

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL
AT SELWYN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER

the Resource
Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER

Submissions and further
submissions on the
proposed Selwyn District
Plan

AND

**Hughes Development
Limited** (DPR-0411)

JOINT WITNESS STATEMENT

Urban Design

Hearing 30.6: Rezone – West Melton

23 February 2023

Background

1. This Joint Witness Statement (**JWS**) relates to the submission by Hughes Developments Limited (**HDL**) on the Proposed Selwyn District Plan (**PDP**) (DPR-0411) seeking that land located at 163 Halkett Road and 1066 West Coast Road, West Melton (the **Site**) be rezoned from General Rural (as notified) to General Residential.
2. At the request of HDL, the Panel issued directions for expert witness conferencing between the planning, urban design, economics and traffic experts for Selwyn District Council (**SDC**) and HDL.
3. This JWS relates to urban design matters.
4. Joint witness conferencing between HDL and SDC's urban design experts (Ms White and Mr Nicholson) took place on Tuesday 28 February between 10am and 12 midday.
5. This joint statement has been prepared in accordance with sections 9.4 and 9.5 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023, which relates specifically to expert conferencing. The attendees confirm they have read, and agree to abide with, the updated Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses included in Section 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023.

Information

6. Information read and referenced during the conferencing includes:
 - Statement of Evidence of Hugh Nicholson on behalf of Selwyn District Council – Urban Design and Landscape, dated 28 November 2022 in the Matter of PC74
 - Rebuttal Evidence of Lauren White on behalf of Hughes Developments Limited
 - Section 42A Report by Craig Friedel (18 January 2023)
 - Urban design report supporting PC74
 - The Updated ODP map and associated narrative
 - Rebuttal Evidence of Simon de Verteuil on behalf of Hughes Developments Limited (Transport) dated 10 February 2023

7. Issues to be addressed/recommended changes to the ODP and the scope of this conferencing:

- Future street connection to the east
- Provision of a footpath along SH73 to the west, to connect to the existing crossing facility
- A requirement for a minimum density of 12hh/ha
- A requirement for post and rail fencing along the northern and southern boundaries

Areas of Agreement

General

Mr Nicholson and Mrs White are both of the opinion that development of the site would contribute to a compact and consolidated urban form for West Melton.

Road connection to the East

8. It is agreed that provision for future road connection to the east is a good urban design outcome and the ODP has been amended to include two indicative road connections to this land.

Fencing along the Northern and Southern Boundaries

9. It is agreed that a requirement in the ODP for a post and rail fence along the northern (Halkett Road) and southern (SH73) boundaries be included in the ODP and this is reflected in the updated ODP narrative.

Areas of Disagreement

Pedestrian Connection along SH73 to the West

10. Mr. Nicholson recommends that a footpath be required along the southern boundary (SH74) to connect the site to the existing crossing facility.

11. Mrs White did not address this issue in her rebuttal evidence.

12. During the conferencing, Mrs White provided information (provided by Mark Brown at DLS) about the issue as follows:
- The area between the site and the existing pedestrian refuge crossing point is approx. 387 metres, along which there are 5 separate property owners; and
 - The berm/shoulder width is only 4.5m. There is therefore insufficient width within the existing legal road reserve to construct a shared path and achieve the necessary separation from the SH carriageway. Additional land would need to be acquired from the five property owners to create the necessary separation distance.
13. Mrs White opined that in the light of the above constraints and recognising that future residents can access SH73 (and facilities/services to the south of the highway through the proposed Rossington Drive link and existing pedestrian connection between Rossington Drive and SH73 and across the pedestrian crossing/refuge, this is acceptable from an urban design perspective.
14. Mr Nicholson considers that a shared path along this section of SH73 would improve the pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the site and would provide a more direct and legible alternative to the Rossiter Drive connection. He acknowledges that the path would be on the State Highway and that the applicant would need to the agreement of Waka Kotahi to implement the path.

The Requirement for a Minimum Density of 12hh/ha

15. Mr Nicholson remains unconvinced that achieving 12hh/ha on the site would lead to poor urban design outcomes. Mr Nicholson places weight on the direction of the NPS:UD with respect to disregarding the potential adverse effects on residential character and considers the application of a minimum residential density an appropriate way to ensure the efficient use of land.
16. In the light of the potential development scenarios illustrated by Mrs White in her rebuttal evidence, Mr Nicholson considers that a minimum density of 10hh/ha would present an acceptable minimum density for this site.

17. Mrs White remains of the opinion that the application of a minimum density is a blunt tool and disregards other urban design principles and values such as recognising place and location, and allowing for transition to existing adjacent residential and rural activity.
18. If a minimum density had to be applied as part of the ODP, Mrs White considers achieving 10hh/ha (i.e. approximately 40 additional sites/dwellings in Figure 12 and 30 additional sites/dwellings in Scenario 3, in the attachments to her rebuttal evidence), would significantly alter the perceived and experienced residential character and amenity in West Melton.
19. In summary, Mr Nicholson supports a minimum required density (10hh/ha) and acknowledges and accepts that this will lead to a degree of change to the residential character of West Melton. He considers 10hh/ha a comparatively low residential density in the wider Canterbury context. Mrs White remains of the opinion that residential density should be the result of a site specific design response.

DATED this 28 day of February 2023



Lauren White
Urban design expert engaged by HDL



Hugh Nicholson
Urban design expert engaged by Selwyn District Council