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Resource Management (Forms, Fees, and Procedure) Regulations 2003 Schedule 1

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Form 5

Submission on publicly notified Plan Change
Selwyn District Plan

Clause 6 of First Schedule, Resource Management Act 1991

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Full name of submitters: John Denis Barclay and Lisa Barclay

This is a submission on the following proposed Plan Change:

Proposed Plan Change 9 Skellerup Block (*name and number of Plan Change*)

The specific provisions of the proposal that my submission relates to are:

1.6, 1.7, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.16, 2.1 Amendment 10, 21,43,45, 3.14, 3.28, 4.6, 4.8, 4.10
4.17, 4.18, 4.39, 4.42, 4.43, 4.46, 4.50, 5.11, 5.17, 5.27, 5.28, 5.30, 5.31, 5.32, 5.35 and
6.2.

My submission in OPPOSITION is:

OWNERSHIP OF THE SKELLERUP BLOCK

Firstly I believe it is important to note that the Skellerup Block is owned by the Selwyn Plantation Board Limited. The two major shareholders of the Selwyn Plantation Board Ltd are Selwyn Investment Holdings Limited (6,068,000 shares) and Christchurch City Holdings Ltd (3,932,000 shares). Selwyn Investment Holdings Limited is in fact wholly owned by the Selwyn District Council and Christchurch City Holdings Ltd is owned by the Christchurch District Council. In effect, the two councils (Selwyn and Christchurch) own the Skellerup Block. One of the directors of the Selwyn Plantation Board Limited is Jens Lauritz Christensen who is also a director of Rolleston Water Supply Limited. Jens is currently running for Council and has been a councillor in the past while subdividing large rural blocks of land in the Selwyn District.

Summary: The plan change request is to the Council for Council owned land with directors who are/ were/ will be on the Council that are/were significant property developers. Are there not conflicts of interest here?

CONSULTATION

As per section 6, the plan change request was required to report to persons identified as being affected by the proposal, but does not oblige the applicant to consult with any person; or create any ground for expecting that the applicant will consult with any person. I would suggest that good manners would include consultation, however as the applicant applying to the Council is effectively the Council itself, it is not surprising that this did not occur. Further, it is noted that the first lodgment of the Skellerup Plan Change was 17 April 2009. How nice it would have been to have received notification at this stage, thus enabling more time to digest and reply to it. No doubt this has been in the wind for years as all of the detail provided takes a long time to research, collate and present.

LEVEL OF DEMAND FOR RURAL RESIDENTIAL LIVING

Current zoning would require non-complying resource consent. If the Skellerup block is to be afforded a plan change and yet the adjoining and surrounding properties were not, this would be completely unfair to the adjoining and surrounding property owners who may wish to embark on such subdivisions themselves. As regards section 5.35, there is no reason that other developers cannot provide subdivisions that are "high quality developments that will preserve and maintain the transition between urban and rural development.

Under the Selwyn District Plan dwellings are provided for at a density of one per 20 ha – this would allow 3 on the site.

The Valuer's report "envisages" (in other words a best guess) that 54 allotments would be sought in Rolleston per annum. Further there is a belief stated that people don't want rural residential areas any larger than what has been proposed (Valuer's report, point 21), this is absolute rubbish! I know of numerous people that want 1ha – 20 ha. The reasons are various including the privacy, going to a more self sufficient society, areas to accommodate various hobbies e.g. horses. As an equine enthusiast, I can tell you that the average horse requires at least 1 ha for the land to be managed effectively i.e. spelling of paddocks as opposed to continual grazing. Not doing so will result in lack of feed and the souring of the land and parasite burden to the animal. Further, these larger blocks are wanted in reasonable proximity to Christchurch Central and most have a need to commute at times. The proposed subdivision of smaller lots (less than 1ha) is not appropriate as can be seen by the subsequent subdivision of the 5000m² on East Maddislands Road that were originally subdivided by Jens Christensen. They became large gardens and presumably either got sick of the maintenance or decided to cash in. People investing in lots of 1ha or more are generally aware of the maintenance that will be required.

Further the comment that "history indicates that the great majority of those lifestyle farming block enterprises that were the general standard in the 80's either failed or no longer exist. I can tell you that most of this was due to the Council allowing subdivisions of no less than 10 acres in numerous areas and yet requiring economic use to be proven. A number of these 10 acre blocks were purchased for personal pursuits; however landowners had to do something that may prove economic use in order to build a dwelling. This often included small glass houses, peony roses, flowers, etc. When the

economic use no longer had to be proven due to rule changes (or when owners thought they could get away with it), those activities ceased and the owners continued with their pursuits for which the land was originally purchased. I know land owners that this applied to.

Point 15 of the Valuer's report states that rural living can be met by sections of 2000m². The Kajens Development could be described as such a subdivision having sections of this size. In fact all it is really is large sections with large dwellings and large garden. It is not rural living at all. Some of it is; however adjacent to rural land which gives a rural feel.

In regard to the Valuer's report point 23, anything less than 1ha is not really country living at all, just a large section and will simply be a large-lot suburbia to users and occupants.

The Selwyn District Council Rural Residential Background Report sets out criteria in paragraph 4.6 states that limiting the number of dwellings within a single location, in order to avoid collective effects of intensified land uses, will assist in differentiating rural-residential character from other densities of development.

In regard to the Valuer's report point 36, rural residential could also be located near Rangiora as this would be similar distance from the CBD.

In regard to the Valuer's report a number of points e.g. 54-71 are all from a developer's financial point of view i.e. how much more can they gain if they slice the land up smaller. This is the objective of the developer, not others. People will always pay for what they want. Of course a 4ha block is more expensive than a section, there is more land! If people buy 4ha, there is usually a pretty good reason for it.

There are a number of residents with lifestyle blocks on Dunns Crossing Road opposite the proposed subdivision (and others in the proposed Rolleston urban area) that do not wish to subdivide their land down to small residential sections. They purchased their land for their own rural lifestyle and although the council has made changes to enable the subdivision of their land they are unwilling to do so. We are one of the groups of such residents. The council has "presumed" that everyone would want to subdivide. Although this may make our land more valuable, it is not the reason that we all purchased in Rolleston in the first place. This change will effectively push out the very people who supported the growth of Rolleston initially. Again this was lack of planning in the initial stages of the Rolleston growth where a number of councillors who were subdividers with a conflict of interest went about their own greedy business with no forethought to either the town or its residents.

The properties opposite the proposed site of the subdivision that have been changed to Living 2A zone are subdividable to 1ha. If this is the case it is preposterous to have rural land opposite subdivided down to a much lower level. The proposal for making the Living 2A zone on Dunns Crossing Road subdividable to less than 1ha in the future has not yet been approved. Remembering that there are residents who do not wish to subdivide, the current proposal will be out of kilter with the land opposite.

As per 3.22 Proposed Plan Change 1 (PC1) to the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement provides the following definition to assist with what is deemed as a "rural residential activity":

Rural Residential Activities:

Residential units outside the Urban Limits at an average density of no less than one per hectare

Why then is the proposed subdivision looking to make the sites smaller?

PC1 is also prescriptive on sequencing. Why would the Council allow the Selwyn Plantation Board be allowed to go out of sequence when others are not. This is again going back to the willy nilly subdivisions done by previous subdividers who were generally on the Council.

It is stated in 1.16 that since the removal of the forest, the site has been sown in pasture and is currently used for grazing stock. This may be true of the Holmes Block but is not for the Skellerup Block. Initially a crop of kale was sown on the Skellerup Block. This was grazed down and no crops or grazing animals have been seen since. A good crop of weeds grew and seeded for a period and more recently, the land has been ploughed over.

Under the proposed Schedule of Amendments, Section 2, Amendment 21 suggests Birch as one of the specimen trees for planting. With all of the displeasure relating to the health issues and effects of these trees in the Rolleston township where Birch were originally planted, I would suggest that this is not appropriate if the Plan change were to go ahead.

Under the proposed Schedule of Amendments, Section 2, Amendment 45 states a minimum allotment size of 4000m² when in fact the plans shows sites as small as 3000m².. The valuer's report point 78 also states the range in area from 4005m² and 6538m², obviously this is incorrect. The visual landscape assessment of the Skellerup Block 2.3 headed "The Proposal" states:

"The proposal aims to establish a rural-residential zoning for the site (proposed lot size average of 5,000m²+). The proposed zone provisions allow a minimum lot size of 2,000m², though the Concept Plan is designed with a minimum lot size of 3,000m²"

Further, if this were to go ahead it is currently inconsistent with what is allowable on the opposite side of the road (the east side) which is 1ha.

How can this subdivision blend with the rural look of existing properties opposite when the supposed rural buffer has a minimum of 15 driveway access points as well as the two internal access roads? What a joke! To maintain any semblance of the rural character the access to all properties should be from within the subdivision and egress via the two new roads only. These roadsides are currently used by equine enthusiasts. How are we supposed to ride horses around the road safely? There will be no rural look whatsoever. This will be in direct contradiction to Amendment 47.

Further, as these buffers are proposed as being 15m, I believe they should be larger, the reasons being:

1. It is my understanding from the Rolleston Structure Plan that any subdivision on the East of Dunns Crossing would be required to place a buffer of 50m – how is this consistent? it is not rural it is large residential sections.
2. There is a proposal that Dunns Crossing Road will be widened within the next 10 years as part of the Rolleston Arterial Roading and Intersection Upgrades” and it will be a collector road. This being the case the 15m buffer will be reduced. (Or let me guess, it will be widened on the East side and bring the road nearer to the existing residents properties. Hardly fair when a proposed subdivision could take this into account.)

I believe that the green belts should be consistent with the District Plan green belt, these being:

Rolleston ‘Green Belt’

A landscape buffer strip will be created between the MUL and the surrounding rural areas. The size and width would be approximately 50 metres. The width may vary to accommodate existing landscape features and linkages into the MUL. The ‘Green Belt’ concept would incorporate horse riding/cycleways and running/walking tracks, ecological habitat creation, stormwater management areas, specimen and avenue tree planting, shelterbelts for wind protection, and could integrate the road boundary reserve areas into the landscape treatment. The design of planting in the greenbelt should aim to retain distant views where possible while also providing shelter from wind. This design co-ordination between the greenbelt and adjacent roads could also include intersection design and avenue plantings that extend into the town. A strong visual sense of open rural character and amenity in the design of the buffer is important. The greenbelt concept could also mitigate potential reverse sensitivity issues of rural activities on residential living. This open space feature of the structure plan is a unifying landscape element. It would create a clear rural/urban spatial edge to Rolleston providing a distinctive identity to Rolleston, and sense of arrival at the town within the rural plains landscape.

It is interesting to note that there is one set of rules for one and one for another.

A number of other options for rural residential development within Selwyn were discussed, these being Lincoln and Prebbleton. I feel that the report (as would be expected) has a slant towards Rolleston being the only option. Prebbleton 5.28 (iii) discusses limited employment opportunities. Most people who live on lifestyle blocks of a reasonable size actually work in Christchurch central and the outlying suburban areas. Further it states that there is only a modest amount of community services and facilities including retail. This is what people usually want to get away from. If these facilities are wanted, people live in town or the suburbs. As for Section 5.30, not everyone who moves to the Selwyn District wants to live in Rolleston. Both Prebbleton and Lincoln do have opportunities for rural residential development albeit limited. There is no need therefore for this vast amount to be located solely in Rolleston.

WATER, STORMWATER AND SEWERAGE

We are concerned that any wells used on the Skellerup Block to service the new subdivision will affect our own personal well and those of neighboring properties. I opposed these wells when they were notified as a proposal due to their ability to draw vast amounts of water at great rates. Initially at the time I believed that these wells would be used for Dairy irrigation. It appears that this subdivision was already on the agenda.

Properties of the size proposed are too small for equine with at least 1ha required for the average horse. I envisage that these will become large "English" gardens with huge areas of lawn that will require a large amount of irrigation as has happened with the larger sized sections in the Kajens subdivision and the East Maddisons 5000m² sections that were also subdivided by Jens Christensen, most of which were later subdivided into "normal" residential sized sections.

Also of concern is the storm water run off into the ground which will not only include the general weather but will include the numerous car washes, pesticides, etc that will be large due to the number of dwellings. The Servicing Report points out that stormwater from the development would require treatment to remove contaminants; I do not believe swales would be effective enough. The concern here is the contaminants from the residents.

The Servicing Report 1.2.1 covers the distance to existing wells stating that there are no existing wells less than 50m from the site. A separation distance of 50m between existing private wells and discharges to ground is generally used by ECAN to trigger additional resource consent requirements. Our well is not much more than 50m from the site.

The Servicing Report 2.1 also states that until staging has been decided, full information on the capacity and connection to the Council's reticulation is unable to be provided. Depending on the capacity of the existing reticulation, it may be required to pump past the nearest existing reticulation and on to where there are larger size council pipes. As this is an unknown factor it is a risk.

VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Although the plan discusses visual effects on surrounding residents with regard to a couple of local farms, I personally will miss my views of the Southern Alps which are iconic for me and will have an adverse visual effect. Further if multiple story residences are allowed this will further impend views. Views will become less open and more residential especially with all of the roadside sections having direct access onto Dunns Crossing Road. This was seen as a constraint in the Visual Landscape Assessment in the proposed development, or attempt to screen that development would detract from the open areas (this would include the views of the Southern Alps).

Although a noise assessment has been prepared, this is for the benefit of new residents in the proposed subdivision, NOT for the effect of the subdivision on existing residents. I am concerned about the level of noise this subdivision would bring. I came to rural Rolleston for peace and quiet having moved from another rural area; this peace and tranquility is slowly but surely being eroded. There will be increased noise from the vehicles (100+ minimum as most residences own at least one vehicle), increased noise

during construction, and increased noise that comes with an increase in the number of residents (probably around another 250 min).
Indeed the valuer's report states that Dunns Crossing Road would become much busier since it would access significantly more residential land.

EARTHQUAKE HAZZARD

The Geographical Investigation Report is now flawed in respect of the Regional Earthquake Hazard in point 5.3. As can be viewed on the Christchurch Quake Map www.christchurchquakemap.co.nz developed by Paul Nicholls of the University of Canterbury, Rolleston has experience the majority of aftershocks and is obviously effected by the new fault lines.

SUMMARY

I wish for the council to maintain the rural zoning of the site – "the do nothing option"
This would retain the existing character and amenity or the area for surrounding residents who purchased there for that specific reason.

The Holmes Block that also requests the same private plan change is already opposite land that has had subdivision activities commenced, albeit that the subdivision appears to have stagnated. It is suggested that this block may be more appropriate for the type of subdivision suggested.

If the Skellerup subdivision were to occur (and this would be against my wishes), I would be more comfortable with 2ha lots and no direct access from sites onto Dunns Crossing Road.

I seek the following decision from Selwyn District Council:

That the council maintains the rural zoning of the site and subdivision of the allowable 10ha be maintained.

I DO NOT WISH to be heard in support of my submission

If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing


Signature of submitter (or person authorised to sign on their behalf) Date 24.9.2010

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