

**BEFORE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONERS
IN CHRISTCHURCH**

TE MAHERE Ā-ROHE I TŪTOHUA MŌ TE TĀONE O ŌTAUTAHĪ

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of the hearing of submissions on Private Plan Change 18 Cashmere
Fields/Hendersons to the Christchurch District Plan

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ABIGAIL ALICE SMITH, LANDSCAPE, ON BEHALF OF
CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL**

Dated: 1 September 2026

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY EFFECTS

1. My full name is Abigail Alice Smith. I am employed by Christchurch City Council as a Senior Landscape Architect with the Professional and Technical Services Unit.
2. I have prepared a landscape and visual amenity effects evidence report in relation to Private Plan Change 18 (PPC18), which seeks to make an amendment to the existing Hendersons Outline Development Plan (ODP) in the Christchurch District Plan. The amendment seeks to rezone a section of north-eastern Hendersons Basin to Residential New Neighbourhood Zone (RNN) from Rural Urban Fringe Zone (RuUF).
3. This summary statement highlights the conclusions and recommendations contained in my evidence report. I was asked to evaluate the landscape and visual amenity effects related to PPC18 and to consider whether the proposal will provide a well-connected and attractive urban area, in response to the submissions received and the Urban Design Statement (UDS) provided by Jade McFarlane of Elliot Sinclair.

Urban Design Statement

4. I consider the UDS to be reasonably comprehensive. I generally agree with the conclusions, however I have a few concerns as to whether the proposed provisions are strong enough to achieve desirable landscape and visual outcomes to provide a well-connected and attractive urban area.
5. The UDS mentions in a number of places that the development will “be environmentally responsible, socially integrated and visually attractive, building upon the site’s natural and cultural identity”. It also states that “the proposal is expected to deliver a high level of visual amenity”. As the majority of the development, particularly that on the RuUF interface, contains extensive areas of wetlands or stormwater basins which will provide this, I am broadly supportive of the conclusions reached in this regard.
6. In my opinion, while the UDS identifies a range of potential benefits arising from the proposed development, many of the potential benefits are not supported by sufficient analysis or explanation of the specific mechanisms that would deliver them. Consequently, the assessment is not considered to clearly demonstrate how the proposal will successfully integrate with the surrounding environment, particularly the established residential areas of Hoon Hay and the Cashmere Road frontage. Without this level of detail, it is difficult to determine whether the development will achieve the stated objectives of creating a well-connected, legible and attractive urban area. Further consideration and explanation is required to demonstrate how these outcomes will be achieved.
7. My key observations and conclusions of the UDS are summarised as follows.
 - The UDS does not address or provide a clear design framework ensuring connectivity and integration with the surroundings.
 - The UDS in regard to the proposed ODP is silent on the scale, density or implications of the proposed zone change on the surrounding area. It is therefore unclear how mitigation

measures along boundaries with surrounding neighbourhoods will assist in reducing the overall visual impact of the proposal.

- The UDS does not address the impact on the rural character interface between the existing residential areas of residential Hoon Hay and the site.
- The UDS is inconsistent in regard to existing vegetation.
- The UDS is silent on the fragmented green space network.
- I support the UDS's peri-urban characterisation of the site, and the UDS assessment describing the existing visual character of the peri-urban areas as providing a modified rural outlook.

Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Matters

8. Regarding landscape character and visual amenity matters in relation to the proposal, I have reached the following conclusions.
 - The receiving environment is a modified rural landscape and as such displays a generally low to moderate natural character and low to moderate visual amenity due to the proposed developments position within a peri-urban landscape.
 - Although a modified landscape, the openness of the rural character of the site is greatly valued by residents and the wider community and therefore carries a high associative landscape value.
 - Adverse visual amenity effects will be greater during the development phase and will slowly diminish as planting establishes. Overtime the development of reserves, stormwater basins, road reserves, street tree planting and planting within residential properties will greatly reduce the overall adverse visual effects.
9. In my opinion, the landscape and visual amenity impact of the proposal could be further mitigated through a number of modifications to the proposed ODP Plan and associated provisions, which I have recommended to address the matters identified above.

Recommendations

10. I have recommended that there are modifications made to the proposed ODP Plan to ensure the best outcomes for landscape and amenity are achieved. These are summarised as follows.
 - The areas shown on the plan for stormwater basins and naturalisation should be retained as RuUF (as long as it does not result in small, disconnected pockets of RuUF land), as this zone provides more protection through the consent process.
 - Consideration should be given to reserves being zoned as Open Space Community Parks to allow development to be undertaken cohesively. This could include the open spaces and stormwater basins along Cashmere Road.

- Regarding the interface between the existing established residential areas and the new development the following is suggested to ensure more appropriate landscape outcomes are achieved.
 - Increase the width of open space along Cashmere Road on the ODP Plan to allow for the retention of existing established vegetation (particularly trees). Providing a large area as open space community parks (or similar) would ensure that the interface with Cashmere Road is protected. It is recommended that the existing trees along the Cashmere Road frontage be protected through the consenting process.
 - Provide open space on the ODP Plan between the existing residential area and the new residential area to allow for a visual buffer between the new development and existing neighbourhoods to assist with reducing reverse sensitivity effects and to provide a more connected community.
 - Show clear and uninterrupted pedestrian, cycle and recreational routes from the existing residential areas, through the residential development to the proposed stormwater basins on the ODP Plan.
 - Clearly define stormwater management areas as distinct from recreational and open space areas on the ODP Plan.
11. I have provided in my evidence report a number of proposed changes to the ODP text to respond to submissions and discussion in response to landscape and visual amenity matters.

Conclusions

12. Having reviewed the UDS, I am of the view that it is comprehensive, and for the most part I agree with the findings and recommendations. Where I consider additional detail or amendments are required, I have provided recommendations to assist with ensuring a well-connected and attractive urban area in keeping with the surrounding area is achieved. Key conclusions are summarised as follows:
- Connections with the community, in particular the interface between the proposed residential areas and the existing Hoon Hay residential area have not been adequately addressed. Whilst I agree that the site is gradually transitioning to a more residential character, the UDS states that the rural character interface and reverse sensitivity issues will be addressed in the design solutions. The UDS itself, however, offers little detail on these matters and therefore further clarity is required. It is also noted that the Master Plan does not include open space along the existing Hoon Hay residential boundary, which is a key outcome necessary to achieve a well-connected and attractive urban area.
 - The retention or removal of existing vegetation and trees needs further detail and clarification, including further discussion on how the sense of place and ecological restoration will be achieved through the development with the use of planting.

- A seemingly fragmented green network and improved pedestrian and cycle connections need further consideration. Consideration of how CPTED principles will be integrated into the design of the development is encouraged to increase physical connections.
13. Further clarification is required regarding the naturalisation of the box drains, including those located along the residential boundary. These elements should also be incorporated into and clearly represented within the Master Plan.
 14. Many submitters expressed concerns about the loss of rural character and visual amenity resulting from PPC18. While change is expected, there is an opportunity to refine the proposed ODP and supporting provisions to ensure high quality, connected communities are delivered alongside residential development. Although the Master Plan aligns with the zone requirements, ODP requirements, and New Neighbourhood Design Guide, the interface between the existing Hoon Hay residential area and the proposed development has not been adequately considered from a landscape perspective.
 15. I consider that the RNN is an appropriate zoning and will manage the impact on the adjoining open space, RuUF and the existing residential area. The recommendations provided will better protect and enhance the receiving environment from potential adverse landscape character and visual effects created by this development and are considered to provide a more well connected and attractive urban area overall.
 16. If PPC18 is to proceed, it is my opinion that incorporating the recommendations outlined will provide a well-connected and attractive urban area, and that potential adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity would be at an acceptably **low** level.

Abigail Smith

1 September 2026