

Before the Selwyn District Council

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*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Proposed Private Plan Change 80 to the Operative District Plan

*and:* **Two Chain Road Limited**  
*Applicant*

Evidence of Dave Compton-Moen (landscape, visual amenity, and urban design)

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Dated: 5 October 2022

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## **EVIDENCE OF DAVE COMPTON-MOEN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 1 My full name is David John Compton-Moen.
- 2 I am a Director at DCM Urban Design Limited, which is a private independent consultancy that provides Landscape and Urban Design services related advice to local authorities and private clients, established in 2016.
- 3 I hold the qualifications of a Master of Urban Design (hons) from the University of Auckland, a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Hons) and a Bachelor of Resource Studies (Planning and Economics), both obtained from Lincoln University. I am a Registered Landscape Architect of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects ('NZILA'), since 2001, a Full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute, since 2007, and a member of the Urban Design Forum since 2012.
- 4 I have worked in the landscape assessment and design, urban design, and planning fields for approximately 25 years, here in New Zealand and in Hong Kong. During this time, I have worked for both local authorities and private consultancies, providing expert evidence for urban design, landscape and visual impact assessments on a wide range of major infrastructure and development proposals, including the following relevant projects:
  - 4.1 2021 – Working for Waimakariri District Council, I prepared Urban Design evidence to assist with Private Plan Change 30 – Ravenswood Key Activity Centre (KAC) which sought to rezone parts of an existing ODP to increase the amount of Business 1 land and remove a portion of Residential 6A land;
  - 4.2 2013 - I was employed by the Christchurch City Council to ground truth the operative district plan provisions relating to height, setback and landscape in the business and industrial areas to determine whether these were achieving the anticipated outcomes.
  - 4.3 2016 – Working for Christchurch City Council I provided Urban design and Landscape Visual Amenity evidence for the Christchurch Replacement Plan for the MAIL site (Industrial Park zone).
  - 4.4 2021-22 - Working for Reefville Properties I provided urban design, landscape and visual amenity evidence for an extension to the Homebase Large Format Retail Park. The Plan change (PC6) sought to rezone the site from Residential Suburban to Commercial Retail Park. Site specific bulk and

location requirements were designed for the boundary shared with the existing residential area to ensure any adverse effects in terms of visual dominance and shading could be minimised.

4.5 2020-21 – Working for several different consortiums, I have provided urban design and landscape advice for the following recent private plan changes in the Selwyn District:

- (a) Wilfield, West Melton (PC59 and PC 67);
- (b) Lincoln South, Lincoln (PC69);
- (c) Trents Road, Prebbleton (PC68);
- (d) Birchs Village, Prebbleton (PC79);
- (e) Extension to Falcons Landing, Rolleston (PC75); and
- (f) Rolleston Southeast (PC78).

4.6 Graphic material for the Selwyn Area Maps (2016);

4.7 Stage 3 Proposed District Plan Design Guides – Residential (High, Medium and Lower Density and Business Mixed Use Zones) for Queenstown Lakes District (2018-2020); and

4.8 Hutt City Council providing urban design evidence for Plan Change 43. The Plan Change proposed two new zones including a Suburban Mixed-use and Medium Density Residential as well as providing the ability for Comprehensive Residential Developments on lots larger than 2,000m<sup>2</sup> (2017-2019). The Medium Density Design Guide was a New Zealand Planning Institute Award winner in 2020.

5 I am familiar with private plan change 80 (*PC80*). I prepared the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment attached to the application.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

6 Although this is not an Environment Court hearing, I note that in preparing my evidence I have reviewed the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in Part 7 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2014. I have complied with it in preparing my evidence. I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise, except where relying on the opinion or evidence of other witnesses. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

### **SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

- 7 My evidence relates to the urban form, landscape character (including rural) and visual amenity relating to PC80.
- 8 In preparing my evidence, I have reviewed:
  - 8.1 Applications for Proposed Plan Changes;
  - 8.2 National Policy Statement on Urban Development;
  - 8.3 Our Space 2018-2048;
  - 8.4 Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Guideline – Te Tangi a te Manu, NZILA (July 2022);
  - 8.5 Operative Selwyn District Plan;
  - 8.6 Selwyn District Council Commercial Design Guide (2012);
  - 8.7 Submissions lodged in relation to the Proposed Plan Changes;
  - 8.8 The evidence of Ms Lauenstein regarding Urban Form; and
  - 8.9 The Section 42a report prepared by Ms White and supporting report on Landscape and Visual Amenity prepared by Ms Faulkner.

### **SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE**

- 9 In summary, I consider that PC80 is an appropriate change to the existing land use, which is considered to be a natural extension to the existing industrial areas in Rolleston.
- 10 The site is well served by existing transport infrastructure which also serves to provide separation from nearby sensitive activities (rural and residential). The receiving environment has a rural, semi-open character transiting to urban fringe/peri-urban. The existing environment has various structures including dwellings, auxiliary structures, power lines and exotic vegetation clustered throughout the landscape typical of rural landscapes.
- 11 The character and land use of the area will shift from open and agriculturally focused to having an industrial character. Through mitigation measures, adverse effects for the Two Chain Road frontage can be addressed.
- 12 In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural properties will experience a change in surroundings from semi-open views across the rural land to views that are more restricted and screened by

vegetation. Adjacent residential properties overlooking the rezoned area will have a mix of partial and screened views of the development. Changes experienced by these residents is considered Low given boundary treatment, the existing width of Two Chain Road and the level of surrounding development which already exists.

- 13 I consider the following aspects to be the main urban design, landscape and visual amenity issues and which I have addressed below:

13.1 Existing Character;

13.2 Effects on Landscape Character (including Rural Character);

13.3 Urban Form and Amenity Values;

13.4 Visual Amenity; and

13.5 Edge Treatments / Mitigation Measures.

#### **EXISTING CHARACTER**

- 14 The PC80 site is bound by State Highway 1 to the south and Two Chain Road to the north. To the east of the site lies the existing boundary of the Business 2A zone which is characterised by large warehouse buildings and large areas of hardstand. To the south of the proposed site and State Highway 1 lies the northern boundary of Rolleston's residential living. The proposed site is located on relatively flat topography and has a typical rural character common throughout the Canterbury Plains. The proposed site contains rural residential properties, established shelterbelts and auxiliary structures associated with rural living. Overall, the topographical attributes of the receiving environment are low with no defining features.
- 15 Vegetation types in the receiving environment are predominantly exotic species, with small amounts of native plants around residential dwellings. Vegetation is used predominantly for shelter belts running along paddock boundaries and around dwellings to block prevailing winds, to provide privacy and to delineate boundaries. Common species include Pine, Macrocarpa and Eucalyptus varying in height between 7 – 20m. The northern boundary of the proposed Plan Change area, along Two Chain Road, is notable for the large pine and eucalyptus trees some of which are in excess of 20m in height. There are large amounts of vegetation towards the eastern and southern boundaries as well, along with a dense area of pine trees in the northwest corner of the proposed site. Majority of the proposed site is open grass paddocks, interrupted by clusters of vegetation occasionally. Overall, the

vegetation cover in the area has a low sensitivity to change, given the high level of fast growing introduced exotic species.

- 16 In terms of sensory qualities, the flat open geometric fields are back dropped by the Southern Alps to the west and the Port Hills to the east. Expansive views are possible intermittently, being screened by existing development and clustered vegetation such as shelterbelts. The infrastructure and shelter belts, though disrupting the continual views, have become integral to the rural aesthetic and identity of the area. The natural characteristic of the environment is considered to be modified, with a rural character as opposed to a natural character. The land surrounding the proposed site mirrors the overall character of the region.
- 17 In terms of built form, dwellings and farm structures are common throughout the area. The scale, character, form, and materiality of these structures vary throughout the receiving environment. Dwellings to the north have a typical rural character and are separate by large open fields and clusters of vegetation. These dwellings have an irregular bulk and location and are often supported by auxiliary structure such as sheds. Development to the west includes Rolleston Prison, and development to the east includes Rolleston industrial zone which is characterised by a mix of medium and large-scale warehouse buildings, service yards and large areas of hardstand. The proposed Plan Change site is approximately 900m to the north of the Rolleston railway station.
- 18 Overall, the receiving environment has a rural, semi-open character transiting to urban fringe/peri-urban. The existing environment has various structures including dwellings, auxiliary structures, power lines and exotic vegetation clustered throughout the landscape typical of rural landscapes.

#### **EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE (INCLUDING RURAL CHARACTER) CHARACTER**

- 19 In terms of urban character, the Plan Change will be viewed as an extension of the Izone and IPort business zones to the east. The state highway and rail-line to the south along with the existing bund plus landscape treatment along the northern edge of existing residential development means the proposed site will not have an effect on the residential character of Rolleston to the south.
- 20 The landscape character of the proposed area and to the west is a mix of semi-open, rural land used principally for agricultural and institutional purposes and smaller compartmentalised lots. The proposed development will modify the landscape from one that is semi-open and agricultural in character to one that is characterised by large scale industrial warehouse buildings, large areas of hardstand and landscape planting. Aspects of rural character can

and will be maintained through the retention of existing vegetation along the Two Chain Road frontage while within the site the character will be consistent with that of the IPort or Izone areas. From within the site and along Two Chain Road and State Highway 1 the rezoned area will be viewed as an extension of the business areas to the east. For the rural properties on Two Chain Road, the rural character of the area will change with the Magnitude of Change considered to be Low-Moderate. This reflects the activities that are possible with the Rural zone noting that large scale buildings up to 12m in height are contemplated for that zone (subject to meeting site coverage and building setback limits). Existing planting along Two Chain Road will be retained, and supplemented, and with the intention to limit access onto Two Chain Road, it is possible for activities within the site to be screened.

- 21 In terms of natural character, the area is already highly modified, having been cleared for agricultural and institutional use. This is reflective in the lack of native vegetation present in the wider area. Existing amenity of the natural landscape is to be enhanced and retained through the planting and development of a green corridor along Two Chain Road bounding the proposal.
- 22 Overall, the character and land use of the proposed Plan Change area will shift from open and agriculturally focused to having an industrial character. Through mitigation measures, adverse effects for the Two Chain Road frontage can be addressed.

### **URBAN FORM AND AMENITY VALUES**

- 23 While the proposed Plan Change is outside of the Rolleston Structure Plan (2009)<sup>1</sup>, the rezoning of the Two Chain Road site to General Industrial would contribute to a well-functioning urban environment, as required by Policy 8 of the National Policy Statement: Urban Development<sup>2</sup>. Rolleston's residential capacity has grown considerably over the past 20 years, and it is important that its supporting business areas grow correspondently to provide employment and wealth opportunities. The position of the proposed Plan Change area is important, noting the site will be viewed as an extension of the existing business zones and physically separated from residential and rural areas.
- 24 The PC80 area is considered to naturally extend existing industrial development at Rolleston, connecting with IPort and IZone. At the edge of the existing industrial zone, the continuation of development at a similar density is likely to be seen as an anticipated natural extension when compared to the broader context

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/14399/090923-RollestonStructurePlanMap.pdf](https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/14399/090923-RollestonStructurePlanMap.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Files/AA-Gazetted-NPSUD-17.07.2020-pdf.pdf>

and is not an isolated or separate element. While the zone change will result in a built form which is greater than the existing Inner Plains land use, the proposed Plan Change retains similar levels of density when compared to adjoining development to the east. The change to a Business 2A zoning is considered appropriate for its setting on the edge of the township when considering the significant addition to development capacity that contributes to well-functioning urban environments, with a consolidated urban form.

- 25 The site's connection to existing commercial areas is important from an urban form and connectivity perspective. The possibility of removing the eastern section of the site due to versatile soils is considered a negative outcome from an urban design perspective, creating a break between areas. However, I agree with Ms Lauenstein that physical connectivity (i.e. road and pedestrian/cycle links) will be maintained regardless of the zoning of the versatile soils. I consider that the exclusion of the versatile soil area from the industrial rezoning, whilst not ideal, nevertheless would not render industrial zoning across the remainder of the site inappropriate from an urban form and landscape perspective.
- 26 The site is well serviced by road and rail with a high level of connectivity and accessibility with the ability for rail lines to be extended into the site if desired. It is considered that the Plan Change area is an in-sequence development adding to the industrial development capacity of Rolleston.
- 27 The PC80 site adjoins existing business development to the east and intends to extend and achieve a similar urban density to that existing business zones. The site is bounded by major infrastructure (SH1 and the rail line) on two sides, a correctional institution on one side and rural land on the fourth. The proposal is consistent with the preferred growth direction of Rolleston, with industrial development restricted to the north of SH1 and residential development to the south. Overall Rolleston's development boundary will be more defined with the Two Chain Road Plan Change in place, with a strong built edge on either side of SH1. The site benefits from being part of Rolleston's urban form, but is also separated from residential areas enough to negate any potential boundary issues.
- 28 PC80 is designed to connect with the existing main south rail line and State Highway 1 to utilise and improve existing infrastructure. The proposed Plan Change is co-ordinated so as to maximise the area's ability to link with the main rail network, allowing freight to be placed directly onto trains for distribution. Being at the rail intersection of the main south line and the west coast line, the site has the ability to create a rail hub serving and supporting business development.



- 29 PC80 proposes a Business zoning to provide additional land for the development of business and industrial activities to support the growing residential population in Rolleston. Rolleston's residential population has grown significantly in the past 20 years with the need for this growth to be balanced with opportunity to allow for a variety of different activities while maintaining the character and amenity values of adjoining areas.
- 30 PC80 is physically separated from residential areas by the state highway and rail corridor while adjoining the existing Business zone. Landscape treatments are proposed along Two Chain Road to ensure existing levels of amenity and character are maintained and avoid potential 'reverse sensitivity' effects. The site is large enough to provide sufficient space for large footprint buildings without creating visual dominance or shading issues.
- 31 The greatest boundary issues are considered to be those along Two Chain Road where additional Landscape mitigation measures are recommended and outlined below. For other boundaries, the Landscape requirements outlined in the District Plan are considered sufficient.

#### **VISUAL AMENITY EFFECTS**

- 32 In terms of visual effects, the proposed development is not seen to generate unexpected levels of effects given the scale of the proposal and the surrounding context.
- 33 In terms of residential properties adjacent to the PC80 site, the effects after mitigation are considered to be either Less than minor or Minor. Most properties are set back from the road boundary and have established vegetation and additional structures located between the property boundary and the main dwelling. Existing planting along Two Chain Road is proposed to be retained, and supplemented where required to retain a substantial screen along this road frontage. In determining the magnitude of change, activities which are possible in the Rural zone were taken into account to form the 'permitted baseline'.
- 34 The plan change area is separated from the southern, predominantly residential, section of Rolleston by the rail corridor and the state highway, a combined width of approximately 60m, and in many places a landscape bund. The majority of properties face away from the state highway with no physical access or connections. There are some residential properties though that do directly access the state highway or have views to the north. For residents and visitors at Rolleston Highway Motel, effects are considered Less than Minor. The complex is a two-storey motel with parking located off Chaucer Street and the units having an outlook over SH1. Individuals staying in these units are likely to be

temporary visitors who chose the location due to its proximity to a more built-up area of Rolleston. For the visitors and for residential properties fronting the state highway, the effects on these properties are anticipated to be Less than Minor due to the existing outlook being SH1 and current industrial development.

- 35 For motorists, views of the proposed site are generally open from the surrounding roads. Given the proposed mitigation measures, and the character of the receiving environment, it is considered that the magnitude of change will be Low or Very Low when compared with activities which are permitted as of right in the Inner Plains Rural zone.

### **EDGE TREATMENTS / MITIGATION MEASURES**

- 36 It is proposed that landscape rules outlined in the Operative District Plan will be adopted, as well as the additional mitigation measures outlined below:

- 36.1 The number of public roads off Two Chain Road is limited to 3.
- 36.2 A shared pedestrian cycle path is formed along the Two Chain Road and Walkers Road frontage to provide connectivity.
- 36.3 A 15m wide landscape strip is created along the Two Chain Road frontage, which consists of:
- (a) A landscape strip of 5m width incorporating the retention and supplementation of existing shelterbelts (except where access is required) within 3m of the road boundary. Where existing gaps occurs, tree species of either *Cupressus macrocarpa*, Leyland cypress or *Pinus radiata* (minimum 600mm high at the time of planting) are to be planted at 3.0m centres.
  - (b) Provision for maintenance access on the southern side of the retained shelter belts.
  - (c) Construction of a 2.5m high earth bund with a northern slope of 1:3. The southern slope may be between 1:1 and 1:4.
  - (d) Planting of two rows of native plants on the upper section of the northern slope, and the top, of the earth bund. The roads shall be 2m apart, with plants at 1.5m centres and alternative offsets to create a dense native belt of 3-5m in height. The plant species shall be selected from *Kunzea eriodes*, *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Pittosporum eugenioides*, *Phormium tenax*,

and *Pseudopanax arboreus*. The plants are to be 0.5L pots with a minimum height of 300mm at the time of planting.

- 36.4 No mitigation measures are considered necessary on other boundaries given the character of the receiving environment and lack of any visual or landscape effects.

## **RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS**

- 37 In response to the submission from Ara Poutama Aotearoa (the Department of Corrections), who had concerns regarding the character, scale, and intensity of activities relating to amenity effects, while the Business 2A zone does allow more intensive activities, I consider the current buffer between the Plan Change area and the prison buildings combined with the implementation of the 3m wide landscape strip along Walkers Road to be sufficient to address visual amenity concerns. Road improvements to Walkers Road are also likely to change the current outlook.
- 38 I have read submissions PC80-0003, 80-0008 and 80-0010 which have been prepared by residents on the northern side of Two Chain Road directly opposite the Plan Change. The relevant concerns to my area of expertise are the undesirable visual impact of buildings, the increase visual impact of traffic and the insufficient buffer proposed. In response, the landscape treatment along Two Chain Road has been increased to 15m with additional planting and the construction of a 2.5m high bund proposed. I consider that this planting combined with the bund are sufficient to mitigate potential adverse visual effects, combined with the limiting of access points on to the road. The combination will result in any development within the Plan Change site having an orientation away from Two Chain Road, in most cases internally into the site. I do not consider that a building setback is necessary or beneficial with the proposed landscape treatment.
- 39 The controls proposed preventing individual lot access onto Two Chain Road is considered an important and effective method to minimise effects on existing rural properties to the north.

## **RESPONSE TO OFFICER'S REPORT**

- 40 I have read the S42A report and supporting evidence of Ms Faulkner regarding landscape and amenity issues. We are largely in agreement that the Plan Change can be successfully integrated into Rolleston's existing town/rural interface, but differ in terms of some minor elements.
- 41 I acknowledge that the scale and intensity of built development will be higher than a permitted rural development but want to highlight

that rural activities are not limited to open paddocks used for grazing or crops. Rural activities can also include buildings, storage sheds, grain silos, and milking yards.

- 42 Following reading the submissions and discussions with Ms Faulkner regarding the treatment of the landscape strip along Two Chain Road, additional measures have been added as outlined above. We are still in disagreement over some minor details, however, including the number of access points onto Two Chain Road. I consider that 3 vehicle entry/exit points over an approximately 2km length (rather than only 1) not to be excessive with the limiting of access from individual lots directly onto Two Chain Road to be the most effective measure to ensure a continuous landscape strip can be established along this frontage.
- 43 We are in agreement that the proposed 3m wide landscape treatment along Walkers Road is sufficient, along with limiting access from PC80 into individual lots north of the proposed primary road intersection, while reduce any potential adverse effects on amenity to acceptable.
- 44 I do not consider it necessary to retain existing trees at the far eastern end of the Plan Change area as I do not consider this is addressing any adverse amenity effects. Views from the east are experienced in context with the existing IZone development and any future development will be viewed as a continuation.
- 45 I do not consider it necessary to place any additional landscape treatments to the southern boundary adjoining the railway. In future the railway may become an integral part of the functionality of PC80, allowing freight and goods to be moved by rail as opposed to by trucks, with a high level of connectivity between the two sites. I do not consider the state highway to be a sensitive environment but one which is characterised by heavy vehicles and road infrastructure. Residential areas to the south of the state highway largely turn their back on the road corridor with only a few properties fronting the road.
- 46 With future upgrades to the state highway, including the roundabout at Walkers/Dunns Crossing Road and the overbridge at Rolleston Drive/Hoskyns Road, the unofficial gateways into Rolleston will be at Dunns Crossing/Walkers in the west and Weedons Road in the east with the state highway section in between being a high-speed traffic corridor with limited access. PC80 is separated from the state highway by the rail corridor and will be viewed as an extension of the IPort and Izone areas with a similar character.

## CONCLUSION

- 47 In terms of urban design and form considerations, the Plan Change of the Two Chain Road site to Business 2A would add significant development capacity for Rolleston to ensure it maintains a well-functioning urban environment, as per Policy 8 of the National Policy Statement: Urban Development. Rolleston's residential capacity has grown considerably over the past 20 years, and it is important that its supporting business areas grow correspondently to provide employment and wealth opportunities. The position of the proposed Plan Change area is important, noting the site will be viewed as an extension of the existing business zones and physically separated from residential and rural areas.
- 48 The proposed Plan Change meets the Objectives and Policies of the Operative District Plan in regard to the Township Volume. The site is highly connected and accessible for all modes of transport, and with the ability for the rail network connectivity to be improved.
- 49 In terms of landscape character and values of the area, subject to the mitigation measures proposed, the proposal will result in a Low-moderate magnitude of change on the existing rural landscape character and associated values. The existing character of the Two Chain Road site is modified and contains no natural features of note. The partially open character of the site will change to a character which is more industrial and compartmentalised, which will be partially screened through the existing vegetation, but will be viewed as an extension to the existing industrial area.
- 50 In terms of visual amenity, the adjacent rural properties will experience a change in surroundings from semi-open views across the rural land to views that are more restricted and screened by vegetation. Adjacent residential properties overlooking the proposed Plan Change area will have a mix of partial and screened views of the development. Changes experienced by these residents is considered Low given the proposed edge/boundary treatments, existing width of Two Chain Road and the level of surrounding development which already exists.

Dated: 5 October 2022

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Dave Compton-Moen