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**To:** Selwyn District Council  
**From:** Hugh Nicholson, Urban Designer  
**Date:** 30 November 2022  
**Re:** DPR-0162 Doyleston Rezoning Request for Proposed Selwyn District Plan  
Urban Design and Landscape Review

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Submission 00162 to the Proposed Selwyn District Plan (PSDP) seeks to rezone 8.85 ha of land on the southern boundary of the Doyleston Township fronting Leeston and Drain Roads. The site is currently zoned for rural uses (GRUZ) and is proposed to be rezoned to Low Density Residential (LLRZ) in accordance with a proposed Outline Development Plan (ODP).
- 1.2 I have been asked by the Selwyn District Council to carry out a peer review of the expert evidence relevant to urban design or landscape matters. As part of the peer review, I have assessed the appropriateness of the proposed rezoning against the relevant strategic directions in overarching documents. I have identified any information gaps in the relevant expert evidence, and where appropriate recommended changes to proposed ODPs in order to better achieve the desired strategic directions.
- 1.3 My assessment does not consider the urban form implications for Greater Christchurch.

## 2.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 2.1 In my peer review I have drawn strategic directions on good urban form from three sources, the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (**NPSUD**), the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (**CRPS**) and the proposed Selwyn District Plan (**proposed SDP**), all of which provide overarching guidance.

- 2.2 The **NPSUD** seeks to provide “*well-functioning urban environments*”<sup>1</sup> that enable more people to live near a centre or employment opportunities, and which are well serviced by public transport<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.3 In particular the **NPSUD** promotes urban environments that provide good accessibility between housing, jobs, community services, and natural and open spaces, support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and are resilient to the likely effects of climate change<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4 The **CRPS** seeks to manage the urban form and settlement pattern of the wider Canterbury region through concentrating or attaching urban growth to existing settlements, and promoting a coordinated pattern of development<sup>4</sup>.
- 2.5 The objectives of the **CRPS** also encourage high quality urban design that maintains and enhances amenity values<sup>5</sup>, and suggests territorial authorities give effect to the *NZ Urban Design Protocol 2005*. The Protocol refer to the need for well-integrated places that have high-quality connections including walking, cycling and public transport, and that are environmentally sustainable<sup>6</sup>
- 2.6 The **CRPS** also seeks developments that promote a diversity of residential, employment and recreational choices, and maintain or enhance amenity values, character and the quality of the environment.<sup>7</sup>
- 2.7 The strategic directions of the **proposed SDP** seek that “*Urban growth is located only in or around existing townships and in a compact and sustainable form that aligns with its anticipated role*”<sup>8</sup>.
- 2.8 The urban growth policies in the **proposed SDP** seek to establish high-quality urban environments by “*maintaining the amenity values and character anticipated within each township*” and “*preserving the rural outlook... through appropriate landscape mitigation... or development controls at the interface*” with rural environments<sup>9</sup>.
- 2.9 The urban growth policies in the **proposed SDP** also direct that the zoning of land demonstrates how it will integrate with existing urban environments including “*prioritising accessibility and connectivity between the land and*

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<sup>1</sup> National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020, Objective 1, p.10

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, Objective 3, p.10

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, Policy 1, p.10-11

<sup>4</sup> Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013, Policy 5.3.1, Regional Growth (Wider Region), (1).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, Policy 5.3.1, Regional Growth (Wider Region), (5)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, Policy 5.3.1 Territorial Authorities: Methods (3)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, Policy 5.3.3 Management of Development (Wider Region) (1 & 2)

<sup>8</sup> SD-UFD-01 Compact and Sustainable Township Network

<sup>9</sup> UG-P10 Urban Form

*adjoining neighbourhoods, commercial centres, ...reserves, and community facilities, including education... and health services”, and “requiring safe, attractive and convenient transport infrastructure that promotes walking, cycling, and access to public transport and public transport facilities to encourage energy efficiency and improve peoples' health and wellbeing”<sup>10</sup>.*

- 2.10 The residential objectives in the **proposed SDP** direct that a “*range of housing typologies and densities are provided*”<sup>11</sup> and that “*increased densities occur in close proximity*” to activity centres, public transport and open spaces<sup>12</sup>. They also require that “*residents have access to a range of community, recreation, education, health, and corrections activities and facilities that support... the residential amenity*”<sup>13</sup>.
- 2.11 The **Ellesmere Area Plan 2031** (adopted in 2016) expected further residential growth in Doyleston but noted there were a number of significant issues to be addressed in order to accommodate substantial growth<sup>14</sup>. This site is one of three Preferred Future Development Sites identified in the Plan<sup>15</sup>.
- 2.12 Drawing on the strategic directions outlined above I have reviewed the urban form proposed in DPR-0162 in terms of:
- a. the extent to which it creates a consolidated and contiguous urban form, and the spatial distribution of densities;
  - b. the level of connectivity with the existing urban environment;
  - c. the accessibility to a range of services using a range of travel modes including walking, cycling and public transport;
  - d. The residential amenity values and character, and the treatment of the urban / rural interface.

### 3.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

- 3.1 The site is rural land fronting Leeston and Drain Roads with open drains on both of these boundaries. The site is bordered by residential land (LRZ) to the north, and industrial land to the north-east. There is rural land to the south and south-east and a reserve, Osborne Park, to the north-west.

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<sup>10</sup> UG-P12 Urban Form

<sup>11</sup> RESZ-03 Residential Objectives

<sup>12</sup> RESZ-04 Residential Objectives

<sup>13</sup> RESZ-07 Residential Objectives

<sup>14</sup> Ellesmere Area Plan 2031, Selwyn District Council, page 36

<sup>15</sup> Ellesmere Area Plan 2031, Selwyn District Council, page 39

- 3.2 There are no pedestrian or cycle facilities along the adjacent section of Drain Road. There is a shared pedestrian / cycle path along Leeston Road.



Figure 1: The site is marked DOY2 on Doyleston Opportunities and Issues Map from *Ellesmere Plan 2031*

## 4.0 COMPACT URBAN FORM

- 4.1 Doyleston is a low-density rural town largely centred on three blocks between Drain Road and Petticoat Lane. There is a service station / dairy and a wood turning workshop on Leeston Road, an engineering workshop on Queen Street, and a seed merchant on Railway Terrace.
- 4.2 The site sits to the south of the existing village and fills in the gap between Osborne Park and the triangle of industrial land on the southern side of Drain Road.
- 4.3 The site is identified in the Ellesmere Plan 2031 as a Preferred Future Development Area, and in my opinion would contribute to a consolidated and compact urban form for Doyleston. It is close to the symbolic centre of Doyleston at the intersection of Leeston, Drain and Beethams Roads, and social activities at Osborne Park and the service station / dairy on Leeston Road.

- 4.4 A residential development would potentially provide residential edges on the southern side of Drain Road and the eastern edge of Osborne Park enhancing the village character and providing improved passive surveillance.



Figure 2: Wide-angle photo of the site from the Osborne Park boundary

- 4.5 I consider that LRZ is an appropriate density given the rural character of the Doyleston, and the distance from schools, shopping and employment centres.

## 5.0 CONNECTIVITY

- 5.1 Connectivity refers to creating streets that are joined together in township-wide networks that provide more choices, and support increased resilience and safer places<sup>16</sup>. Well-connected street networks support walking and cycling.
- 5.2 The proposed ODP provides for a single street connection opposite Queens Street and three recreational (walking / cycling) connections, one at the western corner onto Osborne Park and two onto the shared pedestrian cycle path along Leeston Road. The two recreational connections onto Leeston Road are separated from the residential area by the stormwater facilities, and the recreational connection onto Osborne Park is at the far end of the park away from the majority of the recreational activities.
- 5.3 In my opinion the connectivity of the proposed ODP is *low*. The level of connectivity could be improved to *moderate-high* by changes to the ODP including:

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<sup>16</sup> *People Places Spaces: A design guide for urban New Zealand*, Ministry for the Environment, 2002, p.32

- a. Providing a second street connection with a shared pedestrian/ cycle path onto Leeston Road along the south-eastern boundary;
- b. Providing a second connection to Osborne Park adjacent to the pump track / playground;
- c. Providing a shared pedestrian / cycle path along the Drain Road frontage.

## 6.0 ACCESSIBILITY

- 6.1 Accessibility relates to providing access to public services and facilities particularly within easily walkable or cyclable distances<sup>17</sup>. The New Zealand Household Travel Survey (NZHTS) found that the average walking trip was 1.0km, and the average cycle trip distance was 4.0km<sup>18</sup>.
- 6.2 The houses on the proposed site would be within the average walking and cycle trip distances of the service station / dairy and Osborne Park. There is a shared pedestrian / cycle path along the south-eastern boundary of the site.
- 6.3 As with many small rural-service towns, the majority of employment and supermarket / shopping trips are likely to involve the use of cars. There are no public transport services to Doyleston.
- 6.4 Recognising the rural-service function of Doyleston, I consider that the proposed site would have a *moderate-high* level of accessibility reflecting the good access to services within the village balanced against a lack of public transport and the need to drive for employment and shopping opportunities.

## 7.0 RESIDENTIAL AMENITY AND CHARACTER

- 7.1 The proposed site has a number of interfaces which would require different treatments. These are addressed in the urban design report but are not included in the ODP. Key elements of these treatments should be included either graphically or as part of the narrative as part of the ODP.
- 7.2 The proposed multi-functional stormwater and reserve facilities would provide a high level of residential amenity and landscape character.

<sup>17</sup> *New Zealand Urban Design Protocol*, Ministry for the Environment, 2005, p.21

<sup>18</sup> New Zealand Household Travel Survey, Ministry of Transport, 2015-2018, <https://www.transport.govt.nz/statistics-and-insights/household-travel/>

## 8.0 RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE ODP

- 8.1 If the rezoning request is approved I recommend that the following changes are made to the ODP:
- a. That a second street connection with a shared pedestrian/ cycle path is provided onto Leeston Road on the south-eastern boundary of the site;
  - b. That a second pedestrian / cycle connection to Osborne Park is provided adjacent to the pump track / playground;
  - c. That a shared pedestrian / cycle path is provided along the Drain Road frontage;
  - d. That the properties along Drain Road are required to provide vehicle or pedestrian accessways and low front fences properties along to address Drain Road;
  - e. That open-style reserve fencing is specified along the Leeston Road boundary;
  - f. That visually-permeable fencing with gates for pedestrian access is specified along the Osborne Reserve boundary, and the macrocarpa hedge is replaced with strip of native planting in consultation with the Council and the local community;
  - g. That acoustic fencing and a landscape strip with native planting is specified along the boundary with the industrial zone in the north-eastern corner to mitigate against potential adverse effects from the industrial activities;
  - h. That a rural edge treatment with open rural fencing and an appropriate setback with native tree planting is specified along the south-western boundary.

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In my opinion the proposed rezoning would contribute to a compact and consolidated urban form for Doyleston, and with the recommended changes to the ODP would have *moderate-high* levels of connectivity and accessibility. I consider that with the recommended changes the ODP would provide for a high level of residential amenity and landscape character.

Hugh Nicholson

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