

**BEFORE HEARING COMMISSIONERS
FOR SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER

the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

Private Plan Change Request
71 (PC71)

**SUMMARY OF HEARING REPORT OF MR HUGH ANTHONY NICHOLSON
ON BEHALF OF SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

URBAN DESIGN AND LANDSCAPE

10th February 2022

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 My name is Hugh Anthony Nicholson and I am a Director of UrbanShift, an independent urban design and landscape architecture consultancy. I have prepared a memorandum on Urban Design and Landscape matters for the Selwyn District Council with respect to Plan Change 71 to the Selwyn District Plan.
- 1.2 In general, I consider that if the CIAL 50dBA noise contour is removed the proposed plan change area would be an appropriate location for urban growth linking the existing Rolleston township with a proposed district-wide reserve to the east, and rezoning a block of rural land which has existing residential land uses to the north and west. If the CIAL 50dBA noise contour is not removed I consider that the remainder of the site is still suitable for urban growth given its proximity to the centre of Rolleston and adjacent residential areas.
- 1.3 In general I consider that spatial planning exercises allow a more comprehensive range of options to be considered together with the relevant costs and benefits. They also allow for more meaningful public engagement to be undertaken to inform the spatial planning exercise.
- 1.4 In this instance the 50dBA noise contour, together with the new district park proposed in the Rolleston Structure Plan, set the parameters for the urban form of this part of Rolleston, and I consider that a spatial planning exercise is unlikely to reach a different conclusion with regard to the use of this land.

2. CHANGES TO THE OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ODP)

- 2.1 I note that the applicant has proposed a number of changes to the ODP as in response to the Section 42A report. In particular I am supportive of
- (a) An increase in the minimum density required over the northern part of the site to 15hh/ha;

- (b) An extended network of cycle / pedestrian links along the primary east-west connections and the north-south connections, and along the Levi Road frontage;
- (c) An additional north-south secondary connection running through the area under the 50dBA noise contour;
- (d) An additional secondary connection onto Levi Road at the north-eastern quadrant of the site.

2.2 There are still areas of disagreement as outlined below.

2.3 The revised ODP proposes a park in the area under the 50dBA noise contour together with a pocket park to service the northern half of the site with open space. I consider that it is not appropriate for new residential areas to rely on a neighbourhood park within a neighbouring rural zone given that even if the land is rezoned on a deferred basis, there is no certainty that the 50 dBA noise contour will be removed. I also note that CIAL is opposing the plan change and Ms White supports the retention of the rural zoning within the contour. In my opinion two neighbourhood parks should be located closer to the centres of the northern and southern residential areas to ensure that adequate green open space can be provided for the new residential areas which is not reliant on changes to the 50 dBA noise contour regardless of whether the land is rezoned on a deferred basis or not (see Figure 2 rev. 1).

2.4 While a separated shared pedestrian / cycle way is proposed along the Levi Road frontage, the ODP does not include a similar facility along the Lincoln Rolleston Road frontage. I acknowledge that there is a shared pedestrian / cycle path on the western side of Lincoln Rolleston Road, however, in my opinion expecting pedestrians or cyclists to cross a busy arterial road in order to reach a safe facility signals that they have a secondary status, and does not encourage or support alternative transport modes. I consider that it is not appropriate to rely on alternative pedestrian cycling routes under the 50dBA noise contour, and recommend that a separated shared pedestrian cycle way is provided along the Lincoln Rolleston Road frontage as part of the ODP in order to provide high quality pedestrian and cycling opportunities for the future residents of PC71 (see Figures 2 rev.1 and Figure 3 rev.1).

- 2.5 The plan change area is separated from the wider Rolleston township by two arterial roads, Levi and Lincoln Rolleston Roads. Providing an acceptable level of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists requires the provision of safe crossing facilities over the arterial roads. I recommend that the narrative to the ODP should include the provision of safe pedestrian / cycling crossing points at the intersections of the primary roads (including Broadlands Drive) with Levi or Lincoln Rolleston Roads, and if the 50dBA noise contour is removed, at the intersection of the central east-west road with Lincoln Rolleston Road.
- 2.6 *Connectivity* relates to creating streets that are joined together in city-wide networks and the consequent directness and multiplicity of routes through these networks. Connectivity supports improved choices allowing people to choose their preferred routes of travel, supports increased resilience by providing alternative routes for emergency access and evacuation, and supports safer and more active spaces¹. Research indicates that lack of connection of new neighbourhoods from surrounding areas is linked to vehicle dependence, social isolation and consequent public health risks². Policy 6.3.2 of the CRPS and Objective B3.4.5 of the SDP seek high levels of connectivity both within developments and with adjoining areas.
- 2.7 While the 50dBA noise contour remains, the northern part of the site has two connections onto Levi Road to the north, and three connections through ODP4 to the west. I am aware that Foodstuffs has applied for a resource consent to construct and operate a supermarket on the ODP4 land to the west. I consider that the northern part of the site would be poorly connected with the wider Rolleston township if it was solely reliant on two connections to the north onto a busy arterial road such as Levi Road. In my opinion the minimum acceptable level of connectivity to the northern residential area would require the connection through ODP4 to Broadlands Drive to be formed in addition to the two northern connections. This would provide more direct access to facilities including Foster Park, the Selwyn Aquatic Centre, Rolleston College and Clearview Primary School.

¹ *People Places Spaces: A design guide for urban New Zealand*, Ministry for the Environment, 2002, p.32-34

² *The Value of Urban Design: The economic, environmental and social benefits of urban design*, Ministry for the Environment, 2005, p.31

- 2.8 Given there is now some certainty that ODP4 will be developed for residential use or that the proposed connections through ODP4 will be delivered, I recommend that the proposed ODP includes a rule with respect to the northern area that requires that the Broadlands Drive connection and intersection to be formed before any subdivision of land is approved to the south of the development line shown in Figure 2 rev.1. In coming to this opinion I consider that the land to the north of the development line could be adequately connected by the two connections to Levi Road, while the land to the south of the line would require an additional connection to Broadlands Drive to provide an adequate level of connectivity for future residents.

3. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

- 3.1 I consider that the PC71 would have a *moderate-low* impact on the landscape character reflecting the change from a rural residential and rural landscape with small numbers of houses and large-scale open spaces behind to a residential landscape with a higher number of buildings and a suburban character.
- 3.2 I consider that the visual impact of PC71 on the neighbouring houses along Lincoln Rolleston Road, Levi Road and Nobeline Drive would be *moderate-low* reflecting that the setbacks and aspect, the existing hedges and shelterbelts, and the existing rural residential land use.



Hugh Anthony Nicholson

10th February 2022

Figure 2: rev. 1 PC71 ODP - Rolleston
(with CIAL 50dBA noise contour)

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Kilometres
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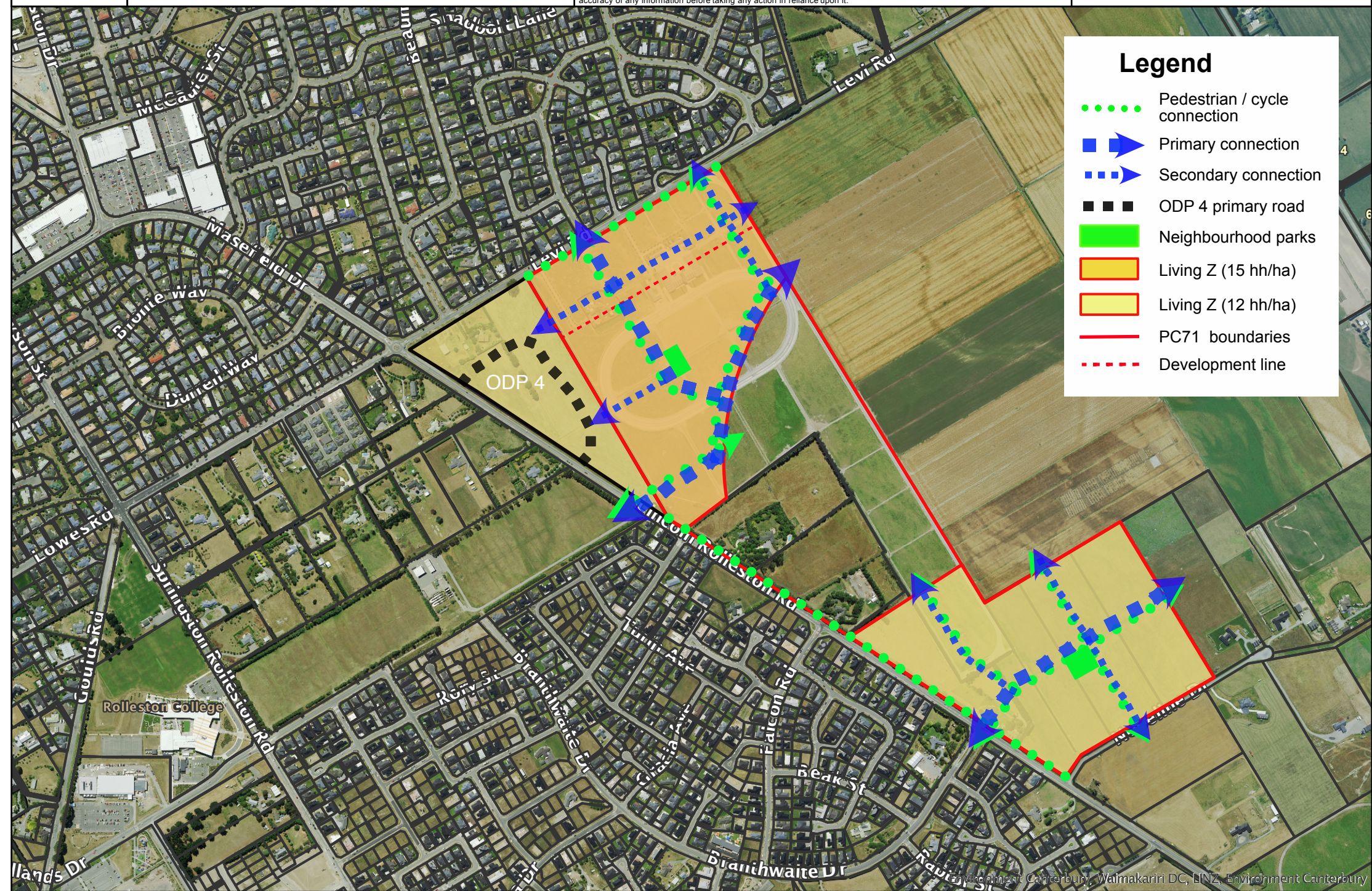


Figure 3: rev. 1 PC71 ODP - Rolleston
(without CIAL 50dBA noise contour)

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