

**Before the Hearings Panel in the matter of proposed Plan Change G: Aokautere  
Urban Growth to the Palmerston North City Council District Plan**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF BRETT GUTHRIE**

**Introduction:**

My name is Brett Guthrie. I have an advanced science degree and two trade qualifications. I have worked in the Public Service, private enterprise and at Massey University in various roles.

I have lived in Palmerston North since 1989, and my wife and I have lived in Moonshine Valley for 24 years. There I joined with a number of residents working throughout the Valley as a small passionate community group in whatever capacity we are able. We have also made many submissions and a number of presentations to the council on issues which affect Moonshine Valley. We have managed to gain some protection of the Valley included in the District Plan. However the precedent effect of the proposed residential zone on the rural-residential areas remains a concern.

**Moonshine Valley:**

I focus on Moonshine Valley as there is a synergy between the established areas and the contrasting new development which must be considered in good planning practice. The “wider scale” as previously described by Mr Hudson. Our property bounds a promontory to the south and so is directly affected by any changes there.

The amenity of the Valley informs my expectation of how these areas will integrate and what such an interface might look like.

The Moonshine Valley enclave is described in the District Plan and Mrs Copplestone cites this in the Planning Report. The Valley attributes and distinct features are also well described in our many submissions with contributions from a variety of experts as well as from a well researched Moonshine Valley History book.

In 2009 Moonshine Valley was described by Resource and Environmental Planner Rachelle Voice as *“a beautified landscape with natural values found in no other locality in Palmerston North.”* Ms Voice further stated *“Moonshine Valley is an isolated unique landscape bounded by ridges that effectively enclose it from outside views.”*

Landscape architect Richard Mayer then described the valley as having *“park-like grounds”* and characterised as *“having high amenity values.”*

Since these were written these distinct attributes have only been enhanced and become increasingly special with the encroaching suburbia.

**Support:**

I reiterate my support for a master plan for Aokautere rather than the previous *ad hoc* approach by competing developers.

I seek acceptance and implementation of the S42A Planning Report with emphasis on those recommendations relating to Moonshine Valley.

In particular the recommendations for a 15 metre setback, and reduced housing density and height. In addition, the recommendation enabling a greater flexibility of housing types on the promontories.

The Planning Report is informed by the following relevant reports:

- Urban Design
- Landscape
- Stormwater
- Geotechnical

**Comments:****Urban Design:**

I accept the rationale of Mr Burns that Moonshine Valley and the adjacent reduced housing density and height, and the promontory topography may constitute a type of transition zone as requested by a number of submitters including myself. This is endorsed by Mrs Copplestone.

These factors ameliorate the potential “hard edge” between the development and Moonshine Valley which Mr Murphy (Chief Planning Officer) once called “a glaring example of poor urban form”

**Landscape:**

Mr Hudson replied to my submission and addendum in particular. I thank him for the comprehensive analysis and responses addressing my concerns. I also thank him for taking the opportunity to revisit Moonshine Valley.

Here again I emphasise Mr Hudson’s recommendation of the 15 metre setback, reduced housing density and height. A 15 metre setback is also supported in the Geotechnical, Stormwater and in Urban Design reports.

**Stormwater and Geotechnical** (combined as overlapping and collaborative):

Mr Miller, accompanied by Mr Duindam (Principal Planner previously at the Council), visited our property and sighted the slips and slumping on the hillside near to the

Woodgate subdivision. The extent of the overlapping slips and location of the several toes were described to them.

The location of several ephemeral springs from the hillside were also highlighted. These flows are noted by myself and other residents to depend somewhat on the extent of cultivation of the fields above our properties in addition to the level of rainfall.

In addition, somewhat mature trees uprooted due to the wet ground near the boundary were evident and commented on by Mr Miller.

Examples of similar instability, slips and slumping (land creep) are shown in Mr Birds report per Tonkin & Taylor, Mike Jack site visit 2020 Appendix B.

There have been extensive planting on this southern slope to stabilise the land as prudent land management and is ongoing. Such planting has also occurred elsewhere in the Valley.

In addition to Mr Miller and Ms Baugham, Tonkin and Taylor also recommend setbacks from steep slopes (Figure 1 Tonkin & Taylor, p.5 Appendix D). Those shown are contained within the natural boundaries of the existing landform which may change as site preparation is undertaken.

It is unknown what effect promontory site preparation and modification will have on the Moonshine Valley properties. Mr Bird leaves this aspect of development to existing subdivision rules with recommendation of geotechnical analysis. Council experience has shown observance of these rules may be lacking.

### **Conclusion:**

I wish to thank those experts who have addressed the concerns of submitters, in particular those of Moonshine Valley residents and for providing solutions somewhat acceptable to all parties in their responses.

Brett Guthrie,  
Moonshine Valley