

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW BURNS – URBAN DESIGN

PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE G – AOKAUTERE URBAN GROWTH

A. INTRODUCTION

[1] My full name is Andrew Burns and I prepared a s 42A report dated 15 September 2023 (**s 42A Report**) and Statement of Reply Evidence dated 28 November 2023 (**Reply Evidence**) on Urban Design on behalf of the Palmerston North City Council (**Council**) for proposed Plan Change G: Aokautere Urban Growth to the Palmerston North District Plan (**PCG**).

[2] This summary addresses outstanding matters raised by Submitters relevant to urban design. I have also been asked to introduce the Structure Plan and the masterplanning process surrounding that.

B. PLAN DESCRIPTION AND UPDATES

[3] (Refer to graphics) The Structure Plan was developed out of a robust masterplanning process. This included inputs from a multi-disciplinary team to analyse the wide range of physical environmental conditions across Aokautere. In particular, the unique geological structures of incised gullies and plateaus, landscape and ecological values, existing development patterns, roading systems, infrastructure, water management and reserves were evaluated to inform the future plan.

[4] (Refer to graphics) Alongside this analysis, the design approach was underpinned by urban design good practice represented by eight 'Plan Principles' - promoting a landscape/gully-led approach; applying best practice; living within a gully network; streets that connect and offer gully experience; sustainable centres-based communities; creating a legible connected 'whole' suburb; and creating identifiable character-driven outcomes.

[5] (Refer to graphics) Plan features – overall plan configuration, residential density, streets and movement, Local Centre / Precinct Plan, range of street types.

[6] The Structure Plans have been updated to reflect recommendations that emerged at s 42A reporting and reply evidence. The updates include:

- (a) Rural Residential zoning reinstated across Mr Waters' land (Maps 7A.4 and 7A.4B);

- (b) A notational roading connection indicated from the 'water tank road' east towards the balance of Mr Waters' land (all Maps);
- (c) Relocation of the suburban (playable) reserve from plateau D1/D2 to D3/D4;
- (d) Small adjustments to two segments of the southern Urban Connector Road within Mr Green's land, changing these to Peri-Urban (Maps 7A.4A, 7A.4D);
- (e) Hatching added to identify the 'Gun Club Noise Mitigation Area' between the 50 and 55dBA Lmax contours (Map 7A.4B);
- (f) Addition of existing street names and linework adjustments to distinguish proposed vs existing streets (all Maps);
- (g) Removal of Urban Connector type 'F', with these roads changed to type 'B';
- (h) Change from Residential to Rural Residential for the small area of Mr Waters's land at the interface with Mr Green's land;
- (i) Minor adjustments to the key to facilitate the above (all Maps);
- (j) Correction to retain the Institutional zoning at the corner of Pacific Drive and SH 57 (Map 7A.4);
- (k) I also note that a range of dimensional adjustments to the street cross-sections (Map 7A.4D 1-15) are recommended by Ms Fraser, but have not yet been reflected in the maps.

C. PLAN SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

[7] As set out in my s 42A Report I consider the structure plan provides for and directs the following outcomes:

- (a) A coordinated Aokautere suburb that manages open space, ecology, recreational access, water management, street systems, housing distribution and amenities;
- (b) A walkable fine grain block structure connected to existing housing areas;

- (c) Variation in lot size, including smaller lots that enable a range of typologies and support more diverse housing outcomes, with more efficient utilisation of valuable land;
- (d) quality streetscapes actively fronted by development;
- (e) attractive and accessible green gullies and walkways that extend the city's recreational network and improve waterways;
- (f) enhanced living environments, by providing walkable access to new Local Centre amenities.

[8] Any extension of Residential zoning requires the management of potential effects on the amenity values of any neighbours, particularly those in Moonshine Valley. I support the design approach in this location, with controls on rear boundary setbacks and maintaining landscape gaps.

[9] My s 42A Report and Reply Evidence concludes that the Aokautere Structure Plan guides the development of the land for residential, local centre and conservation / amenity / recreational activities in an appropriate manner. From an urban design perspective, I am comfortable that the site can be rezoned for these activities.

D. OUTSTANDING MATTERS IN RESPONSE TO SUBMITTERS

[10] The key matters that remain in contention are:

Open Space Provision

[11] Dr Teo-Sherrell seeks more smaller green playable spaces rather than fewer larger spaces. I do not support this submission based on analysis of walkable catchments (Attachment 1) and that the proposed play spaces are supported by Mr Phillips.

Bus Routes and Activity Street Movement

[12] Dr Teo-Sherrell is concerned about bus routes through the Local Centre impacting on the village square. I have stated my support for buses directly accessing the centre to reinforce the centre as a destination and promote footfall but acknowledge that bus routes will be a matter for Horizons Regional Council to determine.

[13] Dr Teo-Sherrell requests the removal of cars from the one-way component of the Activity Street. I do not support this submission for the reasons primarily that such a move would undermine the performance of the anchor store. I have recommended the one-way street be designed as a shared street that would improve pedestrian amenity of the village square as sought by Dr Teo-Sherrell, but maintain some vehicular access.

Prescriptiveness of the Plan

[14] Ms Coats, Mr Farquhar and Mr Thomas raise concerns over the level of prescriptiveness of the plan. I do not support their concerns. Primarily noting in my reports, the high degree of complexity attributed to landform and existing development, the importance of setting optimal conditions at the Local Centre, the role of Urban Connector streets to facilitate area-wide connections and the need to integrate with existing housing and to ensure new development fronts streets.

[15] The prescriptiveness of the Local Centre's Precinct Plan is of particular concern for Mr Thomas who prefers an indicative location for the centre on residentially zoned land. I do not support Mr Thomas' approach for the reasons set out in my Reply Evidence (paragraphs 77 – 79).

Housing Density

[16] Mr Farquhar and Mr Thomas both disagree with the Plan's proposals for medium density housing at Aokautere. I reaffirm my support for housing variety across the Aokautere suburb. Greenfield areas should not be exempt from offering housing choice through lot size variation. The recently released HBNA (2023), as required by the NPS-UD, identified medium and long term demand for 'attached' types to be 14% and 22% of total housing respectively (HBNA, pg 89) while 52% of 30yr total development will be "Greenfield". Historic delivery of "multi-unit" housing has ranged between 7% and 39% between 2018-2022, and 80% of multi-unit developments are attached dwellings. PCG allows 10-14% of the net residential area for medium density housing and of that medium density, dwelling yield ranges from 16% (@25DPH) to 28% (@50DPH), in-line with historic data and future demand.

[17] Proposed medium density housing has been located within 400m of the proposed Local Centre and includes a fine grain walkable block structure, centralised reserve spaces and easy access to bus routes to promote high amenity and active modes.

Only medium or high-value gullies should be protected

- [18] Mr Thomas considers that only medium or high-value gullies should be protected and that other development options should be considered for low-value gullies. I disagree with Mr Thomas. The integrity of Aokautere’s gully system as a whole is important and contributes to the area’s unique identity. Gullies have influenced the proposed roading layout and underpinned the proposed development and zoning approach. Ecological and landscape values attached to the gullies also underpin the structure plan framework.

Wetland Feature at head of Gully 1, North Village

- [19] Mr Thomas prefers the Wetland Feature to be utilised in other ways, potentially for development. I do not agree with Mr Thomas. I consider the co-location of wetland and public open space provides higher levels of public realm amenity that will support medium density housing. Further that the Wetland Feature is part of what was once the head of Gully 1 and connects with the end of the Local Centre, providing identity and gully access within the heart of North Village.

4 December 2023

Andrew Burns