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**To:** Selwyn District Council  
**From:** Hugh Nicholson, Urban Designer  
**Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
**Re:** Plan Change 72 Prebbleton – Urban Design and Landscape Summary Statement

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## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 I have prepared a memorandum on urban design and landscape matters for the Selwyn District Council with respect to Plan Change 72 to the Selwyn District Plan.
- 1.2 I have reviewed the applicant's expert evidence and considered submissions on the Plan Change. This summary highlights areas of agreement with the applicant and any outstanding matters of disagreement.
- 1.3 I consider that the proposed plan change is an appropriate location for urban growth that links Prebbleton with the new district-wide reserve on Birchs Road, and rezones a block of rural land which has residential land to the north and west, and the new reserve to the south.
- 1.4 In general I consider that future spatial planning exercises allow a more comprehensive range of options to be considered together with the relevant costs and benefits. They also allow for meaningful public engagement to be undertaken and used to inform the spatial planning exercise.
- 1.5 In this instance the Council's development of a new district wide reserve on Birchs Road establishes a new urban structure for Prebbleton, and I consider that a spatial planning exercise is unlikely to reach a different conclusion with regard to the use of this land.

## 2.0 Revised Outline Development Plan (ODP)

- 2.1 The applicant has made changes to the ODP in response to issues raised in the Council's section 42A report. In particular I support the following changes:

- a. The Living Z zoning has been extended over the whole site with a minimum net density of 12 hh/ha;
- b. A continuous east-west connection has been provided through the site;
- c. Trices, Birchs and Hamptons Road frontages will be upgraded to an urban standard in accordance with the Council's Engineering Code of Practice;

### 3.0 Additional North-South Connection

- 3.1 After discussions with Mr Collins and Ms Lauenstein, I recommend that the ODP should include a single continuous primary road running north-south, and an additional continuous pedestrian-cycle connection running north-south using the stormwater management area in the south-east quadrant of the site, and the local road network in the north-east quadrant of the site.
- 3.2 This will ensure that if further residential development to the east is not approved or is delayed then there is still a good level of connectivity between the wider Prebbleton village and the new Birchs Road Reserve.

### 4.0 Shared Cycle / Pedestrian Paths

- 4.1 The text in the revised ODP requires a shared cycle / pedestrian path along part of Trices Road between Birchs Road and the primary north-south road to link with the existing Rail Trail. I understand that there is some discussion regarding re-routing the Rail Trail off Birchs Road and through the new Birchs Road Reserve and PC72 to Stonebridge Way.
- 4.2 I recommend that shared cycle / pedestrian paths should be provided (or retained) as part of PC72 along the Birchs, Trices and Hamptons Road frontages, and that a safe crossing point on Trices Road should be provided near Stonebridge Way.

### 4.0 Rural Lots South of Hamptons Road

- 4.1 Ms Lauenstein and I agree that if scope and technical considerations permit, it would be appropriate to include the five rural paddocks to the south of Hamptons Road (owned by the Drinnans) into the Plan Change as part of the Living Z zone. If this is possible I recommend that a cycling / pedestrian connection is provided through the additional land connecting the stormwater management area in the south-east quadrant of the plan change area directly to the new Birchs Road reserve.

### 4.0 Landscape Character and Visual Impact

- 4.5 In my opinion that the proposed plan change would have a moderate-low impact on the landscape character reflecting the change from a rural residential landscape with small numbers of houses and a predominantly natural character to a residential landscape with a higher number of buildings and a suburban character.

- 4.6 Bearing in mind that visual quality is one of the attributes that contribute to landscape character, and that the site is largely surrounded by existing shelterbelts and hedges, in my opinion the visual impact of the plan change on the adjacent houses on Trices and Birchs Roads would be *low*. This reflects that while the landscape character would change there would be no significant loss of views, and there is an existing rural residential character.
- 4.7 I consider that the visual impact on the house and property at 2 Hamptons Road would be *moderate*, reflecting the length of the shared boundary and the change from a rural character and outlook to a suburban character. This is partly mitigated by the setback of the house from the boundary. I note that the owners have submitted on the plan change.

## 5.0 Submissions

- 5.2 Loss of identity and change in character of Prebbleton is a common theme in submissions with submitters mentioning the loss of the 'village' feel or small-town character, together with suggestions that Prebbleton might become part of Christchurch.
- 5.3 People's sense of belonging or emotional attachment to a place is generally understood to be based on their shared experiences of a specific territory over time<sup>1</sup>. Changes such as PC72 are likely to threaten the perception that local people have of their town, in the disruption of existing urban patterns and the introduction of new physical and social elements.
- 5.4 A significant number of submitters are concerned that the 'higher' densities proposed in the Living Z zone would adversely affect the character of Prebbleton, while the Christchurch City Council seeks that the Plan Change is declined in the first instance, but if approved that the density is increased to 15 households per hectare (hh/ha).
- 5.6 On balance I consider that a minimum net density of 12 hh/ha is appropriate in this location reflecting the benefits of a modest increase in density while supporting the existing character of the Prebbleton 'village'.

Hugh Nicholson

**UrbanShift**

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<sup>1</sup> Carmona, M., Heath, T., Oc, T., Tiesdell, S., *Public Places, Urban Spaces: The Dimensions of Urban Design*, 2006, Architectural Press, p.97