

**IN THE MATTER OF** the Resource  
Management Act 1991

AND

**IN THE MATTER OF** a private plan change  
request ('Proposed  
(Private) Plan Change  
40: Wallaceville') to the  
Upper Hutt City District  
Plan made by  
Wallaceville  
Developments Limited.

## **STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF LAUREN WHITE**

### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 As co-author of the Wallaceville Structure Plan Report and an integral part of the consultant team, I have been closely involved with the preparation of the Plan Change request for Wallaceville. Urban design has therefore informed the development of the proposed Structure Plan and is encapsulated in provisions of the Plan Change and through additions and amendments to relevant Upper Hutt City District Plan rules.

1.2 The scope of my evidence includes a brief summary of the approach and content of the Structure Plan Report but, in response to submissions and recommendations in the Officer Report, focusses on the rationale, justification, and/or amendment to, or resolution of, a number of key design features, namely,

- Support for the proposed residential development on land south of Alexander Road and the proposed form and function of Alexander Road itself;
- The approach to Grants Bush, and conditional support to its proposed fencing and support for the proposed pathway;
- The rationale and outcomes for various interfaces with respect to Summerset Retirement Village, Ward Street, Wellington Racecourse, Kiwi Rail and Ministry for Primary Industries and the recommendation that the Plan Change adequately addresses them from an urban design perspective;
- In line with conferencing with Council Officers to which I was involved, and the recommendations in the Council Hearing Report, I am in agreement with the alterations to the proposed amendments and additions to the District Plan for the Proposed Urban Precinct, including the extent of commercial activity, an increased maximum building height, reduced side yards, and alternatives for private outdoor space provision;
- Support for a variable residential density in the Wallaceville Living Precinct (Area A and Area B).
- Support for the retention of an outcome related to limited business / commercial use in the Urban Precinct.

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 My name is Lauren White. I hold a Bachelor of Architectural Studies and a Masters in City

Planning and Urban Design from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. I am an associate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and a Senior Urban Designer with Harrison Grierson.

- 2.2 I appear in relation to a private plan change request ('Proposed (Private) Plan Change 40: Wallaceville') to the Upper Hutt City District Plan made by Wallaceville Developments Limited to rezone approximately 63 hectares of former Wallaceville Ag-Research site and a small part of the Trentham Racecourse property for residential and commercial uses.
- 2.3 I have approximately fifteen years' experience in providing professional urban design services in both the public and private sector, ten of which have been with Harrison Grierson, working on a range of projects, including a number of mixed use private plan changes.
- 2.4 My involvement in the Wallaceville Plan Change commenced in late November 2013. I am familiar with the subject site and its surrounds, having first visited the area in late 2013 to undertake site and context analysis. I also visited the site a number of times during the preparation of the plan change to better understand constraints and opportunities and to clarify design issues.
- 2.5 Although this is a Council hearing I note that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the Environment Court Practice Note (2014) and agree to comply with the Code. Except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence of another person, my evidence in this statement 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 which I express.

### **3.0 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

- 3.1 In my evidence I propose to:
  - a) Describe in brief the Structure Plan Report, of which I am the author, which is submitted with the Plan Change Request
  - b) Summarise and comment on the submissions received on the application that are relevant to my area of expertise;
  - c) Provide comments on the recommendation of the Officer's Section 42A Report related to my area of expertise; and,
  - d) Provide my recommendation on the Plan Change Request

### **4.0 SUMMARY OF TECHNICAL REPORT**

- 4.1 The preparation of the Wallaceville Structure Plan has taken a design led approach, integrating a wide range of technical experts and advice in order to develop a robust and creative framework for future development. It is the design-based document which forms the basis of my evidence and recommendations.
- 4.2 The Structure Plan has recognised the unique and significant opportunity that the site has to establish as a high quality residential neighbourhood in an excellent location in Upper Hutt. The urban design approach to the structure planning process has aimed to:
  - Understand and respond to the site's context, particularly unique historic and landscape values;
  - Bring together the different disciplines and professionals with an emphasis on a placemaking approach;

- Recognise stakeholder aspirations, including Upper Hutt City Council and the community.

4.3 The Structure Plan Report (December 2014) documents the preparation of the Wallaceville Structure Plan and provides direction and justification for the development of the specific and carefully considered precinct provisions. It commences with a thorough analysis of the site (supported by other technical investigations including an Urban Design Assessment), culminating in a set of 'Opportunities and Constraints' which then determined the design response.

4.4 Best practice urban design principles, together with the Upper Hutt Urban Growth Strategy, inform the vision for the site. The Upper Hutt Growth Strategy sets a clear aspiration for the site to develop as a medium to high density comprehensive residential environment, enabling residents to enjoy an attractive environment and take advantage of work opportunities, the central city, open spaces and particularly public transport infrastructure.

4.5 Some of the key features of the Structure Plan document include:

- A precinct approach which aims to create a number of different neighbourhoods within this large site and maximise the efficient use and value of this land resource;
- A specific precinct which recognises the unique historical values of the site and aims to establish a community focus and gateway;
- The retention of Grants Bush as an open space to provide amenity for future residential development while maintaining ecological site value;
- A key movement pattern and a set of road typologies to maximise external integration and ensure internal connectivity;
- A variety of interface responses to ensure integration of future development and minimise any potential negative effects.

4.6 Through the development of a Joint Working Group, the development of the Proposed Structure Plan incorporated input from a number of stakeholders, including both Upper Hutt City Council and feedback during consultation with a number of neighbouring land owners.

4.7 The design features of the Proposed Structure Plan are encapsulated in the Plan Change through the Precinct Descriptions, Intentions and Outcomes as well as through additions and amendments to the relevant District Plan rules.

4.8 During the development of the Structure Plan it became clear that there was insufficient clarity about a number of issues in the western portion of the plan change site (Area B). Uncertainty around the extent of the developable land (due to the Department of Conservation Covenant) and the ultimate use of land south of Alexander Road (subject to the outcome of Plan Change 36) restricted the ability to engage in robust structure planning of that portion of the site. As such, it was decided that the structure planning of this area be delayed such that future development can take advantage of any future development opportunity and respond appropriately to the future adjacent land uses.

## 5.0 URBAN FORM AND FUNCTION - WALLACEVILLE PRECINCTS

5.1 The following section of my evidence sets out the rationale for the relevant amendments and additions to the District Plan that are proposed to ensure that the intentions and outcomes for each Precinct are realised. I note that this section details the Precinct Descriptions and Outcomes, along with relevant District Plan amendments **as proposed in the notified Plan Change**. Section 7 of my evidence below contains my recommendations to

changes of a number of these in response to submitter concerns, Council recommendations and ongoing conferencing with Council officers.

- 5.2 Essentially a “greenfield” site, the AgResearch site has presented the opportunity to develop a unique residential environment, offering a point of difference and additional choice to people looking for a home in Upper Hutt.
- 5.3 The Structure Plan proposes that a number of precincts with specific intentions and outcomes included in the Wallaceville Structure Plan that will be incorporated in an Appendix to the District Plan and new objectives, policies, amendments to existing objectives and policies and amendments to standards and rules and new standards and rules proposed for the District Plan to ensure the intentions and outcomes of each of the precincts is realised. This Wallaceville Structure Plan and accompanying District Plan amendments respond to specific contextual opportunities and constraints across this large site and seek to encourage a range and diversity of land use activity and residential variety. The intention of the Wallaceville Structure Plan is to provide for a number of clearly distinguishable neighbourhoods and to create a high quality neighbourhood in Upper Hutt with a clear and unique character.
- 5.4 There are four precincts in the Plan Change area, namely the Gateway Precinct, the Urban Precinct, Grants Bush Precinct and Wallaceville Living Precinct. The precinct descriptions, intentions and outcomes are described in detail in the Wallaceville Plan Change and minor amendments to objectives, policies, rules and standards are proposed to the District Plan to ensure they are achieved. In brief, the Gateway Precinct is envisaged as a mixed use area which provides the social and community heart of the site and takes its cues from the heritage buildings, campus character and significant specimen trees. The role of the Urban Precinct is to deliver a higher density residential environment to support this heart and make responsible and efficient use of this land resource that is located in close proximity to the Wallaceville rail station. Grants Bush Precinct will be identified with Grants Bush and provides a transition from the higher density residential environments of the Gateway and Urban Precincts to the Wallaceville Living Precinct which will have a more traditional residential density, compatible with general residential use in the vicinity of this area. The Urban and Grants Bush precincts, with a proposed Residential (Centres) Overlay zoning anticipate that Comprehensive Residential Development will occur (to varying extent) that will largely be controlled and guided by existing rules for Comprehensive Residential Developments and Guidelines for Residential (Centres Overlay) Areas.
- 5.5 The Urban Precinct is intended to be visually discernible from the more traditional residential precincts in the Wallaceville Structure Plan Area, and indeed other residential areas of Upper Hutt. With respect to this precinct, a number of additions and/or variations to the District plan rules and standards have been proposed through the Plan Change in order to reflect aspirations for higher density residential developments in this Precinct. Additional new standards for the whole Wallaceville Structure Plan Area seek to address interface issues along the areas boundaries, predominantly noise and vibration.

### **Commercial Activity in the Urban Precinct**

- 5.6 The Urban Precinct is envisaged as being a compact high-density largely residential environment which supports the Gateway Precinct and maximises the use of public transport infrastructure. It also functions as a transition from the Gateway Precinct to the more traditional residential areas elsewhere in the Plan Change area. For this reason, it is anticipated that limited commercial activity may be established in this precinct. Another reason for this it that the existing farm management building and dairy building located in this precinct have been recognised for their heritage value in the *Wallaceville Redevelopment Upper Hutt – Heritage Assessment of Site* report and I am of the view that the reuse of these buildings would be more suited to a business / commercial use than a residential use. This is reflected in the specific reference to these buildings provided in the new extended

explanation to Policy 4.4.3.

### ***Building Height in the Urban Precinct***

- 5.7 Together with the intention for mixed and innovative/higher density residential typologies, the scale of some of the existing buildings and particularly some of the existing trees means that an increase in building height from the existing 8m standard is appropriate. As such, as notified, an 11m maximum building height is proposed for buildings that are developed as part of a Comprehensive Residential Development. This provides comfortably for three storey terraced typologies and low rise apartments as well as additional height for flexibility and a variety of roof forms.

### ***Building Coverage in the Urban Precinct***

- 5.8 In order to provide for more flexibility and increased density, together with the amendments detailed above, the Plan Change proposes to increase building coverage to 50% as a permitted activity (up from 35% for non-CRD development and 45% for CRD developments). I am of the view that this increase would help provide for smaller site sizes and a more urban character, while existing and additional rules concerning private outdoor space are utilised to ensure private on-site amenity is still retained on these smaller sites.

### ***Side Yards in the Urban Precinct***

- 5.9 In order to assist in delivering the intended outcomes of the Urban Precinct, as notified the Plan Change proposed to reduce side yards setbacks to 1m on each side. Current residential zone rules (that relate also to CRD developments) require one side yard of 1.5m and one side yard of 3m. The existing standards would require wider (and therefore larger) lots and contribute to a traditional suburban character. Narrower side yards in this precinct are sought to enable a higher net residential yield and the development of a different residential character than the other residential precincts of the Wallaceville Structure Plan. The reduced setback widths also provide more flexibility for residential subdivision and dwelling design that can better accommodate existing trees to be retained (and included in the District Plan schedule of notable trees) without resorting to very large sites.

### ***Private Outdoor Space for Comprehensive Residential Development CRD's in the Urban Precinct***

- 5.10 As the Urban Precinct is intended to accommodate terrace style housing, multiple level dwellings and low rise apartments, the Plan Change includes amendments to the outdoor living court permitted activity standards in order to allow for above ground dwellings developed as part of CRD's to achieve compliant outdoor living spaces. These can be achieved through a balcony(s) or roof terrace(s) with a minimum combined area of 10m<sup>2</sup> with a minimum dimension of 2.4m. These amendments seek to ensure that all dwellings enjoy sufficient and useable private outdoor space.

### ***Density of Residential Development in the Wallaceville Living Precinct (Area A and Area B)***

- 5.11 The intentions and outcomes of the Wallaceville Living Precinct (that incorporates Area A and Area B when a future structure plan is approved) are described in the Wallaceville Structure Plan and illustrate the intention for this area to establish as "traditional" suburban areas. I believe that, considering these Precinct's adjoining land uses, traditional style residential development represents the most appropriate land use. Notwithstanding the expectation that these areas will accommodate predominately standard residential developments, the Wallaceville Structure Plan also specifies that, a range of residential typologies (in addition to, and smaller than, the typical 400m<sup>2</sup> suburban sections) within the Wallaceville Living Precinct where this is considered appropriate. I support the inclusion of outcomes referring to the provision of a variety of housing density as this will provide housing choice for residents and visual interest in streetscapes. It enables residential

development to leverage off amenity provided by features such as public open spaces or tree-lined boulevards.

- 5.12 In all of Upper Hutt residential zones, the opportunity to subdivide sites at less than 400m<sup>2</sup> is provided for as a Discretionary Activity. This would then apply also to Wallaceville Living Precinct.

## **6.0 RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS**

- 6.1 In the following sections of my evidence I have evaluated and responded to the submission points that are relevant to my area of expertise.

### ***Land South of Alexander Road***

#### *Appropriateness of Residential Development*

- 6.2 A number of submissions<sup>1</sup> address the issue and relevance of proposing Residential (Centres) Overlay zoning south of Alexander Road. The Structure Plan indicates a small enclave of residential development nestled amongst vegetation on land currently identified as Rural Lifestyle Zone in the Upper Hutt District Plan. The remaining land currently zoned Rural Lifestyle is proposed to retain its zoning. My evidence below therefore only addresses the rezoning of the triangular enclave.
- 6.3 The decision to not propose a more standard conventional or suburban residential development (i.e. just Residential Zone with no overlay) in this area was carefully contemplated during the structure planning process. It was informed and supported by three key documents, namely:
- The Landscape and Visual Assessment;
  - The Integrated Transport Assessment; and the
  - Upper Hutt City Council Growth Strategy 2007.
- 6.4 The Landscape and Visual Assessment (as well as the Urban Design Assessment) recognises the value of the hills south of Alexander Road as an important landscape feature which provides the site, as well as the wider urban area, with a sense of place and visual connection to the Southern Hills. This vegetated backdrop is made possible due to the elevation of the hills and the tree growth on them and assists residents in the area with wayfinding and a sense of direction.
- 6.5 The proposed triangle area of residential development south of Alexander Road is located on low lying land which is devoid of tree planting and as such does not contribute to the elevated vegetated backdrop. As such, it is argued in the evidence of Ms. Melisa Davis, who authored the Landscape and Visual Assessment, that development of this area would not

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<sup>1</sup> UHTCA – S5.4  
Ian Stewart – S9.3  
Mark Walkington – S6.1  
Nick Saville – S10.9  
Mears – S15.1  
Mary Beth Taylor – S16.3  
Tony Chad – S17.2  
Forest and Bird – S20.3

reduce the value of the hills as a landscape feature. The structure plan design response includes identifying key road alignments which direct views towards the hills, thereby ensuring a visual connection from inside the plan change area to the surrounding landscape. Long distance views from within the plan change area would still be dominated by the elevated backdrop dwarfing any future residential development.

- 6.6 As outlined in the evidence of Ms Karen Jones, I understand there are no technical or engineering constraints which prevent this area of land from being developed for residential purposes. The appropriate intensity and character of residential development proposed by the Structure Plan is consistent with that on the northern side of Alexander Road, namely it is part of the Grants Bush Precinct which will consist of mixed residential typologies with a maximum building height of (8m) and two storeys.

Access to the land south of Alexander Road and Direct Access of Residential Allotments from Alexander Road

- 6.7 A number of submissions<sup>2</sup> have also raised concerns with Alexander Road and its relationship with the Plan Change area. The function of Alexander Road as a District Arterial was recognised during the structure planning process for the site. As further discussed in the evidence of Mr Mark Georgeson, from a traffic function point of view, it is accepted that Alexander Road carry significant volumes of traffic to and from the central city, some of it industrial in nature. From an urban design point of view, I consider it important that future residential development provide a good interface to the road, with active frontages, habitable room windows and lot layouts that create a sense of address. Residential amenity, pedestrian and cycle safety and visual appeal need to be balanced with traffic speed and volume. This will provide activity and surveillance of Alexander Road which is proposed to have a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 6.8 This approach of balancing movement function with placemaking is what has led to the proposal for the speed limit along this portion of Alexander Road to be reduced to 60km/hr and that formal traffic calming measures be adopted, in addition to a gateway feature to indicate to drivers the change in the speed environment and requirement for appropriate behaviour.
- 6.9 My colleague Mr. Mark Georgeson, author of the Integrated Traffic Assessment, has argued in his evidence that residential development south of Alexander Road assists with this change in nature of Alexander Road and its integration with the Plan Change area. New road intersections and individual property access will help to slow traffic and create a street environment that still fulfils its District Arterial responsibility but still performs as a street with both “movement and place” function.
- 6.10 With respect to traffic safety and individual property access to Alexander Road, I believe that there are design solutions to minimise potential conflicts if necessary, such as providing rear access to properties which front the road or providing for vehicle turning on-site in order to prevent cars “backing out” into traffic lanes. Requirements for on-site manoeuvring are already contained in the District Plan (standard 18.9 for the Residential Zone) and all new accessways are required to have practical vehicle access in accordance with the Code of Practice for Civil Engineering Works.
- 6.11 The decision to propose Residential (Centres) Overlay zoning in this area was also informed by its proximity to both the Wallaceville train station and the future neighbourhood centre proposed in the Wallaceville development. The Structure Plan Report illustrates that this area is within an 800m walking distance of the train station and as such should be

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<sup>2</sup> UHTCA – S5.4  
Ian Stewart – S9.2

developed in order to provide for residential development that can support the public transport infrastructure. The Upper Hutt City Council Urban Growth Strategy 2007, promotes sustainable development which makes efficient use of resources, including public transport infrastructure.

- 6.12 In summary, the development of this portion of the plan change area for residential use is appropriate as:
- it does not detract from or devalue the site's or wider area's landscape context;
  - it makes good use of land which is within walking distance of public transport and future community services; and
  - it assists the transition of Alexander Road to a slower speed environment which is more compatible with its adjacent residential land use.
- 6.13 On the basis of the above, I recommend that no modifications to the proposed zoning of the land to the south of Alexander Road and the relevant Gateway Precinct intentions and outcomes are necessary or appropriate.

### **Grants Bush**

- 6.14 As a covenanted area of natural bush, Grants Bush is a valuable amenity for the future residential development at Wallaceville. I believe that it will provide a unique landscape feature and character for the neighbourhood precinct that surrounds it. A number of submitters<sup>3</sup> have voiced opposition or concern about the Plan Change's approach to Grants Bush, including the intention of providing a pedestrian walkway / cycleway through the bush.
- 6.15 The bush, within the newly aligned boundaries of the Grants Bush covenant, is a natural feature that will be appreciated by the future residents and it is proposed that open space adjacent to the existing stand of native bush be utilised for active recreation. Co-locating open space functions is well recognised as beneficial and efficient. In his evidence, Mr Lowe shares this view.
- 6.16 The Structure Plan proposes to maintain the stand of bush and allow additional space around it for further tree planting. In line with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) considerations, indicative roads are identified on three sides of the bush area in order to ensure active frontage to the bush and that its amenity and character is visible to, and therefore appreciated by, all residents and the wider Upper Hutt community. A proposed plan change provision limits the maximum height of front yard fences within the Urban Precinct and Grants Bush Precinct to 1.5m in order to ensure surveillance of Grants Bush and the adjoining open space area
- 6.17 In order to ensure that good pedestrian and cycle connections are provided through the Structure Plan area, a public path is proposed through Grants Bush. This will provide residents in the western portion of the plan change area with a more direct link to the future neighbourhood centre in the Gateway Precinct and to the Wallaceville rail station. Also, the provision of a formal path will help to prevent residents from "short-cutting" along desire lines that could damage the bush.

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<sup>3</sup> Nick Saville – S10.2 to 10.6  
Mary Beth Taylor – S16.7  
Forest and Bird – S20.9



- 6.18 With respect to the proposed building height of residential development adjacent to the bush, the Structure Plan proposes an 11m / three-storey height limit in the Urban Precinct which borders the eastern boundary of the bush and along all other boundaries (in the Grants Bush Precinct) the existing 8m (two-storey) height limit will apply. Given the envisaged layout of internal roads as illustrated in the indicative Area A roading layout that forms part of the Wallaceville Structure Plan that will be incorporated into the District Plan, potential 11m or three storey buildings would be located across the road from Grants Bush and thus be distanced from it and thereby limiting visual impacts on the bush. In any case, the trees are rather substantial in height and I argue that three storey buildings would not unduly 'dwarf' these trees.
- 6.19 It is acknowledged that the ecological values of Grants Bush need to be protected. Such values are outlined and addressed in the evidence of Mr Mark Lowe. From an urban design point of view, its location in the midst of a future residential area has required some unique design responses which ensures it is integrated with its new context and does not undermine the connectivity of the future neighbourhood. Such design responses have been incorporated into the Wallaceville Structure Plan and on the basis of my opinions expressed above in relation to the submissions relating to Grants Bush I do not consider it necessary to modify such responses.

### ***Interface Issues – Summerset Retirement Village***

- 6.20 The structure planning process thoroughly addressed all interfaces with the Structure Plan area and includes a number of key controls to ensure future development does not adversely affect existing or future residents or ongoing operations of adjacent land uses.
- 6.21 A submission by Welhom Developments Ltd<sup>4</sup>, being the owners of the Summerset Retirement Village has been received which expresses concern about potential overlooking and loss of privacy for village residents, effects of potential construction noise, amenity issues and accessibility.
- 6.22 The Summerset Retirement Village is located on the north east corner of the Wallaceville Structure Plan Area. The land adjoining the village is proposed to be a more conventional residential precinct, namely the 'Wallaceville Living Precinct. This precinct will be zoned residential with no overlay area. I am of the view that the proposed zoning along with the intentions and outcomes specifically outlined for this Precinct are generally consistent and compatible with the built form of the retirement village. This existing residential zoning that applies to this precinct would allow two storey dwellings on standard residential lots (i.e. 400m<sup>2</sup>). Further existing residential zone standards such as boundary setbacks, site coverage and outdoor living court would apply. As no Residential (Centres) Overlay is proposed in this precinct a more intensive development than standard residential would require resource consent. While an outcome for this precinct states that higher density development may take place, it would only be where considered appropriate i.e. were it located at nodes in the movement networks, close to amenities or close to public open space. As such, no specific interface control was included in the Plan Change. Furthermore, with the anticipated interface of "back-to-back" development likely to occur across the property boundary (i.e. rear portions of residential properties adjoining the summerset boundary), it was considered that no specific fencing treatment be required.
- 6.23 However, with a view to pedestrian integration and the opportunity for residents of the retirement village to access and support the future neighbourhood centre in Wallaceville, the Structure Plan identifies a pedestrian connection to enable this to occur. The Wallaceville Structure Plan map has been amended accordingly.

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<sup>4</sup> Welhom – S18.1 to 18.9

6.24 I also note that as outlined in the submissions of Mr Andrew Collins for WDL, private agreements between the submitter and the applicant to address potential reverse sensitivity issues have been agreed. These will not and do not need to form part of the Wallaceville Structure Plan or the District Plan provisions that support the Plan.

### **Interface Issues – Ward Street**

- 6.25 Another interface that was carefully considered during the structure planning process was Ward Street as it functions as the “front door” or “gateway” to the new development and provides an immediate image and character for the Wallaceville Structure Plan Area. A submission<sup>5</sup> in opposition to the plan change raises concern about potential visual impacts on properties on the other (western) side of Ward Street.
- 6.26 The Ward Street frontage of the Wallaceville Structure Plan Area is characterised by very large trees that occupy almost the entire length of the frontage. These trees are already protected through the notable trees provisions in the Upper Hutt District Plan. As such, it is anticipated that relatively little change will occur to the Ward Street frontage of the Plan Change area. In addition it is noted that an outcome of the Gateway Precinct is that ‘fencing along Ward Street be retained as much as practicable’. While not intended, this precinct outcome, along with the location of existing notable trees greatly limits any additional access points being created along the Ward Street frontage.
- 6.27 Any future buildings in the vicinity of the sites Ward Street frontage will need to be setback from the notable trees’ drip lines and as such very limited change to the visual nature of Ward Street is anticipated. This whole Ward Street frontage is also part of a Category 1 Heritage Covenant and therefore subject to newly proposed controls in relation to signage and to new buildings. The new restricted discretionary rule for all new buildings in the Gateway Precinct (and therefore the Ward Street frontage) includes matters where Councils discretion is restricted. Such matters include consideration of the potential effects on adjoining properties.
- 6.28 In summary, the potential impact of visual change on properties on the other side of Ward Street is therefore considered to be very minor and suitably managed through both existing and proposed covenants and rules. Therefore no modifications are proposed to the Plan Change in response to the submission by Ian Stewart.

### **Interface Issues – Wellington Racecourse**

6.29 Area B of the proposed Structure Plan proposes to rezone the land to residential. The shape factor of the site is a response to the existing land use pattern associated with the racecourse, i.e. it follows the extent of the oval track and the “chute” which extends in a south easterly direction towards Alexander Road. Consultation with the racecourse during the assessment of opportunities and constraints and the development of the Wallaceville Structure Plan established the extent/boundaries of the Wallaceville Structure Plan area, some of which is not defined by existing cadastral boundaries. As a result, it proposes residential development on the land between the track and the chute.

Submission point S6.2<sup>6</sup> in the submission by Mark Walkington, opposes the Plan Change on the grounds that the future residential use of this part of the racecourse landholding restricts the view of the chute from the racecourse stands. I understand that there is no technical information that argues that this visual connection is necessary. Indeed, I note that the Wellington Racing Club itself supports the Plan Change and is satisfied that future residential use that will be facilitated with the rezoning is a compatible adjoining land use. As such, the land is determined appropriate for residential use, contiguous with the

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<sup>5</sup> Ian Stewart – S9.2

<sup>6</sup> Mark Walkington

remaining structure plan area. I therefore consider that no modification to the Plan Change is required in response to this submission point.

### ***Interface Issues – KiwiRail***

- 6.30 The Plan Change recognises the constraint of the railway line on its northern boundary and includes a number of provisions to protect future residential amenity along this interface and in turn protect this regionally significant asset. These include noise insulation, ventilation and an acoustic fence. As agreed between myself as an urban design expert and Malcolm Hunt as a noise expert, the height of the fence is proposed to be 1.5m. This will ensure a level of noise protection that Mr Hunt deems acceptable whilst at the same time providing some limited visual surveillance from the residential properties to the future shared cycleway/walkway that will be provided within the railway corridor.
- 6.31 Mr. Malcolm Hunt will address noise issues as part of his evidence. From an urban design point of view, the resultant residential amenity of properties as well as the surveillance of the public walkway is acceptable under the current provisions proposed in the Plan Change. From an urban design perspective no modifications are considered necessary to address the KiwiRail submission.

### ***Interface Issues – Ministry for Primary Industries (Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Diseases)***

- 6.32 This submitter<sup>7</sup> has voiced concern about potential reverse sensitivity effects generated by future residential development on its southern boundary. These include noise effects and security issues. The plan change proposes to manage this interface through both private covenants and through existing district plan standards (i.e. sunlight access, site coverage, outdoor living spaces etc) and proposed district plan standards (boundary fencing and ventilation). The proposed fence is to be 2.0m in height in order to provide for acoustic protection. Unfortunately, this fence is located typically on the north side of future residential properties and will shade their north facing private outdoor spaces. This is a compromise that needs to be made in order to allow for efficient land utilisation in this location.
- 6.33 Residential development adjacent to the Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Diseases will likely improve the safety of the site as it will limit access to and along its boundaries. The rear of private residential sections along its boundary will mean that these boundaries are potentially less visible or exposed to the general public. The existing operations on the adjoining site will be protected through the existing business commercial and residential zone standards and through the introduction of new ventilation and fencing standards that seek to specifically address this interface.
- 6.34 In addition, I note that there are a number of trees within the vicinity of the MPI boundary that are proposed to be included in the schedule of notable trees making development in the immediate vicinity of the boundary with the MPI site relatively difficult. Therefore, I believe that, in combination, these measures and new and existing standards will address the reverse sensitivity concerns raised in the submission. I therefore do not recommend any modifications to the Plan Change in this respect.

## **7.0 THE SECTION 42A REPORT**

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<sup>7</sup> MPI – S13.1 to 13.5

7.1 The following section of my evidence evaluates the comments and recommendations made by Council Officers with respect to the provisions outlined in the previous section above.

### **Fencing of Grants Bush**

7.2 In her Officer Report, Ms Boyd recommends that the Plan Change require both the perimeter of, and pathway through, Grants Bush be fenced. With respect to fencing the perimeter, I would question the purpose and efficacy of the fencing as public footpaths are provided along adjacent roads. That said, I could support this recommendation subject to controls on the type and height of fencing, such that it was attractive and permeable and would not reduce the amenity and surveillance of the bush. For example, a typical batten and wire fence would be appropriate and would keep pedestrians on the paths.

7.3 **Recommendation:** Ms Blick has proposed a wording amendment to the Grants Bush Walkway Description, I support the proposed amendment. I also note that these amendments were agreed with the relevant Council Officers and the amends are detailed in the Joint Statement provided to the Hearings Committee on 1 July 2015.

### **The Grants Bush Walkway**

7.4 Ms Boyd has recommended that the Wallaceville Road Typologies be amended to ensure that the proposed pedestrian/cycleway through Grants Bush is appropriate and that it is fenced. Along with Mr Lowe, I also challenge the purpose of the fence, particularly if the perimeter was fenced as per my discussion above. Unless the fence was relatively low (say maximum of 1m) and of visually permeable material (an example described earlier), I could not support this recommendation as I believe it would generate issues with public safety. It is important for users of the pathway to have sightlines down the path as it meanders, as well as sightlines around corners to prevent accidents.

7.5 As notified it was intended that a shared path of 1.4m be provided to enable pedestrians and cyclists to be able to pass each other. In order to protect ecological values of the bush, I note however that Mr Lowe has recommended that cyclists be excluded from the walkway. If this is deemed necessary, I would still argue for the retention of the path as a valuable pedestrian connection which promotes connectivity through the site.

7.6 Whether shared or pedestrian only, the proposed width of 1.4m is considered to be the minimum practical width, particularly considering that vegetation can overhang the path. It is anticipated that this path be a metallated surface with timber edging and that it not be illuminated for night time use. I note that Mr Lowe has suggested raised boardwalks be incorporated where necessary to protect the bush floor. I support this recommendation.

7.7 **Recommendation:** Ms Blick has proposed a wording amendment to the Grants Bush Walkway description in the Wallaceville Road Typologies. I support this amendment. I recommend that **no change** be made to the proposed width of the walkway as proposed.

### **Commercial Activity in the Urban Precinct**

7.8 In her Officer Report, Ms Boyd raises her concern with the potential expectation for commercial and business use in the Urban Precinct and wishes to remove reference to this activity in the Precinct Outcomes as described and referenced in the Wallaceville Structure Plan.

7.9 One of the drivers for the outcome relating to business / commercial use in this precinct is

the presence of the existing farm management, dairy buildings and other existing buildings and the opportunity they present to be retained and re-used in the future if appropriate uses are found for them. This outcome is more likely to be achieved should business or commercial use be specified as an outcome for the Urban Precinct by the Plan Change.

- 7.10 While I appreciate the concerns raised by Ms Boyd and agree that non-residential activities should be concentrated in the Gateway Precinct in order to support this precinct's establishment as the social and retail heart of the new development, it is my view that limited business and commercial use is appropriate in the Urban Precinct. Such land use would be adequately controlled as a fully Discretionary Activity which requires a resource consent. The existing matters for considerations for resource consent applications require consideration of, among other things, compatible scale, site layout, and amenity values. Furthermore, the proposed Plan Change includes additional matters for consideration (18.37) including 'the extent to which the subdivision and/or development is consistent with the Wallaceville Structure Plan'. Changing the reference to such activity in the Precinct Outcomes from "some" to "limited" will indicate the intention for the scale of such activities to be small. Given the use of the word 'limited' it is likely that a proposal for medium to large scale business / commercial activities would be deemed inconsistent with the Structure Plan. With respect to the concern about the extent of business/commercial use and potential undermining of the vitality/viability of the Gateway Precinct, I consider the revised wording of the outcome as proposed by Ms Blick is sufficient.
- 7.11 **Recommendation:** I recommend that the outcome in the Urban Precinct description relating to 'limited business / commercial use' be retained. I recognise, that for clarity and to provide Council with additional comfort as to the level of business / commercial use, Ms Blick in her evidence has proposed minor wording changes to this outcome. I support these wording changes.

### **Building Height in the Urban Precinct**

- 7.12 Whilst supporting the proposed height increase in general, Ms Boyd and Ms Duffell of Council have expressed concern that the proposed height limit of 11m could allow for four storeys. I also note that this concern was raised in the submission of Upper Hutt City Town and Country Association. I acknowledge that there is some precedent and risk of potential development achieving four storey of development under an 11m maximum height limit, which may result in poor outcomes with respect to ground floor frontages, building form and poor streetscapes. For example, if a four storey building is designed to comply with the 11m height, this may result in flat or uninteresting roof forms. Such developments are clearly not intended under the proposed standard and the corresponding precinct outcome:
- *Three storey height limit (11m) to allow for three storey attached terrace and low rise apartments with pitched roof forms*
- 7.13 I accept this issue needs to be addressed and agree that the maximum height limit should be amended to reflect the specified outcome and to provide only for three storeys of development. I do however acknowledge that allowances should be made for enough scope within the standard to allow for a variety of roof forms. As such, I recommend that the proposed rule is amended to allow for a 9m building (to the top of wall /roof junction) with an additional 2m in height provided to allow for pitched roofs or roof features (such as gables). In response to concern raised by Council. I accept the inclusion of a restriction that prevents any habitable rooms in this additional height space. The 2m "roof allowance" provides for flexibility of roof pitches, particularly across wider low rise apartment floor plates.
- 7.14 **Recommendation:** Maximum building height in the Urban Precinct be limited to **9m**, with an

additional allowance for roof projections of **2m**. I agree with the particular amendments proposed to the wording of the standard specified and the outcome as included in the evidence of Ms Blick. I also note that these amendments were agreed with the relevant Council Officers and the amends are detailed in the Joint Statement provided to the Hearings Committee on 1 July 2015.

### ***Building Coverage in the Urban Precinct***

- 7.15 Ms Boyd and Ms Duffell have recommended that the proposed increase in building coverage to 50% in the Urban Precinct not be adopted into the District Plan. This is 15% above the residential standard and 5% above the CRD / Residential (Centres) Overlay standard. Whilst the intention to create a higher density residential precinct is supported, it is also acknowledged that no precedent exists in the District Plan to address outcomes associated with this extent of building coverage as a permitted activity.
- 7.16 Should a non-CRD proposed development in the Urban Precinct wish to exceed the permitted activity rules (i.e. exceed 35% building coverage) it would need to be assessed as a restricted discretionary activity. Further, if CRDs which seek an increase in coverage above the permitted activity standard (45%) would require consent as a discretionary activity, Council's assessment of the potential effects of increased building coverage would not be restricted.
- 7.17 **Recommendation:** Maximum building coverage is **excluded** from the Plan Change. This exclusion was agreed with the relevant Council Officers and is detailed in the Joint Statement provided to the Hearings Committee on 1 July 2015.

### ***Side Yards in the Urban Precinct***

- 7.18 Current rules for side yard setbacks are one side of 1.5m and one side of 3m. These standards apply to both standard residential developments and CRD within Residential (Centres) Overlays. While I acknowledge that Ms Boyd supports in principle the desire to see a more urban character in this precinct, I appreciate her concerns surrounding unintended and undesirable outcomes associated with 1m minimum side yards as proposed by the Plan Change. Through discussion, it is agreed that 1.5m side boundaries on both sides would still provide for the intended outcomes of the precinct while not deviating in any significant way from the current provisions of the District Plan.
- 7.19 I also agree with the recommendation that the reduced side yards relate only to CRD developments only.
- 7.20 **Recommendation:** Adopt the recommendation that minimum side yards in the Urban Precinct by **1.5m** on both sides. I note that these amendments were agreed with the relevant Council Officers and the amends are detailed in the Joint Statement provided to the Hearings Committee on 1 July 2015.

### ***Private Outdoor Space in the Urban Precinct***

- 7.21 As it is anticipated that some dwellings will be developed entirely above ground level in the Urban Precinct, provision has been made for private outdoor space to be provided as above ground spaces. As part of her report, Ms Boyd has requested additional clarity be provided and terminology amended in order to ensure good outcomes, i.e. that adequate useable

outdoor living spaces be provided to above ground dwellings. As such, it is agreed that for a dwelling located entirely above ground, the term “roof terrace” be omitted as a private outdoor option, outdoor living space (balcony) is stipulated to be accessible from a living room and have a minimum width of 2.2m. It is also agreed that the option proposed by the Plan Change to provide shared outdoor space communally at ground level be excluded. This shared space is still seen as valuable amenity but considered an extra to individual private outdoor areas.

- 7.22 **Recommendation:** Private outdoor space for dwellings that have no habitable rooms at ground level in the Urban Precinct is provided by way of a balcony or terrace that is accessed from an **internal liveable room** and has a minimum depth of **2.2m** and a minimum area of **10m<sup>2</sup>**. I agree with the particular track changes made to the outdoor space provision in line with this recommendation as provided in the evidence of Ms Blick.

### **Density of Residential Development in the Wallaceville Living Precinct (Area A and Area B)**

- 7.23 Council Officers in conferencing have identified a potential discord in the Plan Change’s approach to, and description of, the potential residential density in the Wallaceville Precinct and Area B. In particular they have expressed concern with the inclusion of the following outcome in Area A of the Wallaceville Living Precinct:

- Some pockets of higher density comprehensive residential development located at nodes in the movement network and adjoining public open space

- 7.24 And the following outcome in the Area B description:

- Higher density pockets to be located at nodes in the movement network and adjoining public open space

- 7.25 Whilst it is the intention that these areas establish predominantly as “traditional” suburban areas, Council appear concerned about the extent to which the above outcomes set up an expectation for higher density comprehensive residential development despite these areas not having the Residential (Centres) Overlay that is associated with such development. As no overlay is proposed in these areas I recommend that the wording be amended slightly to refer to “areas of variable density” as opposed to “clusters of higher density”.

**Recommendation:** That new Policy 4.4.15 and its explanation along with the intentions and outcomes for Area A and Area B of the Wallaceville Living Precinct be amended to replace ‘higher density development’ or ‘comprehensive residential development’ with ‘areas of variable density development’ in appropriate locations. I agree with the track change wording included in the evidence of Ms Blick

## **8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 I support the rezoning of the Wallaceville site as an area with a mix of zones with a precinct approach to promote variety, protect unique site values and create a sense of place. Urban design has been integrated with the planning process to achieve a plan change which encapsulates the intended spatial outcomes through relevant additions and amendments to the District Plan. The minor amendments proposed in response to submitter concerns and the recommendations in the Hearing Report, I believe assist in reaffirming the distinctive intentions and outcomes developed for each of the Precincts.

- 8.2 In summary, my recommendations include:

- Retaining the small pocket of residential use south of Alexander Road;
- Retaining the potential for commercial activity in the Urban Precinct but recognising its appropriate scale and extent;
- Minor amendments to relevant bulk and location standards as agreed with Council, including building height, side yards and private outdoor space;
- Minor amendments to the Structure Plan map which indicates pedestrian connections to both Summerset Retirement Village and the south side of Alexander Road and;
- Minor amendments to the described outcome with respect to residential density in the Wallaceville Living Precinct.

8.3 I am of this opinion that these recommendations and their respective outcomes will deliver a high quality and varied residential environment, which is supported by appropriate business and commercial uses and well integrated with its existing context. They also enable the distinctive natural and historic site values to be recognised and harnessed to create a neighbourhood with a unique sense of place

<b>DATE</b>	2 July 2015
<b>NAME</b>	Lauren White
<b>POSITION</b>	Senior Urban Designer, Harrison Grierson Consultants Limited
<b>SIGNED</b>	