

MEMORANDUM

Date: 19 August 2022

From: Dr Greg Burrell (Instream Consulting)

To: Liz White (Liz White Planning)

Subject: Updated Review of Ecological Assessment for PC80 Rolleston

1. INTRODUCTION

Private plan change application 80 (PC80) to Selwyn District Council (SDC) involves a proposal to rezone approximately 98 hectares of rural land in Rolleston to Business 2A Zone. This memorandum reviews ecological aspects of PC80 and it has been prepared to support the council's S42A report. This memorandum updates an earlier report¹, which reviewed the original ecology assessment and recommended ecological sampling in relation to potential wetlands on site.

In preparing this memorandum, I have reviewed the following documents provided by the applicant:

- Novogroup (2022). Request for change to the Selwyn District Plan, prepared for Two Chain Road Limited, 7–183 Two Chain Road, Rolleston. February 2022. ['the updated application'].
- Attachment 2 to the updated application:
 - Proposed outline development plan ['the ODP']
- Appendix E to the updated application:
 - Taylor, M. (2022). Private plan change 80 Rolleston – Response to s92 – Request for further information, Two Chain Road development. Memorandum to Bruce van Duyn of Two Chain Road Ltd, from Aquatic Ecology Ltd, dated 11 February 2022.
- Appendix G to the original application (October 2021):
 - Taylor, M. (2021). Ecological values in the Two-Chain Road Block (Two Chain Road Ltd.). Letter to Bruce van Duyn at the Carter Group, from Aquatic Ecology Ltd, dated 17 September 2021.

I am familiar with the location, having previously undertaken fish sampling and fish salvage at multiple locations along the Paparua Water Race network, including sites near Rolleston. I have also provided ecology advice to SDC in relation to nearby plan change applications PC73, PC81, and PC82. I have no conflict of interest with this application.

¹ Burrell, G. 2020. Review of ecological assessment for PC80 Rolleston. Memorandum from Greg Burrell of Instream Consulting to Liz White, 5 November 2020.

2. ECOLOGY REPORT REVIEW

The October 2021 ecology report assessed ecological values based on a desktop review of existing information and a walkover site visit. In response to a S92 request for further information, the February 2022 ecology assessment was based on more detailed site investigations. In my opinion, the combination of desktop and field-based assessment was appropriate for the highly modified, agricultural setting, where ecological values are anticipated to be low.

The October 2021 ecology report identified a water race (part of the Paparua race network) flowing across the southwestern end of the PC80 block. The report considered the water race may support native eels and upland bullies, which are commonly found in similar habitats. The report recommended against piping the waterway and concluded that negative ecological effects of land development will be low, assuming 10 m waterbody setback rules are applied. I note that the updated ODP shows the water race will be retained and the updated application states that 10 m setbacks will be applied to the water race. Overall, I agree with the ecology report conclusions and consider the proposed approach to managing the water race will avoid adverse effects on its ecological values.

The February 2022 ecology report summarised field investigations of five potential wetland areas, previously identified as having damp ground or surface water. The field assessment used a combination of plant species cover, soil conditions, and hydrology to determine whether each area was a wetland. I consider the mixture of qualitative and semi-quantitative methods used were appropriate for the modified environment. The report concluded that three of the areas do not meet the definition of a wetland under the RMA, one area does meet the definition, and the other area was uncertain, due to it being lined with plastic. The updated ODP shows the latter two areas as 'wet area[s]' for further investigation at the time of subdivision. I agree with the ecological assessment and agree with the proposed approach to undertake further ecological investigations at a later point.

In summary, I consider that the applicant's ecology assessment methods are appropriate, I agree with their assessment that the site likely supports low ecological values, and I consider their proposed approach to managing ecological effects as part of the proposed land zoning change is appropriate.