

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF AARON PHILLIPS – PARKS & RESERVES

PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE G – AOKAUTERE URBAN GROWTH

A. INTRODUCTION

[1] My full name is Aaron Phillips 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 Parks & Reserves on behalf of the Palmerston North City Council (**Council**) for proposed Plan Change G: Aokautere Urban Growth to the Palmerston North District Plan (**PCG**).

B. KEY ISSUES

Quality of Provision

[2] The parks and reserves in PCG will provide an excellent level of service, with amenity values higher than other established urban areas, and plan change areas recently completed or planned. This is largely due to Aokautere's topography and the value the gullies provide in vegetation restoration and walkway opportunities.

[3] Open space provision for parks planning follows a reserve category typology or hierarchy. In PCG the primary reserve types for consideration are neighbourhood and suburb.¹ Ecological reserve opportunities are usually associated with other key drivers such as stormwater management.

[4] The three existing reserves would be complemented by three additional new reserves. One would be a suburb reserve positioned to the south to balance the existing Adderstone Reserve to the north, one within the central medium density area proposed and another positioned to maximise the overall reserve coverage for walking distances.

Distribution of Open Space

[5] Dr Teo Sherrell queries the distribution of the reserves within the Structure Plan. I am confident that this distribution is optimal, subject to the recommendation in my Reply Evidence that Reserve 2 be relocated.²

¹ City, cemetery, and sportsfield reserves not being required as per Parks and Reserves Assessment.

² As per Figure 3 of Statement of Reply Evidence of Aaron Phillips dated 28 November 2023. See also from [26].

- [6] This recommendation is due to my health and safety concerns about locating a playground next to a potentially deeper than expected stormwater detention pond. It also reflects the changing assumptions as to medium density at the end of the promontories, affecting the likely effective catchment, and because relocation will enable better walkway connections than the currently shown location which is bounded by roads on three sides.

Walkways

- [7] The nature of the gullies means there will be numerous opportunities to extend the walkway network in this area. Not all gullies would include walkways and some walkway developments will depend on the detailed feasibility and costs. However overall, the planned network will be of a much higher quantity and quality than most residential areas.

Stormwater Reserve Vesting vs Purchase

- [8] Council does not propose a change to the practice of vesting of reserves, with the primary purpose being stormwater management and ecological restoration opportunities.
- [9] Gullies, mainly used for stormwater management and ecological enhancement, are typically vested by the developers during subdivision without compensation. In contrast, the Council is more likely to purchase land sought for recreational purposes only. Such decisions are made at the time of subdivision, but the gully systems are unlikely to meet the criteria for compensation.
- [10] The quantity of gully stormwater reserves needing restoration work within the PCG residential areas is expected to take up all the available resourcing.
- [11] Reserves labelled F1 – F4 and G14 are unlikely to meet Parks’ criteria for purchase, as they will fall outside of urban residential areas and are unlikely to have public access. I note these areas will not require immediate land use changes. Further, there will be other potential avenues for ecological protection. The Council will maintain its current practice regarding the vesting of ecological areas in rural areas, to assess them on a case-by-case basis at the time of subdivision, weighing up the costs, benefits, and strategic direction.

4 December 2023

Aaron Phillips