

Before the Independent Commissioner

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of an application by Foodstuffs South Island Limited for the establishment and operation of a PAK'n SAVE supermarket and fuel station at 191 Main North Road, and associated car parking, vehicle access, landscaping, signage, and storm water treatment (RMA/2018/2029)

Joint Witness Statement: Urban Design

1 November 2019

- 1 This joint witness statement sets out the extent of matters agreed as at 25 October 2019 between the experts listed below with respect to urban design matters arising from RMA/2018/2029.
- 2 The expert conferencing was held at Christchurch City Council on Friday 25 October 2019.
- 3 Participants at the meeting were:

David Hattam – Christchurch City Council

Jennifer Dray – Christchurch City Council

Andrew Burns – Foodstuffs South Island Ltd

Niko Young – Foodstuffs South Island Ltd

Tony Milne – Foodstuffs South Island Ltd
- 4 In preparing this statement, the expert witnesses have read and understood the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as included in the Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note 2014.
- 5 Mr Nathan Harris (Planner, Christchurch City Council) was present at the start of the meeting, to assist in the room set up, and at the end of the meeting, at the request of the experts to answer specific questions relating to policy. Mr Harris is not providing evidence with respect to urban design matters and did not provide input in relation to such matters at the conferencing.

Background

- 6 An appropriate urban design assessment framework for the application should consider the provisions in the Christchurch District Plan Chapter 3 – Strategic Directions, Chapter 15 – Commercial Zone, and given the Application Site’s underlying zoning, Chapter 16 – Industrial Zone. It is acknowledged however that neither Chapters 15 or 16 are a perfect fit for the application, and that site and activity-specific consideration should be brought to bear on any assessment. There was little discussion as to the weighting that should be given to the relevant policies and matters of discretion within these Chapters when assessing the urban design matters and effects of the proposal.
- 7 David Hattam is of the opinion that Chapter 15 is most relevant and will look to this for assessment with less emphasis placed on Chapter 16. Regarding urban design outcomes, David Hattam is of the opinion that the Proposal should be considered as a centre-like activity rather than an out of zone activity. Andrew Burns noted that the close proximity of a supermarket to fine grain retail, an office and possibly a

future school (though this is speculative) is suggestive of a place with centre-like qualities.

- 8 Responding to questions around policy, Nathan Harris confirmed that he considers Objective 15.2.4 'Urban form, scale and design outcomes' and policies 15.2.4.1 'Scale and form of development' and 15.2.4.2 'Design of new development' to be relevant.
- 9 Andrew Burns considers an assessment approach that presents 'general urban design matters' informed by best practice and District Plan policy direction as relevant to the site. David Hattam suggested that the provisions in the Commercial Chapter are a good starting point for any general principles.
- 10 A proposed change to the Proposal was introduced at the start of the session, relating to the potential removal of the Commercial Local (CL) Zone from the Application Site. This is further addressed at para 12 below.
- 11 There was high level discussion regarding the appropriateness of a supermarket in this location. The coarse grain of the urban block within which the Proposal sits presents challenges regarding finer grain levels of movement. There was general discussion and acknowledgement of the importance of integration.

Matters Agreed

- 12 **CL Zone land** - removing the portion of land to the northeast from the Application Site comprising the Commercial Local Zone was not favoured by David Hattam and his position is that excluding this site will not remove the issues he has with the proposed site layout and its integration. It was agreed that the CL Zone should remain as part of the Application Site.
- 13 **Connectivity and Integration** - it was agreed that walking connections north into the CL Zone, south into the Foodstuffs Head Office site and east towards Main North Road are important.
- 14 **Connectivity to the south** - it was agreed this is desirable, but traffic related matters appear to conflict with a better aligned pedestrian path. It was agreed that the proposed southern link from Main North Road into the site is circuitous and from an urban design and landscape outcome is not the most desirous. A straighter route that avoided the crossing at the junction with Main North Road would be preferred. It was agreed that this outcome was to serve people approaching the site from the south on the street. It was also acknowledged that this may be difficult to achieve and needs to be considered alongside vehicle access and safety matters, and this will be further explored

- 15 **Connectivity to the south** - it was also agreed a pedestrian route south to Foodstuffs Head Office is important, alongside the proposed vehicle access. However, it was also acknowledged that this may be difficult to achieve and needs to be considered alongside vehicle access and safety matters, and this will be further explored.
- 16 **Connectivity to the north** – it was agreed, as a minimum a shared pedestrian and cycle link should connect north into the CL Zone from the supermarket and car park. Improvements should be considered as to how the path traverses the CL Zone. Further to this, improved pedestrian amenity and access from the proposed supermarket north to the CL Zone was considered important but that vehicle access was not required. It was agreed that this link would be reviewed to achieve a more direct alignment.
- 17 **Connectivity to the east** - it was agreed that the proposed bus stop location on Main North Road reinforces the northern-most pedestrian route between Main North Road and the supermarket as the primary link into the Site. It was discussed that further landscape enhancement and path width is required and it was agreed that this could be achieved through surface materials and planting.
- 18 Allied to 17 above, it was agreed this northern-most pedestrian link connection to the supermarket needs landscape enhancement at and around the entry to the building to give it similar status to the southern market entry.
- 19 **Cycle connections** – it was agreed these should be included and indicated in the Proposal from Northcote Road (links back to Northern Line Cycle Way) into the Site. It was unclear to what extent Abley Transportation Consultants, and Council traffic officers, had already discussed this matter.
- 20 **Lydia Street right of way** - it was agreed that traffic safety and general safety and amenity of the proposed 1.2m wide pedestrian link along the Lydia Street access way was 'just' acceptable but is subject to detailed design including lighting. David Hattam qualified this by saying that while it is acceptable now, it may not be if a non-industrial activity such as a school is developed west of the supermarket, for instance due to the likelihood of a large number of pupils legitimately using the link. It was also agreed that for the area to the west of the application site, given the Lydia Street access needs to be two-way, any widening of the footpath would result in a narrowing of proposed planting, and therefore would result in a negative effect on the amenity being provided by the planting,
- 21 **Future western links** - David Hattam stated it would be desirable to future proof a western link to a future non-industrial activity (such as a possible school). In the absence of information on the school's plans, it was agreed that this cannot be designed as part of this application. However, there was general agreement that should this development occur then the Proposal can support it through the Lydia

Street access and to a pedestrian link west from Main North Road. It was agreed that while a link via the Foodstuffs Head Office access would provide a direct route this may not be favoured by the occupiers.

- 22 **Fuel Station structure design** – Neither David Hattam nor Andrew Burns were supportive of the design of the fuel facility structure as shown on the Proposal. It was agreed that the design of the fuel facility structure should be less utilitarian and less bulky and, subject to operational requirements, should be redesigned to achieve a more 'elegant outcome'. The fuel facility at the Frankton PAK'n Save, Queenstown was cited by Tony Milne as an example of a design that is receptive to, and acceptable within the special landscape context of its setting.
- 23 **Supermarket building design and signage** - David Hattam outlined issues regarding the scale and dominance of the yellow sign and the articulation of the building facade. Andrew Burns raised similar issues including signage design and relational scale to the parent building and modulation of the eastern facade. Niko Young discussed possible options with regard to architectural relief. It was agreed that these matters are relatively easily addressed and could be resolved through design. (Note that there was no detailed discussion as to the exact look of potential changes to the design of the supermarket's eastern elevation, except to note that the yellow elements should be subservient to the overall built form.)

Matters Not Agreed

- 24 **CPTED** - it was agreed that the area to the rear of the supermarket should be gated outside of business hours to avoid concealment and entrapment risks. It was acknowledged that this was a matter raised in the CPTED Assessment within the Rough and Milne Landscape and Urban Design Report. There was no overall agreement as to the location of the gates and Niko Young agreed to supply further gate location solutions to David Hattam and Jennifer Dray. There was no overall agreement on this matter.
- 25 **Supermarket position on the Site** - for reasons of street activation, centre design and pedestrian connectivity, David Hattam suggested the position of the supermarket building on the Site should be reconsidered. Andrew Burns, Tony Milne and Niko Young acknowledged that while there are urban design benefits of a frontage closer to the street, the issue goes beyond purely urban design matters. There are operational, functional (including emergency coordination) and safety requirements that dictate the current layout of the Proposal. Tony Milne also suggested for reasons of the relationship with the residential zone to the opposite side of Main North Road, as well the character of Main North Road, the setback was appropriate. There was no overall agreement on this matter.
- 26 **Fuel Station location** - both Niko Young and Tony Milne outlined that the location of the fuel facility as shown on the Proposal has been dictated by operational

requirements – primarily fuel tanker servicing. David Hattam was not supportive of the fuel facility location. Andrew Burns observed that an alternative location might improve both the visual experience of the Site from Main North Road and its level of pedestrian engagement.

Conclusion

27 It was agreed that a number of urban design matters can be appropriately resolved and managed through minor changes to the Proposal in combination with consent conditions. However, there are several urban design matters on which there is no overall agreement between the experts.

Dated 1 November 2019



Andrew D. Burns



Niko Young



Tony D. Milne



David Hattam



Jennifer Dray

