

Landscape Assessment Report

Proposed Plan Change
Edwards Road, Selwyn

10 June 2025



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

TAG Group have purchased eight titles of land southwest of Rolleston township (the Site), comprising a nearly 66ha contiguous block, for the purpose of creating a residential development. It sits immediately east of Edwards Road and immediately north of Selwyn Road (refer to GA, p03). The Site comprises current agricultural land and three rural residential blocks at the south end that front Selwyn Road.

RMM Landscape Architects have been asked to prepare an Outline Development Plan (**ODP**) and an Urban Design Assessment (**UDA**) for that ODP. In addition, RMM have also been asked to provide a separate Landscape Assessment Report that assesses the landscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed plan change (**PPC**). This report looks at the broader landscape context as well as the Site itself and effects on the immediate surrounds.

This Landscape Report is to be read in conjunction with the:

- Edwards Road Plan Change Urban Design Assessment, RMM, 10 June 2025; and
- Edwards Road Plan Change Graphic Attachment (GA), RMM, 10 June 2025.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology and terminology used in this report has been informed by the Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines¹ (**TTatM Guidelines**).

The Site and its surrounds were visited on 2 April and 14 May 2025. These site visits were undertaken to assist in understanding the landscape character and values within the receiving environment and assessing the proposal's actual and potential landscape and visual effects.

The scope of this LAR is tailored to the nature of the project and its landscape context, including relevant policy documents and provisions in the Partially Operative Selwyn District Plan (**District Plan**).

The table below (**Figure 1**) outlines the rating scales that are used in this report and a comparative scale between the seven-point scale and the various RMA effects 'tests'.

Very Low	Low	Low - Moderate	Moderate	Moderate - High	High	Very High
Less than Minor		Minor	More than Minor		Significant	

Figure 1. The seven-point landscape and visual effects rating scale and a comparative scale of degree of effects.²

¹ 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines'. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022.

² *ibid* Para 6.39, page 151.

2 Relevant Policy Provisions

2.1 Partially Operative Selwyn District Plan

The key provisions within the District Plan that give effect to the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**) and the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2010 (**CRPS**) are set out under the Strategic Directions Chapter and are reinforced by the Natural Character and Urban Growth Chapters.

The Strategic Direction, and Natural Features and Landscapes Chapters set out the high-level objectives that are relevant to an assessment of landscape and visual effects. There is a separate urban design assessment that has been undertaken, that assesses the urban design aspects of the PPC.

The relevant landscape related objectives and policies are outlined below, and these have been taken into consideration in the body of the assessment report.

Strategic Direction - District Identity Objectives

Our Environment

SD-DI-04 - Places, landscapes, features, and indigenous biodiversity, which make an important contribution to Selwyn's environment, cultural heritage, or are of spiritual importance to Ngāi Tahu, are identified, recognised for their values, and protected for future generations.

Thriving Rural Communities

SD-DI-06 - Outside of defined urban growth areas, Selwyn's highly productive land is retained for rural production activities and rural communities retain their rural character.

Strategic Direction - Urban Form and Development Objectives

Compact and Sustainable Township Network

SD-UFD-02 - Urban growth is located:

2. Inside Greater Christchurch only within existing urban areas, Greenfield Priority Areas, or Future Development Areas identified in the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement; unless adding significantly to development capacity and contributing to well-functioning urban environments.

Strategic Direction - Urban Growth Objectives and Policies

UG-01 - Urban growth is provided for in a strategic manner that:

1. achieves attractive, pleasant, high quality, and resilient urban environments.
2. achieves the built form, amenity values, and character anticipated within each residential, kainga nohoanga, or business area;
6. integrates with existing residential neighbourhoods, commercial centres, industrial hubs, inland ports, or knowledge areas;
10. does not compromise or foreclose the use of highly productive land for rural production.

General District Wide Matters - Natural Features and Landscapes Objectives

NFL-01 - The outstanding natural features and landscapes of Selwyn are protected from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.

NFL-02 - The values of the visual amenity landscapes of Selwyn are maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

3 Landscape Description

3.1 Existing Landscape Character and Amenity

The Site forms part of the much larger Canterbury Plains landscape. These outwash plains are a contiguous landscape system of generally alluvial soils bisected by large and smaller rivers draining from the Southern Alps towards the coast to the east. This provides an even and relatively flat landscape on which agricultural land use activities dominate.

There is very little natural vegetation and hence very little in the way of remaining ecosystems left on the Plains. The visual landscape character is dominated by the enclosure or openness that is afforded by rural shelterbelts or lack of them. Where there are shelterbelts occurring along road boundaries and within properties, the visual outlook is restricted to these long, linear lines of structural vegetation or views across monocultural paddocks to shelterbelts.

Where there is openness, this generally provides wider views to the Southern Alps to the west and to the Port Hills / Banks Peninsula to the east over a broader vista of flat, open paddocks.

Selwyn District is the fastest growing district in Canterbury which has led to the rapid outward expansion of a number of townships including Rolleston, Lincoln, and Prebbleton. This rapid urban growth is changing the character of the surrounding rural area, just outside Christchurch from being visually dominated by farming activities to a more peri-urban character. This rapid urban expansion has resulted in an associated rapid change to what has been the predominant rural character of the Plains.

Currently the township of Rolleston has expanded west to Dunns Crossing Road, where residential development is either completed or under construction, at a distance of approximately 415 metres from the southern part of the Site (Refer to GA, p06). Notably, this residential development that fronts Selwyn Road has a generic residential aesthetic consisting of a sealed footpath, grass verges and houses setback 4 – 5m from the boundary line.

In the intervening space, between the Site and Dunns Crossing Road all along the eastern and northern boundaries of the site, further residential development has been approved via a plan change to create DEV – R07 (Refer to GA, p06). This means that the baseline / anticipated environment includes three quarters of this block of land being residential in character and Edwards and Selwyn Roads forming a logical southwest boundary to Rolleston township. RMM have been informed that the extent of the DEV – R07 plan change was based on land ownership and cadastral boundaries, i.e. there was no landscape reasoning on why this development did not include the Site. Noting that the DEV – R07 ODP future proofs seven internal road connections into the Site.

For the purpose of further describing the landscape context of the receiving environment³, a radius of approximately 4kms out from the centre of the site has been used. This reaches north to State Highway 1 (SH1), east towards the eastern side of the Rolleston township and to the west and south, takes in a representative section of the rural Canterbury Plains.

³ www.qualityplanning.org.nz - The receiving environment is the environment upon which a proposed activity might have effects.

3.1.1 Landform

The context for the Site is part of the wider Canterbury Plains landscape system reflecting the outwash from the Southern Alps via the major rivers. The receiving environment is part of a broad outwash plain lying between the Selwyn River and the abandoned flow path of the Waimakariri River which historically ran south of Banks Peninsula. The area generally slopes evenly at approximately 0.5% down towards Lake Ellesmere (Te Waihora) and due to its expansiveness is perceived as flat land.

3.1.2 Landcover and Land Use

As described above the land cover of the receiving environment is currently characterised by the land uses that predominate (Refer to GA, p04). This is agricultural land use to the south and west, whereas the northeastern quarter is anticipated to contain residential development.

To the west and south of the Site, where agricultural land use dominates, large dairy farms and pivot irrigated paddocks occupying most of the land. There are several small pockets of more intensive lifestyle blocks with remaining area being extensive grazing.

Northwest of the site, at a distance of 1.42 kilometres(km) is the SDC Wastewater Treatment and Resource Recovery Plant (Refer to GA, p04).

The remaining receiving environment lies to the north and east and is occupied by residential, community and commercial land uses, either proposed or existing, comprising DEV – R07 and the existing township of Rolleston. The town centre is approximately 3.7 km distant. The major proximate community facilities are Foster Recreation Park (2.1 km), Selwyn Sports Centre (2.75km), Selwyn Aquatic Centre (2.95km) and Rolleston College (3.1km), all to the northeast.

3.2 Site Description

The Site is comprised of eight titles, totalling 65.89 ha (refer to GA, p05). It borders future residential development to the north and east (refer to GA, p06) and Selwyn and Edwards Roads to the south and west, and rural land beyond.

The District Plan does not identify the Site as containing any significant landscape or ecological features, or forming part of an ONL, ONF, VAL or any wāhi tapu designations. Also, the soils within the Site are not classified as HPL – LUC 1 – 3, therefore the Site is not defined as highly productive land.

The eight lots are split into three rural residential properties each containing a dwelling, gardens and mature amenity and shelter planting that front onto Selwyn Road. These properties are 4.13 ha (1002 Selwyn Road), 1.96 ha (986 Selwyn Road) and 10.21 ha (966 Selwyn Road). The property at 966 Selwyn Road is distinctive in that it has an attractive mature garden setting along its Selwyn Road frontage with good quality exotic tree specimens.

The other five rural properties contain paddocks primarily used for grazing, all broken up by mature conifer shelterbelts. The paddocks are typically 250m x 400m, with the exception of an area of horticultural shelter blocks along the eastern side of the Site.

At the southwest corner is the six-way intersection comprising Edwards, Ellesmere Junction, Selwyn and Swamp Roads, comprising a complex six-legged junction (the intersection) (refer to GA, p06, p12). At the southern extent of the Edwards Road boundary is a Selwyn District Council Utility Reserve which juts “into” the site on an angle and is 1.62 hectares in size (refer to GA, p06). This

Council Utility Reserve land is not part of the Site although there has been some discussion with SDC as to the future use of this reserve which is anticipated to contain a new wastewater pump station.

The Site includes a water race which is currently dry and therefore it is assumed it has very little ecological value associated with it. There are no other notable features on the Site, except for a cluster of good quality, exotic trees that form part of the garden for the property at 966 Selwyn Road in the southeast corner of the site (Refer to GA, p13).

3.3 Landscape Character and Values

The landscape values of the receiving environment stem from its past and present landscape attributes (landform, landcover and land use). The landscape character and values of the receiving environment, that are relevant to an assessment of the PPC are listed below.

- The landscape exhibits a typical rural character consistent with the rural land immediately surrounding Rolleston. The key difference between the site and the wider rural surrounds is the way in which the Site is adjacent to DEV – R07 and forms part of the contiguous block of land bounded by Brookside, Dunns Crossing, Edwards and Selwyn Roads, that is situated on the western urban fringe of the township.
- Generally, there are high physical and perceptual values that stem from the open rural character and 'big sky landscape' synonymous with the Canterbury Plains. However, on the urban edge of Rolleston, these values are of a moderate degree due to the level of development and the resulting sense of enclosure.
- There are high associative values with Rolleston being known as the town of the future, the largest town within the Selwyn District and its current rapid growth.
- Whilst not yet visually apparent, once DEV – R07 is developed the Site will be perceived as the remaining piece of rural land that is yet to contain residential development within Rolleston's southwest corner.

4 The Proposal

4.1 Description of the Proposal

It is proposed to rezone the Site from Rural to Medium Density Residential. Future residential development enabled by the proposed rezoning will need to be developed in accordance with the proposed ODP. The layout of the ODP, in principle is to act as a direct extension of the adjacent DEV-R07 development area with integrated connections, including road, pedestrian and green links, complementary community facilities and recognition of rural boundaries, boundary treatments and gateways.

The residential density will achieve a minimum overall density of 15hh/ha. This will be achieved by a higher density around central facilities such as green links and amenities (refer to GA, p07,08, UDA, p14). The landscape benefit of this is to have larger sections that can accommodate more amenity planting towards the rural interface that will allow a less abrupt change in landscape character from urban to rural, when compared with smaller sections.

The connectivity framework of the ODP complements DEV-R07, extending that development's proposed roading pattern and proposing a framework of green links that work with the roading and connect proposed community reserves, a possible school and a proposed neighbourhood centre (refer to GA, p07) within the Site. From a landscape perspective, this offers opportunities for these green links to provide positive and sustainable transport and recreation connections and create community cohesion.

Another aspect of the connectivity framework is the treatment of the intersection at the southern corner of the Site. It is proposed to stop Edwards Road adjacent to the SDC utility reserve. Edwards Road will turn east into the Site and the very southern stretch of Edwards Road will become a cycle and pedestrian path and continue to provide access to the few existing properties at the southern end of this road. This proposed road layout change has been recommended by Council's Traffic Engineer to assist with simplifying the complex Ellesmere Junction, Selwyn, Edwards and Swamp Roads six-way intersection. From a landscape perspective, this offers the opportunity to provide an attractive landscaped gateway into the southwest corner of Rolleston. However, such a gateway is not currently proposed as it will be fully or partly within Council's road reserve.

In relation to boundary treatments, on the north and east boundaries the UDA recommends integration with proposed DEV-R07 (refer to UDA, p16), rather than specific edge treatment. From a landscape point of view this is positive and appropriate, so that the new developments are seen as part of a cohesive township.

On the western and southern boundaries, it is recommended that these boundaries will be similar with the Selwyn and Edwards Road treatments within DEV-R07, consisting of:

- a 1.2m tall post-and-rail fence along the road boundary;
- a 5m wide landscape strip, consisting of native shrub vegetation (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Phormium cookianum*, *Corokia cotoneaster*, *Olearia paniculata*, *Hebe salicifolia*, and *Coprosma virescens*); and
- dwellings will be setback 10m from the road boundary.

These design elements will provide a consistent and attractive appearance to the rural interface to this block of development, recognise the change from rural to residential land use, and provide the opportunity to express a local landscape character.

5 Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

5.1 Assessment of Visibility and Visual Effects

“Visual effects are effects on landscape values as experienced in views. They contribute to our understanding of landscape effects. They are a subset of landscape effects.”⁴

“For example, a proposal that is in keeping with the landscape values may have no adverse visual effects even if it is a large change to the view. Conversely, a proposal that is completely out of place with landscape values may have adverse effects even if only occupying a small portion of the view.”⁵

The significance of the visual effect is influenced by the visibility, distance, duration of the view, the scale, nature and duration of the proposal, its overall visual prominence, the context in which it is seen, and the size of the viewing audience.

Perceptually, whether the proposal is considered appropriate is determined by the visual effects on the receiving environment and whether the landscape values attributed to this setting are retained or whether, if adversely affected, effects can be satisfactorily avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Visual matters are integral to landscape rather than a separate category. Physical, associative and perceptual dimensions are each experienced visually (and through other senses). However, effects on landscape values do not have to be visible to be an effect.

The current visibility of the site is principally gained from the roads running along its south and west boundaries. Edwards Road bounds the site to the west and Selwyn Road to the south. Ellesmere Junction Road runs further to the south, intercepting the site at its southwestern corner as part of a six-legged intersection that also includes Swamp Road and the southern extension of Selwyn Road.

The **GA** includes panorama photographs, representing the views and visibility of the Site and future residential development gained from the above-mentioned public places. The Site Photographs assist with understanding the visibility of the Site from the neighbouring private properties. A viewpoint location plan illustrating where these photos were taken from is also included (refer to GA, p03).

5.1.1 Edwards Road

Edwards Road is 2.4km long, local access road (SDC designation), with the southern kilometre comprising a gravel surface. The northern 1.2kms extends alongside the anticipated development within DEV-R07, the following 990m bounds the western side of the Site, with views into the Site being screened by an existing conifer shelterbelt. Lastly, the southern 230m bounds the yet to be developed SDC utility reserve consisting of an open paddock with views to shelterbelts within the Site. This anticipated mix of residential and partly rural outlook highlights the edge of Rolleston township and provides a low-moderate to moderate degree of visual amenity.

The visible change resulting from the PPC will be extending the anticipated residential development within DEV-R07 along Edwards Road to Selwyn Road. This extension of residential development along the eastern side of the road will appear in-keeping with the residential development along the northern half of the road and will not alter the rural outlook on western side of the road. Therefore,

⁴ ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Para 6.25. Page 142.

⁵ *ibid.* Para 6.27. Page 142.

whilst there is a change in outlook, future development will be visually consistent with the existing residential pattern of development within Rolleston, that extends out to Edwards Road. The proposed landscape buffer and built form setbacks recognises that Edwards Road is the western edge to the township by providing a more vegetated outlook for road users, rather than one that is purely residential in character. This will assist with creating a more aesthetically appealing / attractive outlook.⁶ Also, the transition in outlook from residential to rural will remain, because the outlook to west of Edwards Road and south of Selwyn Road will be retained.

Overall, the future residential development enabled by the PPC will have a **very low to low degree** of adverse effects on visual amenity experienced by road users.

5.1.2 Selwyn Road

Selwyn Road is 17.6kms long extending northeast to southwest between Shands Road and the Selwyn River. Road users travelling southwest travel through a peri urban / rural living landscape, alongside the 4.9km southern boundary of Rolleston township, including DEV-R07 and then into a more rural setting beyond the six-way intersection. Noting that the land immediately south of Selwyn Road, opposite Rolleston is typical of and contributes to the wider rural setting. This varied landscape outlook provides road users a low-moderate – moderate degree of visual amenity.

The Site's southern 600m long boundary is adjacent to Selwyn Road, situated between DEV-R07 and the six-way intersection. The visible change resulting from the PPC will be an extension to the anticipated residential development within DEV-R07 west along Selwyn Road to Edwards Road, with Rolleston's southern boundary being 5.5km long.

This 600m extension of residential development along the northern side of Selwyn Road will appear as a logical, cohesive and direct extension of the southern extent of Rolleston township. Most notably, the six-way intersection will be perceived as a clear and defensible urban edge / boundary between the township and rural land. Therefore, whilst there is a change in outlook for a short 600m stretch of road, the future urban development will be consistent with the existing 4.9km urban edge and residential pattern of development that sits nicely within the local and wider grid pattern of the Canterbury Plains.

Similar to Edwards Road, the proposed landscape buffer and built form setbacks will assist with providing a more vegetated outlook, rather than one that is purely residential in character. This is important to those travelling southwest to northeast as it will visually soften a potentially harder urban edge, that may be perceived as adverse. Beyond the six-way intersection, the transition in outlook from residential to rural will remain, because the outlook to west of Edwards Road and south of Selwyn Road will be retained.

Overall, the future residential development enabled by the PPC will have a **very low degree** of adverse effects on visual amenity experienced by road users.

5.1.3 Ellesmere Junction Road

Ellesmere Junction Road extends east to west between Burnham and Lincoln. This road carries the most traffic of the proximate roads and runs at an angle to the site, (refer to GA, p06). A general rural outlook is experienced when travelling along this road with clear urban / rural edges being experienced when entering and exiting Burnham, Springston and Lincoln. This more rural outlook

⁶ District Plan – UG-O1.1

with direct facing views to the Port Hills and Southern Alps provides road users a moderate degree of amenity.

The Site is briefly seen from a 120m stretch of this road when travel east and west through the six-way intersection at 100km/h, with Ellesmere Junction Road users having the right-of-way. Beyond this stretch of road, views are screened by conifer shelterbelts, a pine plantation and native roadside vegetation.

The PPC will enable road users to briefly see the southern corner of Rolleston township. However, it will be seen perpendicular to the road alignment, for no more than 5 seconds⁷ and when seen it will not interfere with views to the Port Hills or the Southern Alps.

When taking the anticipated DEV-R07 development into consideration, most road users will be aware of their proximity to the township. Therefore, whilst it is not visible yet, this corner can logically and perceptually contain development with it not inappropriately breaching a hard boundary to this urban / rural interface. The proposed boundary treatment will also assist with visually softening what could otherwise be a more prominent residential appearance.

Overall, the future residential development enabled by the PPC will have a **nil to very low degree** of adverse effects on visual amenity experienced by road users.

5.1.4 Swamp Road

Swamp Road runs north to south between Bethels Road, near Selwyn River and the six-way intersection. It provides access to the rural and rural living properties along its 4.9km length. The rural outlook provides low-moderate to moderate degree of visual amenity and is very consistent with the outlook and amenity gained from the receiving environment and its wider rural area.

The site is seen at the northern end of Swamp Road. Future residential development enabled by the PPC will be technically visible from the northern 1.7km of road, north of the intersection with Ashley Dene Road. However, future residential development will only become noticeable and slightly prominent beyond the vegetated buffer as road users are within 1km - 500m of the Site. Whilst the development will be seen directly in front of road users, it will form a very small part of their overall view with the rural outlook to the east and west and views over the distant shelterbelts to the Southern Alps being retained.

Overall, the future residential development enabled by the PPC will have a **very low - low degree** of adverse effects on visual amenity experienced by road users.

5.1.5 Neighbouring Properties - North and East Boundaries

The existing rural properties north and east of the Site, that currently contain paddocks and no dwellings are anticipated to contain residential development.

DEV-R07 illustrates residential development adjoining the Site's northern and eastern boundaries. These boundaries currently comprise numerous shelterbelts along that would shade afternoon sun from future properties to the east and may create a sense of enclosure for the properties to the north. Therefore, the rural activities within the Site will detract from the future amenity of these future residents.

⁷ 100km/h = 27m/s.

The PPC will enable a residential outlook, consistent with the majority of the newer parts of Rolleston. Whilst open paddocks may be appreciated, dense mature shelterbelts are permitted and would not contribute to the amenity of these future residents. Therefore, the future residential development enabled by the PPC, when compared with the status quo will have a **nil to very low degree** of adverse effects on visual amenity that is anticipated to be experienced by these future residents.

5.1.6 Neighbouring Properties – South and West Boundaries

There are three rural residential properties that are directly across Edwards and Selwyn Roads from the Site.

113 and 151 Edwards Road, opposite the northwest and southwest corners of the Site, respectively. These two properties have been developed to contain dwellings that have a northwest orientation, away from the road and Site, and towards the Southern Alps. They both contain mature roadside shelterbelts and internal amenity that screen the Site from view. Views into the Site are only experienced when exiting these properties.

It is anticipated that when exiting these properties, the nearby areas of residential development within DEV-R07 will be gained beyond the Site. Therefore, the change in outlook enabled by the PPC is only to their foreground view when leaving their property. Beyond this, residential development is anticipated to be seen. Therefore, the PPC will appear as a cohesive and direct extension to the existing development within Rolleston township, with Edwards Road forming a hard edge to the township. Also, the proposed boundary treatment will assist with visually softening the future residential development by creating a more green / vegetated appearance. This will assist with mitigating the potential adverse visual effects, along with the pragmatic nature of this view being momentary.

997 Selwyn Road, opposite the southern boundary of the Site comprises a residence and several ancillary buildings. The rural living part of this property is more north and north-west facing due to its proximity and location on the southern side of the road. This property contains mature roadside vegetation and internal amenity planting that reduces the views into the Site. However, unlike the other two properties, partial views from the dwelling to the Site's southwest corner and residential development enabled by the PPC will be gained. Noting that the shorter view to the north is of an unkempt rural property that does not contribute to the Site's amenity.

The residential development enabled by the PPC will change the rural outlook that is current gained. The resulting residential outlook, beyond Selwyn Road will be partly mitigated by the proposed boundary treatment that will softening the appearance of built form. Also, the houses setback at least 10m from the northern road boundary will not interfere any potential long ranging views to the mountains that may be gained, that may otherwise be screened by shelterbelts. Nor will it interfere with views over their own paddock within the western corner of their property. Additionally, these residents will perceive the wider growth patterns and the cohesive edge to the township that Edwards Road provides.

Overall, the future residential development enabled by the PPC will have a **nil to very low degree** of adverse effects on the visual amenity experienced by residents at 113 and 151 Edwards Road, and a **low to low-moderate degree** experienced by residents at 997 Selwyn Road.

5.1.7 Summary of Visual Effects on Landscape Values

To summarise the above:

- Future development will appear as a logical, cohesive and direct extension to the existing residential pattern of Rolleston township.
- Edwards and Selwyn Roads will be perceived as a clear and defensible urban edge / boundary between Rolleston township and rural landscape, with the residential pattern of development coherently situated within the local and wider grid pattern of the Canterbury Plains.
- The transition in outlook from residential to rural will remain, because the rural outlook west of Edwards Road and south of Selwyn Road will be retained.
- The proposed boundary treatment consisting of a 5m wide native strip of planting, a post-and-rail fence and dwellings being setback 10m from the road boundary will assist with visually softening residential development. This will assist with creating a more aesthetically appealing / attractive outlook.⁸

Overall, future residential development resulting from the PPC, as experienced from the surrounding public roads will be of a **nil to low degree** of adverse visual effects. When experienced from neighbouring properties they will be of a **nil to very low degree** from all neighbours except 997 Selwyn Road, where the adverse visual effects will be of a **low to low-moderate degree**.

5.2 Assessment of Landscape Effects

“A landscape effect is an outcome for a landscape value. While effects are consequences of changes to the physical environment, they are the outcomes for a landscape’s values that are derived from each of its physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions. Change itself is not an effect: landscapes change constantly. It is the implications of change on landscape values that is relevant.”

⁹

The Rolleston Structure Plan (refer to UDA, p4) and the Rolleston Structure Staging (refer to UDA, p5) show a clear, well-structured plan of expansion for the township and the staging for how that might occur. As noted in the UDA, as of 2009, this was a Structure Plan through until 2075 and now nearly all the planned areas to accommodate residential development have been constructed or are planned to be. The Structure Plan is now over 16 years old and given the very rapid development of Rolleston it is now outdated and is no longer a useful tool for guiding future urban growth. In saying this, it is understood that Council are in the early stages of progressing a new structure plan for the townships of Rolleston, Lincoln, and Prebbleton.

Council is currently finalising a full review of the District Plan. In addition to confirming urban zoning for the majority of the land within the Structure Plan, the District Plan Review also resulted in the inclusion of DEV-R07, refer to GA, p05 & UDA, p4. This shows DEV-R07 occupying three quarters of the existing rural block bounded by Brookside, Edwards, Selwyn and Dunns Crossing Road, being the block of land that the Site forms the southwest corner of.

As mentioned, the extent of the DEV – R07 plan change was based on land ownership and cadastral boundaries, and there were no landscape reasons on why this development did not include the site. Also, the Dev-R07 ODP includes connections into the Site. Therefore, no prior analysis illustrates that the Site cannot contain development, rather the anticipated development alludes to the idea that it can accommodate residential growth.

⁸ District Plan – UG-O1.1

⁹ ‘Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines’. Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022. Para 6.01 – 6.03, Page 135.

The PPC will inherently change the character of the Site from rural to residential. As discussed in Section 3, the landscape exhibits a typical rural character consistent with the rural land immediately surrounding Rolleston. The key difference between the Site and the wider rural surrounds is the way in which the Site is adjacent to DEV – R07 and forms part of the contiguous block of land bounded by Brookside, Dunns Crossing, Edwards and Selwyn Roads, that is situated on the western urban fringe of the township.

There are no landscape features / defined edges, such as distinct topographical changes, rivers / streams or a road boundary that differentiates the Site from the DEV-R07 land. I.e. the Site forms a contiguous part of this block of land, and the surrounding roads form a hard / defined edge that can contain this development. The Site is essentially similar in character to the broader area, the north-eastern part of which is anticipated to be developed as residential. Therefore, from a landscape perspective there are no landscape attributes or values that would preclude the site from being urbanised.

Also, notably, the site and receiving environment is a third-tier landscape as it does not form part of an ONL, ONF or VAL, nor does it contain any significant landscape or ecological features, or any wāhi tapu designations. Due to this, the Site is not considered to make an important contribution to Selwyn's environment.¹⁰

The reduction in 66ha of rural land, in this landscape setting is small in size and extent, with the proposed change in land use directly integrating with DEV-R07.¹¹ Importantly, this overall residential development will be contained by Edwards and Selwyn Roads that are clear and defensible boundaries to Rolleston's urban interface with the surrounding rural landscape.

Regarding this, enabling residential development on the Site may alleviate the need for urban growth in areas that maybe more sensitive to change¹² or where the soil is more fertile¹³. Therefore, whilst a comparison assessment has not been undertaken, this corner site appears more suitable to absorb residential development when compared with other areas of land surrounding Rolleston, including those on the opposite side of Edwards and Selwyn Roads.

Overall, the change in land use and character within the site enabled by the PPC, will have a **very low to low degree** of adverse effects on the rural character of the wider landscape.

¹⁰ District Plan – SD-DI-O4

¹¹ District Plan – UG-O1.6

¹² District Plan – NFL-O1 and NFL O2

¹³ District Plan – SD-DI-O6 and UG-O1.10

6 Recommendations

6.1 Landscape Recommendations

The following are concise recommendations that define the report's earlier discussion.

- Landscape Character Proposal Document: As part of the subdivision consent, a Landscape Character Proposal Document for the development be provided and agreed on by SDC that covers landscape analysis factors including topography and soil type, site context and character, and site history and mana whenua cultural influences. From this analysis a cohesive landscape character proposal is developed that covers a proposed public land planting strategy, landscape materiality and concepts for public landscape construction (furniture, fencing, wayfinding, lighting, ancillary construction).
- Integrated Southern Boundary Plan: As part of the subdivision consent a plan be developed that integrates the southern end of the pedestrianised Edwards Road, the southern boundary of the SDC Utility Reserve and proposed Rural Urban Gateway on Selwyn Road. This plan would respond to the Landscape Character Proposal Document and the proposed Boundary Treatments for Edwards and Selwyn Roads.

Conclusion

The PPC is to rezone the Rural Zoned land within the southwest corner of this block of land to Medium Density Residential. It includes a proposed ODP that has been designed to directly integrate with DEV-R07.

Regarding landscape and visual effects:

- At a broad scale this proposal represents the logical, cohesive and direct extension of existing residential growth for the township of Rolleston. It completes the residential footprint of a current rural block anticipated to contain this type of development.
- The ODP for the proposal is logical and extends and complements the already planned infrastructure and facilities of this part of Rolleston.
- Future development will appear as a logical, cohesive and direct extension to the existing residential pattern of Rolleston township.
- Edwards and Selwyn Roads will be perceived as a clear and defensible urban edge / boundary between Rolleston township and rural landscape, with the residential pattern of development coherently situated within the local and wider grid pattern of the Canterbury Plains.
- The transition in outlook from residential to rural will remain, because the rural outlook west of Edwards Road and south of Selwyn Road will be retained.
- The proposed boundary treatment consisting of a 5m wide native strip of planting, a post-and-rail fence and dwellings being setback 10m from the road boundary will assist with visually softening residential development. This will assist with creating a more aesthetically appealing / attractive outlook.

Overall, the future development enabled by the PPC will have a **very low to low degree** of adverse effects on the landscape character and values of the receiving environment. Due to this, the PPC aligns with the District Plans Strategic Direction and Natural Features and Landscape Objectives and will result in a comprehensive, coordinated and efficient development.