

Before the Selwyn District Council

under: the Resource Management Act 1991

in the matter of: Proposed Private Plan Change 73 to the Operative
District Plan: Dunns Crossing Road, Rolleston

and: **Rolleston West Residential Limited**
Applicant

Summary of Evidence of Nicole Lauenstein (Urban Design)

Dated: 28 September 2021

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SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF NICOLE LAUENSTEIN

INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Nicole Lauenstein.
- 2 I am the director of a+urban, a Christchurch based urban design and architecture company and have a Masters in Architecture and a Masters in Urban Design.

SDC URBAN DESIGN REPORT, EVIDENCE AND EXPERT CONFERENCE

- 3 In his urban design report, attached to the S42 report, Mr Nicholson urban designer for SDC, identified areas of concern in response to the original application and made suggestion for improvements.
- 4 At that point I was brought into this project to review the original application and to advise on urban design matters. Several improvements including those suggested by Mr Nicholson were incorporated in the revised ODPs attached to my evidence in chief.

Key changes for the Skellerup Block were:

- the introduction of a clear road hierarchy;
- improved connectivity in all directions internal and external;
- the introduction of an interconnected green network; and
- improved pedestrian and cycling amenity.

Key changes for the Holmes Block were:

- a change in location to key access road;
- improved connectivity in all directions internal and external;
- the introduction of an interconnected green network;
- the removal of the bund along Burnham School Road and provisions for direct property access;
- interface treatment of B1 zone / school; and
- improved pedestrian and cycling amenity.

Mr. Compton Moen representing the applicant, Mr Nicholson representing the SDC and myself also representing the applicant participated in an urban design expert conference to discuss the revised ODPs and any other relevant urban design and landscape matters. We have been able to reach agreement on many points but have also identified remaining points of disagreement.

KEY AGREEMENTS REACHED

- 5 In summary, we reached agreement that all concerns raised by Mr Nicholson specifically related to the original ODPs and the urban environment within, have been successfully addressed by the revised ODPs. This includes internal amenity and connectivity.
- 6 And, that the proposed external connectivity to the existing and possible future neighbourhoods as shown on the revised ODPs is appropriate and will not preclude urban growth in the future.
- 7 Beyond the ODPs, we have reached agreement that the Rolleston Structure Plan has given Rolleston its underlying structure and allowed it to gradually grow into a compact and consolidated township by directing urban growth over the past 10+ years.
- 8 We also agreed that opportunities for growth in Rolleston are limited to areas to the west, south-east, and in parts to the south. As a result, the next growth sequence will most likely step across Lincoln Rolleston Road and Dunns Crossing Road.

REMAINING DISAGREEMENTS

The appropriate method for enabling urban growth

- 9 There is general disagreement between Mr Compton Moen, myself and Mr Nicholson as to the most appropriate method to enable urban growth and development (i.e. whether this be through private plan changes or through a more comprehensive and strategic regional planning exercise).
- 10 At this point I would like to add that we had several general discussions as to the scope of the conferencing and the importance to clearly stay within the area of our expertise. I consider that this particular discussion point straddles the boundaries into planning expertise.
- 11 I have discussed this particular matter with colleagues from the planning fraternity to gain a better understanding, and realised that it is important to contribute to this discussion from a purely urban design perspective. I would like to explain how each of these planning instruments (i.e. plan changes, structure plans) is a part of the urban design 'toolbox'.
- 12 From a purely urban design perspective I consider that plan changes play a significant role in the direction and manifestation of growth. Plan changes provide a high level of detailed information specific to a PC site and the immediate surroundings. This feeds back valuable information into the wider urban growth process. Plan changes consist of design and planning phases involving private owners, councils, experts in various fields, and allows for public consultation and input through submissions that enable the community to contribute to the shaping of their town.
- 13 I have been involved in several plan changes over the last 20 in years and consider them to be a comprehensive and thorough urban design tool. It

sets clear parameters and provides a high level of certainty that important urban design outcomes will be achieved.

- 14 Looking at a Structure Plan, from a purely urban design perspective, I consider it to be a less detailed and more aspirational or visionary plan that provides a broad 'physical structure' of a township and assists in guiding the direction of growth. However due to its lack of site specific detail, and the fact that it has to project far into the future, I would not necessarily consider the specific physical extent (urban limit and timelines) as finite. The overall design intent and underlying structure are the key components that inform urban matters, not a specific single line or boundary.
- 15 A new structure planning exercise is, in my opinion, not required to determine the next step of urban growth for Rolleston. The Structure Plan has already laid out the overarching physical structure of the township and determined the direction and pattern of growth. I see Plan Change 73 as a logical continuation of the direction and patterns already in place.

Compact urban form

- 16 The second disagreement is to some extent a continuation of the first. As it also relates to process and timing. We all agreed that each PC 73 block in itself will achieve a compact urban form and that if other areas to the south and north of the blocks would develop the entire area west of Dunns Crossing Road will contribute to a wider connected and consolidated urban form.
- 17 However, Mr. Nicholson does not consider that PC 73 alone contributes to a wider compact urban form for all of Rolleston and lacks sufficient connectivity, as it only connects along one side to existing residential areas. As I set out in my full evidence, this is a natural occurrence. Growth mostly occurs in smaller clusters, and will always create some temporary anomalies in form and connectivity. This is evident throughout all the new areas of development in Rolleston. Once the 'gaps' between the newest developments are completed, the full extent of connectivity will be achieved, and the desired consolidated urban form can be experienced.
- 18 I am aware of development proposals being "underway" or on the drawing board for areas south and north of the Skellerup block and shared this information in broad terms with Mr Nicholson at the conferencing.

CONCLUSION

- 19 Rolleston is a key regional centre and growth around its perimeter is not a matter of 'if' but 'when'. PC73 clearly sits in a future growth area for Rolleston and can accommodate part of that growth, while other areas around the current edge of Rolleston experience development constraints. This south west growth path is consistent with the overarching direction initiated by the Structure Plan and the later identified FDAs and I consider

that the proposed extension of Rolleston through PC 73 is a logical next step in the growth sequence of Rolleston.

- 20 The revised ODP's provide a high level of internal amenity and connectivity, clear movement hierarchy, an interconnected green network with generous open spaces, and a fine grain of external connectivity to existing and possible future adjacent developments. They will generate a consolidated form and well-functioning internal environment for each block.
- 21 The changes also allow both blocks to contribute to a wider consolidated growth pattern along the western periphery of Rolleston, and will guide future connectivity in this area.

Dated: 28 September 2021

Nicole Lauenstein