

Before Palmerston North City Council

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of a proposed plan change to rezone
land at 611 Rangitikei Line to establish
the Whiskey Creek Residential Area

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF DANIEL GEORGE MALES
IN SUPPORT OF FLYGERS INVESTMENT GROUP LIMITED
(LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE)**

[18/05/2022]

Counsel Acting

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INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Daniel George Males

Qualifications and Experience

2. I have a BA (Hons) in Landscape Architecture with 1st class honours (1999) and a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction (2001) from Leeds Beckett University, UK. I am also a Registered NZILA Landscape Architect.
3. I have over 20 years' experience in the field of Landscape Architecture and in particular, strategic planning and design of public spaces. I am a Director at Local Landscape Architecture Collective Ltd (Local) which was established in 2018. I was previously a Principal at Isthmus Group Ltd where I worked in their Wellington Studio (2006-2018).
4. I am currently providing Landscape Architecture advice to Council with regard to the preparation of plan changes for the Kākātangiata area of the City.
5. I have also provided Landscape Architectural advice and design input into several comparable projects and strategic plans over the past decade most recently including:
 - Horowhenua District Council - Proposed Plan Change 4 Tara-ika (2021 – present)
 - Cannons Creek South East Masterplan, Porirua (2020-present)
 - Waitārere Beach Masterplan and Proposed Plan Change Horowhenua (2019- present)
 - Porirua Northern Growth Area - Plimmerton Farm, Porirua (2019-2020)
 - Porirua City Centre Masterplan (2014- present)
 - Keneperu, Porirua (2015-2018)

Involvement in Proposed Plan Change

6. I have been involved in detail with the site planning and master planning stages of the development and subsequently have been engaged by the Applicant to provide expert Landscape Architecture advice on the

proposed plan change to rezone land at 611 Rangitikei Line to establish the Whiskey Creek Residential Area.

7. As part of preparing this statement of evidence, I have read the following reports and documents:
 - (a) the reporting and drawings that form the application;
 - (b) the submissions;
 - (c) the Section 42A Report and appendices.

Code of Conduct

8. While this matter is not being heard before the Environment Court, I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014 and I have complied with it when preparing this evidence. Other than when I state that I am relying on the advice of another person, this evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

Scope of Evidence

9. In this statement I:
 - (a) provide a summary of the landscape design matters
 - (b) respond to landscape design matters raised by submitters; and
 - (c) respond to landscape design matters raised in the s42A reports.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

10. The proposed Plan Change is for the block of land that lies on the northwest edge of the city includes four properties (611 Rangitikei Line; 165-243 Flyers Line; 609 Rangitikei Line; and 127 Benmore Ave). These properties (the Site) include 2 dwellings (609 Rangitikei Line; and 127 Benmore Ave) and a large area of flat farmland, positioned at the intersection of Rangitikei Line and Flyers Line to the city's current urban edge along Meadowbrook Drive and Benmore Avenue.

11. The proposed Plan Change and associated Structure Plan facilitate the rezoning of land for residential purposes, a small area of commercial and reserve. The following landscape elements are incorporated:
 - (a) a new reserve within the flood plain providing recreational access and amenity
 - (b) a new neighbourhood park directly connected the reserve
 - (c) a rehabilitated Whisky Creek and environs providing ecological improvements
 - (d) a new urban edge to the city acting as an important gateway on approach along Rangitikei Line.
 - (e) a further vegetated corridor along Rangitikei Line
 - (f) an internal local roading network connecting new streets to the reserve.
 - (g) a shared path connection through the site from Benmore Avenue through the proposed Reserve and around to the Mangaone Stream shared path; and
 - (h) pedestrian footpaths and street planting throughout the site.

BACKGROUND

12. I was part of the design team that included McIndoe Urban; Harriet Fraser Transportation Planning; Resonant; Thomas Planning; Mitch Hydro and Acousafe Consulting & Engineering that produced the Whiskey Creek masterplan and structure plan. My involvement included landscape design inputs through all phases of the masterplan development and refinement of the structure plan:
 - (a) Numerous visits in 2020 and 2021 to the site and surrounding neighbourhood and environs.
 - (b) Site and desktop analysis of the site.
 - (c) Collaborative work with the team to generate design principles, masterplanning options, and multi-criteria assessment of development

scenario, refinement of the masterplan and the development of the structure plan.

(d) Stakeholder consultation.

(e) The preparation of plans and the Whiskey Creek Urban Design and Landscape Report in collaboration with McIndoe Urban.

SUBMISSIONS

13. I have summarised the landscape design topics included in the submissions and provided comments on each topic below.

14. **A number of submissions talk about existing wildlife, ecological outcomes, and the Whisky Creek environs.** (*Submissions S7, S11, S20*)

15. I support the intention of these submissions and the statement in the S42a "that the proposed Conservation and Amenity Zone is likely to provide for a better and enhanced environment for wildlife following the intended rehabilitation and development of the reserve." I recommend that these submission points are rejected and no change to the structure plan is required for the following reasons:

(a) Currently the site is principally utilized as arable farmland. While this provides some pockets of habitat, it provides very little biodiversity and is a far cry from the rich swamp forests ecosystem that once covered most of the alluvial plains across the Manawatū.

(b) The plan change includes provision of over 8 Ha of reserve within the flood plain (approximately 10 Ha in total). The re-vegetation of this reserve and stream corridor has potential to provide significant ecological benefits in terms of water quality, habitat (both aquatic and terrestrial) and food source for fauna, as well as the ability to recreate a measure of forest cover. The scale of this reserve can provide a 'stepping stone' for fauna (most notably birds) moving within the suburban landscape and between significant ecological areas such as Manderson's Bush.

(c) As outline above and in the Urban Design and Landscape Report it is my belief that this reserve is well placed to enable significant ecological improvements to the site and wider city, enabling habitat creation and

public access / amenity that in turn will contribute to a distinctive place-based identity.

16. **The realignment of the Whiskey Creek stream and construction of the wetland require resource consent and impacts on freshwater will need to be addressed and consents approved by Horizons.** (Submission S18)
17. I support these submissions but recommend that no change to the structure plan is required for the following reasons:
 - (a) Currently the upper reaches of the creek have been altered from the original stream alignment. The intention within the masterplan is for a revitalised stream corridor that includes riparian planting, the introduction of new wetland features and enhanced biodiversity and habitats. Throughout this corridor a variety of new pedestrian and cycle paths are proposed linking with the wider street network and Mangaone Stream.



Figure 1: Aerial image of the existing site

- (b) As set out in the Urban Design and Landscape Report further work with inputs from the relevant stakeholders and experts will be required in the development of the reserve and revitalization of Whiskey Creek including alignment, ecological improvements and access, and I agree that additional consents will be required. It is worth noting that the above aerial photo (Figure 1) clearly illustrates the existing stream alignment and overland flows to the northern section of the site. With the exception of the

constructed field drains, the alignment of these are unaffected by the proposed roading and development areas shown in the plan change.

18. **A number of submissions request a buffer strip (houses to be set back or removed) along the boundary with houses on Meadowbank Drive** (Submission Points S1, S2, S3, S11 & S15)

19. I recommend that these submissions be rejected for the following reasons

(a) As outlined in paragraph 17 the location of the open space along the stream corridor provides for significant positive ecological outcomes. This open space location also provides amenity for both neighbourhood residents and the wider city, allowing strong connections to be forged with adjacent natural and rural environments. This is therefore a preferable location for public reserve.

(b) While a number of the existing dwellings, notably 23b and 21 Meadowbrook Drive (as illustrated in Submissions S1,S2 and S11) do have low fences and look out over the site. It is worth noting that many properties already have high (1.8m) fences and vegetation along the rear property boundary.



Figure 1: view of Meadowbrook Drive properties from the site.

Due to this prevalence of rear fences and properties backing on to the space I agree with the s42A report that the inclusion of a green strip of open space along the rear boundary of Meadowbrook Drive properties “*would not be consistent with good practice from an urban design perspective (i.e. having properties backing onto a strip reserve)*”.

I do however agree with the evidence of Andrew Burns in the recommendation to increasing the rear yard setback from 1.5m to a min 3m setback for any future dwellings that share a common boundary with Meadowbrook Drive. This, together with a 5m max height of any new

dwelling units adjoining properties along Meadowbrook Drive would in my view provide additional buffer on 'private land' between new dwellings and the existing Meadowbrook Drive properties. Additional measures such as aligning property boundaries where possible (as shown on the masterplan) would also enable effective ongoing control over fencing and boundary treatment.

SECTION 42A REPORT

20. I have read those parts of the section42A report relevant to my area of expertise, in particular Appendix I: Parks and Recreation Assessment from Aaron Phillips and note the report includes the following suggested amendments:
- (a) The neighbourhood reserve adjacent to the multi-unit housing be identified as a separate land parcel.
 - (b) That the stormwater treatment reserve, discussed in sections 3.12 to 3.14 of Appendix I, have any reference to open space or recreation functions removed.
 - (c) That buffer reserves, if any, consider the form and function matters raised in Section 11 of Appendix I.
21. I agree with and support these amendments.

CONCLUSIONS

22. It is my opinion that the landscape design approach as outlined in the masterplan (which underlies the plan change and structure plan) is design led and principle-based. This was informed by a robust process and I remain of the view that the Whiskey Creek Plan Change and Structure Plan restores ecological aspects of the site while developing the land for residential and recreational uses. This is consistent with best-practice landscape architecture and design.



Daniel George Males

18/05/22