

BEFORE THE SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Under	the Resource Management Act 1991
In the matter of	Proposed Plan Change 72 to the Operative Selwyn District Plan: Prebbleton
And	Trices Road Rezoning Group (the Applicant)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF NICOLE LAUENSTEIN (URBAN DESIGN)

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QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1. My name is Nicole Lauenstein. I have the qualifications of Dipl. Arch. and Dipl. R.U.Pl. equivalent to a Master in Architecture and a Master in Urban Design (Spatial and Environmental Planning) from the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany. I was an elected member of the Urban Design Panel in Christchurch from 2008 to 2016 and am a member of the UDF (Urban Design Forum). Before moving to New Zealand, I became a member of the BDA (German Institute of Architects) and the AIA (Association Internationale des Architectes).
2. I am director of a + urban, a Christchurch based architecture and urban design company established in 1999. I have over 25 years of professional experience in architecture and urban design in particular within the crossover area of urban development, master planning, and comprehensive spatial developments.
3. I have practised as an Urban Designer and Architect for the first 8 years in Germany, Netherlands, England and Spain and Australia before re-establishing my own architectural and urban design practice in New Zealand. In both practices I have undertaken many projects combining the architectural and urban disciplines. Projects have been varied in scale and complexity from urban revitalisation of city centres, development of growth strategies for smaller communities, architectural buildings in the public realm and private residential projects in sensitive environments.
4. Prior to my arrival in NZ I worked for several European Architects and Urban Designers. I was involved in a range of urban studies and rural area assessments for the governance of the individual federal states in Germany, investigating urban sprawl of major cities such as Frankfurt, Darmstadt, Rostock, Berlin and the effect on the urban and rural character. This work included developing mechanisms and criteria to facilitate sustainable development. Other work for private clients consisted of designing sustainable developments in sensitive areas within very stringent development guidelines.
5. My experience in New Zealand includes working on growth strategies for urban and peri-urban areas, including rural and urban residential developments, with a mixture of densities from low, to medium and high. I have prepared several urban analysis, development strategies and design concepts, for both urban and rural residential areas within the Canterbury region (Lincoln, Rolleston, Tai Tapu, Ohoka, Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Lake Hood, Ashburton) I have also done this for Akaroa and the wider South Island, namely developments in Queenstown, Wanaka, Invercargill, Marlborough Region, Hurunui District, and Buller District.
6. My most recent urban design and architecture work includes:
 - a) Papa Otakaro Avon River and East/North Frame concept design, Christchurch Central City
 - b) Kirimoko residential development in Wanaka Stages 1 - 6
 - c) Urban analysis and strategic plans for Selwyn District Council Hurunui District Council, Christchurch City Council (CCC), Queenstown and Lakes District, Nelson and Buller District, Wellington CBD and Auckland City and the greater Auckland urban area
 - d) Masterplans for urban development in Lincoln, Rolleston, Tai Tapu, Amberley, Rangiora, Ohoka, Ashburton, Christchurch, Westport Wanaka and Queenstown, Auckland
 - e) Mixed Use development Hagley Avenue, Christchurch
 - f) New Tait Building and Masterplan, north-west Christchurch
 - g) Several commercial and residential 'rebuild' projects in Christchurch
 - h) Master Plans for post-earthquake Inner-City block infill and brown field conversions in Christchurch.

- i) ODP's for rebuild projects in the Christchurch CBD
 - j) Analysis and identification of Character Areas within Christchurch as part of the District Plan Review
 - k) Several private Plan Changes
7. I have been involved in tertiary education, and have lectured urban design at Lincoln University at both graduate and post graduate level. I am currently a guest lecturer at ARA Institute of Technology teaching architecture and urban design. I have also delivered professional development workshops for both architects and urban designers.
8. I confirm that I have prepared this evidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in Part 7 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2014. The issues addressed in this statement of evidence and appended report are within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence or advice of another person. The data, information, facts and assumptions I have considered in forming my opinions are set out in the part of the evidence in which I express my opinions and/or in the appended report. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I have expressed.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER RELEVANT STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

9. I have drawn strategic direction on good urban form from several sources including the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPSUD), the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (CRPS) and the Operative Selwyn District Plan (OSDP), all of which provide overarching guidance.
10. Key strategic directions given by these documents state that residential developments should:
- a) Provide “well-functioning urban environments” that enable more people to live near a centre or employment opportunities, and which are well serviced by public transport (NPS-UD);
 - b) Be of a high quality and incorporate “good urban design principles” (CRPS) as per NZ Urban Design Protocol 2005 - these principles refer to the need for well-integrated places;
 - c) Have high-quality connections including walking, cycling and public transport, and are environmentally sustainable, and
 - d) Ensure that “growth of existing townships has a compact urban form”, and that a “high level of connectivity is provided both within the development and with adjoining land areas” (OSDP).
11. Other relevant documents I have considered are NZ Urban Design Protocol 2005, in particular the core principles that refer to the need for well-integrated places that have high-quality connections including walking, cycling and public transport, and that are environmentally sustainable.
12. All bar one of the above mentioned documents provide direction on overarching urban design matters such as density, urban form and walkability, sustainability, etc but these directives are generic in nature and apply to all urban residential development at an either national, regional or district level. The only documents providing more specific and local information with regard to urban spatial structure and form are the Prebbleton Structure Plan 2010 (PSP), and to some extent the Rural Residential Strategy.

REVISED ODP

13. In response to the several matters raised by the Council section 42A report, the applicant has reviewed the proposal and made minor changes to the roading layout and has extended the Living Z (LZ) zone across the entire ODP site. The revised ODP and Narrative (Appendix A1a and b) are underpinned by the updated Indicative Layout for the Site (Appendix A2) and a new Conceptual Overview Plan (Appendix A3) showing how the ODP and design concept integrate with the existing residential areas, potential future urban residential areas to the east, and Birchs Road Park to the south.

OVERALL SUMMARY

14. In my opinion the proposed PC72 development (the Site) represents good urban design outcomes, is consistent with good urban design principles and follows key strategic urban design directives given by the above-mentioned overarching planning documents as follows:
 - a) The proposal will contribute to well-functioning urban environment by consolidating the urban form of Prebbleton and retain an overall concentric structure and compact form.
 - b) The proposal contributes to the formation of a southern edge of Prebbleton by strengthening the new urban boundary (Birchs Road Park) at Hamptons Rd.
 - c) The proposal will provide good external connectivity, by logically linking existing neighbourhoods, and future proofing links for future development. This will enable a variety of transport modes and access to parks, commercial areas and community services.
 - d) The proposal will create and maintain good internal connectivity through the zoned land. It promotes walking, cycling and public transport access.
 - e) The proposal will create urban residential environments consistent with the character of Prebbleton and proposes a range of housing types, sizes, and densities, that respond to the demographic changes and social and economic needs of the district.
 - f) The proposal has in-built mitigation measures to offset 12hh/ha and retain a high visual amenity for rural neighbours.
 - g) The proposal introduces a critical urban link between the town centre, surrounding residential neighbourhoods and the new Birchs Road Park.

SUMMARY STATEMENT – URBAN DESIGN REPORTS

15. As discussed above, I prepared the same technical report to support both the Trices Road Rezoning Group Proposed District Plan submission and the Private Plan Change request (PC72). Copies of both can be found on Council's website. As a result of the Plan Change process and the Council's Request for Further Information (RFI), I updated my original report to include a landscape and visual assessment and produced an additional document covering specific urban design matters raised in the RFI that were not yet covered in the original report. PC72 as notified on the Council's website includes the RFI updates and my updated urban design report.
16. The following paragraphs of my evidence are a summary statement of the matters covered in my report and my opinion on relevant urban design matters.

Character and Density

17. The proposed development will modify the character of the landscape from rural lifestyle blocks to a suburban character where buildings, infrastructure, and amenities are more concentrated and visible. This is, in my opinion, in keeping with the residential development on the opposite sides of Trices Road and Birchs Road.
18. Some aspects of the open character of the existing Site will be maintained through the following measures:
 - a) Provision of a large stormwater management area (SMA) located in a natural low point within the south-eastern part of the Site.
 - b) The retention of a cluster of established trees within a small local reserve. The suitability and health of the individual trees will be assessed at detail design stage.
 - c) The mitigation provided by fencing and landscape planting towards the rural environment and public reserve both east and south (to be secured by developer covenants at the time of subdivision, as noted in the Outline Development Plan (ODP) narrative.
19. The landuse of the area will shift from semi open and agriculturally focussed to a more concentrated, high amenity residential use, introducing a residential urban character. However, through a combination of mitigation measures, namely:
 - a) Special edge treatment to the rural environment
 - b) Introduction of a large SMA which doubles as a recreation reserve in dry months
 - c) Retention of established trees within a small neighbourhood reserve
 - d) The introduction of high amenity streetscapes with generous planting of street trees within the road reserve
 - e) Off road pedestrian / cycle ways that serve to create additional 'green links' within the Site and contribute to overall connectivity of the Site to the surrounding areas
20. I am confident that a high amenity will be achieved for residents. In particular, the larger SMA and the east-west road alignments support longer viewshafts to the Port Hills providing a sense of place and open character.
21. The Site is bordered on two sides with established urban residential developments and has been identified as a growth area for Prebbleton in both, the Rural Residential Strategy (RRS Area 8) and the PSDP (Proposed Selwyn District Plan - subject to an Urban Growth overlay). As such an increase in development density can be expected. The question here in my opinion, is not whether development should occur but what is the appropriate density of development, and what is an appropriate level of amenity to be provided with that density.
22. To ensure coherence with existing development patterns and possible future surrounding residential areas, PC72 has adopted a suitable LZ residential zoning aligned with recent urban growth areas at Prebbleton. I consider this residential density to be appropriate for its setting on the edge of the township as achieves the desired contrast in character from rural to urban environments. It is also consistent with the CRPS which requires minimum densities of 10 hh/ha for greenfield priority areas. I accept that immediately surrounding areas comprise lower density zoning – L3 on the opposite (west) side of Trices Road (5000m² average) and L1A on the north side of Trices Road (minimum 2000m²). I note that the L1A zoning has been 'upzoned' to General Residential (average 650m²) in the PSDP. This indicates the Council desire to increase densities in response to the current housing shortfall and strong demand for sections. The proposed LZ density will be an

increase but within the surrounding context this zone will provide a similar residential character with regard to dwelling typology, roading standards and general residential amenity of the development.

Rural to Urban Character

23. The Site sits right at the edge of Prebbleton township and is already surrounded by residential development to the north and west. The Site is well located to naturally extend these existing residential developments east and southwards. While the proposed overall density for the Site is higher than the various existing residential areas to the north and west, and while it will initiate change to the Site itself and for the immediate neighbours, the proposal retains a density that, in my opinion, will integrate well into the surrounding residential environment. Development on the Site regardless of its density, Living 3 (L3) or LZ, will present a more urban character when compared to the existing 4ha lifestyle blocks.
24. Although rural residential is considered to be a very low density form of urban development, it nevertheless introduces residential characteristics and gradual change. The LZ zone will provide stronger residential characteristics and a less gradual and more immediate change which is utterly appropriate in this specific location within the context of the adjacent Birchs Road Park and residential neighbourhood.
25. I consider the density of the LZ Zone is more appropriate for its setting between the current edge of the township and Birchs Road Park. The proposal shifts the current location of the rural /urban interface from Trices Road to Hamptons Road but does not alter the nature of the change itself. This change from rural to residential character is anticipated to occur regardless of the specific density and was accepted as part of the identification of the Site as an urban growth path by the Council – as a preferred rural residential site in the RRS and with an Urban Growth Overlay in the PSDP for rural residential development.

Visual amenity and Edge treatment

26. Overall, the character and landuse of the area will shift from a more open and agriculturally focused, to a more concentrated high amenity residential character. This brings with it changes in outlook for neighbouring properties. The most affected party is the rural dwelling to the southeast (2 Hamptons Road) with less than minor effects remaining, following the successful implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.
27. The effects on the residents of Birchs Road I consider to be less than minor without mitigation, due to the fact that the existing dwellings are either well set back from the road boundary and/or already have well established visual screening through dense boundary vegetation on their properties.
28. The effects on most Trices Road residents, I consider to be less than minor without mitigation, due to well established visual screening through dense boundary vegetation or tall solid fencing along their road boundary. The effects on those residents on Trices Road that currently experience views into the Plan Change site in my judgement are minor without mitigation. However, these will reduce to less than minor with the successful implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.
29. Potential adverse effects experienced by the public, I consider to be less than minor as they are intermittent and fleeting. They only occur on public streets and no reserves or public open spaces are affected.

Urban Form, connectivity and well-functioning Urban Environments

30. Due to the introduction of the new Birchs Road Park to the south of Hamptons Road, it is appropriate that the urban boundary of Prebbleton shift to Hamptons Road. The new park will contribute to a more discernible and defensible boundary in the form of a green edge to the south providing a physical and visual buffer to the rural land. For the new park to be a successful community facility it needs to be well integrated and linked to the urban fabric of Prebbleton. It is therefore paramount that the PC72 Site is developed as a residential environment to ensure good connectivity between the township and the new park.
31. The revised PC72 proposal will ensure the Site interlinks well with the neighbouring environments and provides a high residential amenity and connectivity within the site. This is achieved by:
 - a) Provision of a direct north-south primary road connection;
 - b) Provision of east-west connectivity via primary and local road from Birchs Road to possible future development to the east;
 - c) Provision of a mix of residential densities including pockets of medium density;
 - d) Provision of pedestrian and cycle links within and through the ODP area to connect to adjoining urban areas and the new reserve; and
 - e) Provision of a variety of open space environments including the stormwater management areas and a smaller green pocket park to break up the built form and create a high amenity for residents.
32. Should the site develop as a low density rural residential environment it will retain some of its rural characteristics, but also, in my experience, become a more isolated space, less accessible by the public and will not provide the necessary connectivity that is essential for well-functioning urban environments. Rooding layouts of rural residential environments often have dead end roads leading to private properties, tend to have a lesser standard relating to street lighting and provision of footpaths and cycle ways. But most importantly the larger dwelling setbacks and rural style landscaping i.e. taller hedges do not provide adequate passive surveillance over the important north-south link to the Birchs Road Park.
33. Within the context of the township of Prebbleton, and the wider Selwyn District the proposed development also adds significant capacity that contributes to a well-functioning urban environment.

Prebbleton Structure Plan (Appendix B1 and B2)

34. The PSP 2010 has provided some guidance towards developing the underlying structure for Prebbleton to grow into at its own pace over the following 30 years. However, the Structure Plan at the time did not foresee the fast rate of growth in the district and the impact this would have on the demand for residential development in Prebbleton. This was further accelerated by the regional movement of the population from east to west after the Canterbury Earthquakes. The PSP anticipated a population growth from approx. 2500 to 4962 residents by 2041. Census data shows it reached 4970 in June 2020, almost 20 years ahead of time.
35. Notwithstanding this major discrepancy, in today's context I believe the PSP still provides some important guidance for the urban form and overall character of Prebbleton. In 2010 the PSP identified Prebbleton as a small town *'that despite the recent rapid growth still manages to retain something of a village feel. This characteristic is appreciated by its residents and is one of the reasons that people choose to live in Prebbleton.'*

If this village feel is to survive as the township continues to grow, it is essential to identify what it is that engenders that feel and what measures can be put in place to maintain it'.

36. It follows on with *'this Structure Plan is primarily concerned with the physical characteristics of the township. Table 7 lists identifiable elements which come together to form these qualities.'* (Appendix B2).
37. From an urban design perspective, I consider that the elements set out in Appendix B1 and B2 can be broken into two categories being those contributing to urban form, and those contributing to the character and amenity of the township.
38. In my opinion, the following elements relating to urban form are still relevant today and continue to inform the urban form of Prebbleton. That said, I consider that the 'Urban Limit' as identified by PSP is definitely not up to date anymore.
- a. *Definite start and finish to the village*
 - *Maintain separation from Christchurch.*
 - *Uphold urban limit and ensure rural residential development does not lead to a blurring of the urban/ rural distinction*
 - *Construct roundabout to mark southern entrance to village.*
 - b. *Focal point around the pub and shops*
 - *Consolidate and strengthen the existing 'town centre'.*
 - c. *Large domain on edge of township*
 - *Extend domain as population grows.*

(Note - this refers to the existing Prebbleton domain. SDC have since decided an additional district reserve is required to the immediate south of the PC72 site.)
 - d. *A balanced community*
 - *Mix of homes of different types and tenures which support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.*

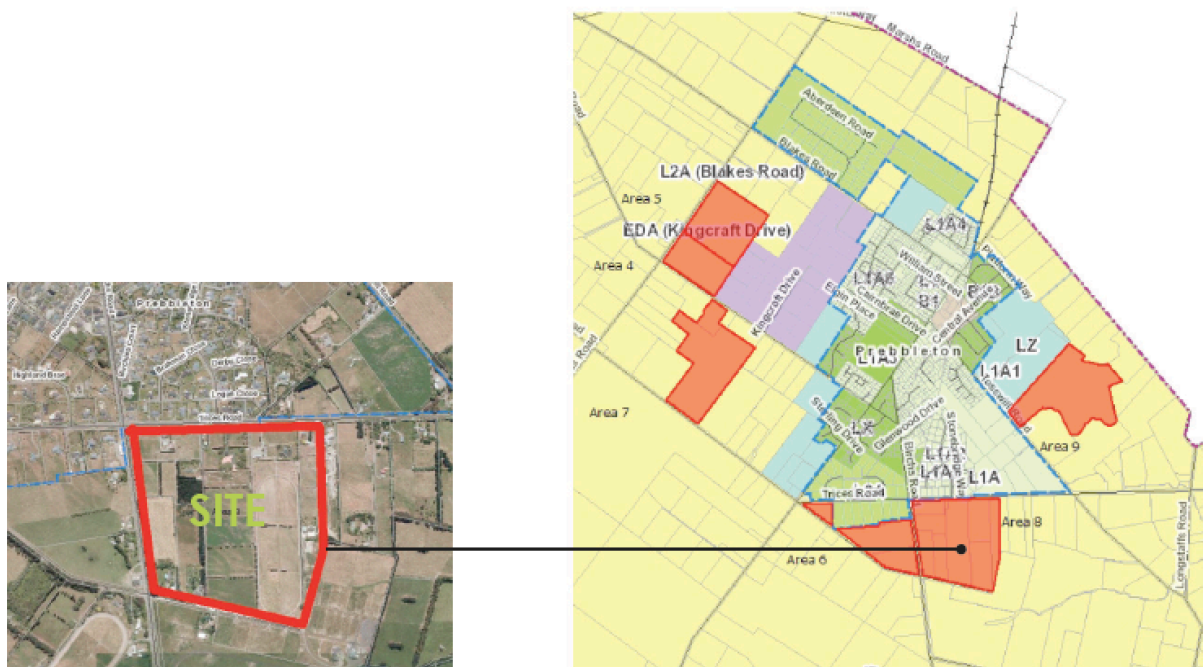
(Note – the valuation evidence in support of PC72 is that the current Prebbleton housing market is 'skewed' towards larger properties. The proposal with a density of 12 hh/ha will help provide a greater diversity of housing types including some medium density housing.)
39. The remaining elements listed in Table 7 contribute more towards 'village character' and amenity rather than actual physical urban form.
40. Regarding compact urban form, in my opinion, PC72 is consistent with the specific elements set out by the PSP with the exception of upholding the PSP urban limit. This limit was set in 2010 based on growth projection at the time prior to the Canterbury earthquakes and Covid 19 which have added to accelerated growth in the Selwyn District.
41. With regard to character and amenity, the proposal is consistent with the PSP. It builds on the identity of Prebbleton by retaining existing vegetation, opening viewshafts to the Port Hills and, incorporating high amenity open spaces with opportunities for extensive planting. PC72 will facilitate attractive streetscapes and high quality houses. Most importantly it will provide the important physical connection for the community to the new recreational space (Birchs Road Park) to the south.
42. Regarding density and character, the following paragraph 8.4. Housing Density in the PSP clearly sets out how higher densities can be integrated into Prebbleton adjacent to the existing lower density environments.

'The RPS requirement to achieve a residential density of 10 houses per hectare will mean that the average density of the ODP areas is higher than existing residential development in Prebbleton. For higher density development to be acceptable it must be carefully designed and located to be compatible with existing development and the character of Prebbleton. The increased density may be achieved by generally smaller section sizes or there may be pockets of larger and smaller sections, including areas of higher density comprehensive development.'

43. This statement clearly shows that the PSP as early as 2010 anticipated increased densities and considers that they can be integrated into the existing village character of the township through appropriate design measures.
44. The proposal is generally consistent with this providing 12hh/ha with medium density areas proposed in close proximity to high amenity open space and key movement corridors.

Rural Residential Strategy 2014 (Appendix C)

45. In addition to the PSP, the Rural Residential Strategy 2014 (RRS) looked at areas on the periphery of Prebbleton that would be suitable for rural residential developments – see image below. It clearly identified the proposed Site as a future urban growth area for rural residential development (lot sizes in the 1-2 hh/ha size range). That, in my view, clearly indicates not only that future residential growth is expected in Prebbleton, but also that the Site is considered suitable for that purpose.



46. At the time, Area 8 was identified as a site with the ability to deliver cohesive and integrated urban form to Prebbleton, whilst providing a transitional buffer from established residential development to the Rural zones.

Proposed Selwyn District Plan and growth

47. Although not yet applicable, it is good practice to consider proposed future planning documents when assessing future urban growth. The PSDP includes an urban growth chapter setting out the policies and objectives in relation to urban growth in the district. The chapter's overview sets the tone as follows:

The Selwyn District is a desirable place to live, work, and play, which is generating a demand for housing and business opportunities to support the needs of the growing community now and into the future. The Urban Growth chapter assists in meeting these demands by encouraging a consolidated and compact settlement pattern that optimises the use and development of resources. This chapter also assists in ensuring there is enough urban development capacity available to meet the District's housing and business needs while assuring that high quality living and business environments continue to be developed to implement the adopted Development Plans.

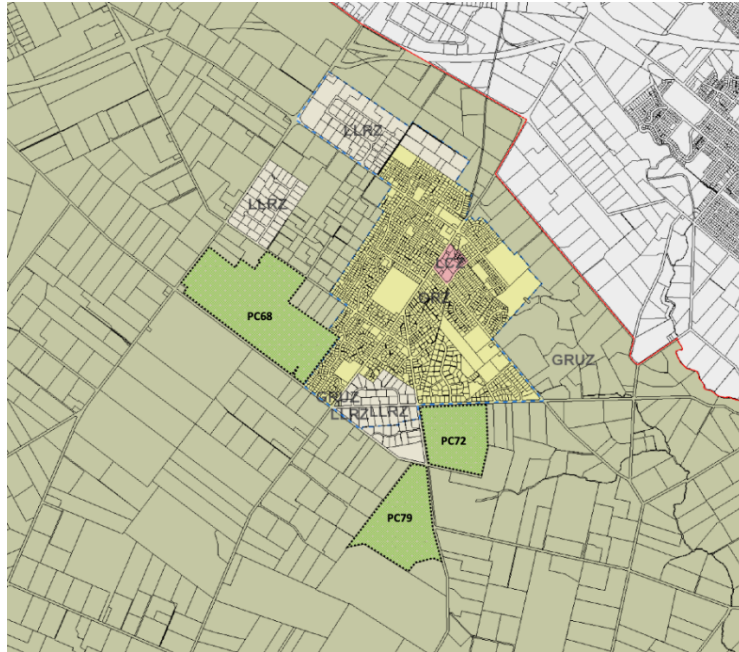
48. The PC72 proposal is, in my view, consistent with this urban growth direction, in terms of achieving a consolidated and compact settlement pattern.

Urban analysis of Prebbleton 2021 (Appendix D1)

49. As a result of working on several developments in the region, and in the absence of "live" documents, I regularly update my own urban form analysis of townships in the wider Canterbury region. In preparation for this evidence, I have revisited my own urban analysis of the compact urban form of Prebbleton. I have taken the directions and guidance from the PSP and the RRS as discussed earlier into account, as well as taking guidance from other district, regional, and national, statutory and non-statutory planning and urban design documents, including the requirement in the PSDP for new General Rural Zone developments (the equivalent of Living 1 zone under the operative Selwyn District Plan) to achieve a minimum density 12hh/ha.
50. Although the key growth directions and patterns have not necessarily changed for Prebbleton since the release of the PSP in 2010 and the RRS in 2014, specific changes have occurred in respect of the Site (Area 8) as follows:
- a) General growth of the township and demand for housing has continued to accelerate post earthquakes and during Covid 19;
 - b) RRS Areas 4, 5 and 6 have now been developed on a rural residential basis, meaning some rural residential living opportunities in Prebbleton are being provided for;
 - c) RRS area 7 has been included in PC68 requesting rezoning of a very large block of land in the south west of Prebbleton to a LZ density, a similar request as PC72 for Area 8, meaning a potential increase in LZ opportunities and a potential decrease in Rural residential living opportunities.
 - d) The Southern Motorway extension has been completed, changing the character of the rural area between Prebbleton and Templeton (this is now dissected by the motorway). Potential replacement rural residential areas could be considered here;
 - e) The residential areas north of Trices Road have been further established and continue to grow eastwards. The existing L1A zones are proposed to be 'upzoned' to General Residential (GR) Zone in the PSDP and submissions by the Ballantrae Residents Group seek upzoning of the L3 land on the north side of Trices Road to GRZ; and by others (including the Drinnans) for GR or Large Lot residential

zoning of land to the east. As a result of this, the Trices Road character is undergoing a transition from a predominantly rural to a mostly residential street; and

- f) Construction has commenced on the large recreation reserve to the south of Hamptons Road - Birchs Road Park - this results in Hamptons Road to become the new town boundary.
- g) An additional LZ rezoning request has been lodged for the area west of the new Birchs Road Park. (PC79).



- 51. Without pre-empting decisions for these LZ rezoning requests, the above list of 'changes' shows that the urban form of Prebbleton is not static; it continues to evolve and expand in an organic but nevertheless connected and coherent manner. As a result, the Site is now enveloped by planned or existing urban development and a recreational reserve on 3 sides.

Urban Form and southern township boundary (Appendix D2)

- 52. With the introduction of the new Brichs Road Park to the south of Hamptons Road, the urban boundary of Prebbleton has, I would say, shifted to Hamptons Road. The reserve will contribute to a boundary in the form of a green edge to the south providing a physical and visual buffer to the rural land. This creates a far stronger edge to the town; meaning the transitional buffer (with a gradual reduction in density from north to south) is no longer required. As a result, the Site has become an 'infill' site versus an edge of town site.
- 53. In my experience, the new park will also provide a strong defensible boundary for a consolidated urban form for Prebbleton. Having a significant area of open space/reserve as its neighbour removes the need for the Site to mitigate against a rural neighbour to the south, thus allowing it to be developed to a full urban density.

Connectivity to other urban areas

- 54. Proximity to Christchurch makes Prebbleton a very desirable residential destination for people that want to live in a smaller township and be part of a more rural community. The connections to Christchurch have

greatly improved with the upgrade of the motorway and related road networks, making travel from Prebbleton to this regional centre very fast and efficient. This is supported by a direct bus line between Christchurch and Lincoln, running through Prebbleton at regular intervals offering an alternative to the commute via car. The bus stop is located immediately adjacent to the Site on Birchs Road. The short distance to Christchurch also enables cycling to the southern parts of the city as a feasible alternative.

55. I consider the proximity to Lincoln and Rolleston an important aspect, as these larger towns, at approximately 7km distance, provide services to Prebbleton that may not be available within the town itself, such as main commercial centre, an industrial zone, high schools, other educational facilities i.e. Lincoln University, indoor and outdoor sport facilities and medical care facilities. As a result, both Lincoln and Rolleston also provide opportunities for work.
56. Within the more immediate urban context I consider that the proposed development will further consolidate the urban form of the township and ensure a well-functioning urban environment is achieved. In particular, the proposed north-south link through the Site connecting Birchs Road Park with the existing residential neighbourhood will be an important contributor to the wider green network and urban connectivity of Prebbleton. (Appendix D2). The Site is also well connected to transport corridors due to its proximity to the Southern Motorway.
57. Whilst Prebbleton is not of a size to be entirely self-sustaining it does offer a variety of day-to-day services to the community, most of which are centrally located within the town centre to the north, approximately 1.4 km from the centre of the ODP area. At an average walking speed this would equate to 10-15 minutes and approximately 3 to 4 minutes on the bicycle. There are two main routes to access the town centre either via Birchs and Springs Road or via the residential neighbourhood to the north through the domain.

Internal amenity and connectivity

58. Development of the site to an urban density will ensure it interlinks well with the neighbouring environments and provides a high residential amenity and connectivity within the site. This is achieved by:
 - a) Provision of a direct north-south primary road connection.
 - b) Provision of a direct east-west primary road connection from Birchs Road to possible future development to the east.
 - c) Provision of a mix of residential densities, including pockets of medium density.
 - d) Provision of pedestrian and cycle links within and through the ODP area to connect to adjoining urban areas and the new Birchs Road Park.
 - e) Provision of a variety of reserves and a small neighbourhood reserve to break up the built form and create a high amenity for residents.

Higher densities and consolidation

59. Increases in densities are a key tool to consolidate urban environments either through retrofitting existing areas or through the inclusion of medium density areas in new developments. Both methods of consolidation are available in Prebbleton. This Site achieves such intensification by including medium density areas. These higher densities are located in close proximity to internal open space to compensate for the reduced private

outdoor spaces on individual properties and mitigate the increase in built form. I consider that these medium density areas can be integrated in the proposed area, without affecting the surrounding character

60. With the town centre only 1km to the north of the site, educational, community, and commercial facilities catering for day-to-day needs are accessible, within easy cycling distance and still acceptable walking distance.

SECTION 42A REPORT

61. I have read the Council s42A report with a focus on the matters raised by Mr. Nicholson (urban designer) and Mr Collins (traffic engineer). With regard to urban design the report makes the following recommendations which I will to address further in my evidence:

- a) Extension of rezoning of Living Z min 12 hh/ha across entire Site
- b) Inclusion of the rural lots south of Hamptons Road (Drinnan land) - if scope allows
- c) Internal and external connectivity
 - o Continuous east-west road connecting through the site
 - o Additional continuous vehicular north - south connection
 - o Improved cycle and pedestrian network
- d) Other matters
 - o Medium density locations
 - o Affected parties
 - o Clarification regarding road frontage upgrades
 - o Rail Trail
 - o Future role of Hamptons Road

62. The applicant has considered the proposal and in response to the Council recommendations identified above and provides an updated ODP (Appendix A1a and A1b) which is underpinned by the updated Indicative Layout for the Site (Appendix A2) and a new Conceptual Overview Plan (Appendix A3) to show how the ODP and design concept integrate with the existing residential areas, potential future areas to the east, and Birchs Park to the south which is currently under construction.

Extension of rezoning of Living Z min 12 hh/ha across entire site

63. The revised ODP now includes the south-west corner (Tuffs block) to be rezoned as LZ with a minimum density of 12hh/ha to align the zoning across the entire Site.
64. I agree with Mr Nicholson that the entire Site is best suited to be developed at a minimum density of 12hh/ha. A higher density of 15hh/ha, requested by CCC and Canterbury Regional Council (Ecan), would require the inclusion of a building typology that is not characteristic for the small Prebbleton township, such as attached townhouses. These are best suited for suburban and central Christchurch and other key centres such as Rolleston, Lincoln, Rangiora and Kaiapoi. Within the Prebbleton context they would be out of place and introduce a significant and inappropriate change in residential character.
65. Extending the LZ zone across the Tuffs block instead of the originally proposed L3 zoning provides residential cohesion and increases residential capacity across the site. However, it requires the removal of the landscape

strip along Birchs Road to ensure direct access to properties can be created and the risk of undue shading by large specimen trees is avoided.

66. In the original application this landscape strip was primarily included on the ODP as part of the L3 zoning as the existing vegetation would assist in retaining a more rural character at the southern end of Birchs Road suitable for such a low density development. The taller specimen trees at the southern corner, in particular the large gum tree, currently form part of a natural gateway into Prebbleton.
67. The removal of this landscape strip will alter the street appearance along this central and southern part of Birchs Road from a landscaped edge screening development to a residential street edge with full views into the development. It will also alter the gateway effect currently created by the two large trees on the corner of Hamptons Road and Birchs Road. The utility areas across the road will also be more prominent, less screened and clearly visible from the proposed development.
68. However, considering the desire of the current owners (Tuffs) to retain their dwelling and generous landscaped garden and the corresponding value of the property, it can be expected that at least a portion of the far south-west corner of the Site will most likely not be developed in the near future, and is likely to be one of the last areas of the Site to transition into a full urban density. As a result the screening and gateway function will most likely remain intact for the short to medium term until the vegetation within Birchs Road Park is established and will start to take over the gateway function.
69. With regard to the landscape and visual assessment, the removal of the landscape strip will expose views into the proposed development and create similar effect on the adjacent dwellings across the road as the north-west corner has. The visual effects on the Birchs Road properties to the west however will be low due to the buffer provided by the Birchs Road corridor. In addition, the few properties that could be affected by this change are either far set back from the road boundary or have existing vegetation screening direct views. At the far southwest corner, the sites opposite the ODP area, are not yet developed or form part of a utility reserve.

Inclusion of the rural lots south of Hamptons Road (Drinnan land) – if scope allows

70. The owners of 2 Hamptons Road (Drinnan) have requested via a submission on PC72 to include 5 rural paddocks south of Hamptons Road between the proposed ODP and the new Birchs Road Park. A possible layout with a 12hh/ha density for the Drinnan Land has been looked into at a 'broad brush' level without specific technical information such as geotech, services, stormwater management or topography being available. From an urban design perspective, with a view to connectivity, I consider it may be possible to integrate this additional LZ area to the proposed ODP area, Birchs Road Park and possible future development to the east.

Internal and external connectivity (Appendix A1, A2 and A3)

71. The applicant has prepared an Indicative Layout for the Site (Appendix A2) which underpins the revised ODP. This Indicative Layout provides an integrated vehicular, pedestrian and cycle movement network. Although all roads will be local roads the design concept has a clear road hierarchy of primary and secondary roads. With primary roads creating main access points, through routes and key linkages into the surrounding

neighbourhood. Secondary roads in contrast, are designed to keep traffic flows and travelling speeds low and create safe and quiet street environments.

72. Pedestrian paths and cycle ways are either integrated in the road network or use dedicated shared paths where they align with primary roads or route through open spaces, stormwater reserves and short green links creating local shortcuts . The intention of the design is to prioritise high amenity pedestrian and cycle environments over vehicular routes and create a variety of movement option through the site.
73. The revised ODP (Appendix A1) identifies a direct primary north-south road through the site from Trices Road to Hamptons Road and Birchs Road Park. As this road is the main vehicular access to the site off Trices Road and a main distributor within the site, a shared path provides a separate and safe environment for pedestrians and cyclist. The finer grain local roads are not shown on the ODP to retain a level of flexibility for the detailed design process still to be undertaken. The Indicative Layout Plan however shows an indicative secondary direct north-south through route is available for pedestrian and cyclists within the eastern part of the site. It starts as a smaller local road from Trices Road leading southwards where cyclist share the road with slower travelling cars and pedestrians using the footpaths provided. Halfway into the site pedestrians and cyclists are taken off the local road and directed through the green space and SMAs via a shared path along a direct route to Hamptons Road.
74. Despite the Council Officer's recommendations, it is a deliberate design decision not to provide an additional direct vehicular north-south through route to avoid creating "local shortcuts" for commuting cars. This ensures that north-south through traffic is directed to Birchs Road and the internal north-south primary road. All other north-south local roads retain low traffic flows and serve primarily as residential streets providing access to properties within the Site. Although there is only one direct vehicular north-south route there are several opportunities for north-south movement into and through the site making it very permeable for pedestrian and cyclists.
75. Although a secondary direct vehicular north-south road has been suggested by Mr Nicholson for improved connectivity, I understand that, from a pure traffic management perspective this is not required and may not be desirable. As shown in Appendix A3, it is very likely that a primary road connection will eventuate as part of residential development in the future to the east of the site providing additional links between Trices Road and Hamptons Road. For the Site and the immediate context the short pedestrian/cycle link through the smaller SMA provides the right level and type of connectivity.
76. The ODP accompanying PC72 as notified provided one primary east-west route into the site off Birchs Road located opposite the pedestrian link into the western neighbourhood. In response to the Council Officer's recommendations the access point has been retained to keep the direct pedestrian/cycle linkage and the road has been extended to create a direct east-west route through the site. A second access point in the form of a short pedestrian cycle link has been added in the revised ODP to service LZ area on the Tufts block. The revised ODP retains one additional connections to the east. Located in the northern part of the eastern boundary, this connection provides a full road linkage to a potential future residential neighbourhood and has been located to avoid conflict with existing dwellings on site and on adjacent sites.

77. The Conceptual Overview Plan (Appendix A3) shows how the revised ODP/design concept will integrate into the wider surrounding environment and how good connectivity can be achieved within the existing and future development areas along the southern edge of Prebbleton.

Other matters

Medium density locations

78. The indicative locations of Medium Density (MD) areas shown as part of a RFI response have not changed in principle as a result of revisiting the design layout and ODP. Some minor refinements have been made such as the removal of any MD areas from the immediate ODP boundaries to ensure any potential effects of intensification are internal to the Site and won't affect neighbouring areas. The majority of the MD areas are located either adjacent to larger open spaces and reserves or within smaller high amenity residential streets.
79. Additional MD areas may be added at detailed design if suitable locations are identified as part of the detailed design process. To retain this level of flexibility the MD areas have not been graphically located on the revised ODP but are covered in more detail in the associated ODP narrative.

Affected parties

80. There is general agreement that the changes to the receiving environment are low to moderate and both Mr Nicholson and I agree that the main affected party is the rural property on 2 Hamptons Road. However, there is a minor disagreement relating to the severity of the change and resulting effects on this property. Mr Nicholson considers the change to be moderate whereas I consider it to be moderate to low.
81. Subsequently, the owners of this rural property have asked, via submission, for part of their land located south of Hamptons Road to be included in the ODP area so it can be developed at a LZ density. It can therefore be assumed that the owners are generally accepting if not supportive of the change from rural to residential. The piece of land subject to the Drinnan submission is located closer to the existing dwelling and has less mitigating landscape screening so is more visually exposed.

Clarification regarding road frontage upgrades

82. Trices, Birchs and Hamptons Road will all require road frontage upgrades to bring them up to an urban road standard and this is confirmed in the accompanying ODP narrative. However, each road requires a slightly different design approach depending on specific circumstances such as interface with Rail Trail and/or interface with Birchs Road Park.
83. Each road also has a different character, different traffic volumes and different orientation and privacy requirements from residential outdoor areas – I would therefore recommend that each road is addressed specifically at the subdivision design stage and in dialogue with the relevant experts and Council to ensure appropriate design responses such as visual splays for Rail trail, shared pathways, fencing and screening, placement of street trees, on-street parking, traffic calming measures, pedestrian/cycle crossing points, etc are integrated.

Rail trail

84. It is my understanding that rerouting of the Rail Trail from the town centre via the edge of the Domain and through Stonebridge Way is being considered. A shared cycle / pedestrian path is proposed along part of Trices Road between Birchs Road and the primary north-south road to provide the opportunity to link the current route along on Birches Road to the new Stonebridge Way part of the Rail Trail. An alternative solution may be to re-route the Rail Trail through the Site via the primary north-south road connecting it directly into and through Birchs Road Park. This would create a cohesive and continuous high amenity pedestrian and cycle network between the two main open spaces in Prebbleton and contribute safety outcomes when compared to the status quo arrangement.

The future role of Hamptons Road (Appendix A3).

85. Hamptons Road will remain a dead end road in the short to medium term with a turning point at the eastern end. However, the road should be designed to accommodate primary road functions so it that it is future proofed and can be extended to service the land to the east (in the event that further residential rezoning occurs to the east at a later date). From an urban design perspective a good solution would be to gradually bend Hamptons Road to the north-east to meet up with Trices Road at, or close to, Mersham Drive, creating a southern loop providing good connectivity to Birchs Road Park and assist in creating a concentric form and town boundary.
86. This configuration allows for a direct north-south connection to be located in the future within this possible future residential development to the east offering a link from Trices Road, close to Ashford Ave, to the future extension of Hamptons Road. This is another reason why the revised ODP does not include an additional north-south connection through the Site. From an urban design perspective this configuration provides a better outcome with regard to connectivity and legibility .

SUBMISSIONS

87. I have reviewed submissions on PC72 that relate to urban design matters. A key concern raised in these submissions is the risk of a loss of 'village feel' and rural small town character. My reading of the PSP is that the majority of the elements that contribute to this 'village feel' are not the number of dwellings or people, nor is it the actual physical size of the township. The elements listed in table 7 (Appendix B3) when working in combination are what I believe create the unique character and 'village feel' of Prebbleton. New developments can continue to provide this 'village feel' if they are responsive to this character, by integrating these elements into their design.

Village character through design

88. 'Village character' and high amenity are not a result of a specific density or lot sizes and are only loosely linked to the actual size of a township. Not every small town has character and not every large town is characterless. The specific or unique character of a township is a result of:
- a) The way it has organically grown;
 - b) How it manifests its historic patterns and features;
 - c) How it expresses its underlying urban and landscape structure, defines boundaries, and creates connections;
 - d) How it integrates landscape features, topography, and views;

- e) How it presents itself through streetscape, the quality of its public spaces, the appropriate scale of its building; and
- f) Finally, how it supports and connects people and community

89. The SPS has identified in table 7 the specific elements that contribute to the village character of Prebbleton. These have been taken into consideration when the possible concept design and ODP were developed.
90. The ODP builds on the existing built form of Prebbleton by naturally extending the residential character across the site to connect with the new reserve. Internal and external connections, green spaces, and high amenity green pedestrian and cycle linkages will break the development into smaller components. This will allow views into the site from adjacent developments and preserve a sense of openness, adding to the small town community feel and village type character.
91. The proposal also responds directly to the existing natural features by taking its cues from the underlying topography and natural drainage patterns of the Site. It uses these to create a connected green and blue network to provide a structure for green spaces and high amenity green pedestrian and cycle linkages. This will create larger non-build areas between denser residential clusters. The large SMAs will allow views into the rural land and towards the Port Hills anchoring the development into the landscape providing a sense of place.
92. PC72 provides the vital link between the township and Birchs Road Park, strengthening this important relationship and providing pedestrian and cycling connectivity through the Site. Development of the Site to a residential level is therefore critical to ensure the Site contributes to the urban form and connectivity of the township.
93. PC72 has several opportunities to integrate local features and characteristics into the streetscape and public places such as
 - Integration of the rail trail
 - Road frontage upgrades with specific Prebbleton features drawing references from rural and railway history, i.e. style of fencing, signage
 - Generous street tree planting
 - Retention of existing trees
 - Retention of rural elements through integration of existing rural residential properties
 - Pedestrian and cycle focused street design offering casual community meeting points
 - Generous landscaping of open green spaces and utility management areas
 - Fine grain connectivity for the community suitable for a small township

What is the appropriate development density for the site

94. The s42A Report, Urban Design report by Hugh Nicholson, as well as several submissions raise the question about the appropriate development density for the Site within this context. Several views are expressed from a 15hh/ha density at the upper end requested by CCC and Ecan to 2 hh/ha at the lower end requested by several local submitters. This wide spread of density is a reflection of the different viewpoints and positions.

Rural residential

95. The Site was identified by the RRS as a suitable area for rural residential development and subsequently was added as area 8 – preferred rural residential area. At that point the rural residential density of 2hh/ha was an appropriate response however due to the changes that have occurred in the last decade including the escalating house prices and increased demand and new government policy directives the external parameters have shifted.
96. With regard to PC72, the introduction of the Birchs Road Park to the south has initiated the most important change shifting the urban boundary of Prebbleton from Trices Road to Hamptons Road extending the urban form southwards. This has located the Site in a strategic position between existing development and an important community recreational facility. The Site now needs to facilitate high amenity safe pedestrian and cycle linkages between these areas with appropriate passive surveillance which cannot be achieved to a satisfactory level within a low density residential environment such rural residential/ L3 zone due to the lack of eyes on the street / design standards of pathways, lighting levels etc . A rural residential density of 2hh/ha is therefore not appropriate.
97. I am aware that in the event that PC72 is approved this would reduce the provision of LLR /L3 land in Prebbleton and may create a shortfall in readily available properties in this part of the housing market. However, there are still pockets of land available on the outskirts of Prebbleton that would be well suited for lower density / rural residential type development of 2hh/ha. For example, areas along the north and north-western perimeter, where agricultural activities are no longer feasible but urban densities should be avoided in order to contain the urban form of the township and prevent the amalgamation with Christchurch. In such areas rural residential development can provide an adequate and permanent buffer and at the same time the increased residential density also responds to the Government's housing shortage 'where suitably located'.
98. If the Site was to be zoned L3, it may retain some of its rural characteristics but as a low density development it would be less permeable and accessible for the public and prevent the necessary connectivity that is essential for this urban environment to function well, and in particular, for the Birchs Road Park to become a well-integrated and successful community facility. My main concern would be the lack of passive surveillance over the pedestrian and cycle ways through the site and the sense of isolation of the park in relation to the township, discouraging people to cycle or walk to the new destination. (refer to Appendix A1a ODP L3)

12hh/ha

99. As mentioned earlier with the introduction of Birchs Road Park, it is paramount I believe, that the Site is developed as a full urban residential environment to ensure good connectivity between the township and the new recreational reserve can be achieved. Within the context of the small township of Prebbleton, the proposed density of min 12hh/ha will offer significant capacity but still allows it to integrate into the existing character. This residential density also enables some of the existing landscape features to be retained and existing dwellings to be integrated as it allows for a few larger properties to be placed in strategic places to respond to the unique spatial requirement of the site – i.e. increased building setbacks to accommodate shading from existing trees.

100. The Indicative Layout (Appendix A2) was developed to underpin and test the ODP to ensure the required minimum density of 12 hh/ha can be achieved. It shows a possible layout at a conceptual level only and requires further detailed design input before being finalised. The layout achieves the required 320+ households based on developing the entire site to a 12hh/ha standard including subdividing all existing rural dwellings. This initial overall density could be slightly increased by introducing more MD areas in a few selected locations adding at most 10-15 households. Alternatively, the additional MD areas can be used as a substitute for the loss of sites as a result of the retention of existing dwellings and associated landscaped curtilage.

15 hh/ha

101. My understanding from involvement in other plan changes, CCC and ECAN are looking at Plan Change proposals from a very broad perspective across a wider area including several districts. Both encourage proactive responses to the current housing crisis by providing higher densities for all greenfield locations within the wider Christchurch area. This directive is made in an effort to provide as much housing as possible within the wider Christchurch area in a more consolidated urban form. However, this blanket 'one size fits all' approach does not respond to individual locations or specific circumstances. As mentioned earlier, the Prebbleton context is one of low to average densities and a 15 hh/ha development would be uncharacteristic and inappropriate. It will require the introduction of a new housing / building typology that will change the residential character of the small township.

102. I therefore agree with Mr Nicholson that the entire Site is best suited to be developed at a minimum density of 12hh/ha.

CONCLUSION

103. It is most appropriate that the land use proposed in PC72 provides for the vital and active link between the Prebbleton township and the new recreational reserve – Birchs Road Park – to the South.

104. Rural residential character by nature of its low density, rural streetscape and dense, bulk landscaping would not provide the appropriate level of connectivity and public engagement that is required for a public link between the reserve and the township. Road standards and lighting levels within the street would be of a reduced level and the very low density development would not provide sufficient passive surveillance over the public environment.

105. A full urban residential zoning such as Living Z, will provide a better street character, improve overall amenity, and allow for good passive surveillance over the street. This will also ensure that the correct lighting standards, roading standards, cycle ways, and footpath qualities are adequately provided for, something that is imperative in such an important community connection.

106. It is important to note that Birchs Road currently provides the only connection between the township and Birchs Road Park. PC72 offers the opportunity to create a second strong and direct connection between the township centre via the Prebbleton Domain and through established residential areas. With Birchs Park now under construction, the need for better connectivity of this recreational green space with the township is critical. A full residential development such as the proposed LZ is a better fit for this area than a rural residential development.

107. The new context the Birchs Road Park creates has changed the 'urban suitability' for the Site. It has now become the most suitable location for Prebbleton to grow into, to close the gap between the township and the new urban boundary created by the park.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Lauenstein', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nicole Lauenstein

14 January 2022