identified Urban Limits**). The setting of urban limits is intended to promote efficient development through a more compact urban form, including sufficient provision of housing to meet the projected population growth and to cater for business land development. It is also noted that Lincoln is identified as a 'Key Activity Centre', whereby the existing commercial centre is recognised as a key component of the settlement pattern and provides a focus for areas of more intensive development (**Objective 5: Key Activity Centres & Policy 5: Key Activity Centres & Commercial Activities**). Together, **Objective 4: Integration of Land Use, Infrastructure & Funding**, **Objective 7: Integration of Transport Infrastructure & Land Use** and **Objective 8: Protection of Strategic Infrastructure** seek that land use change is integrated with the funding and provision of infrastructure and services; that development is located so as to reduce energy use; and that growth does not adversely effect the efficient operation of key strategic infrastructure.
- 6.6 Establishing a clear picture of the rate and scale of future development that is likely to occur within each of Selwyn District's major townships in the Greater Christchurch area will enable the primary features and costs of this growth to be identified and managed from the outset. As such, the implementation of a 'community-led' approach will mean that development can be planned and carried forward logically, while integrating land use and funding with associated infrastructure and transport needs. It is therefore considered that the approach adopted in PC7 is consistent with the overarching strategic direction to managing urban growth contained within PC1.

### Outline Development Plans

- 6.7 PC1 prescribes the number of households that need to be accommodated within the proposed urban limit boundary (**Policy 6: Urban Form, Infrastructure & Sequencing within Identified Urban Limits**). The proposed changes in PC7 to introduce the requirement to prepare an ODP will provide a mechanism within the District Plan to achieve the provisions of PC1, which is not practically achievable with the current provisions. This approach is also consistent with the way in which development of Greenfield areas is envisaged to occur in PC1 (**Policy 8: Outline Development Plans and Changes of Zoning in District Plans**).
- 6.8 The criteria for each ODP will help to ensure efficient, effective transport connections and the integrated management and lifecycle assessment of water systems within and through ODP areas and the existing township; provision for a range of residential densities and lot sizes; integrated open spaces; protection and enhancement of natural, ecological, landscape and historical heritage features; which are all encouraged under **Policy 7: Development Form & Design**.

### ***District Plan objectives and policies***

- 6.9 Section 32(3) of the RMA states that "An evaluation must examine:
- (a) *the extent to which each objective is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of this Act", and*
  - (b) *whether having regard to their efficiency and effectiveness, the policies, rules, or other methods are the most appropriate for achieving the objectives".*

### Strategic Approach

- 6.10 Those objectives that are considered to be of most relevance to the strategic approach of PC7 are contained in Volume 1: Townships, Part B, Section 4 'Growth of Townships' B4.3 Residential and Business Development. A copy of these provisions is contained within the Proposed Amendments to the District Plan contained Section 9.
- 6.11 The current Plan provisions are based around a 'strategy for residential and business development' (pg B4-021) and associated objectives (B4.3.1, B4.3.2 & B4.3.3) that seek to avoid potential adverse environmental effects of rezoning land for such purposes; anticipates that new areas for urban development are rezoned by way of private plan change request; and that each plan change request is assessed against the relevant policies of the Plan. The relevant policies in this respect are divided into two parts. The first part sets out the general policies pertaining to 'town form' relating to matters such as achieving

a compact township shape, avoiding the isolation of rural land and utilising existing vacant land zoned for that purpose. The second part contains 'specific policies for townships', which itemise the preferred growth direction for each of the District's townships and identifies any particular features or hazards associated with their future expansion.

- 6.12 In order to enable the Council to implement a strategic approach to managing residential and business development, it is necessary to alter the existing objectives and add new objectives to remove the reliance on private plan changes. While such changes recognise that parts of the district are at different stages of strategic planning, an emphasis is to be placed on achieving an integrated land use pattern with the timely, intergenerational and effective provision of associated infrastructure, including appropriate transport and movement networks.
- 6.13 It is also necessary that additional provisions are introduced to facilitate the implementation of township structure plans as these are prepared and adopted by Council. In this instance, PC7 includes specific provisions to implement the Lincoln Structure Plan (LSP), which was adopted by Council in May 2008. The implementation of the LSP coincides with PC1 to the RPS, which includes (among other things) the requirement to prepare outline development plans for Greenfield growth areas, and to achieve a certain number of households over a staggered timeframe at a minimum density of 10 households/ha for Selwyn District. Such development is also to be confined to within the Urban Limits (identified on the PC1 Planning Maps) so as to promote the consolidation of townships and to retain the rural character of the surrounding area.
- 6.14 The introduction of new objectives, together with associated policies and implementation methods, is therefore considered necessary for Council to change to a strategic approach to managing the location, scale and character of urban development.

#### Outline Development Plans

- 6.15 As noted above, the relevant Residential and Business Development objectives (Objectives B4.3.1 – B4.3.3) focus on avoiding adverse effects on natural and physical resources, amenity of townships and special sites, ensuring that new developments adjoin townships at compatible densities to achieve a compact shape consistent with preferred growth direction and the rezoning of land by a consistent and equitable process. Their associated explanations and reasons focus on the types of effects that should be avoided when expanding townships and the need to develop areas adjoining existing townships rather

than create new settlements as many small towns cannot sustain employment for their population and are not sufficiently large to warrant community facilities or basic services.

- 6.16 These existing objectives are considered to provide sufficient direction as to what is sought for any new growth of townships and therefore no new objectives are proposed. However, new policies promoting the use of Outline Development Plans is required to better achieve these objectives.
- 6.17 The existing policies (Policies B4.3.1– B4.3.5) cover a range of topics as to how the existing objectives will be achieved. The topics include the requirement for new development to be within the appropriate zone, new urban land to adjoin at least one existing urban boundary and to utilise existing undeveloped zoned land where available whilst maintaining a compact town shape. However, little is available to support the proposed objectives in terms of developing land in accordance with an Outline Development Plan, particularly within Greenfield areas.
- 6.18 It is proposed to introduce new general policies to require the development of “ODP areas”, as identified on the Planning Maps of the District Plan, to occur in accordance with an ODP, which has been prepared as part of a plan change and included in the District Plan. The criteria for each ODP area is detailed within a policy listing out matters such as requirements for roading and walking and cycling linkages, the provision of community facilities and recreation reserves. This will provide guidance and direction as to when ODPs are required and what is expected to be included in them. An additional general policy is also proposed to direct how the staging of residential growth will be undertaken and what will trigger the ability to begin the next stage e.g. Stage Two can begin either by a set year (2017) and once 85% of the household numbers of area of Stage One has been completed. This policy also explains when the deferment can be uplifted from the new Living Z zone that is proposed. No deferment or staging is proposed for the Business 2 zoned land in Lincoln as the structure plan seeks this rezoning prior to 2017.
- 6.19 As part of implementing the Lincoln Structure Plan, it is also appropriate to provide more specific criteria for the growth of Lincoln Township itself. At present there are a number of Lincoln specific policies concerning the existing zoning and potential development. However, the structure plan has now identified large areas for future development. To help facilitate development, it is considered appropriate to split this large ODP area into five blocks. Each of the five ODP blocks proposed within this larger area is subject to its own policy

criteria according to any relevant circumstances for a particular block e.g. the need to provide for the Railtrail<sup>6</sup> in Block 2.

- 6.20 A new rule is proposed to ensure that any subdivision within an area defined on the planning maps as an ODP area must be in accordance with an ODP that has been inserted into the Plan. The purpose of this rule is to ensure that any subdivision proposed in accordance with the underlying zoning does not compromise the ability to achieve the strategic outcomes of the structure plan.
- 6.21 In addition, all land within ODP areas 1-4 within Lincoln, will be subject to a new generic (deferred) living zoning to ensure that development occurs in a staged manner to maximise efficiency of land use and the appropriate implementation of infrastructure.
- 6.22 The proposed provisions will provide a mechanism and new zoning for enabling Greenfield growth around existing townships within the Greater Christchurch area such that the target household numbers set by RPS Change 1 can be achieved in a sustainable manner. The target household numbers for each township and identification of Greenfield areas in PC1 set a new preferred growth direction for these townships. The requirement to prepare an ODP within any "ODP area" will also ensure that consideration is given to the provision of strategic infrastructure and facilities such as roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, community facilities, business activities, services (5Waters assets) and reserves.
- 6.23 Facilitating the sustainable and strategic growth of Lincoln Township within such a large Greenfield area is difficult. As such, the division of this single area into five separate blocks, each requiring its own ODP, will allow for developers and landowners to collaborate and potentially prepare a joint ODP. This process will enable growth to occur whilst having regard to important values of the township, including the Liffey Stream and other amenity or historic features, which is a key focus in Objective B4.3.1 (reducing adverse effects on natural and physical resources, amenity, ecological, cultural, heritage or landscape values).
- 6.24 The staging of development will ensure that the timing of development within the ODP areas 1-4 occurs in accordance with a structure plan and PC1 i.e. once the majority (85%) of the previous stage has been completed, including the installation of associated infrastructure and servicing, and the time period identified within PC1 has been reached. This will provide clear direction as to

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<sup>6</sup> The Railtrail is a regional cycling route extending from Hornby to Little River being progressively developed and implemented the Christchurch to Little River Railtrail Trust in conjunction with participating Councils.

when land will be available for development and therefore provide all landowners and developers with certainty and consistency in this regard.

- 6.25 Overall, it is considered that the District Plan does not presently contain sufficient policy direction to ensure that growth within Greenfield areas occurs in an integrated and intergenerational effective manner. It is therefore considered that the addition of the proposed provisions will better serve the purpose of the RMA, by allowing for the target growth of townships to be achieved within the District whilst providing for important strategic infrastructure and encouraging quality and innovation in design to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of new developments.

#### ***Scope of Proposed Plan Change***

- 6.26 The proposed changes to the District Plan relating to the implementation of a strategic approach to managing urban development and introducing requirements relating to ODPs are summarised as follows:

- Amending and introducing new objectives and policies to support a strategic approach to urban development within the Greater Christchurch area;
- Introducing a requirement to prepare an ODP for all new subdivision within those areas identified on Planning Maps;
- Splitting the Lincoln growth areas into five 'blocks', each requiring a separate ODP;
- Amend Planning Maps to identify each ODP block within Lincoln;
- Provide new district wide policies to set out where ODPs are required, what they are required to provide for and what they are required to include;
- Provide Lincoln specific policies to identify the specific criteria that are applicable to each of the Lincoln ODP areas;
- Provide new district wide policies to determine when each of the township growth stages may be implemented and when zoning deferments can be lifted.
- Insert a subdivision rule in both the Rural and Township Volumes to ensure that any land within an area identified as requiring an ODP cannot be subdivided until an ODP is prepared and inserted into the District Plan.
- Rezone all existing living and rural zoned land with ODP areas 1-4 to a new zone (Living Z deferred), including associated minimum average allotment sizes and site coverage requirements.

- Rezone land within ODP area 5 to Business 2 for future industrial purposes.

### ***Analysis of Options***

- 6.27 The Council has considered whether the District Plan, as it currently stands, represents the most efficient or effective means of achieving appropriate residential and business development within the District.
- 6.28 Overall, it was found that the existing provisions pertaining to urban growth of townships could result in significant environmental costs. In particular, allowing growth in the absence of an overall strategy provided by an outline development plan may result in sporadic development that is unlikely to achieve an integrated settlement pattern for which appropriate infrastructure extensions and upgrading could be managed.
- 6.29 The Council has therefore decided that a Plan Change is necessary to facilitate a strategic approach to urban development, including the insertion of an appropriate policy framework to enable the implementation of township structure plans. It has also been determined that new provisions to require the preparation of an outline development plan are required to provide guidance for developers on how the intended growth is to be achieved.
- 6.30 This Section 32 evaluation has considered alternatives to the proposed option of introducing new objectives, policies and rules relating to growth of townships. The alternative options include:
- maintaining the status quo;
  - the introduction of provisions to guide developers in preparing an ODP;
  - the introduction of provisions to support ODPs that will be prepared by Council itself; and
  - the rezoning of land by Council without using ODPs.
- 6.31 Overall, the Council has determined that the preparation of objectives, policies and rules to guide future preparation of an outline development plan is the most appropriate means to provide flexibility and guidance for developers, while ensuring the integration of land use with the appropriate provision of infrastructure.

## **PREFERRED OPTION: Option 1 – Plan Change as proposed**

- 6.32 This option includes the following amendments to the District Plan.

### District Wide Objectives

- 6.33 Amendment and introduction of new district wide objectives to recognise that parts of the district are at different stages of strategic planning and to ensure that a strategic approach applies to residential and business development within those townships in the Greater Christchurch area. In doing so, emphasis is placed on the need to ensure that development is contained within the identified Urban Limits of PC1 and that it is supported by the provision of timely, efficient and integrated infrastructure. A policy framework is also introduced to achieve a target number of households within each township in the Greater Christchurch area.

### District Wide Policies

- 6.34 New district wide policies that require all urban growth within Greenfield areas in the Greater Christchurch area to be in accordance with an ODP. Each ODP is then required to be introduced into the District Plan as part of a Plan Change. The general criteria to be included in each ODP is also provided in a separate policy, as is the staging of Greenfield development and when the deferment for the new "Living Z" zone may be uplifted.

### Lincoln Specific Policies

- 6.35 Lincoln specific policies that provide specific criteria to be included in ODPs for Greenfield areas around Lincoln Township. These criteria include the provision of a number of Lincoln specific matters e.g. strategic road links, stormwater systems, Railtrail etc. Given that there are several large Greenfield areas identified for future growth in Lincoln and that these areas contain multiple land parcels with multiple ownership, these land areas have been split into five ODP areas to ensure the integration of strategic infrastructure and facilities. While it would be very difficult to facilitate growth through one single ODP for the entire growth area identified at Lincoln, each of the five proposed ODP areas remains large enough to achieve the necessary strategic planning outcomes for both residential and business expansion.

### Planning Maps

- 6.36 All land within an ODP area, will be identified as such on the applicable Planning Maps. The Planning Maps will also show the different stages/sequencing for growth and the new zoning (Living Z (Deferred) and Business 2) applicable within these areas.



#### Rezoning and District Wide Subdivision Rule for ODPs

- 6.37 It is proposed to rezone all land within Lincoln ODP areas 1-4 to "Living Z (Deferred)". All existing zoning in these areas will remain as the underlying zone. ODP area 5 will be zoned Business 2 and will not be deferred. No subdivision, regardless of zoning, will be permitted (via the insertion of a new subdivision rule in both Volumes of the Plan) until an ODP is inserted into the District Plan for each respective area.

#### **Environmental Benefits**

- 6.38 The proposed option will produce broad environmental benefits associated with strategic land use planning, including the provision and staging of urban growth in accordance with the target household numbers and urban design principles set by PC1 to the RPS. The requirement to prepare an ODP within any Greenfield areas in the Greater Christchurch area will allow greater strategic consideration to be given to the location of important infrastructure and facilities such as roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, community facilities, business activities, services and reserves. It is anticipated that the integration of these physical resources (including the 5Waters built environment), while taking into account the natural features and characteristics within each ODP area and that of the wider township, will promote efficiencies in the functioning of the community and facilitate a sustainable growth pattern.
- 6.39 It is recognised however, that with regard to Lincoln, the realisation of such environmental benefits is likely to be difficult over such large Greenfield areas. It is therefore considered that the division of these large areas into five separate blocks, each requiring its own ODP will encourage landowners to collaborate and prepare a joint ODP in accordance with the policy criteria for that ODP area. The creation of five blocks also enables the implementation of more fine grained criteria for the preparation (and assessment) of each ODP e.g. esplanade strip adjacent to the Liffey Stream. The integrated use of the 5Waters services, including reuse of stormwater for non-potable garden use, will also promote the principles of low impact urban design.
- 6.40 Overall, the use of the ODP mechanism will enable the required urban growth targets to be met in Greenfield areas, whilst providing for staged and strategic solutions to achieve a sustainable growth pattern.

#### **Environmental Costs**

- 6.41 There are few likely environmental costs of the proposed Plan Change given that urban growth of townships within the Greater Christchurch area is identified within PC1 and thus there is an expectation that this will occur. However, there may be, at least in the short term, an increase in pressure on

the design capacity of existing infrastructure and community facilities whilst development is undertaken and the appropriate services are put in place.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 6.42 The proposed ODP mechanism does not require any definitive detail which allows greater flexibility for developers to create their own development solutions to suit their own, and the market's requirements. The staging of residential development will ensure that the timing of various portions of development within the ODP areas will be done appropriately i.e. once the majority (85%) of the previous stage has been completed and the corresponding infrastructure and servicing are available, and once the time period identified within PC1 has been reached,. This will also help to reduce Council costs in terms of preparing detailed outline development plans themselves.
- 6.43 The ability to provide for a strategic outcome will ensure that proposed development will be efficient and sustainable, particularly in terms of infrastructure and community facilities. Therefore, the chance of creating sporadic or poor design outcomes for future growth within townships is reduced. This in turn will have the benefit of improving linkages, facilities and infrastructure within the area which will contribute to residents' appreciation and enjoyment within their living environment. Facilities that will be provided for in Lincoln, such as the walking and cycling Railtrail, will assist with promoting healthier lifestyles and encouraging an improved sense of community and interaction within the local area.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 6.44 Additional costs and time are likely to be borne by developers through the preparation and design of an ODP. These costs will include undertaking a private plan change to include the finalised ODP details within the District Plan, which may require negotiations with landowners and will be subject to public notification.
- 6.45 It is also anticipated that the process of preparing an ODP is likely to involve greater input from Council staff at an early stage, with the potential for pre-application meetings to discuss concepts prior to lodgement of a formal Plan Change application. This is likely to increase time and costs associated with the process in the short term at least.

## **EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

### **Option 2 – Maintain Status Quo**

- 6.46 The do nothing approach maintains the status quo.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 6.47 The benefits arising from the status quo are that the existing provisions/zoning in the Plan provide some protection from large scale sporadic development occurring as of right. Large areas of Greenfield land are currently zoned for rural densities e.g. Inner Plains – 4ha and Outer Plains – 20ha, which will help to avoid key strategic outcomes from being compromised by ad hoc urban development.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 6.48 There will be no comprehensive policy direction with regard to the development of Greenfield areas and implementation of any structure plan. As such, it is unlikely that the piecemeal development of these large tracts of land will achieve a sustainable growth pattern. In addition, there is greater risk that important strategic outcomes e.g. roading and walking and cycling connections will be compromised limiting efficiency and function and in turn reducing the enjoyment and amenity of existing residents. There is also a potential that infrastructure is not designed to accommodate future requirements or that it precludes future options, such as conservation of water resources.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 6.49 There is a lesser upfront cost to the community by maintaining the status quo to which developers or temporary users are already accustomed to.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 6.50 Each new development will need to be addressed individually and may not reflect or be consistent with the strategic outcomes sought via a structure plan. Development is likely to continue on some level, particularly in those areas already zoned for living use, but this is likely to occur on a sporadic or incremental basis. This approach will not enable the Council to fulfil its obligations with respect to PC1 or allow it to consider and address the wider implications of the development on the township. Should such development occur, it is likely to contribute to additional traffic and pressure on infrastructure whilst potentially jeopardising strategic outcomes e.g. important road links which in turn will compromise the efficient and effective function of the township, thereby reducing local amenity values.

### **Option 3 – Plan Change to provide detailed ODPs in the District Plan**

- 6.51 This option is similar to the Option 1, but differs in that Council itself would design and introduce Outline Development Plans into the District Plan themselves rather than rely on developers to do so.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 6.52 This will enable Council to ensure that the ODP is in strict accordance with the environmental and development outcomes sought by Council for future Greenfield growth, as indicated in structure plans. This option will provide environmental benefits including the provision of a suitable mechanism to enable staged growth to occur whilst ensuring that the target numbers set by RPS Change 1 can be achieved in a sustainable manner. The provision of an ODP will allow strategic consideration to be given to the location of important infrastructure and facilities such as roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, community facilities, business activities and reserves, together with the integration of the 5Waters assets.
- 6.53 With regard to Lincoln, Council would provide an ODP for each of the five proposed blocks. The creation of five blocks will enable a more fine grained criteria to be provided for in each ODP block for Lincoln e.g. esplanade strip adjacent to the Liffey Stream.
- 6.54 Overall, the use of the ODP mechanism, as implemented by Council, will enable the required urban growth targets to be met in Greenfield areas, whilst providing for staged and strategic solutions to achieve a sustainable urban growth pattern.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 6.55 There are few environmental costs of the proposed Plan Change that are likely given that urban growth of townships is identified within PC1 and thus there is (at this stage) an expectation that this must occur. However, there may be, at least in the short term, an increase in pressure on existing infrastructure, and facilities whilst development is undertaken. In addition, the reliance on Council to prepare all ODPs will limit the ability for developers to consider any alternatives or potentially environmentally superior ODP layouts in detail.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 6.56 Where ODP areas have multiple ownership and/or land parcels, this will enable Council to actively determine the outcome rather than rely on negotiations between different landowners when preparing an ODP, which has the potential to allow the ODP process to be undertaken with greater speed.

- 6.57 The proposed ODP mechanism does not require any definitive detail which allows greater flexibility for Council to create development solutions to particularly suit their own, and the market's requirements. The staging of development will ensure that the timing of various portions of development within the residential ODP areas will be done appropriately i.e. once the majority (85%) of the previous stage has been completed and the corresponding infrastructure and servicing are available, and once the time period identified within PC1 has been reached.
- 6.58 The ability to secure strategic outcomes will promote the integrated development of each ODP area and the efficient and effective use of natural and physical resources within the immediate and wider area, particularly in terms of the provision of infrastructure and community facilities and reserves. The successful integration of communities within adjoining ODP areas and the existing township is anticipated to contribute to residents' appreciation and enjoyment within their living environment. Facilities that will be provided for in Lincoln, such as the roading and walking and cycling linkages will also assist in promoting healthier lifestyles and encouraging an improved sense of community and interaction within the local area.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 6.59 Flexibility for developers and landowners will be limited to the Council's prepared ODP which may compromise the ability for these parties to work together to implement the ODP i.e. some landowners/developers may not be motivated to pursue the development of their land without the ability to negotiate on the ODP layout. In addition, there will be costs incurred by Council in terms of preparing detailed outline development plans in house as opposed to allowing developers/landowners to undertake this work themselves.

#### **Option 4 – Do not encourage ODPs and rezone land for development instead**

- 6.60 This option considers Council avoiding the use of ODPs altogether and implementing various density living zones to achieve the outcomes sought in a structure plan. For such rezoning to logically occur in accordance with the staging proposed in a structure plan, a deferment of the proposed zoning for the later stages would be required to prevent them being developed prematurely.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 6.61 The appropriate zoning to encourage the desired density of dwellings within the development can be implemented e.g. various density living zones. This will

allow development to continue within specified Greenfield areas and the target numbers for township growth in PC1 are likely to be achieved, provided that such requirements are explicit in the zoning and subdivision rule package. As such, the environmental benefits associated with the intensification of housing and consolidation of existing townships may be realised through this approach.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 6.62 The absence of a strategic approach is likely to result in ad hoc development that may not necessarily achieve coordinated and sustainable outcomes e.g. important long term connection links may be lost, particularly if excess cul-de-sacs are created. This can result in environmental costs associated with a poorly connected local roading network and developments that do not sufficiently promote cycling and walking options and thereby increase car usage, which results in increased traffic congestion, pollutants, and a reduction in amenity for residents.
- 6.63 In addition, as each individual subdivision would only be required to provide servicing to cater for its own level of development, the ability to provide comprehensive infrastructure to accommodate future growth may be compromised by the provision of smaller servicing schemes undertaken on an ad hoc basis.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 6.64 The rezoning of land will enable developers to pursue subdivision and land development quicker than if they are required to prepare and insert an ODP into the District Plan. It also provides a relatively quick, clear direction for future development within the Plan rather than the ODP process. This will allow the township to grow and progress on some level, which will help move towards achieving the township growth identified within PC1.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 6.65 Each new development will need to be addressed individually and may not reflect or be consistent with the strategic outcomes sought via a structure plan. It is more likely to result in sporadic development that will potentially compromise the staging of infrastructure upgrades that are associated with township growth identified within structure plans. In addition, development is likely to continue on an ad hoc and incremental basis that may not reflect a sustainable growth pattern and subsequently compromise the amenity values of residents in the community e.g. a lack of connectivity will reduce cycling and walking options and reduce access opportunities to community facilities.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.66 It is concluded that the existing provisions do not represent the most efficient or effective means of achieving the existing objectives of the District Plan, given the Council's change to a community-led approach to managing urban growth and the need to meet the growth targets within any Structure Plan and PC1 to the RPS.
- 6.67 The preferred option (Option 1) will produce broad environmental, social and economic benefits associated with strategic land use planning, including the provision and staging of urban growth in accordance with the target household numbers and urban design principles set by PC1 to the RPS. The requirement to prepare an ODP within any Greenfield areas in the Greater Christchurch area will allow greater strategic consideration to be given to the location of important infrastructure and facilities such as roads, cycle and pedestrian routes, community facilities, business activities, services and reserves. It is anticipated that the integration of these physical resources, while taking into account the natural features and characteristics within each ODP area and that of the wider township, will promote efficiencies in the functioning of the community and facilitate a sustainable growth pattern.
- 6.68 It is therefore considered that Option 1 is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Resource Management Act 1991, having regard to the evaluation undertaken in accordance with Section 32 of the Act.
- 6.69 Whilst this option will place the emphasis for preparing an ODP as part of a Plan Change on developers rather than the Council, it is considered that this is an appropriate mechanism to enable land owners to negotiate between themselves where necessary, and provide flexibility for developers to create an ODP that addresses the criteria covered by the proposed provisions in the District Plan.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 6.70 The provisions of the District Plan amended and/or new provisions included by this section of PC7 are listed below:

### Township Volume

Plan Section		Plan Provisions
B 4.3	Residential & Business Development	Issues  Strategy  Objectives B4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 4.3.5  Policies B4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.6; 4.3.7; 4.3.8
B 4.3	Specific Policies for Townships - Lincoln	Policy B4.3.56
C1	Living Zone Rules – Status of Activities	Notes
C 4.7	Living Zone Rules - Buildings	Table C4.1
C 12	Living Zone Rules - Subdivision	Rule 12.1.3.21; Table C12.1; Rule 4.7.3.2
C13	Business Zone Rules – Status of Activities	Notes

### Rural Volume

Plan Section		Plan Provisions
C10	Subdivision - General	Rule 10.1.1.13



## **7 Medium Density Housing**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### ***Greater Christchurch Metropolitan Urban Development Strategy (UDS)***

- 7.1 The Council, in partnership with neighbouring Christchurch and Waimakariri Councils, Canterbury Regional Council, and Transit New Zealand (since renamed as the New Zealand Transport Agency) is currently looking at where and how greater Christchurch is going to grow over the next thirty five years. The Urban Development Strategy (UDS) was adopted by the Council following extensive public consultation. The UDS sets the framework for managing urban growth in greater Christchurch through a combination of staged urban expansion around the rural fringes of Christchurch and neighbouring towns such as Rolleston and Lincoln, and an increased emphasis on accommodating a growing proportion of urban growth through more intensive use of the existing urban areas, especially in close proximity to township centres. If this intensification is to occur, and is to result in attractive, vibrant communities that provide a range of housing choices, then it is vital that medium density dwellings are well designed and appropriately located so that they provide a good level of amenity for both occupants and the wider neighbourhood.

#### ***Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement***

- 7.2 The Urban Development Strategy is to be implemented through a wide range of regulatory and non-regulatory methods. The first key regulatory implementation method to result from the UDS has been the formulation of Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement (RPS). Change 1 sets out the objective and policy framework for how urban growth is to be accommodated over the next thirty five years in Metropolitan Christchurch. At the time of writing, submissions and further submissions on Change 1 had been received, but hearings had not been held and decisions on those submissions had not been released. As such, Change 1 is still subject to modification and amendments in response to submissions and therefore only moderate weight can be placed on the provisions as they currently stand. Consideration of the provisions of Change 1 is none-the-less a key matter to have regard to in undertaking this S.32 assessment as the District Plan is required by the RMA to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement. Any proposed District Plan amendments considered in this assessment therefore have to be examined in the light of whether or not they give effect to the provisions of Change 1. The relevant Change 1 objectives and policies, especially as they relate to Greenfield development and medium density housing are therefore considered in detail below.

- 7.3 The overall approach to managing urban growth in Change 1 is articulated in **Objective 1** which seeks to accommodate urban growth by achieving consolidation of existing urban areas, avoiding unsustainable expansion outside urban areas, and bringing about, amongst other matters, higher density living environments in inner Christchurch, in and around Key Activity Centres, and in new greenfield subdivision areas. Such development is to achieve built environments that have a sense of character and identity, retain heritage values, protect areas of special amenity, provide for a range of densities and uses, and are healthy, environmentally sustainable, functionally efficient, and economically vibrant (**Objective 2**).
- 7.4 **Objective 5** recognises the need to provide for and sustain Key Activity Centres (Lincoln and Rolleston town centres are both identified as 'Key Activity Centres'), with it noted that these existing centres provide a strong basis of support for more intensified residential living. **Objectives 4, 7, and 8** collectively seek that land use change is integrated with the funding and provision of infrastructure and services, including transport infrastructure, that development is located so as to reduce dependency on private motor vehicles, and that growth does not adversely effect the efficient operation of key strategic infrastructure such as the Christchurch International Airport or transport corridors.
- 7.5 The objectives are to be implemented via a number of policies and associated methods. **Policy 1** requires that all urban activities should only occur within the urban limits delineated on Map 1 of the RPS, with the exception of minor boundary amendments provided for under **Policy 12**. This is therefore a strong, directive policy aimed at controlling the location and extent of future urban growth in Greater Christchurch.
- 7.6 **Policy 2** is the primary policy by which the overall Change 1 objective of managing urban growth through consolidation and intensification is to be implemented. As such the policy and associated methods are repeated here in full:
- a) *An increasing proportion of the residential growth of Greater Christchurch should take place through intensification by redevelopment of areas identified on Map 1. There shall be a change over time to greater rates of intensification particularly in Christchurch City than has occurred in the past. Between 2007 and 2041 the ratio of intensification to greenfields development is intended to change from approximately 25:75 to 60:40;*
  - b) *Intensification will take place in areas already identified for higher density forms of living in Christchurch City, in areas identified on Map 1<sup>7</sup> and in areas to be identified through district plans to achieve the household numbers identified in Policy 6. Intensification should be encouraged in*

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<sup>7</sup> The underlined text is amendments recommended by Environment Canterbury Officers in response to submissions.

and close to the Key Activity Centres as identified in Policy 5 and on Map 1 and suitable industrial "brownfields" sites.

- c) Territorial authorities shall encourage intensification by selecting particular areas for enhancement of amenities to provide an attractive environment for higher density living.
- d) Christchurch City Council will recognise and provide for central city intensification which underpins and supports the role of the Central Business District within the Greater Christchurch sub-region.
- e) Christchurch City Council will in identifying areas for intensification recognise and provide for the protection of heritage values and areas of special amenity.

#### **Methods**

- 2.1 Territorial authorities within their district plans shall identify areas suitable for urban intensification within the Urban Limits so as to provide for the households in Table 1 of Policy 6.
  - 2.2 Territorial authorities should give consideration to appropriate administrative and financial arrangements to enable and encourage intensification to occur.
  - 2.3 The Christchurch City Council will continue to promote the implementation of and support high-density residential redevelopment within the central city.
  - 2.4 The Christchurch City Council will investigate methods for promoting intensification including the selection of areas for specific Council initiatives. The Council will develop and implement Urban Intensification Plans for all such selected areas. A comprehensive approach will be taken and the current dispensed approach will be discouraged.
  - 2.5 Territorial authorities will research, and implement as appropriate, methods for promoting development and enhancement of Key Activity Centres.
  - 2.6 The Canterbury Regional Council, in conjunction with the territorial authorities within Greater Christchurch, shall monitor the development capacity (including vacant land and redevelopment opportunities) within the Urban Limits.
- 7.7 **Policy 2** therefore contains a set of explicit requirements regarding the provision and encouragement of residential intensification that Selwyn Council is to fulfil. In particular, the District Plan is to be designed in such a way as to accommodate the household numbers stated in Policy 6 within the growth areas identified on Map 1.
- 7.8 **Policy 5** relates to the future development of Key Activity Centres which include the Lincoln and Rolleston town centres. Policy 5 requires the Council to sustainably manage the development of such centres to among other things broaden the mix of uses appropriate to the centre, including medium and/ or high density residential provision within and adjoining the Key Activity Centre.
- 7.9 The need for the strategic integration of infrastructure with urban growth is recognised in **Policy 6**, which sets out the staging in which various urban growth and intensification areas should be developed. As stated in Policy 2 above, the Council is to accommodate within Greenfield growth areas the numbers of

new households set out in Table 1 of Policy 6. Table 1, as amended by Officer recommendations<sup>8</sup> in response to a submission from SDC, has identified a single growth area for Lincoln Township that is to accommodate a total of 3,900 households by 2041. This growth is to be staged, so that Lincoln is to accommodate 1,300 new households in the ten year period between 2007-2016, a further 1,100 households in the next ten year period, and then a further 1,500 households again in the fifteen years after that.

7.10 Change 1 as a whole is predicated on making accurate estimates of the extent of future household growth. If the accommodation of households in the identified greenfield growth areas is not able to be met then this implies that additional greenfield land will need to be made available to accommodate urban growth which runs counter to the overall objective of accommodating urban growth through urban consolidation. This S.32 review therefore faces the difficult task of developing methods that are appropriate for both ensuring that a high standard of design and amenity is achieved in the Greenfield growth areas and that the character of these areas is compatible with the character of the townships and market demand, whilst concurrently achieving built densities that are sufficient to accommodate a substantial increase in the number of households i.e. to accommodate the household numbers required by Policy 6, the greenfield areas will need to include areas of medium density housing that is at a higher density than what has been typically built within the Selwyn townships to date.

7.11 **Policy 7** requires that development in both greenfield and intensification areas should give effect to urban design best practice and the principles of the Urban Design Protocol developed by the Ministry for the Environment in 2005 and to which the Council is a signatory. These principles include safe connectivity that enables a range of different transport modes e.g. public transport, cycling and walking, sufficient and integrated areas of open space, with higher levels of public parks where residential densities are highest, a high standard of visual interest and amenity, and the protection of heritage features.

7.12 **Policy 11** requires development to achieve average minimum net densities of 10 household units per hectare in the Greenfield growth areas in Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts. The only exceptions to this average density requirement are where such densities would have a significant adverse effect on listed heritage buildings, listed heritage areas, tree protection orders, or significant open space, landscape or coastal values. The Council is required to implement

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<sup>8</sup> S.42a Officer report prepared by Laurie McCallum for Environment Canterbury, dated 18 December 2008

the required densities through the District Plan. It is important to note that 'net density' is defined in Change 1 as:

*"Net Density: is the number of lots or household units per hectare. The area (ha) includes land for:*

- Residential purposes, including all open space and on-site parking associated with residential development;*
- Local roads and roading corridors, including pedestrian and cycle ways, but excluding State Highways and major arterial roads;*
- Local (neighbourhood) reserves.*

*The area (ha) excludes land that is:*

- Stormwater retention and treatment areas;*
- Geotechnically constrained (such as land subject to subsidence or inundation);*
- Set aside to protect significant ecological, cultural, heritage or landscape values;*
- Set aside for esplanade reserves or access strips that form part of a larger regional or sub-regional reserve network;*
- For commercial or business use, or for schools, hospitals or other district, regional or sub-regional facilities."*

7.13 The growth area identified for Lincoln, as recommended in the S.42a Officer report referenced above, has a gross area of some 380 ha, with a net area of approximately 360 ha. To accommodate 3,900 households within a net area of 360 ha results in a net density of some 10.7 households per hectare. The 'net density' includes matters such as local roads and parks, therefore the actual land available for residential development will be somewhat less than 360 hectares. The Lincoln Structure Plan identified areas of medium density housing (15 households per hectare (hh/ha)) that may be necessary if the overall growth figures are to be accommodated i.e. to achieve an average of 10.7 households it will be necessary to build some houses at 15 hh/ha (or higher) to compensate for land lost to local non-residential purposes such as parks and roads.

7.14 Change 1 recognises that over the thirty five year life of the document circumstances may change. **Policy 15** requires the Canterbury Regional Council to reconsider the extent, location, and timing of land for development if monitoring shows that there has been a change in urban growth rates or changes to the provision of infrastructure to service growth.

7.15 **Overall summary of the Change 1 RPS objectives and policies of relevance to medium density housing in Greenfield growth areas:** Growth is to be managed with a primary emphasis on consolidation and more intensive use of new Greenfield growth areas. The RPS Map 1 identifies the Greenfield growth areas

around Lincoln and Rolleston, and identifies the existing town centres as 'Key Activity Centres'.

- 7.16 Change 1 is based on predictions of the number of future additional households, with this growth then allocated across the greater metropolitan area, with a mix between new Greenfield subdivisions and the amount of new households that need to be accommodated within the existing urban limits. Change 1 requires the Council to achieve average minimum net densities of 10 household per hectare. The work undertaken for the Lincoln Structure Plan identified that in order for the 3,900 new households allocated to Lincoln in Policy 6 to be accommodated, areas of medium density housing of at least 15 households per hectare may be necessary so that an overall average minimum net density of 10 hh/ha was achieved. The reason for this is the amount of land that is required to be taken up by local roads and reserves which reduces the developable 'net' land available for erecting dwellings. This S.32 review therefore faces the task of developing methods that are appropriate for both ensuring that a high standard of design, amenity, and local infrastructure is achieved, heritage protection is achieved in the higher density living zones, whilst concurrently ensuring that built densities are at a level that is sufficient to accommodate a substantial increase in the number of households in Selwyn.

***District Plan objectives and policies relevant to medium density provisions***

- 7.17 Section 32(3)(a) of the RMA states that "an evaluation must examine the extent to which each objective is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act" and 32(3)(b) "whether having regard to their efficiency and effectiveness, the policies, rules or other methods are the most appropriate for achieving the objectives".
- 7.18 The current Plan provisions for living environments seek to provide quality living environments that are "pleasant places to live". The relevant provisions are located in the "Quality of the environment", "Residential Density" and "Residential and Business Development" chapters of the Plan. The objectives of the Plan for providing for living environments address issues affecting the quality of the environment, amenity values and reverse sensitivity. Additionally, there are a number of objectives that focus on maintaining the existing low density "spacious" character of the living environments in the District's townships. The Plan also acknowledges the importance of finding a balance between the potentially conflicting goals of enabling residents to have living environments and section sizes that meet their needs, and maintaining the existing low density spacious character. Added to these existing conflicting goals is the need to ensure that the new household numbers identified in RPS Change 1

are accommodated within identified Greenfield growth areas, with an attendant need to introduce medium density forms of housing. The associated explanations and reasons of the existing Plan objectives and policies focus on the importance of setting base requirements for maintaining the overall amenity and low density character of the townships.

- 7.19 The existing objectives are considered to provide sufficient direction for providing for low density growth within the townships. However, new objectives are required to provide more explicit direction for the provision of high quality medium density housing, particularly to ensure that it is compatible with the existing character of the townships. The Council has identified a need to provide a greater range of living environments and housing choices for residents in the District, both to meet the requirements of RPS Change 1 and to provide housing choice with some smaller section sizes and associated smaller dwellings and smaller outdoor living spaces that are easily maintained. As a result medium density areas can play an important role in catering for the housing needs of a section of the community whose housing needs may not be met by conventional housing typologies.
- 7.20 The development of medium density housing is currently hindered by the existing objectives that require the existing amenity of the townships to be maintained. Therefore, two objectives have been proposed to provide for a variety of housing options and living environments to provide for the diverse needs of the community. A further objective has been included to reinforce the importance of maintaining a compact urban form and creating high levels of connectivity. These objectives are considered to represent a more effective and efficient method for achieving Part II of the Act than the current objectives which limit the variety of housing types and that have the potential to result in the inefficient use of land and associated infrastructure.
- 7.21 The existing policies address a range of matters relevant to achieving the objectives, and determining how new developments will be compatible with the existing character and amenity of townships. Therefore, it is proposed to introduce a number of new policies to ensure that new medium density developments are designed to provide high quality, higher density living environments whilst also being compatible with the existing amenity and character of the townships. The topics of the policies include location and design issues. The policies state that medium density shall be developed in greenfield sites, or by changing the zoning of existing low density living zones, in accordance with Outline Development Plans. The location of medium density developments is important, and medium density developments should be located within close proximity to community facilities, open space and activity nodes. The consideration of connections and access should influence the

design of medium density developments to encourage sustainable transport use and to reduce the number and length of vehicle trips.

- 7.22 It is equally important that medium density developments deliver high amenity outcomes, through well designed buildings and streets. Therefore a number of design policies have been proposed. These policies include requiring medium density to comply with key design principles including small, navigable block sizes, blocks and sections are aligned to take advantage of views, natural features of the site and orientated for daylight and sunlight admission, provide private open space and provide a diversity of housing types to reflect different lifestyle choices and needs of the community. The policies also include an emphasis on the importance of ensuring that medium density is compatible with the surrounding environment.
- 7.23 It is considered that when these proposed Plan Change amendments are read in context with the existing objectives and policies they will provide a more effective and efficient method of providing for the development of medium density residential developments than the current Plan provisions. The proposed amendments will provide for high quality design for medium density that provides a level of compatibility with the existing urban form. Further the amendments will provide a more strategic approach for the substantial medium density developments anticipated for the greenfield areas around townships such as Lincoln.



## ***Analysis of Options***

### **PREFERRED OPTION : Option 1 – Detailed Medium Density Package**

- 7.24 This option includes a medium density rule package and seeks that greenfield growth areas within Lincoln Township, as identified in the RPS Change 1 (or residential zoned but undeveloped in the District Plan), are zoned “Living Z (Deferred)” to provide for future residential growth. The zoning will be deferred until an ODP is inserted into the District Plan through a plan change, with the ODP identifying areas that will be developed for medium density housing. Zoning deferment will also apply to the sequencing of development in accordance with the staging plan contained within the Lincoln Structure Plan, and as shown on Planning Maps.
- 7.25 New objectives, policies and rules will be introduced through this plan change to provide direction for enabling a diversity of housing options to provide for the needs of the community. These provisions reflect the key principles of a non-statutory “Design Guide for Medium Density Housing” that will be developed separately and that will sit outside of the District Plan.
- 7.26 It is intended that the Plan will include relevant urban design-based assessment matters in the Plan to provide adequate guidance to applicants, whilst the non-statutory design guide will be a much longer and more user friendly document with illustrations, photographs, and case studies of good and bad examples. The guide will assist developers in designing their proposals, without becoming prescriptive matters that must be adhered to like District Plan provisions. By keeping the design guide outside of the Plan also enables the guide to be revised and updated without needing to go through a formal plan change process.
- 7.27 Overall, it is considered that this approach is the most suitable to provide direction for the development of high quality medium density areas in accordance with the design guide, the structure plans and ODPs and will enable the Council to meet its obligations under Plan Change 1 to the RPS.

### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 7.28 This option will provide a greater emphasis and direction regarding the location and design criteria for medium density developments through new medium density provisions in the Plan. New rules and assessment matters related to the medium density outcomes are included to provide direction to developers, landowners and Council as to how developments will be assessed.

- 7.29 The proposed medium density package encourages developments to respond to the surrounding natural environment and be efficient in the use of resources and reduce infrastructure costs. The provisions seek to ensure that the layout of streets and the orientation of dwellings are managed to maximise solar gain in houses. High levels of connectivity and close proximity of developments to community facilities will encourage the use of a variety of modes of transport, to encourage non-motorised forms of transport and reduce fuel consumption and emissions.
- 7.30 Specific provisions have been included to encourage developments with high amenity, for example placing restrictions on front fences, creating a balance between buildings, hard surfaces and open spaces, and placing restrictions on the visual impact of garages when viewed from the streetscene. Further, the provisions seek to maintain the character of an area by placing an emphasis on retaining the existing landscape features such as mature trees and water races and encouraging aligning streets and dwellings to respond to views of the surrounding landscape.
- 7.31 The proposed medium density provisions provide a clear direction as to how developments can achieve a high level of quality and a variety of design and form. The provisions include an emphasis on the importance of ensuring that the new medium density developments are compatible with the surrounding environment. The development of medium density housing will help to achieve the target housing numbers and densities sought in RPS Change 1. This option provides flexibility for developers and landowners to identify areas appropriate for medium density housing within their developments.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 7.32 There are few environmental costs associated with the proposed method when compared to the existing situation. However, the introduction of medium density housing typologies will result in changes to the character of the existing low density nature of the existing townships.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 7.33 The design guide and proposed medium density provisions provide private developers with a level of flexibility to create their own development solutions that respond to the characteristics of the site, provide high quality medium density areas that are connected and accessible, with high levels of amenity and quality private and public open spaces, and that suit their own and the market needs. The provisions provide developers with clarity as to the outcomes sought by Council.

- 7.34 For the community, the medium density package seeks to ensure that quality living environments are developed by providing well connected neighbourhoods with high amenity values. High levels of connectivity and the location of dwellings within close proximity of community facilities encourage the use of non-motorised transportation modes promoting healthy lifestyle options for residents. Further, changing the preferred form of transport from motor vehicle to walking or cycling provides informal opportunities for social interaction. High amenity values in a neighbourhood contribute to levels of enjoyment and a sense of ownership for the environment. These factors aid in the fostering of a sense of community.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 7.35 There are costs and time associated with the preparing and processing of a Plan Change to implement the proposed amendments. In addition, landowners and developers will need to seek a further private plan change to introduce an ODP to provide areas for medium density developments.
- 7.36 This option provides developers and landowners with the discretion over whether to apply the proposed rule package to their medium density developments as no land will be specifically zoned for medium density as a result of this plan change. Developers may choose not to adopt the proposed medium density provisions and could propose their own alternative rule package, with this alternative package subject to the normal submission and hearing process associated with plan changes.

## EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

### Option 2 – Maintain Status Quo

- 7.37 The do nothing option would seek to retain the existing approach, whereby developers are free to choose whether or not to provide medium density housing, acknowledging that such housing would be likely to trigger the need for a resource consent due to it being below the minimum average site size and therefore a non-complying activity.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 7.38 The existing provisions / zoning in the Plan place restrictions on the provision of higher density and comprehensive housing developments. This ensures that medium density developments can not occur as of right and the existing low density built character, valued by many people in the community, would be retained.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 7.39 There will be no comprehensive policy direction with regard to Greenfield growth areas adjacent to the existing townships that are appropriate for medium density or comprehensive developments. Without a comprehensive approach there is potential that new residential developments will lack variety in housing options that respond to the needs of the community. This may result in poor quality developments and a minimal range of housing forms to meet the diverse housing needs of the community. It may also compromise the Council's ability to meet its obligations under Change 1 to the RPS with associated implications for either fewer households being accommodated or additional Greenfield land being required for urban growth.
- 7.40 Further, there is a risk that without Council guidance medium density development may not occur, with developers preferring to build low density residential areas. The direct environmental costs that would result from maintaining the status quo include reduced resource efficiency and increased infrastructure costs.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 7.41 The costs and resourcing required to prepare and implement a Plan Change will be avoided. Individual landowners will also avoid the costs associated with preparing private plan changes to prepare an Outline Development Plan and will have more freedom to undertake a development as they wish, which may be economically cheaper.

### **Economic and Social Costs**

- 7.42 Each new development will need to be addressed individually and may not reflect or be consistent with the strategic outcomes sought via a structure plan. This option is likely to result in a limited variety of housing options that do not reflect the different needs of the community, especially those of the young, single, elderly and people with disabilities. This may result in the creation of neighbourhoods dominated by single family dwellings that are not practical or affordable for many members of the community.
- 7.43 Without a comprehensive approach to medium density there is potential that key design elements, such as strong transport connections and maintaining a balance between buildings and open space, will not be provided in new developments. The costs to the community may include poor access to the surrounding environment, limits on transportation options, reliance on private vehicles, and limited opportunities for residents to meet and socialise.
- 7.44 Further, it is likely to result in sporadic developments that will potentially compromise the staging of infrastructure upgrades that are associated with township growth identified within structure plans. Development is likely to continue, particularly in those areas already zoned for living use, but on an ad hoc and incremental basis that does not provide good design outcomes or reflect a sustainable growth pattern.

### **Option 3 – Council initiated plan change to rezone land for medium density development**

- 7.45 Option three would require the Council to initiate a plan change to rezone specific blocks of land for medium density development in accordance with the Structure Plans. This would be undertaken in conjunction with the inclusion of a medium density package as outlined in Option 1. The medium density package would include the introduction of new objectives, policies and rules that provide direction on providing for a diversity of housing options to provide for the needs of the community and reflect the key principles of a non-statutory "Design Guide for Medium Density Housing" (sitting outside of the District Plan).

### **Environmental Benefits**

- 7.46 This option would provide a level of certainty for landowners and developers as to the appropriate location, extent and design of medium density developments anticipated by the Council.
- 7.47 The process of rezoning land would ensure that appropriately located land would be zoned for medium density and that development would provide the desired mix of medium and conventional densities. The location of medium

density housing would be determined by close proximity to existing community facilities, encouraging non-motorised modes of transport and thereby reducing fuel consumption. The clear identification of medium density areas would also ensure that the Council met its obligations under RPS Plan Change 1.

- 7.48 The introduction of medium density provisions in the Plan will encourage developers to design medium density housing to create high quality environments. Specific provisions seek to create a balance between buildings and open spaces, create neighbourhoods with character and place restrictions on the dominance of fences and garages in the streetscene.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 7.49 This option would require a more fine grained analysis of the environment to ensure that medium density was being proposed for the appropriate locations. Further, this option does not provide flexibility for developers to consider alternative and potentially better environmental outcomes than those identified on the ODP map. In effect it would require Council to determine the broad layout of subdivisions, rather than providing landowners with the freedom to develop their own ODP that meets their needs as well as achieving a good level of urban design and appropriate densities.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 7.50 This option would provide clear direction as to the appropriate location and extent of medium density developments.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 7.51 This option would involve costs to the Council associated with the preparation and implementation of a plan change. A further cost to the Council will include the administration and resourcing to design and prepare all ODPs rather than leaving this requirement in the hands of the landowners. This option will also limit the flexibility for the design and layout of developments, as well as constraining future development to a set plan at an early stage.

#### **Option 4 – Medium density provisions with Medium Density Design Guide as an Appendix to the District Plan**

- 7.52 This option is similar to the first proposed option but would seek to include the Medium Density Design Guide as an appendix to the District Plan, in addition to the proposed rule package i.e. the design guide would become a formal assessment matter.

### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 7.53 The majority of the environmental benefits for this option are the same as those for Option 1. However, this option will also provide a closer link between the two documents, providing the design guide with statutory force. Therefore, the guide will have a strong influence over the design outcomes of medium density developments. The guidelines will be found more readily and be more easily referenced.

### ***Environmental Costs***

- 7.54 This option does not appear to result in any environmental costs.

### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 7.55 The majority of the economic and social benefits of this option are the same as Option 1. Further, the District Plan will contain most information required for the development of medium density housing, providing developers with a greater level of information in one document.

### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 7.56 There are costs and time associated with the preparing and processing of a Plan Change to implement the proposed amendments. Following this, each new development will be assessed by Council with a greater level of discretion to consider design outcomes, requiring substantial levels of input into the design and location of medium density developments. This is likely to increase the time and costs associated with the process.
- 7.57 By making the guidelines a part of the District Plan their status is elevated, and may result in developers taking a too prescriptive approach to the application of the design principles in the guide. Further, any change to the design guide would require a Plan Change.

### **Medium density provisions – conclusion**

- 7.58 Following the development of the UDS, the Council has reviewed the future form and densities of developments in the townships within the Greater Christchurch area of the District. This has in turn resulted in a review of whether the District Plan objective and policy framework represents the most efficient and effective means of achieving appropriate development within areas identified for future growth within structure plans, including the Lincoln Structure Plan, and Change 1 to the RPS.
- 7.59 It is considered that the existing provisions providing for growth in the townships are restricted by objective and policy requirements to maintain the existing "spacious" living environments, resulting in limited housing options. Medium density housing provides for greater choices in living environments for residents. Medium density housing developments can provide for a range of housing sizes and types, from a one bedroom apartment to a five bedroom house, and can include dwellings with smaller and easily maintained outdoor living spaces. As a result medium density areas can cater for the housing needs of a wider selection of the population than conventional densities, including people with disabilities, the young, single persons and the elderly.
- 7.60 Medium density housing can be designed in a manner that is more resource efficient than conventional low density developments, by reducing land use, reducing travelling distances to community facilities, consolidating access to public transport facilities and services thereby increasing their effectiveness and efficiency, reducing fuel consumption and maximising energy efficiency. It is recognised that just as lower density housing does not meet the needs of everyone in the community, so too medium density does not suit everyone. Medium density housing will therefore form part of the mix of development within new Greenfield subdivisions, and will help ensure the provision of a diverse range of housing stock that meets the wider housing needs of the community.
- 7.61 The ability to provide medium density forms of housing is also necessary if the growth areas identified on Map 1 to the RPS Change 1 are to be able to accommodate the household growth numbers envisaged in RPS Policy 6.
- 7.62 The Council has therefore decided that a Plan Change is necessary to ensure that the implementation of structure plans and the requirements of Change 1 to the RPS can be achieved with an appropriate policy framework to both provide suitable management and guidance and to enable medium as well as low density housing. The proposed changes to the District Plan seek to introduce new objectives, policies, rules and assessment matters to enable high



quality medium density developments in identified Greenfield sites in the District.

7.63 The intended changes to the Township Volume of the Selwyn District Plan are summarised as follows:

- Provide new objectives that place emphasis on high quality medium density developments in Greenfield areas as identified in Outline Development Plans;
- Provide policies to determine where medium density developments shall be established and to provide direction on creating good quality design outcomes;
- Provide rules and assessment matters to determine the location and suitable design outcomes for medium density developments; and
- Provide reference for the Design Guide for Medium Density Housing.

7.64 The Section 32 Evaluation considered alternatives to achieve Part II of the Act and the requirements of Change 1 to the RPS. The options included maintaining the status quo, development of a detailed medium density objective, policy, and rule package with specific locations to be determined through ODPs produced as private plan changes, a Council initiated plan change to rezone land specifically for medium density, and including the medium density guide as an appendix to the District Plan.

7.65 Overall, the Council has determined that the most efficient and effective way of providing medium density developments is by developing an objective and policy package that supports medium density in appropriate locations, an ODP process for identifying those locations, and a rule package for managing the effects of medium density development.

7.66 Having applied the criteria for assessment required under Section 32 of the Resource Management Plan 1991, Option 1 (the preferred option) is considered to be the best fit for this criteria. The proposed introduction of new objectives, policies, rules and assessment matters to the living environment provisions is in accordance with the broad urban design principles set out in the Urban Design Protocol developed by the Ministry for the Environment, the matters set out in policies 7 and 8 of Change 1 to the RPS, and the newly created, non-statutory Medium Density Residential Design Guide. It is considered that when these proposed Plan Change amendments are read in context with the existing objectives and policies they will provide a more appropriate method of providing for the development of medium density residential developments, achieving the provisions of Change 1 to the RPS, and

achieving the purpose and principles of the Act than the current Plan provisions.

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## **OTHER METHODS – Medium Density and Subdivision design guides**

- 7.67 In addition to the specific objectives, policies, and rules discussed in detail below, the Council has also developed several non-statutory 'other methods' for implementing the Plan's objectives and policies. These methods include the production of two guides addressing Medium Density housing and subdivision. The purpose of the guides is to provide a user friendly document to assist the community in developing future residential areas and in understanding the urban design outcomes the Council is seeking.

### ***Medium Density Housing Design Guide***

- 7.68 The Medium Density Guide provides an urban design framework for residential developments at densities higher than the current level. The purpose of the guide is to identify and explain the key characteristics of good medium density development to ensure that new developments are compatible with the existing environment, to create a high quality living environment, and to provide a variety of housing types that use resources in an efficient manner. The final form of new medium density developments will be guided by the concepts and criteria of the Medium Density Design Guide which have been incorporated into the Plan as assessment matters.
- 7.69 It is noted that the Medium Density Design Guide will sit outside of the Selwyn District Plan and will have no direct statutory weight, albeit that they will be "other matters" to consider when assessing a resource consent and will help to inform any plan change applications relating to medium density developments.
- 7.70 To meet the RPS Change 1 urban growth targets in a sustainable and integrated way, new approaches to residential development in the townships of the District are required. In order to meet the RPS average minimum net densities of 10 households per hectare in Greenfield growth areas, it is likely to be necessary for some developments to include areas of medium density housing of at least 15 units per hectare or else the anticipated population growth will not be able to be accommodated within the urban limits identified in Plan Change 1 to the RPS.
- 7.71 In order to achieve medium density in townships that overall are "spacious" and have a "rural feel", successful developments will need to be compatible with the context of the township. This can be achieved by providing good connections with existing developments, providing open spaces around the dwellings, and designing dwellings that provide variation in style, form and cladding.

- 7.72 When located within close proximity to community facilities, medium density developments can reduce the travel distance of residents and increase the use of non-motorised forms of transport. A high level of connectivity within urban environments provides for efficiency of movement, reduces reliance on motorised forms of transport and travel times, improves accessibility to community facilities and provides opportunities for social interaction. In the context of new Greenfield developments, this means developments need to build on existing connections and create better ones to encourage greater levels of movement, including building safe and convenient cycle routes and walkways to link neighbourhoods with one another and to community facilities.
- 7.73 The Medium Density Housing Design Guide has been developed to encourage best practice design in the intensification of specified areas around existing townships within the Greater Christchurch area of the Selwyn District.
- 7.74 The **broad principles and key features** of the Medium Density Housing Guide are as follows:
- The principles of the housing guide seek to ensure that development occurs in a consolidated, sustainable coordinated manner. A compact urban form incorporating urban design principles is sought.
  - New medium density developments are concentrated around the existing township form, in close proximity to existing and proposed services.
  - To maintain the character and amenity of the township, new medium density developments will be designed in relation to the context in which the development will be located.
  - Provide a high quality living environment by balancing the built form with open space and plantings to maintain the existing amenity and character of the township.
  - Provide for housing choice
  - An average minimum net density of 10 households per hectare across all greenfield areas, which may require at least 15 households per hectare to be achieved in medium density areas.
  - Provide for an integrated transport and walking network.

#### ***Design Guide for Residential Subdivisions in the Living Zones***

- 7.75 The Subdivision Design Guide provides detailed guidance and criteria for the development of well designed residential subdivisions. The purpose of the guide is to define the key elements and characteristics that inform the design and layout of new subdivisions to create high quality neighbourhoods.

- 7.76 The layout of a new subdivision needs to respond to the context of the surrounding environment, including both the natural features and the built environment. Incorporating natural features into the design of the subdivision provides a new development with a more distinctive character and a sense of place. This can be achieved by designing the layout of the subdivision to take advantage of views towards the Port Hills or the Southern Alps. Maintaining a connection between the existing environment and the new development can be achieved by maintaining existing natural elements such as waterways, mature trees and in some cases shelterbelts, and by enhancing access to reserves.
- 7.77 The Design Guide seeks to ensure that street orientation and section proportions are designed to ensure practical use of the site, provide for an attractive street frontage and the receipt of sunlight in private gardens and living rooms. The layout of each section should be designed to avoid the need for private space to be located between the house and the street. An example of how this may be achieved is by designing the street layout whereby sections on the south or east side of the street have wide frontages that allow gaps between buildings for the sun to penetrate, providing houses with sunlight in living spaces and solar gain.
- 7.78 The layout of individual residential lots should be designed to provide attractive, visually coherent neighbourhoods that are safe and encourage interaction between neighbours. Dwellings should be designed to provide connection between the public and private realms by ensuring that main doors, living rooms and windows face the road environment. Further, lot design should be undertaken in a manner that provides clear demarcation between the public and the private realms. Rear lots in a block reduce the privacy of the adjacent dwellings, increase the size and depth of blocks and can decrease the accessibility and navigability of the block.
- 7.79 The integration of new developments with surrounding neighbourhoods can be achieved through the creation of strong transport connections that ensure neighbourhoods are easily accessed and navigated. The key design elements identified in the Design Guide seek to achieve greater connectivity by providing multifunctional thoroughfare streets, neighbourhood blocks that are small, easily navigable and convenient for cycle and pedestrian movements, and a variety of transport linkage options, including walking and cycling routes, and green networks.
- 7.80 The Design Guide for Residential Subdivisions has been developed to encourage best practice in the design and creation of new developments. The

**broad principles and key features** of the Design Guide for Residential Subdivisions in the Living Zones are as follows:

- Ensure a high level of amenity and connectivity, providing residents with a safe and sustainable neighbourhood.
- New developments should be designed in relation to the surrounding natural and built environment.
- Provide for an integrated transport, cycling and walking network.
- Provide for on site stormwater disposal that meets both engineering and amenity requirements.
- Design sections that provide for the practical use of the site, encourage active street frontages and receipt of sunlight in private gardens and living rooms.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS – Objectives and Policies

- 7.81 The objectives and policies of the District Plan amended and/or new provisions included by this section of PC7 are listed below:

### Township Volume

Plan Section		Plan Provisions
B3.4	Quality of the Environment	Objectives B3.4.4, 3.4.5
		Policies B3.4.1, 3.4.3
B 4.1	Residential Density	Objective B4.1.1
		Policies B4.1.1, 1.1.6, 1.1.13
B4.3	Residential & Business Development	Objective B4.3.3
		Policy B4.3.4

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS – Rules

### *Review of General principles:*

- 7.82 The proposed rule package has been designed as an efficient and effective method for implementing the existing and proposed policies and thereby achieving the objectives of the Selwyn District Plan, and thereby Part II of the Act. The rules are also considered to be a necessary method for achieving the objectives and associated policies of Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement. The District Plan is required by the Act to 'give effect to' the RPS, with the rule package designed to both enable higher density housing to occur and for such housing to display good urban design qualities.
- 7.83 The proposed rule package is predicated on the basis that it applies only to Greenfield developments, with all Greenfield areas required to produce an Outline Development Plan (ODP) that shows the location of medium density housing areas. The medium density rule package does not apply to infill situations within existing built-up areas i.e. private landowners will not be able to apply the rule package to existing blocks of low density living zoned land to create ad hoc pockets of medium density housing. For existing low density living zoned areas, there is the option of introducing either a Council-initiated or private plan change to change the zoning to that of medium density, however such a process is subject to an assessment under s.32 and full public notification where the merits can be fully examined and is quite different from a rule package that enables as-of-right medium density in an ad hoc manner through an existing suburb.

- 7.84 Greenfield growth areas identified in the RPS Change 1 (or zoned but undeveloped in the SDP) are to be zoned 'Living Z' which identifies that the land in question is suitable in principle for residential development. The urban zoning is however deferred, pending a private plan change that would include an ODP showing where lower density e.g. L1 and medium density housing areas are to be located. In those areas shown as being for medium density, the medium density rule package would apply. In keeping with the SDP layout, the below rules are therefore all restricted discretionary, unless otherwise stated.
- 7.85 In developing the medium density rule package, the medium density provisions in the Christchurch (L2, L3 LG zones), Wellington, Kapiti, Papakura, and various Auckland Council Plans have been considered, alongside the existing SDP living zone rules, definitions, and Plan format for Living zones.
- 7.86 The medium density rule package has also been developed to ensure that enables development of at least 15 units/hectare (net), so that an overall density of 10 units/ha (net) is achieved across Greenfield areas. Typical Greenfield Living1 development tends to result in a density below 10 units/ha once the matters such as local roads and parks that are required by Change 1 to the RPS to be included in the developable 'net area' are taken into account. To increase average density across a development that is largely Living 1 so that a net density of at least 10 units per hectare is achieved, the medium density areas will need to be achieving at least 15 units per hectare (net), with the Plan Change designed to enable densities in medium density areas to be higher than 15 units/ha so that the actual extent of medium density areas is able to be reduced i.e. 5 hectares at 30 units/ha rather than 10 hectares at 15 units/ha. The flexibility in density within the Medium Density areas will also enable a range of housing typologies and housing choice to be delivered and will provide developers with the flexibility to meet market needs whilst also ensuring that RPS densities are able to be achieved.

### **Proposed Rule Package**

#### **Part C, 12 Living Zone Rules - Subdivision**

- 12.1.3.5** Any allotment created, including a balance allotment, contains a building area of not less than 15m x 15m, except for sites greater than 350m<sup>2</sup> in area in a medium density area shown on an Outline Development Plan where the minimum building area shall be not less than 8m x 15m. For sites that form part of a comprehensive residential development in a Medium Density Area covered by an Outline Development Plan there shall be no minimum building area requirement and;
- 12.1.3.6** Any allotment created, including any balance allotment, complies with the relevant allotment size requirements set out in Table C12.1

#### **Table C12.1 Allotment Sizes**

Lincoln:



**Living Z** 650m<sup>2</sup>, with a minimum individual allotment size of 550m<sup>2</sup>, except that allotments I within a Medium Density area located within an operative Outline Development Plan shall have a maximum average allotment size of 450m<sup>2</sup> and a minimum individual allotment size of 350m<sup>2</sup>.

These requirements exclude any allotment that forms part of a comprehensive residential development identified by a consent notice on the subdivision consent and located within a Medium Density area where there shall be no minimum site size. Subsequent subdivision consent within a comprehensive residential development shall however only be granted following the erection (to the extent that the exterior is fully closed in) of the dwellings that are to be subdivided, with that subsequent subdivision to have a maximum average density of

### **Definitions**

**Comprehensive residential development:** shall only apply to the Living L15 zone in Prebbleton or to a Medium Density area identified on an Outline Development Plan.

**In Prebbleton it** means 8 or more residential units clustered, planned and designed in an integrated and comprehensive manner. Comprehensive residential development applies where all required land use and subdivision consents are submitted concurrently or where the required land use consent for comprehensive residential development is submitted and approved prior to a subdivision consent being submitted for the same.

**In a Medium Density area located within an Outline Development Plan, it means 4 or more residential units, clustered, planned and designed in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The comprehensive residential development is to be shown via a consent notice on the creation of the balance lot, with any subsequent subdivision consent for the individual units only being granted following the erection (to the extent that the exterior is fully closed in) of the dwellings that are to be subdivided.**

### **Size and Shape**

#### **12.1.4.17-21**

....

*Note: The consent authority shall consider a dwelling as being a minimum of 150m<sup>2</sup> in gross floor area (except in Medium Density areas located within an Outline Development Plan where the minimum gross floor area shall be 80m<sup>2</sup>), when using its discretion under Rules 12.1.4.18 to 12.1.4.22 for compliance with District Plan rules.*

### **Non-complying Activities – Subdivision – General**

12.1.7 Except as provided for in Rules 12.1.5 and 12.1.6, the following activities shall be non-complying activities:

12.1.7.1 Any subdivision subject to Rule 12.1.1 which does not comply with Rule 12.1.3.

12.1.7.2 Upon deposit of a Plan of subdivision, any further subdivision (other than by way of boundary adjustment) of any allotment within that Plan of subdivision (other than a balance lot) in the Living 1A Zone at Lincoln.

12.1.7.3 In the Living 1A5 Zone at Prebbleton, subdivision for comprehensive residential development shall be a non-complying activity where a land use consent for a comprehensive residential development has not been obtained.

**12.1.7.4 In a Medium Density Area located within an Outline Development Plan, any subdivision to create an allotment less than 350m<sup>2</sup> that is not part of a comprehensive residential development shall be a non-complying activity. Subdivision of a comprehensive residential development shall be a non-complying activity prior to the erection**

(to the extent that the exterior is fully closed in) of the dwellings that are to be subdivided.

#### Reasons for rules

*Add a new paragraph to the end of the 'reasons for rules section as follows:*

In Medium Density areas that are located within an Outline Development Plan, provision has been made for comprehensive residential developments. Such developments are anticipated to result in lots that are smaller than 350m<sup>2</sup>, and therefore the development needs to be built in an integrated manner to ensure that acceptable urban design and amenity outcomes are achieved. A minimum of four dwellings designed and built in a comprehensive manner is required to ensure that the building design and relationship to each other has a good standard of urban design. The Plan requires a building commitment to be in place prior to subdivision consent (typically unit titles) being granted to ensure that the lot boundaries are located in a logical position and to also control the creation of very small allotments below 350m<sup>2</sup> prior to building that could then potentially be sold and built individually, thereby frustrating the creation of a comprehensive, integrated development. Given that the intention of comprehensive residential developments is to facilitate higher density housing options, the final subdivision (post-building) should be such that subdivision does not exceed a maximum average of 450m<sup>2</sup> per allotment i.e. the comprehensive residential development provisions are to be used for small lots rather than large lot developments which would be counter to the purposes of a Medium Density area.

#### Discussion

- 7.87 The lot size rule needs to both ensure an adequate level of amenity, provide choice in the housing typologies available to residents, and to ensure that the urban growth requirements for accommodating some 3,900 new households in Lincoln over the coming thirty five years set out in Policy 6 to the RPS are able to be met. Both a minimum and a maximum average dimension are therefore required to ensure that lots are neither too small (and result in poor amenity outcomes or developments that are markedly out of keeping with the existing character of Lincoln) or too large and therefore density targets are not able to be achieved. As noted above, medium density areas need to be capable of achieving around 15 households per hectare to enable Greenfield blocks as a whole to achieve the 10 units per hectare necessary for accommodating the RPS requirements. Given that the RPS Change 1 includes a number of 'undevelopable' matters such as local roads and parks within the definition of 'net area', in practice the densities of the actual developable land are likely to be somewhat higher if the land identified for urban growth in Lincoln is going to be able to accommodate the required number of households. Similar issues may well arise in future growth areas around other townships such as Prebbleton and Rolleston. The medium density provisions have therefore been designed to enable a range of housing typologies and densities to both provide housing choice, and to enable flexibility in subdivision layout and lot sizes. For example, the requisite number of households could be accommodated via a smaller, denser Medium Density area instead of a larger, lower density area. The minimum required nominal building platform has been reduced to reflect the smaller section sizes anticipated in the Medium Density

areas, whilst still ensuring that a functional building area is provided in each allotment.

7.88 The site sizes will not permit the creation of individual lots that are smaller than 350m<sup>2</sup> as below this size it becomes difficult to ensure good urban design outcomes when such lots are developed individually. The proposed provisions do however provide for comprehensive residential developments whereby a minimum of four dwellings can be designed and built at one time, with overall per lot densities below 350m<sup>2</sup>. The ability to design and build such developments in an integrated manner means that the urban design issues are able to be resolved, with the buildings relating to each other and any adjoining public spaces such as road or parks. Because such higher density developments need to be designed and built in a comprehensive manner, it is proposed that subdivision consent (typically unit titles) will not be granted until there is evidence of building commitment to the point of the exterior of the dwellings being fully closed in. This provision means that very small lots cannot be created and sold off individually prior to building, with different owners then able to pursue individual designs that may not relate well to one another and that are likely to result in the inefficient use of sites. Higher density complexes will still be subject to an 8m height limit and are also proposed to be subject to a design and appearance rule (discussed below) to ensure good urban design outcomes.

7.89 Given that the intention of comprehensive residential developments is to facilitate higher density housing options, the final subdivision (post-building) should be such that subdivision does not exceed a maximum average of 450m<sup>2</sup> per allotment i.e. the comprehensive residential development provisions are to be used for small lots rather than large lot developments which would be counter to the purposes of the Medium Density areas.

#### **4.6 Buildings and Building Density**

##### **Permitted Activities – Buildings and Building Density**

- 4.6.1** The erection on an allotment (other than a site at Castle Hill) of not more than either:
- One dwelling and one family flat up to 70m<sup>2</sup> in floor area; or
  - One principle building (other than a dwelling) and one dwelling, shall be a permitted activity, except that within a comprehensive development more than one dwelling may be erected on the balance lot prior to any subsequent subdivision consent after erection of the dwellings (to the extent that the exterior is fully closed in). residential that occurs

##### **Non-complying Activities – Buildings and Building Density**

- 4.6.6** The erection on an allotment of any building (other than an accessory building) which does not comply with Rule 4.6.1 shall be a non-complying activity in the Low and Medium Density areas covered by an Outline

Development Plan, Living 1A, 1A2, 1A3, 1A4 zones at Prebbleton and all Living 2 and 2A zones.

#### 4.7 Buildings and Site coverage

- 4.7.1** Except as provided in Rule 4.7.2, the erection of any building which complies with the site coverage allowances set out in Table C4.1 below shall be a permitted activity.

**Table C4.1** Site Coverage Allowances

<b>Medium Density</b>	<b>Including garage</b>	<b>35%</b>
	<b>Excluding garage</b>	<b>35% - 18m<sup>2</sup></b>

**Note: Where a site forms part of a comprehensive residential development of 4 or more adjoining lots less than 350m<sup>2</sup> in size, the site coverage shall be calculated across the area of the entire comprehensive residential development, excluding any undeveloped balance lot.**

- 4.7.3** Any activity which does not comply with Rule 4.7.1 shall be a restricted discretionary activity if it complies with all of the following standards and terms:

....

- 4.7.3.2 The site is located in a medium density area located within an Outline Development Plan and the maximum area of the site occupied by a building(s) is:**  
**(a) 40% - including a garage; or**  
**(b) 40% - 18m<sup>2</sup> - excluding a garage.**

**Note: Where a site forms part of a comprehensive residential development of 4 or more adjoining lots less than 350m<sup>2</sup> in size, the site coverage shall be calculated across the area of the entire comprehensive residential development, excluding any undeveloped balance lot.**

- 4.7.4** Under Rule 4.7.3, any resource consent application shall not be notified and shall not require the written approval of affected parties, and the Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion to consideration of:

- 4.7.4.1** The number of sites in the street or subdivision where site coverage already exceeds 35%.

- 4.7.4.2** Any adverse effects, singularly or cumulatively, on the residential density or 'spaciousness' of the area.

- 4.7.4.3 In any medium density areas located within an Outline Development Plan only:**  
**(a) the extent to which a complying outdoor living area and opportunities for tree planting and garden landscaping are to be provided;**  
**(b) whether there are any areas of communal or public open space in the immediate vicinity of the site.**  
**(c) the extent to which a balance is achieved between buildings and hardsurfacing, and landscaping and open space;**  
**(d) the avoidance of an appearance of cramped development that is out of keeping with an open and spacious streetscene; and**  
**(e) whether the visual effects of increased site coverage are offset by the provision of an attractive, well designed street frontage with good levels of architectural detailing and articulation and the siting of garaging and parking areas to the rear of the site.**

## Reasons for Rules

### Site Coverage

Rule 4.7 is designed to maintain 'spaciousness' in the Living zones of Selwyn District. It does this by controlling the ratio of land to building rules. The rule does not affect the size of an allotment (only the extent of the lot that can be covered in buildings), therefore a variety of allotment sizes may be provided for. An exemption has been made for Dunsandel Primary School from the maximum building floor space requirement of the Living 2 Zone to bring it into line with other schools which are subject to a percentage of site covered, rather than a maximum floor area figure.

Rule 4.7.3 provides for some allotments to have higher site coverages, as restricted discretionary activities. This enables the Council to meet the demand for small, easy care sections while managing the number of such allotments, so as to maintain overall spaciousness. The rule only applies in Living 1, ~~and 1A zones~~ and Medium Density Areas located within an Outline Development Plan because Living 2 zones are distinguished from Living 1 zones by their lower residential density.

Higher levels of site coverage have also been provided for emergency services recognising their importance to the community. Their general one-off locations throughout the district's townships will ensure any impact of increased density on the overall character of an area is minimal.

Significant new development in West Melton will adjoin State Highway 73. The volume of traffic using this road, mainly at "open road" speed limits, requires a degree of physical separation which (in combination with noise bunding) is intended to partly mitigate the effects of traffic noise.

### Discussion

- 7.90 The medium density zone is anticipated to result in dwellings that are typically two stories in height. In order to maintain an adequate balance between buildings and open space in the medium density zone, site coverage has intentionally been kept at a reasonably conservative 35%. It is also noted that whilst the proposed level of site coverage is the same as the lower density L1 zones, properties in these lower density zones are seldom developed to the maximum site coverage permitted i.e. whilst the plan provides 35%, development is often closer to 25% in reality e.g. a 1,000m<sup>2</sup> site with a single storey 250m<sup>2</sup> dwelling. It is however anticipated that the medium density zones will develop to a level much closer to the permitted site coverage, and therefore lots will appear more intensively developed than typical L1 sections.
- 7.91 This level of site coverage still enables a footprint of at least 122m<sup>2</sup> (at 350m<sup>2</sup> site). These footprints are sufficient for providing either a small single storey dwelling or a good sized two storey dwelling.
- 7.92 The Selwyn Plan has a standard format for site coverage that is explicit that room for a double garage needs to be taken off the site coverage allowance if no garage is proposed on the building plans. This provision is a response to historical developments where garages are built some time after the dwelling itself and therefore it is necessary to ensure that adequate space is provided for a garage without causing the site to be overdeveloped. With modern housing developments, garages are generally constructed as part of the dwelling, and are typically incorporated into the dwelling design with internal

access from the garage into the dwelling. The need for additional space for garaging to be provided at a later date is not therefore considered to eventuate with any particular frequency. In the event that a dwelling is designed without a garage, the provision for a garageable space is however incorporated into the rule, with the important difference that this space only needs to be sufficient for a single garage (18m<sup>2</sup>), rather than the double space currently required by the Plan. This difference is in recognition of the smaller sites and the potential that occupiers of medium density dwellings may not require double garaging.

- 7.93 The 'restricted discretionary' standard has been set at 40% in recognition of the higher density built character of the medium density areas, whilst also recognising the need for developments with greater coverage to be carefully designed and assessed. The difference between the 35% 'as of right' standard and the 40% restricted discretionary standard is that at higher building densities, the design decisions, site layout, and balance between buildings and gardens/open space become more important and therefore it is important that the Council is able to exercise its discretion regarding potential effects on both the on-site amenity of the proposed building and the wider impacts on street scene and the character of the area. An exception is made for comprehensive residential development where individual units are likely to be unit titled as part of a wider complex and where it is more appropriate for site coverage to be calculated over the complex, rather than the nominated boundaries for individual units.

#### **4.8 Buildings and Building Height**

- 4.8.1** The erection of any building which has a height of not more than 8 metres shall be a permitted activity.
- 4.8.2** Any activity which does not comply with Rule 4.8.1 shall be a discretionary activity.

No change is proposed to this rule, with the Medium Density areas to have an 8m height limit.

#### **Discussion**

- 7.94 The standard height limit across all the SDP living zones is 8m, with any buildings over 8m being a fully discretionary activity. An 8m height limit readily enables a two storey dwelling with a pitched roof to be erected, with it possible to also include a 'loft' room within the roofspace. Despite the ability to build two storey dwellings, the typical housing form in Lincoln, and indeed the other Selwyn townships, is that of single storey dwellings. As with the site coverage provision, it is anticipated that development in the medium density zone will be more likely to develop closer to the maximums permitted by the Plan, and that due to the smaller section sizes and proposed 35% site coverage provision there will

be much greater provision of two storey dwellings. A height of 8m is therefore considered to be acceptable in a medium density zone as the built contrast will typically be a shift from single storey in existing L1 areas to two storey buildings in the medium density areas. Were three storey (11m) buildings to be permitted as of right then the built contrast would be out of keeping with the rural village character of the existing Selwyn townships and would present a potentially discordant transition within new subdivisions.

- 7.95 It is noted that proposals that exceed the 8m standard are discretionary rather than non-complying activities, and therefore developers still have the ability to build higher housing forms in the medium density areas if they are able to demonstrate that the proposed buildings are well designed and are located in such a manner that they will not affect the character of the wider subdivision or any nearby lower density properties.

#### **4.9 Buildings and Building Position**

##### **Recession planes**

- 4.9.1** The construction of any building which complies with the Recession Plane A requirements set out in Appendix 11,

**4.9.1.1** in a Medium Density area located within an Outline Development Plan, the starting point for the recession planes set out in Appendix 11 shall be 5m above ground level; and

**4.9.1.2** Where the building shares a common wall with another building along an internal boundary, the recession planes set out in Appendix 11 shall not apply to the area covered by such a wall.

##### **Discussion**

- 7.96 The angles in Appendix 11 are the same for all living zones in the Plan. It is considered that the current controls are unreasonably onerous for a Medium Density area and will not readily enable the erection of two storey dwellings on relatively small lots, with two storey dwellings anticipated in the Medium Density areas. The starting point for the recession plane has therefore been increased to 5m, so that two storey buildings can be readily constructed (given there is also a requirement for buildings to be set 2m in from the boundary thereby enabling an effective eave height of some 5.5m before the recession plane angles start to restrict building mass). The recession plane control, combined with the site coverage provision of only 35%, will encourage two storey dwellings with reasonable open space around them, and will enable dwellings to be oriented 'front and back' towards the road and rear gardens and built across much of the width of the site rather than being oriented towards side boundaries where privacy can become an issue.

- 7.97 An exception has been added to the rule to make it explicit that where buildings share a common wall at the boundary such as terraced or semi-detached houses, no recession plane applies along that portion of the boundary with the common wall. It is noted that the Plan already excludes common walls from the need to comply with the internal boundary setback controls under clause 4.9.3, however as this clause is a separate rule from the rule controlling recession planes, the exclusion under 4.9.3 does not currently apply to recession plane angles.
- 7.98 As with height, it is also important to note that should a developer wish to comprehensively develop a block of medium density housing that was within their control then they have the ability to do so under the proposed comprehensive housing provisions, thereby enabling greater flexibility in terms of the location of units within the same large lot (pre-unit titling).

#### **Setbacks from boundaries**

- 4.9.2** Except as provided in Rules 4.9.3 to 4.9.18 ~~22~~, any building which complies with the setback distances from internal boundaries and road boundaries, as set out in Table C4.2 below.

#### **Medium Density areas located within an Outline Development Plan**

- 4.9.15** Any dwelling or principle building shall be set back a minimum of 3m from any road boundary.
- 4.9.16** Where an allotment has legal access to a private Right of Way or shared access, any dwelling or principle building on that allotment shall be set back a minimum of 3m along the entire length of the boundary with that private Right of Way or shared access.
- 4.9.17** Any garage where a vehicle door faces the road, a private Right of Way or shared access shall be set back a minimum of 5.5m from the road boundary, private Right of Way, or shared access.
- 4.9.18** Any garage shall not be located between the front facade of the dwelling and the road boundary or the private Right of Way or shared access by which the allotment is accessed. The front facade is deemed to be the primary facade facing the road. Where an allotment has no direct road frontage apart from an access, the front facade is deemed to be the primary facade facing the private Right of Way or shared access by which the allotment has access.
- 4.9.19** Any dwelling or principle building, excluding garages, shall be setback a minimum of 2m from any internal boundary. Buildings may however be sited along an internal boundary of the site if the building shares a common wall with another building.
- 4.9.20** All balconies at first floor level and above may only be located in a facade that faces a road boundary or an internal boundary shared with land vested or designated for recreation or esplanade reserve/ strip purposes.
- 4.9.20.1** Any windows at first floor level or above must be either:
- facing a road boundary, or an internal boundary shared with land vested or designated for recreation or esplanade reserve/ strip purposes; or
  - Be located in the facade facing the northern internal boundary for lots where the eastern or western boundaries face a road; or



- Be located in the façade facing the eastern internal boundary for lots where the northern or southern boundaries face a road; or
- Set back a minimum of 10m from an internal boundary; or
- Have a sill height of at least 1.6m above internal floor level; or
- Be obscure glazed and non-opening or top-hinged.

Note: “northern internal boundaries” are deemed to be those boundaries located between 49 and 55 degrees, and “eastern and western boundaries” are deemed to be those boundaries located between 39 and 49 degrees, and “southern internal boundaries are deemed to be those located between the 39 degree points as shown on the recession plane indicator in Appendix 11. In the Appendix 11 example point A is the northern boundary, Point B the western boundary, and both Point C and the road boundary would be the eastern boundary.

*Renumber existing clauses 4.9.15 – 4.9.24 and include new clauses 4.9.15-4.9.20 in existing clause 4.9.21 relating to restricted discretionary status.*

## Reasons for Rules

### Building Position

Rule 4.9 is intended to give property owners maximum flexibility over the use of space on their properties, while affording neighbours adequate protection in relation to sunlight, privacy and outlook. Setback distances are not used to maintain ‘spaciousness’. This is done by site coverage while recession planes control shading, and setback distances control privacy and outlook.

In the Medium Density areas included within an Outline Development Plan, buildings are required to be set back a minimum of 3m from the road boundary or shared Rights of Way and shared accessways. The road boundary setback is smaller than that required for sites in the lower density Living zones in recognition of the higher density character anticipated in the Medium Density areas and the need to enable smaller sites to be used in an efficient manner. Some setback is however still necessary to provide the opportunity for some landscaping and tree planting along the road frontage, Rights of Way, and shared accessways and will help to maintain an open and pleasant street scene and to provide adequate levels of amenity and the opportunity for landscaping along shared driveways. The need for buildings to be set back from private Rights of Way and shared accessways is in recognition that these areas function as private lanes and as such there is a need to maintain adequate levels of amenity along such areas and to ensure that they are not overly dominated by buildings and blank, high boundary fencing.

Garages are required to be set no further forward than the front façade of the dwelling so that they are not visually dominant from the street, private Rights of Way, and shared accessways. Front facing garage doors are required to be set back at least 5.5m from road boundaries, private Rights of Way, and shared accessways to enable vehicles to be parked in front of the doors without intruding over footpaths, road reserve, or shared driveways, and to provide a second informal car parking space for occupants or visitors.

In the Medium Density areas, provision is also made for dwellings and primary buildings to be setback a minimum of 2m from internal boundaries to ensure a degree of daylight is available to ground floor windows. Garages are however able to be erected along the internal boundary in recognition that they are inherently single storey structures and do not contain habitable space. Buildings are able to be built to an internal boundary where they will share a wall with a neighbouring building, in order facilitate more intensive forms of housing to develop such as semi-detached or terraced typologies. No recession planes apply over that portion of the boundary where a common wall has been built as there will be no shading effects where buildings share the same wall. To facilitate more intensive forms of housing and to enable two storey dwellings to be designed on relatively small sites, the recession plane requirements start at 5m rather than 2.5m. This will encourage buildings to be oriented towards the street and rear garden, rather than towards side boundaries.

In the Medium Density areas, balconies at first floor level and above are only permitted in facades that face road or reserve boundaries due to the potential for balconies to have a significant adverse effect on privacy if they are located overlooking internal boundaries. In more intensive residential areas where dwellings are in closer proximity to one another than low density zones and where there is a much greater likelihood of dwellings being higher than single storey, there is an increased need to maintain acceptable levels of privacy. Windows at first floor level or above are therefore only permitted if they either face a road or reserve boundary, are set back a minimum of 10m from an internal boundary (typically the rear garden boundary), or have a high level internal sill or are obscure glazed (thereby providing light but preventing overlooking). Windows are also permitted in north-facing facades (for east-west oriented sites), or east facing facades (for north-south oriented sites). This provision enables first floor and above windows to be established with a consistent orientation along streets so that at first floor level windows on neighbouring properties will not be able to look directly into each other, thereby maintaining adequate levels of privacy whilst also enabling upper storey rooms to be provided with access to sunlight.

Setbacks do not apply to utility structures because these structures have small bulk and are not occupied by people. However, they do apply to utility buildings which have a larger floor area, as such buildings have the potential to cause shading and loss of outlook. They are more likely to be occupied by people and, therefore, can affect privacy.

If the conditions for permitted activities are unable to be met, the proposed building may be able to proceed by application for a discretionary or restricted discretionary activity. The assessment matters for restricted discretionary activities are listed. A reverse sensitivity issue may arise if the 20 metre setback in Rule 4.9.9 for the Living 2A zone at Prebbleton is not met, due to the nature of adjoining rural land uses at the southern zone boundary. This rule was adopted in the decision on a plan change under the previous District Plan. Similarly, Rules 4.9.6, to 4.9.8 were adopted as a consequence of plan changes made operative under the previous District Plan, and those provisions have been carried over.

The siting of a dwelling less than 150m from the Lincoln Sewage Treatment Plant is a non-complying activity, and is therefore not generally considered appropriate. This rule was also adopted as a consequence of a plan change made operative under the previous District Plan.

### **Discussion**

- 7.99 A 3m building setback from the road boundary is considered appropriate for achieving a balance between an open street scene, the opportunity for some landscaping in front of the dwelling, and enabling efficient use of smaller sites and the establishment of a higher density character.
- 7.100 Garages that face the street, private RoWs, or shared accessways are required to have a 5.5m setback to their doors to enable a car to be parked in front of the garage without projecting onto the footpath, road reserve, or RoW. The garage door setback will mean that in general garages will be recessed behind the front façade of the dwelling which will achieve a positive urban design outcome whereby the visual appearance of the dwelling will not be dominated by garaging at the expense of habitable rooms. In the event that dwellings are set back more than the minimum 3m required by the Plan, there is the potential for both front-on and side-on garages to be erected forward of the dwelling's front façade which is considered to be a poor urban design outcome. To ensure that this does not occur and that the appearance of dwellings from the street remains characterised by habitable rooms rather than

garaging, it is proposed that garages not be located forward of the front building line.

7.101 To enable the use of small sites to be maximised, whilst also providing some access to daylight for windows facing internal side boundaries, the standard 2m side boundary setback has been retained.

7.102 There are no rules currently in the Plan relating to window or balcony setbacks. Privacy is a subjective issue with people's tolerance levels varying from household to household. In medium density areas there is a perception that people ought to anticipate a less private environment than that anticipated in a low density living area. The counter view is that in medium density areas privacy becomes more of an issue with more multi-storey buildings and more people living in close proximity to one another. The proposed provisions have therefore been designed to strike a balance between the need to provide daylight to rooms at and above first floor level, whilst also maintaining adequate levels of privacy and amenity for both future occupants and neighbours. Balconies are therefore restricted except where they face the street or public open space as the ability to sit out on balconies enables considerable overlooking of adjoining properties, even where balconies are set some distance from an internal boundary. First floor and above windows are permitted where they face the street or public open space, where they are set at least 10m from an internal – and typically rear – boundary (10m is a standard distance in urban design literature), are high level windows with an internal sill height of at least 1.6m, or are obscure glazed. An important element of the window controls is that for sites located on east-west oriented streets, upper floor windows are permitted in the north-facing façade, and for sites in north-south oriented streets, windows are permitted in the east-facing façade. This provision enables first floor and above windows to be established with a consistent orientation along streets so that at first floor level windows on neighbouring properties will not be able to look directly into each other, thereby maintaining adequate levels of privacy whilst also enabling upper storey rooms to be provided with access to daylight. The proposed privacy rules relating to windows and balconies, in combination with the recession plane, and site coverage provisions will tend to promote two storey dwellings oriented to the street and the rear garden rather than the side boundaries, which is an extremely common, well-established layout for medium density residential areas throughout the western world.

**4.12 Comprehensive Residential Development in Medium Density Areas located within an Outline Development Plan**

Restricted Discretionary Activities - Comprehensive Residential Development in Medium Density Areas located within an Outline Development Plan

4.12.1 In a Medium Density area located within an Outline Development Plan, comprehensive residential development shall be a restricted discretionary activity, which shall not be notified and shall not require the written approval of affected parties. Under Rule 4.12.1 the Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion to consideration of:

4.12.1.1 Context

The extent to which medium density development responds to the existing context:

- (a) Provide compatibility in scale between the new development and any neighbouring buildings;
- (b) Is oriented towards adjoining public spaces such as roads, parks, or reserves and presents a front façade with a good level of glazing. Visible pedestrian front entrances and low front fencing;
- (c) Provide dwellings which relate to each other and surroundings in terms of regularity of features such as window height and detailing and a consistency in roof slope and form.

4.12.1.2 Public Interface and External Appearance

The extent to which the public interface and external appearance of buildings in medium density developments:

- (a) Provide dwellings with visual interest when viewed from any public spaces through articulation, roof form, openings and window location;
- (b) Provide visible entry to the dwelling when viewed from the road or the main public access to the development;
- (c) Provide a good level of glazing and overlooking from habitable rooms towards the road and any adjacent public open spaces.

4.12.1.3 Dwelling design, position and orientation

The extent to which the dwelling design, position and orientation of buildings in medium density developments:

- (a) Locate and orientate dwellings to define external spaces, to allow adequate sunlight and daylight into main living rooms and private outdoor spaces;
- (b) Position dwellings to ensure that dwellings front on to, and are accessed from, the road, private Right of Way, or shared accessways;
- (c) Position dwellings to capitalise on any views or natural features;
- (d) Minimise the visual dominance of garaging and vehicle parking areas, especially as viewed from the street or public open spaces. The use of rear courtyards for parking is encouraged.

4.12.1.4 Private outdoor living spaces

The extent to which medium density developments provide private outdoor living spaces that:

- (a) Have the primary outdoor living space directly accessible from an internal living room;
- (b) Have any secondary outdoor living spaces such as balconies directly accessible from living rooms or bedrooms;
- (c) Are located so that the principle private outdoor living space will receive sunshine for a reasonable portion of the day in winter;
- (d) Are located so that the principle outdoor living space is not directly overlooked by windows or balconies of neighbouring dwellings;
- (e) The extent to which communal outdoor living space is provided within a comprehensively designed development and the functionality of that space for meeting the likely needs of future occupants.

#### 4.12.1.5 Visual and acoustic privacy

The extent to which medium density developments provide visual and acoustic privacy:

- (a) Avoid or minimise direct views from the windows of one dwelling into another through the use of the following design devices:
  - The shape and position of the buildings
  - Location of windows e.g. off set windows and high sill windows
  - Separation distance
  - Intervening screening e.g. 1.8 metre high fences (not on road boundary or frontage with accessways), hedges, trees
  - Screening devices on balconies
- (b) Provide acoustic treatment between dwellings through enhancing separation between openings, effective solid acoustic screening and by locating noise sensitive spaces from noisy activities (e.g. service areas and garages).

#### 4.12.1.6 Safety and security

The extent to which medium density developments are designed to reduce the fear and incidence of crime:

- (a) The avoidance of narrow alleyways and places of entrapment;
- (b) A clear definition between public and private spaces;
- (c) The ability to provide casual surveillance of public space from private property and vice versa.

#### 4.12.1.7 Accessibility and connectivity

The extent to which medium density developments are designed for accessibility and connectivity:

- (a) Design new developments that provide for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles within and through the development and to surrounding residential areas and community facilities;
- (b) Provide direct pedestrian and cycle linkages from developments to and between any adjoining reserves and open spaces.

## Reasons for Rules

### Comprehensive Residential Development in Medium Density Areas covered by an Outline Development Plan

Within comprehensive residential developments in Medium Density areas covered by an Outline Development Plan, the Plan enables higher density forms of development to occur. Due to their higher density, such developments need to be planned in a comprehensive manner to ensure that adequate levels of urban design and amenity are achieved. The Plan therefore requires resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity with the Council's discretion limited to the urban design, appearance, and amenity of the development. This provision has been inserted to ensure that the widespread community concerns that have been voiced in other Districts regarding poor quality high density developments are able to be avoided in Selwyn, whilst still enabling the provision of a wide range of housing choice for residents. This provision includes an extensive set of assessment matters to ensure that higher density development provides a good level of amenity for residents, neighbours and views from public places including streets.

## Discussion

- 7.103 The general direction of the Plan rules with respect to all the living zones has been 'traditional' in that they control the bulk and location of buildings, with the design details left to the individual landowner. This approach is based upon the presumption that buildings which are erected within the defined building 'envelope' are unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenity or character of the surrounding area. This existing approach means that it is possible for developments to be designed in such a way as to be fully complying with the Plan, thereby giving certainty to the landowner that they can proceed with their project without the costs, delays, and uncertainty of the resource consent process.
- 7.104 The bulk and location approach generally works well in a low density suburban context where buildings generally have a low bulk relative to the size of their site and a considerable amount of open space and opportunities for landscaping are retained. Due to the larger scale and density anticipated in the medium density zones, these zones are more sensitive to the effects of design choices than the other lower density residential areas of the District and therefore the current bulk and location approach is not considered to be appropriate for effectively controlling adverse effects that could potentially arise from higher density forms of development. It is noted that the bulk and location style of rule package has been found to be inadequate for controlling effects in other parts of New Zealand where Plans have provided for Medium Density development for some time. This Plan Change represents an opportunity for Selwyn Council to 'shut the door before the horse bolts' by ensuring that medium density developments are built to a high standard of urban design and that adverse community reactions to poorly designed, higher density developments are avoided.

- 7.105 It is therefore proposed that in addition to bulk and location rules, new medium density developments will be subject to an assessment of their design, appearance, and amenity. The proposed assessment matters are focussed on the achievement of widely accepted urban design principles relating to matters such as site layout, the provision of adequate landscaping and open space, glazing and architectural detailing in the front façade rather than blank walls, the relationship of the proposed dwelling with adjoining properties etc. The 'urban design principle' based approach recognises that there is a wide range of acceptable Medium Density building styles and design solutions, which combined with issues of personal freedom and landowner rights and expectations, makes it inappropriate to specify a certain architectural style of building.
- 7.106 The proposed design, appearance and amenity rule is an approach that is similar to that adopted in many other cities and districts in New Zealand where medium and high density forms of housing are proposed. The development of the assessment matters themselves was guided by a review of other similar provisions in district plans within New Zealand and the urban design principles described in the 'seven Cs' of the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol (to which SDC is a signatory), namely Context, Character, Choice, Connections, Creativity, Custodianship and Collaboration. From these it was clear that there is a similarity of issues that need to be addressed by good urban design and development.
- 7.107 The inclusion of urban design guidelines within District Plans has been suggested as a possible Local Government action in a recent MfE report on urban design (Urban Design Protocol Action Pack, March 2005) and is also required by Policy 7 of Change 1 to the Regional Policy Statement. The inclusion of design and appearance rules for medium and high density housing has been undertaken in the Wellington, Kapiti, Papakura, Hamilton, Queenstown, and the various Auckland Plans to ensure that higher density multi-unit developments achieve a high standard of urban design, with Christchurch currently investigating a plan change to follow this approach for the higher density Living 3 and 4 zones in Christchurch.
- 7.108 The introduction of a design, appearance and amenity rule across the Medium Density zones for new developments does represent a major methodological shift in the regulatory approach of the Council. A blanket design rule will impose additional costs on both landowners and the Council through increasing the number of resource consents needing to be processed. The increase in build costs for developers would depend on the level of design that they intended to undertake compared to that required to gain resource consent under the new provisions i.e. if they had intended to construct a well

designed building then no changes or additional costs will be necessary, whereas if their original proposal was poorly designed then there will be additional costs in developing a better proposal.

7.109 In balancing the costs and the benefits of this rule, it is proposed that it have restricted discretionary status and that it is explicit that application will be non-notified and will not require the written consent of other parties. The 'non-notified' clause recognises that firstly such developments will be occurring in Greenfield areas only and therefore will not have existing, long-established residential neighbours, and secondly that appropriate technical persons should process these applications as they have the expertise to best assess design, appearance and amenity, and that the potential for adverse effects from design and appearance is on the urban form and character of the area rather than on any particular person/s. It should also be noted that the equivalent design and appearance rules in other District and City Plans are "predetermined" to be non-notified applications and do not require neighbours' consent to be provided when an application is made for consent under the design, appearance and amenity rule.

7.110 The actual administration of a design, appearance and amenity rule will need to be determined by the Council and this would occur outside of the plan change process as the rule will not specify the processing mechanism. The Environmental Policy and Approvals Unit is charged with the administration of resource consent processing and will have a role to play in determining the actual manner in which a rule could be applied. This could include the use of an in-house expert to review applications (as happens currently in the case of heritage applications), an external person or persons, a design panel (as used in other cities and being developed presently in Christchurch), or a combination of these. Parallel to the development of this plan change, the Council has also been developing a Medium Density Design Guide to help provide more detail to both residents and developers as to the sorts of outcomes sought in the medium density areas and the sorts of design solutions available for meeting the Plan's assessment matters. This design guide will be non-statutory and will sit outside the District Plan, albeit that the key design matters raised in the guide have been incorporated into the design and appearance rule assessment matters.

7.111 A requirement that all new medium density developments be assessed against nationally established urban design principles is an important tool for ensuring that such development does not result in an unacceptable living environment for both occupants of these areas and the wider community. On balance these benefits outweigh the costs of new developments having to go through the resource consent process, with non-notified status assisting in minimising



these costs whilst still enabling an urban design assessment to be undertaken with appropriate technical input and review.

#### **4.13 Buildings and Streetscene**

##### **Permitted Activities – Buildings and Streetscene**

##### **For both low and Medium Density areas located within an Outline Development Plan**

**4.13.1**      The maximum height of any fence between the front building façade and the street or a private Right of Way or shared access over which the allotment has legal access, shall be 1m. For allotments with frontage to more than one road, this rule shall only apply to the façade that includes the front entrance to the allotment, with fencing on the other road frontage to be no higher than 1.8m.

**4.13.2**      Garages are to occupy no more than 50% of the width of the building façade facing the road, or a private Right of Way or shared access over which the allotment has legal access.

##### **Restricted Discretionary Activities - Buildings and Streetscene**

**4.13.3**      Any activity which does not comply with Rule 4.13.1 and Rule 4.13.2 shall be a restricted discretionary activity.

**4.13.3**      Under Rule 4.13.1 the Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion to consideration of:

**4.13.3.1**      The degree to which an open streetscene is maintained and views between the dwelling and the public space, private Right of Way or shared access are retained.

**4.13.3.2**      The extent to which the visual appearance of the site from the street, or private Right of Way or shared access over which the lot has legal use of any part, is dominated by garden planting and the dwelling, rather than front fencing.

**4.13.3.3**      The extent to which the proposed fence is constructed out of the same materials as the dwelling and incorporates steps in plan, landscaping, and see-through materials such as railings or trellis.

**4.13.4**      Under Rule 4.13.2 the Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion to consideration of:

**4.13.4.1**      The extent to which the front façade is dominated by habitable rooms and glazing rather than garaging.

**4.13.4.2**      The extent to which the opportunity for passive surveillance and overlooking of the street, Private Right of Way, or shared access from the dwelling is provided.

##### **Reasons for Rules**

##### **Buildings and streetscene**

Solid, high screening structures such as fences and walls that are erected on road boundaries of properties have the potential to cause adverse visual impacts on a pleasant and open streetscene along with other associated effects such as disconnection and reduction in the potential for passive security between dwellings and the street. There rule acknowledges that where sites have frontage to more than one road, the rule only applies to the façade that includes the front entrance to the allotment so that a reasonable degree of privacy is able to be achieved for corner sites or allotments that back onto a second

road. On other sites, it is expected that subdivisions will be designed to ensure that privacy can be achieved on the lot and that buildings will have been positioned with the need for private outdoor space in mind.

Another key element in maintaining a pleasant and attractive streetscene is to ensure that developments are not visually dominated by garaging when viewed from the road, private Rights of Way, or shared accessways. The rule therefore limits the width of garages to no more than 50% of the front façade of the dwelling to ensure that front facades contain visual interest, and the opportunities for glazing and passive surveillance. In medium density areas this provision works in tandem with the requirement that garages not project forward of the front building façade to further minimise the visual impact of garaging.

### **Discussion**

7.112 Low fences and landscaping help define the separation from public space (footpaths) to private space, whilst still enabling passive surveillance from dwelling windows and a pleasant, open streetscene. Any fencing needs to be kept to a low height to maintain the open character of the street and to enable intervisibility between the street and the dwelling. It is noted that many Greenfield subdivisions in recent years have included private developer-initiated covenants on the title which prevent any front fencing whatsoever, so a requirement limiting fences to 1m does not represent a significant departure from the accepted norms in Selwyn. The 3m building setback and the nature of medium density housing typologies on relatively small sites means that dwellings are likely to be built close to the road boundary, with private outdoor living space located to the rear. The purpose of the frontage space therefore becomes one of providing the opportunity for some landscaping and for creating a setting for the entrance of the dwelling.

7.113 It is a well-established urban design principle that front dwelling facades should include 'active' internal spaces i.e. living areas where passive overlooking of the street is possible, and where the front façade has good levels of glazing and architectural detailing. A key element in achieving these outcomes is to ensure that the front facades of dwellings are not dominated by garages, which present relatively bland detailing, no or few windows, and limit passive overlooking and interaction with the street. This passive surveillance is a key element in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which relates to reducing crime and increasing safety and a sense of community through the careful design of buildings and neighbourhoods. This rule should be relatively easy to achieve, especially given it is also proposed that for the Medium Density areas the provision of only a single car parking space be required, thereby enabling developments to have only a single garage should they so wish.

## **4.14 Buildings and Private Outdoor Living Space**

### **Permitted Activities – Buildings Private Outdoor Living Space**

#### **Medium Density areas located within an Outline Development Plan**

4.14.1 In Medium Density areas located within an Outline Development Plan, dwelling shall be provided with a private outdoor living space with a minimum area of 50m<sup>2</sup> and a minimum dimension of 4m, except that the area provided by balconies with a minimum dimension of 1.5m may also count towards the 50m<sup>2</sup>. The outdoor living space (excluding balconies) is not to be located between the front building façade and the road boundary.

#### Restricted Discretionary Activities - Buildings and Private Outdoor Living Space

4.14.2 Any activity which does not comply with Rule 4.14.1 shall be a restricted discretionary activity which shall not be notified and shall not require the written approval of affected parties. Under Rule 4.14.1 the Council shall restrict the exercise of its discretion to consideration of:

4.14.2.1 The degree to which any reduction in outdoor living space will adversely affect the ability of the site to provide for the outdoor living needs of residents of the site.

4.14.2.2 The extent to which any outdoor living space intrudes in front of any residential unit such that it would be likely to give rise to pressure to erect high fences between the dwelling and the street, to the detriment of an open street scene.

4.14.2.3 The degree to which large areas of public open space are provided within very close proximity to the site.

4.14.2.4 The degree to which any communal outdoor living areas are proposed where individual dwellings form part of a comprehensive residential development.

4.14.2.5 The degree to which a reduction in outdoor living space would contribute to a visual perception of cramped development or over-development of the site.

#### Reasons for Rules

##### Buildings and Private Outdoor Living Space

A minimum area and shape of outdoor living space has been required for dwellings in Medium Density areas is to ensure that an area of each site is set aside which is sufficient to meet the outdoor living needs of current and future residents of the site and to provide the opportunity for tree and garden planting. The rule only applies to Medium Density areas as the reduced allotment sizes could result in relatively narrow strips of unbuilt land around dwellings that do not provide a useable outdoor living area. The provision of an outdoor area also means that sites retain the opportunity for tree and garden planting which helps to balance the built appearance of higher density areas and visually soften the built environment. Balconies can be counted towards the required outdoor living area in recognition of the positive role that well-located balconies can play in meeting the amenity needs of occupants and providing an alternative small outdoor living area that may receive sun at a different time of the day. Balconies can also be a positive design element and are encouraged where they provide passive surveillance of the street or public open spaces without resulting in subsequent pressure from landowners to fence these boundaries to ensure privacy which can happen with ground level outdoor living areas.

#### Discussion

7.114 The primary purpose of the outdoor living space rule is to ensure that an area of each site is set aside which is sufficient to meet the outdoor living needs of

current and future residents of the site and to provide opportunities for garden landscaping.

7.115 The outdoor living space rule is closely related to site density and site coverage, in that it contributes to visual amenity, spaciousness, levels of privacy and access to sunlight and daylight. In the lower density living zones, the inclusion of an outdoor living space rule is not generally necessary as the site coverage controls mean that for large sites, there is generally sufficient space left for the provision of a functional outdoor living area e.g. a 1,000m<sup>2</sup> site with coverage of 35% still has 750m<sup>2</sup> of space free of buildings. In the medium density zone, because the sites are smaller, there is the risk that a building will comply with site coverage yet be located so that no functional outdoor living space is provided i.e. the unbuilt portion of the site is comprised of a relatively narrow strip of land around the building. The rule is also important as outdoor living space can assist in breaking up building mass and providing an opportunity for landscaping and direct soakage of rainwater but these are by-products of the rule rather than its main purpose which is related to the provision of adequate on-site amenity for occupants.

7.116 In a practical sense, outdoor living spaces provide a private area for residents to carry out a range of activities including; clothes drying, outdoor seating, a barbeque area, planting of trees and shrubs or simply accessing sunlight.

7.117 The proposed dimensions represent a balance between providing a functional outdoor living space and enabling flexibility with building design and layout on relatively small sites. The provision recognises that balconies can provide very functional outdoor spaces and therefore the provision of balconies is proposed to be included within the 50m<sup>2</sup> area so that designers have some flexibility with being able to provide for instance a 40m<sup>2</sup> ground floor area and two 5m<sup>2</sup> balconies. This use of multiple spaces can also be beneficial in obtaining good sunlight access e.g. spaces to the east and west of a dwelling. The dimensions also recognise that the ODP criteria for the location of Medium Density zones includes such zones being sited in close proximity to public open space where residents are provided with opportunities for outdoor leisure and recreation.

7.118 A review of other higher density zones around the country shows that there is an accepted consistency of areas around the 35-40m<sup>2</sup> area. In Auckland the areas range between 25m<sup>2</sup> and 40m<sup>2</sup>, with the North Shore requiring 40m<sup>2</sup> and both Dunedin and Wellington requiring 35m<sup>2</sup>. The provisions in these other plans are for areas that are for zones that enable a somewhat higher density than that proposed in this plan change, therefore a larger area is considered to be appropriate in this instance. It is noted that the proposed area is the same as that required in the Christchurch Plan for the Christchurch Living 2

zones which are closest in density to the medium density zone proposed in this Plan Change.

#### 5.4 Vehicle Parking and Cycle Parking

Permitted activities – Vehicle Parking and Cycle Parking

5.4.1 Any activity which provides for car parking, cycle parking, vehicle loading and parking access in accordance with the following conditions shall be a permitted activity:

Car Park Spaces

5.4.22 The number of car parks provided complies with the relevant requirements of the activity as listed in Appendix 13

#### Reasons for Rules

*Amend paragraph 6 as follows:*

On-site car parking is desirable to reduce potential adverse effects on traffic flow and safety, especially on Strategic Roads. On-site car parking also avoids the potential adverse effects of having vehicles constantly parked outside people's houses. Such effects include lack of on-site parking for visitors, loss of 'street outlook' and reduced privacy. Within Medium Density area located within an Outline Development Plan, the minimum on-site car parking standard has been reduced in recognition of the more built-up character of these areas, the potential for smaller dwellings with fewer occupants, and to provide increased design flexibility for small sites. The requirement for a 5.5m setback between garage doors and the boundary with a road, private right of Way, or shared access means that this area can be used as an informal second parking spaces for residents or visitors.

#### Part E, Appendix 13

#### Transport

#### 13.1 Minimum Parking Space Requirements

**Table E13.1- Minimum Parking Spaces to be Provided**

Residential Dwellings 2 spaces per residential dwelling, or 1 space per residential dwelling in Medium Density areas identified on an Outline Development Plan

#### Discussion

7.119 The Plan currently requires a minimum of two on-site car parking spaces to be provided for residential dwellings. It is proposed that in the Medium Density areas this minimum requirement be reduced to one space per dwelling. This reduction is in recognition of the design constraints imposed by smaller sites and the need to provide flexibility with design and layout by reducing the amount of spaces required to be taken up by vehicle parking. A reduction in the amount of garaging can have positive urban design benefits where the visual impact of such structures is reduced. Demand for parking is potentially going to be less given that the smaller site sizes mean that there is the potential for smaller dwellings to be built with a corresponding reduction in the number of occupants. Medium Density areas are also to be located adjacent to public open space and community facilities which help to reduce the overall need for car journeys to be made. Medium Density areas are anticipated to have a

more 'built up' character than that typically found in the low density living zones in Selwyn District, with a limited degree of on-street parking compatible with a higher density character. It is important to emphasise that the proposed rule is a minimum requirement, and if the market demands more on-site parking then that is able to be provided as of right by developers. The rule simply gives people the option to have a single parking space if that is all that they feel they need to have.

DRAFT

## **8 Subdivision Design**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### ***Change 1 to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement***

- 8.1 Proposed PC1 to the RPS prescribes the number of households that need to be accommodated within the proposed urban limit boundary (Policy 6 Urban Form, Infrastructure and Sequencing within Identified Urban Limits). The proposed changes to the subdivision provisions will not compromise the ability to achieve the provisions of the RPS, particularly as efficient, effective connections for a range of densities; provision for a range of residential densities and lot sizes; integrated open spaces; protection and enhancement of natural, ecological, landscape and historical heritage features; high visual interest; and amenity, health and wellbeing are all encouraged under Policy 7 (Development Form and Design).
- 8.2 Of the operative provisions of the RPS, those of particular relevance are:
- Policy 3 (Chapter 15. Transport) which seeks to promote changes in movement patterns to reduce short trip single occupant vehicle movements and to replace these with other transport mode options such as walking and cycling.
  - Policy 2 (Chapter 13. Air) which seeks to promote measures that reduce emissions from the use of carbon based fuels.
- 8.3 Both of these provisions will be better achieved following the proposed amendments as improved connectivity and access to community facilities will reduce the demand for motorised transport use. This in turn will assist with promoting the reduction of emissions generated from development.

#### ***District Plan objectives and policies***

- 8.4 This section of the Plan Change proposes to include new objectives, policies and assessment matters relevant to subdivisions.
- 8.5 Section 32(3) of the RMA states that “An evaluation must examine:
- (a) *the extent to which each objective is the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of this Act”, and*
  - (b) *whether having regard to their efficiency and effectiveness, the policies, rules, or other methods are the most appropriate for achieving the objectives”.*
- 8.6 There is no reference or emphasis on amenity or design and their consequences in the outcome of a subdivision. Therefore, the two proposed

objectives seek existing natural and built environment through subdivision design and layout and that subdivision provides variety, and efficiency in its design and form and function.

- 8.7 The existing policies (B4.2.1 - 4.2.8 as contained within "Appendix 1") of relevance cover a range of topics as to how the existing objectives will be achieved. The topics include the provision of appropriate services and facilities, appropriate allotment size, shape and orientation, creation of allotment boundaries along existing natural and physical features, construction activities, the ability to place consent notices on titles, development contributions and environment compensation. Little is available to support the proposed objectives which now place greater emphasis on subdivision design, form and function.
- 8.8 It is therefore proposed to amend Policy B4.2.4 and introduce a number of new policies to support the proposed objectives. Policy B4.2.4 presently focuses on the placement of allotment boundaries in terms of using existing natural and physical features e.g. rivers and road. The current explanation and reasons for this policy also refers to the consideration of protection of heritage sites and buildings and archaeological sites as a factor in determining boundaries. However, this policy focuses on the use these features only as a means of determining boundaries. Special features such as water races, mature trees, views and heritage buildings are worth retaining where possible, as much for character and amenity, as for determining property boundaries. Good subdivision outcomes that presently exist in the district have utilised existing features such as water races. It is considered that the proposed amendments to this policy to seek the retention of natural, historic and other unique features within subdivision whilst still using such features to help determine boundaries provides stronger direction to achieving subdivisions with variety and the proposed objective (B4.2.3) seeking the maintenance and enhancement of amenities of the existing natural and built environment.
- 8.9 The topics of the proposed policies include the scale of residential blocks; convenience to community infrastructure; variety of allotments sizes to cater for different housing types and densities; strong connectivity links; and reverse sensitivity. These new policies provide strong direction and guidance as to how the proposed objectives will be achieved and place emphasis on a number of important design and function considerations, which are not present within the District in a policy context.
- 8.10 No new rules are proposed as all subdivisions are currently restricted discretionary activities subject to meeting the existing standards e.g. minimum allotment sizes. However, a number of assessment matters have been



introduced to support the proposed objectives and policies and provide a greater level of discretion for Council to consider matters relating to design, form and function of subdivisions.

- 8.11 The proposed objectives, policies and amendments to existing provisions provide greater direction to understanding how the existing environment can be incorporated into a development and creating innovative yet functional, efficient and practical designs. This will assist with improving connectivity and access to important community facilities such as educational, medical, and sports facilities, encourage the use of non vehicular transport and contribute to residents' appreciation and enjoyment within their living environment. It will also assist with promoting healthier and more fulfilled lifestyles by providing convenient access to sporting and recreational activities and encouraging a more enriched sense of community and ownership of the local area. The implementation of a planned and progressive approach to urban development will also be reflected in subdivision design, particularly with regard to improved connectivity between developments and the "seamless" provision of infrastructure.
- 8.12 In addition, the proposed changes seek to minimise the number of rear sections and strengthen street character, amenity and outlook between properties. Greater emphasis is be placed upon retaining existing features such as mature trees and water races to maintain any notable character or unique aspects within areas of subdivision. This approach will serve to encourage the integration of existing resources, including waterraces, into the community rather than pushing these services outside the urban boundary. Stronger direction is also provided in the plan to achieve variety in design and form which will reduce the monotony of new developments and better enable a range of densities to be established within townships where appropriate. This will help to achieve the target housing numbers and densities sought in PC1 to the RPS by allowing greater flexibility and innovation to developers whilst not compromising key design principles.
- 8.13 At present the District Plan does not provide sufficient policy direction to consistently achieve the above matters, which has resulted in generic subdivision design in some cases e.g. similar size lots and housing and poor connectivity. It is therefore considered that the addition of the proposed objectives, policies and assessment matters will better serve the purpose of the RMA, by encouraging greater quality and innovation in subdivision design and will help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of new subdivisions whilst still allowing for target growth for townships to be achieved within the District. These provisions will be supported through a subdivision design guide, which will sit outside the District Plan, as described in further detail below.

### **Background of this section of the Proposed Plan Change**

- 8.14 Given the increasing pressure created by subdivision to meet the growth targets of the RPS and also the expectation to maximise yield by developers, the design, form and function of a subdivision can be compromised in order to achieve a maximum yield of allotments.
- 8.15 At present the District Plan does not provide any detailed provisions, nor provide Council much assessment discretion regarding the design, form and function of subdivisions. There are some exceptions for Prebbleton (lots sizes, significant trees, primary school needs, walkway/cycle linkage to Springs Road), Rolleston (pedestrian and cycle linkage, local reserves, design guidelines, underground power and services) and Tai Tapu (natural hazards). Rolleston, as it applies to identified areas, is in fact provided with a specific yet short subdivision guideline contained as a separate appendix. This provides some guidance on matters such as walkway areas, footpaths, fence heights, lighting and landscaping. However, the District Plan generally tends to focus on the provision of flexible subdivision with allotments of an appropriate size and with required services with little ability to consider design, form and function in detail.
- 8.16 On 22 September 2008, the Council became a signatory to the Urban Design Protocol, an initiative of the Ministry for the Environment. The Urban Design Protocol has been produced to promote a step-change in the quality of New Zealand's towns and cities and sees good urban design as an essential component of successful urban areas.
- 8.17 Council subsequently prepared an Urban Design Action Plan, which listed the following outcomes:
- a. To provide a means of assessment of subdivision applications to allow for greater use of discretion.
  - b. To break away from the strict use of engineering-based standards to create more variety and human scale.
  - c. To ensure subdivision respects its context and provides for connections.
- 8.18 The Council has subsequently prepared a "Design Guide for Residential Subdivisions in the Living Zones" to provide guidance on those principles and design criteria that achieve a good urban design outcome in new subdivisions. The purpose of the guideline is to explain to developers, designers and landowners what the Council is seeking in new subdivisions within the Living zones of all townships in the District.

- 8.19 To date, subdivision within the District has produced some developments that are seen to be quite generic, comprising similar sized sections, house designs and site layouts. In addition, large numbers of rear lots have occurred in some areas creating large numbers of access points, isolation of residents from the surrounding community and low levels of connectivity.
- 8.20 These issues can (at least in part) be attributed to the lack of key principles and design criteria within the current District Plan, whereby designs tend to rigidly follow the engineering based standards e.g. lot sizes, site shape, but do not emphasise connectivity and place making. Examples of such development include large areas of housing with numerous cul-de-sacs or shared right of ways, large numbers of rear lots and limited connections for cyclists and pedestrians. This pattern of subdivision also makes it difficult to develop a well connected local roading network with a consistent hierarchy of road form and function.
- 8.21 Due to substandard urban design outcomes that have been occurring within the District and the limited potential to address these issues using the current provisions in the District Plan, a Plan Change to incorporate the key principles and design criteria of the "Design Guide for Residential Subdivisions in the Living Zones" is therefore proposed.

#### ***Scope of the Proposed Plan Change***

- 8.22 All subdivision applications are presently restricted discretionary activities with the matters of discretion focused on matters such as appropriate density, servicing and utility standards rather than quality design outcomes. Design outcomes that are now sought include matters such as improved connectivity, variable and innovative design layouts, maximising the value of open spaces, strong connections for allotments with the street frontage and reducing rear lots serviced by individual driveways.
- 8.23 The proposed changes to the Township Volume of the District Plan are summarised as follows:
- Introduction of new district wide objectives to place emphasis on innovation and quality of subdivision design.
  - Introduction of policies to set out how improved design in subdivision can be achieved e.g. ensure strong connections between allotments and the street;
  - Introduction of design criteria into subdivision assessment matters to assess whether the subdivision achieves a good urban design outcome.

- Reference to the “Design Guidelines for Residential Subdivision in the Living Zones”.

8.24 The proposed provisions will provide both emphasis to the new guidelines and increase the level of discretion for Council when assessing subdivision applications, particularly regarding design, form and function.

#### ***Analysis of Options***

8.25 The Council has undertaken consideration as to whether the District Plan, as it currently stands, represents the most efficient or effective means of enabling subdivision whilst achieving quality outcomes.

8.26 This Section 32 Evaluation has considered alternatives to the proposed option of introducing new objectives, policies and assessment matters relating to subdivision. The alternative options include the status quo; and the introduction of objectives and policies and assessment matters whilst also including subdivision guidelines as an appendix to the District Plan.

### **PREFERRED OPTION : Option 1 – Plan Change as proposed**

- 8.27 This involves the introduction of new objectives and policies, and assessment matters within the subdivision section of the Township Volume. These provisions concentrate on the key aspects of the newly created subdivision guidelines. The subdivision guidelines will be kept as a separate document from the District Plan to avoid repetition of information and to enable the guidelines to be amended as required without undertaking a full Plan Change e.g. details such as types of roadside planting, street names etc may require amendments over time but these will not affect consistency with the key subdivision provisions proposed in the District Plan. In addition, keeping the guidelines as a separate document means that they will not be read as prescriptive District Plan requirements, rather they will provide an aid to interpreting what outcomes Council are seeking in subdivision design.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 8.28 The proposed option will provide a much greater emphasis and direction via new objectives and policies within the District Plan as to what design outcomes are appropriate. New assessment matters relating to subdivision design outcomes are included to provide direction to Council and guidance for developers as to what particular design aspects need to be addressed in new subdivisions.
- 8.29 The proposed amendments encourage development to respond to the surrounding natural environment and be efficient in the use of resources. The provisions seek to ensure that the layout of streets and the orientation of dwellings are managed to achieve high levels of connectivity, create a sense of place and result in an attractive living environment.
- 8.30 A reduction in the number of rear sections created in a new subdivision will ensure that the majority of new dwellings will be provided with a street frontage which will reduce the number of right of way access points to rear lots. Street character and amenity, which can be deteriorated by excessive accesses, fencing or a lack of outlook to and from properties, will be improved via specific provisions addressing these matters e.g. the use of garden plantings rather than solid fencing. In addition, an emphasis will be placed upon retaining and making efficient use of existing features such as mature trees, water races to maintain any notable character or unique aspects within areas of subdivision.
- 8.31 Applying a more strategic approach to subdivision will facilitate the efficient and integrated provision of servicing, including the adoption of a lifecycle approach to managing 5Waters assets e.g. harvesting water and wastewater

recycling. Improved connectivity between new and existing urban areas will also provide for the efficient use of all modes of transport, rather than relying primarily on private motor vehicles.

- 8.32 Perhaps the most influential aspect of the proposed changes in terms of environmental benefits, when compared to existing examples of subdivision within the District, is the stronger direction provided in the Plan to achieve a variety in design and form of subdivisions rather than simply meeting minimum standards. This will reduce monotony of new developments and better enable a range of densities to be established within townships where appropriate. This will help to achieve the target housing numbers and densities sought in PC1 to the RPS by allowing greater flexibility and innovation to developers whilst not compromising key design principles and the efficient and effective use of resources.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 8.33 There are few likely environmental costs of the proposed Plan Change when compared with the existing situation. However, the increased level of design quality sought by the proposed changes may increase pressure on existing subdivisions or developed residential areas to upgrade services or undertake works to ensure that any future development in these areas is consistent with the Subdivision Design Guidelines.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 8.34 The benefits of providing good quality and efficient subdivision design relate to the creation of a sense of place, whereby the subdivision has its own identity (while fitting in with the character of the existing township); a strong sense of community; uses attractive landscaping and roading materials; provides for housing types and facilities that people want; and has a range of open spaces. Other benefits arising from high quality subdivision design relate to a reduction in the use of motor cars in the local area through an integrated transport, cycle and pedestrian network; convenience to important community infrastructure; and encourages safe and secure areas through quality design e.g. discouraging solid and continuous fences along existing and new road boundaries. Improving connectivity and access to important community facilities such as educational and medical facilities and sports fields will contribute to residents' appreciation and enjoyment within their living environment. It can also assist with promoting healthier and more fulfilled lifestyles by providing opportunities for social interaction and encouraging a more enriched sense of community and ownership of the local area.

- 8.35 In addition, there is potential to minimise long term Council maintenance costs associated with new development through innovative design and features e.g. low maintenance plantings or features such as landscaped swales, instead of excessive lawn areas.

#### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 8.36 An increase in subdivision assessment matters in the District Plan may increase the administrative and compliance costs on developers in terms of formulating a subdivision layout and design that achieves the desired outcomes and in preparing subdivision consent applications.
- 8.37 In addition, each new development will be assessed by Council with a greater level of discretion to consider design outcomes. It is therefore anticipated that the process of preparing a subdivision application is likely to involve greater input from Council staff at an early stage, with the potential for pre-application meetings to discuss concepts prior to lodgement of formal applications. This is likely to increase time and costs associated with the process in the short term at least.

## EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

### Option 2 – Maintain Status Quo

- 8.38 The do nothing approach maintains the status quo.

#### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 8.39 Maintaining the status quo with respect to the existing subdivision provisions is unlikely to give rise to any additional environmental benefits, except insofar as the discretion contained within the existing assessment matters of the Plan extends to general subdivision design matters.

#### ***Environmental Costs***

- 8.40 The discretion for Council to consider comprehensive design outcomes for subdivisions remains very limited. This has the potential to result in design outcomes that are not efficient or effective from an urban design perspective e.g. lack of responsiveness to the site context stemming from the poor integration of existing site features and surrounding land use activities. Existing problems associated with subdivision such as a lack of variety in section sizes and housing types and lack of connection with the street scene due to solid and continuous fencing or an excess of rear allotments are likely to continue reducing the amenity associated with a new subdivision. Inefficient development is also more likely to arise due to design shortcomings such as the provision of too many cul-de-sacs in a small area, the creation of gated subdivisions, absence of low impact urban design features or the failure to provide for long term road extensions through a subdivision to allow future continuation of development. This pattern of subdivision makes it difficult to develop a well connected local roading network with a consistent hierarchy of road form and function. This lack of integration can end up creating small "dead-end" pockets of subdivision and it becomes very difficult to regain connectivity in the future.

#### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 8.41 There is a lesser upfront cost to the community by maintaining the status quo to which developers are already accustomed to. The existing provisions in the Plan would remain which will ensure that the minimum density standards for living zones will still be met where presently zoned and subject to the current matters of discretion e.g. allotment sizes, access and servicing, applicable for subdivision. This will allow townships to still grow and communities to develop and associated infrastructure to be put in place. However, these benefits are generally limited in this regard, particularly in the long term, given that surrounding Greenfield land is predominately zoned for rural densities.



### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 8.42 Poor subdivision design and simply achieving the density requirements is unlikely to result in an efficient outcome thereby increasing economic and social costs to the community. Examples include the increased need to use motorised transport due to poor connectivity and the reduction in use of community facilities due to poor access from surrounding local areas. Unsustainable development is also more likely to arise due to design shortcomings such as the failure to provide for long term road extensions through a subdivision to allow future continuation of development and the efficient and effective provision of public transport.
- 8.43 Where inefficient or unsustainable development occurs through poor design, this inevitably will affect the perception of local amenity values and reduce the ability to contribute to community activity or pursue healthier and more environmentally friendly lifestyle options.

### **Option 3 – Plan Change to include Subdivision Guidelines as an appendix to the District Plan**

- 8.44 This option is similar to the preferred option but differs in that the subdivision guidelines would be included as an appendix to the District Plan. The proposed option will provide a much greater emphasis and direction via new Objectives and Policies within the District Plan as to what design outcomes are appropriate. New assessment matters related to subdivision design outcomes are included to provide direction and criteria to both developers and Council as to what particular design aspects new subdivisions will be assessed against. In addition, the Subdivision Design Guide will also be included as an appendix to the Plan.

### ***Environmental Benefits***

- 8.45 The environmental Benefits anticipated for this approach will be the same to those discussed under the Preferred Option (Option 1).

### ***Environmental Costs***

- 8.46 There are few likely environmental costs of the proposed Plan Change when compared with the existing situation. However, the increased level of design quality sought by the proposed changes, including the appending of the Subdivision Guidelines to the District Plan, may increase pressure on existing subdivisions or developed residential areas to upgrade services or undertake works to ensure that any future development in these areas is consistent with the Subdivision Design Guideline.

### ***Economic and Social Benefits***

- 8.47 Including the Subdivision Guidelines as part of the District Plan will provide a greater level of information in one document thereby helping to improve efficiency in the design process at an initial design stage.
- 8.48 The benefits of providing good quality and efficient subdivision design will still be achieved. In summary, these relate to the creation of a sense of place, whereby the subdivision has its own identity (while fitting in with the character of the existing township); a strong sense of community; uses attractive landscaping and roading materials; provides for housing types and facilities that people want; and has a range of open spaces. Other benefits arising from high quality subdivision design relate to a reduction in the use of motor cars in the local area through an integrated transport, cycle and pedestrian network; convenience to important community infrastructure; and encourages safe and secure areas through quality design. Improving connectivity and access to important community facilities such as educational and medical facilities and sports fields will contribute to residents' appreciation and enjoyment within their living environment. It can also assist with promoting healthier and more fulfilled lifestyles by providing opportunities for social interaction and encouraging a more enriched sense of community and ownership of the local area.
- 8.49 In addition, there is potential to minimise the Council long-term maintenance costs associated with new development through innovative design and features e.g. low maintenance plantings or features such as landscaped swales, instead of excessive lawn areas.

### ***Economic and Social Costs***

- 8.50 Each new subdivision application will be assessed by Council with a greater level of discretion over design outcomes and therefore the overall subdivision process is likely to involve greater input with the potential for pre-planning meetings to discuss concepts prior to the lodgement of formal applications. This is likely to increase time and costs associated with the process.
- 8.51 By making the guidelines part of the District Plan itself, their status is elevated to the extent that it would require a Plan Change to change any aspect of the guidelines. This would make it very difficult to alter the guidelines, which are likely to require amendments/updates at different stages e.g. there may be a change in Council Policy regarding the preferred methods to undertake stormwater management. However, this would not necessarily result in the need to change the District Plan provisions. Presently, the District Plan allows for consideration, under matters for discretion, of any method to achieve suitable

stormwater management. The subdivision guidelines provide direction as to what is preferred but if this were to change in the future, it would not be necessary to alter the Plan as well. However, if the guideline were part of the District Plan, then every change, regardless of what it entailed, would require a Plan Change. Similar circumstances would occur for other changes to the Design Guidelines such as the type of streetlights that are preferred to reflect the character of a subdivision, or the type of plants to be used in landscaping of reserve areas.

- 8.52 This would therefore increase the cost and time involved in keeping the guidelines up to date.

### **Conclusion**

- 8.53 Having applied the criteria for assessment required under Section 32 of the RMA, it is Option 1 (the preferred option) that is considered to best fit the criteria.
- 8.54 The introduction of new objectives and policies, and assessment matters within the subdivision section of the Township Volume will draw on key aspects of the newly created subdivision guidelines and achieve greater environmental, economic and social benefits than would occur via the status quo.
- 8.55 The key benefits that are anticipated to arise from the proposed amendments include improved connectivity, more efficient use of all modes of transport, improved access to community facilities, reduction in the number of rear sections, improved street character and amenity, greater emphasis upon retaining existing natural and heritage features, and a greater variety in design and form of subdivisions whilst still being able to achieve the housing numbers and densities sought in the RPS. These improvements will in turn help with social and community interaction, appreciation and enjoyment whilst also promoting healthier lifestyle options.
- 8.56 The key environmental, economic and social costs associated with this option include an increased pressure on existing subdivisions or developed residential areas to ensure future development in that area has greater consistency with the Subdivision Design Guidelines. In addition, an increase in the administrative and compliance costs on developers may arise due to a greater emphasis on achieving good design outcomes as well as the required housing density.
- 8.57 Overall, it is concluded that proposed Option 1 (the preferred option) will best achieve the purpose and principles of the RMA as opposed to the status quo (Option 2) or introducing the guidelines into the Plan as an appendix (Option 3).

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 8.58 The provisions of the District Plan amended and/or new provisions included by this section of PC7 are listed below:

### Township Volume

Plan Section		Plan Provisions
B 4.2	Subdivision of Land - Objectives	Objectives B4.2.3; 4.2.4
B 4.2	Subdivision of Land - Policies and Methods	Policies B4.2.3; B 4.2.4; 4.2.9; 4.2.10; 4.2.11
C 12	Living Zone Rules - Subdivision	Note 11; Standard 12.1.3.7, Table C12;
C 12	Living Zone Rules – 12.1.4 Matters of discretion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12.1.4.12 – 12.1.4.19;</li><li>• 12.1.2.21 – 12.1.4.25;</li><li>• 12.1.4.30 – 12.1.2.34</li></ul>
C24	Business Zone Rules - Subdivision	24.1.3.7

## **9 Proposed Amendments to the District Plan**

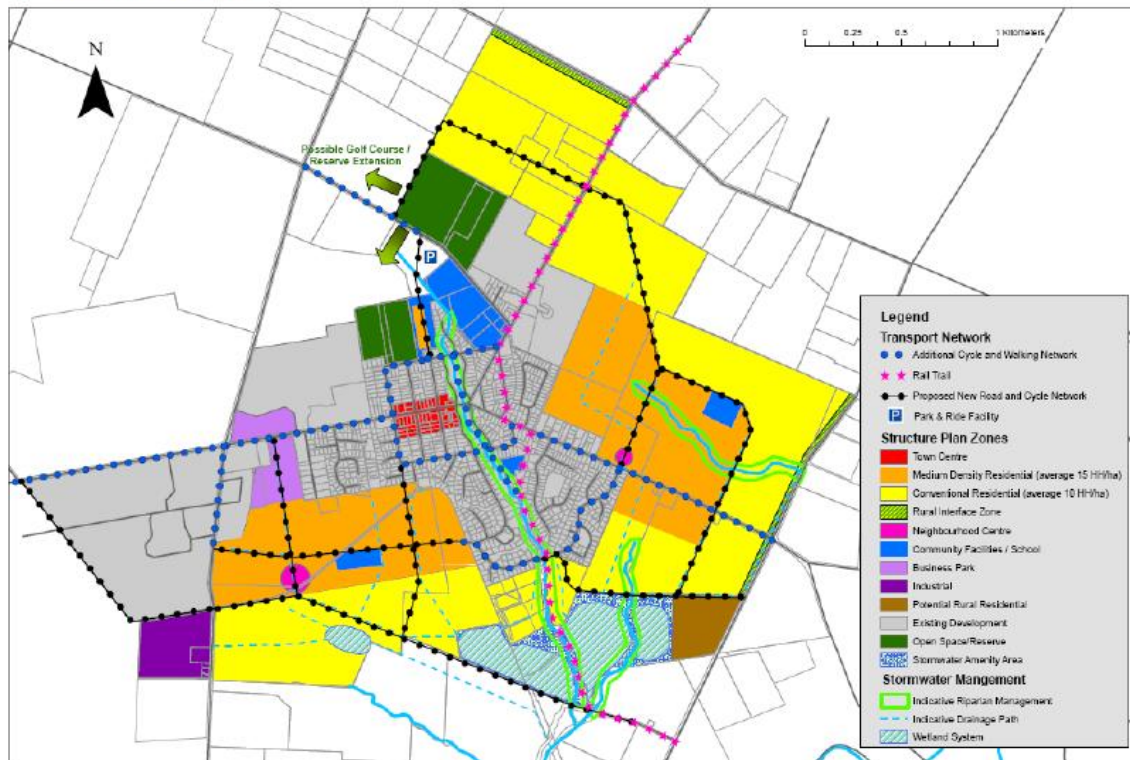
***See overleaf...***

- 9.1 Note that amendments to the existing text of the District Plan are shown as **~~bold and strikethrough~~** and new text proposed by PC7 is shown as **bold and underline**.

## **APPENDIX 1**

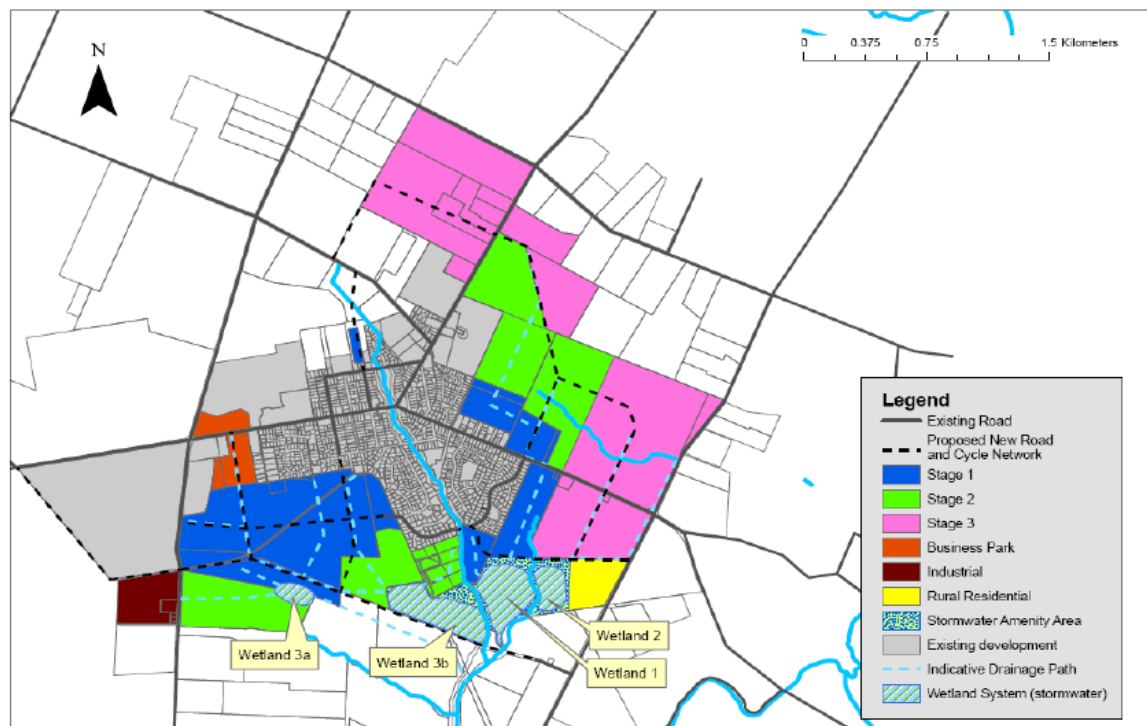
### **Lincoln Structure Plan Map and Staging Plan**

## 5.2 LINCOLN STRUCTURE PLAN



LINCOLN STRUCTURE PLAN PAGE 14

## 6.4 RESIDENTIAL STAGING PLAN



LINCOLN STRUCTURE PLAN PAGE 19

## APPENDIX 2

### Flow Chart of Planning Approach of PC7

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