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Dear Ms Tessendorf

PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 21: TRAFFIC ASSESSMENT

As arranged I have considered traffic implications of the proposed plan change, and report as follows.

1. Background

Proposed Plan Change No. 21 (PPC 21) provides for rezoning of approximately 0.85 hectares of land from General Recreation Activity Area status to General Residential. The land is currently owned by HCC but the intention is for it to be sold for development.

2. Scope

This assessment considers traffic matters relevant to the plan change evaluation under Section 32 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). These include the ability of possible developments to comply with permitted activity conditions, and the potential for adverse effects on road safety and efficiency.

3. Description

The land to be rezoned is currently part of a recreation reserve adjacent to the site of the former Otonga School. The school closed some years ago and its site is now being redeveloped for housing.

While 0.85 hectares of the reserve is to be rezoned for residential use, a further 0.65 hectares is to be retained as recreational land. Both areas are in grass.

Access to the land is by a right of way off Oakleigh Street, shared with residents of the housing development on the Otonga site. The right of way is for inward movements only, with outward traffic leaving the site through the Maungaraki Road entry to Belmont Regional Park. A short length of the exit route passes along an otherwise unformed section of Maungaraki Road.

Oakleigh Street and Maungaraki Road are both classified as Access Roads in the District Plan roading hierarchy, indicating that their predominant function is to provide local access. At this point both streets have a kerb-to-kerb width of 10.0 metres. Oakleigh Street has footpaths on both sides, Maungaraki Road a footpath on one side only. Traffic flow along the route is estimated to be approximately 500 veh/day.

4. Potential development

Under its current status of General Recreation Activity Area, permitted activities are confined to recreation, recreation ancillary activities and landscape furniture. Buildings and structures are limited to an area of 100 square metres, or no more than 15 per cent of the total site. The scope for development is therefore very limited.

If the plan change proceeds, part of the land will become General Residential Activity Area, with the potential to be subdivided into residential allotments with a minimum area of 400 square metres. As shown on Tonkin and Taylor Drawing 84009.004-04, there is room for up to around eleven lots to be formed.

Base plan: from Google

Figure 1: Cul-de-sac roading

While the form of access is a matter to be determined by the developer at the time of subdivision, two means of access are possible, as shown in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 shows a new public road formed from Maungaraki Road at the entrance to Belmont Regional Park, giving ready access to both the

development area and to the remaining area of recreation reserve. A new intersection would be formed at the park entrance, leading to a new roadway with a turning head at the end. The existing right of way into the Otonga School site would remain in place. (Note: the two diagrams show former school buildings, not the more recently constructed housing.)

Such a roading system could be largely compliant with the District Plan. A 7.2-metre wide carriageway would be required, with footpaths on one or both sides. The section through Belmont Regional Park could be entirely within legal road and could be constructed as of right.

Base plan: from Google

Figure 2: One-way road

Figure 2 shows an alternative method of access, with a one-way through route based on the present one-way circulation system. With one-way movement the carriageway could be narrower with widths in the range 4.0 to 5.0 metres, similar to those of the present right of way. Because this could easily be

blocked by a parked or disabled car, recessed parking or paved shoulders may be desirable features. Parking for visitors would also be useful.

The roading could either be vested as road, or else maintained as a private right of way.

Whether or not the system had equivalent functionality to compliant two-way roading, one-way circulation systems are not specifically provided for in the District Plan, and a number of non-compliances would need to be assessed, including the width of accessway and a failure to meet roading design standards within the section of legal road through Belmont Regional Park. If the number of potential dwellings exceeded ten then resource consent would be needed if the roading remained private. It can be noted however that these issues were faced during assessment of the development within the Otonga School site.

A third option might be to negotiate use of the existing right of way through the Otonga site. This would however involve a substantial increase in the number of properties served by a private right of way, raising operational and maintenance issues, not to mention being well outside normal Council policy. A further practical issue is that the right of way is several metres higher than the proposed development area, which means parking would need to be on elevated car decks or at first floor level.

5. Parking

Whichever access system is adopted, all allotments will be capable of meeting the normal District Plan parking requirement of two spaces per dwelling.

At various times there will be a demand for visitor parking, not only for people visiting residents but also for persons using the reserve. From time to time there will be large-scale events taking place in Belmont Regional Park, resulting in a large demand for on-street parking. If a two-way road is formed, parking can take place with only minor inconvenience to residents. If narrow one-way roading is used, the roadway could easily be blocked by parking, and if the road were vested as a public road then it would not be possible to exclude non-residents.

6. Effects on roading network

Typically residential dwellings generate between five and ten vehicle movements per day. If approximately ten lots are created therefore, total generation will be in the range 50 to 100 veh/day, which compares with existing flows on Oakleigh Street and Maungaraki Road, currently around 500 veh/day. These are small figures, well within capacity of the route.

Additional traffic will access existing roads at the right-of-way entrance in Oakleigh Street, and at the entrance to Belmont Regional Park. Both access points have satisfactory visibility, with sight distances of 70 metres or more.

Beyond the immediate vicinity effects on the network are likely to be very small.

An examination of the New Zealand Transport Agency crash database shows that during the 2005-2009 five-year period four accidents were reported on Oakleigh Street, none of which resulted in injury. (At the time of writing results for the 2010 year are incomplete. Only two crashes occurred near the site, the

other two were at the Dowse Drive intersection. In my view the record shows no evidence of a significant existing safety problem.

7. Conclusions

PPC 21 proposes to make an area of recreational land available for residential development, with potential for up to around ten new lots.

Although the site is located behind existing housing, it will be possible to develop satisfactory access roading, with either a new cul-de-sac road or a one-way roading system.

In developing a subdivision and development layout, it should be possible for all lots to comply with District Plan parking requirements.

Additional traffic flows will be small in relation to present traffic levels on Oakleigh Street and Maungaraki Road. Effects on the roading network are expected to be minor.

It is concluded that development which the plan change provides for can be implemented with only minor effects on traffic safety or efficiency.

Yours faithfully

Bill Barclay

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