

File No: TM30395

16 July 2025

Timaru District Council
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To the Madam Chair and the Hearing Panel,

RE: POST HEARING LETTER OF CLARIFICATION – SUBMITTER NO 128 (SCOTT)

Thank you for the opportunity to present at Hearing G last week on behalf of our clients – Warren and Liz Scott (Submitter No. 128), in relation to their submission on the Proposed Timaru District Plan (PDP).

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IN LIGHT OF HEARING G:

To clarify the relief originally sought in the submission:

- a) *The primary decision sought is the retention of FDA3. FDA3 recognises that the site is suitable for urban development, and this has been further demonstrated through our evidence.*
- b) *This submission also seeks greater clarity on the timing of the preparation of the Development Area Plan and initiation of the associated plan change, and which party will initiate the plan change process.*
- c) *The alternate relief sought is to rezone the site General Residential Zone (GRZ) as part of the PTDP process*

Subsequently, our evidence also outlined a rezoning to **Future Urban Zone (FUZ)** as an intermediary option, recognising that live zoning may not be supported by the Council's s42A recommendations. We understand the Hearing Panel had a number of questions in relation to some overall matters associated with Hearing G, and our statements of evidence for the range of submitter sites we were representing (5 submitters/sites in total). As a result, we felt there was a reduced opportunity for the Scott's submission no. 128 to be traversed in detail, including the emphasis of important evidence.

We note that we had **35 minutes** allocated to present the statement of evidence for this client, however the Scott's time slot was used for 'overall' points of clarification from the Hearing Panel. We therefore consider that in fairness to the Scott's and for the Panels benefit, we wish to supply a written letter of

clarification, along with Mr Glen McLachlan's speaking notes (Appendix A - attached) and respectfully request that the Panel reviews both in full.

Furthermore, considering both our own planning and infrastructure evidence, and recent evidence presented by other submitters — particularly Submitter 81 (Mr. John Shirtcliff), we respectfully reaffirm and strengthen our statement of evidence position and that the panel consider the following as outlined below.

2.0 CONCERNS WITH THE PROPERTY ECONOMICS (PE) ASSESSMENT

Throughout our submission, evidence, and response to the Draft s42A report, we raised concerns regarding the robustness of the Property Economics capacity assessment. In our professional experience and local knowledge, the modelling appears to overestimate feasible capacity and underestimates actual housing demand by relying on outdated projections and optimistic lot yield assumptions.

It was only on Day 1 of Hearing G, during Mr. Heath's verbal evidence, that he confirmed actual average lot sizes modelled for the existing urban environment were larger than an avg. of 450 m², but still based on optimistic figures (circa. 586m² – Geraldine), which seem inconsistent with what's seen in practice and validated through our prior evidence with reference to the Colliers Report. We repeatedly requested from the TDC on multiple occasions for the methodology for how Mr. Heath arrived at assumptions made in relation to the lot size and its feasibility modelling for Geraldine. Given that the assumptions were made across the District we question the quantum data that has been used. The assumption method and settings should be different for Geraldine as a unique settlement compared to that of Timaru, Temuka or Pleasant Point. Further, this was also confirmed by Mr John Shirtcliff (Submitter 81).

3.0 COST BURDEN ON SUBMITTERS TO FILL EVIDENTIAL GAPS

Given the significant cost of engaging an economist to independently re-run capacity and demand forecasts, along with our fundamental questions to some of the assumptions remaining unanswered, we chose instead to focus our evidence on constructive inputs requested or anticipated by the s42A author, and/or needed now or for future planning works — including for example:

- An integrated draft outline development plan;
- Engineering servicing assessments (3 Waters and flood hazard); and
- A viable transport assessment; and

Subsequently given the strategic importance and reliance of the Property Economics report to inform Council throughout the whole District, we believe Council has a responsibility to independently validate

the PE analysis as part of their role in defending their own growth strategy and meet requirements of the NPS-UD.

The peer review process for this PE report is recommended. As part of the peer review it is important to ensure that the economic modelling and analysis reflects the local context of the District (as opposed to a metro setting assumption of Auckland for example).

4.0 SHIRTCLIFF EVIDENCE AND SUPPORT IN LIGHT OF OUR SUBMISSION POINTS

We respectfully highlight the evidence submitted by **Mr John Shirtcliff (Submitter 81)** in regards to **the population and growth of Geraldine.**

Based on Mr Shirtcliff's appearance at the hearing, he appears to bring a strong background in rural and urban economics, he delivered a **thorough critique of the PE analysis**, including for example:

- Independent **2023 Census meshblock population data**, confirming that **Geraldine has already exceeded the 2048 medium-growth projections** used in the PDP;
- Evidence of sustained growth in Geraldine over the last decade (+43% since 2013), which directly contradicts the capacity sufficiency assumptions and;
- The use of **Stats NZ sub-district population forecasts**, highlighting their historic tendency to under-project small-town growth.

We concur with Mr Shirtcliff's findings and submit that they **substantiate the core concerns we raised**, now with the added rigour of economic analysis — which we lacked the means to commission independently. His evidence **fills a critical gap** in the hearing record and validates our assertion that Geraldine's residential land supply is **neither adequate nor responsive** to the observed and forecast demand that will enable the Township to respond to growth.

5.0 WHY LIVE ZONING (GRZ) IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE RELIEF

We consider the appropriate and efficient planning response is to **rezone the Scott site to General Residential Zone (GRZ) now**, through the PDP process, given:

- a) The site has been identified (by Council) and proven (by our evidence) to be suitable for residential development;
- b) The **readiness of the site** to accommodate development;
- c) The supporting assessments already supplied;
- d) The fact **the site is not subject to the NPS-HPL** (as again confirmed by Matt Bonis at the hearing last week);

- e) The **growth-confirming evidence** presented by multiple submitters; and
- f) The growing fragility of the modelling underpinning the current sequencing regime (FDA3 with a 5-year delay),

In relation to (c) above, Mr Bonis confirms the site is exempt from the NPS-HPL and therefore Clause 3.4(4) **does not apply** to the Scott's land, or the larger identified FDA3 i.e. there is to be no consideration of need or capacity in respect to the rezoning, against NPS-HPL.

NPS-UD:

We consider that the case for live rezoning to General Residential Zone (GRZ) is strongly supported by the **National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD)**. The site contributes to a **well-functioning urban environment** by providing feasible and serviceable housing capacity within an identified growth area, supporting integrated infrastructure planning, and reflecting the evolving needs and values of the Geraldine community.

Furthermore, and as raised by the Panel on day 1 of Hearing G, we draw attention again to **Clause 1.5** of the NPS-UD. Which encourages **Tier 3** local authorities to adopt the approaches of Tier 1 and 2 councils, with **whatever modifications are necessary or helpful** to enable effective implementation. This includes providing for residential capacity with plan-enabled **and** infrastructure-ready zoned land.

6.0 RELIEF SOUGHT

Considering the statement of evidence and the points made above, we summarise the relief sought and respectfully request that the Panel consider:

- a) Amend the zoning of the Scott land (22 Templer Street) to **General Residential Zone (GRZ)** as part of the PDP; or
- b) Rezone the site to **Future Urban Zone (FUZ) with the view to rezone to GRZ in the nearby future**. This was framed in the context of working within the s42A's infrastructure caution, strong reliance on the PE report and burden of evidence to rebut the economics assessment. Should the Panel not consider live rezoning appropriate at this stage, we subsequently offered the Future Urban Zone (FUZ) as an alternative relief; or
- c) Should (a) or (b) as set out above not be deemed appropriate we seek that the **current FDA be reduced to a two (2) year timeframe** to enable the Outline Development Plan to be developed and approved. We then recommend that any subsequent GRZ live zoning will occur post this two (2) year timeframe by virtue of a District Plan change.

7.0 IN SUMMARY:

- We note that the site is not subject to the NPS: HPL. We also note that all other matters such as the infrastructure provision, traffic effects, flooding effects and the provision of an Outline Development Plan was addressed.
- We are of the view that the site contributes to a well-functioning urban environment by providing feasible and serviceable housing capacity within an identified growth area, supporting integrated infrastructure planning, and reflecting the evolving needs and values of the Geraldine community.
- We consider that the case for live rezoning to General Residential Zone (GRZ) is strongly supported as set out by **National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD)** in relation to **Clause 1.5** and **Clause 3.4** matters of the NPS-UD that sets out Council's obligations to have plan-enabled **and** infrastructure-ready zoned land.
- In light of the cumulative evidence now before the Panel, we believe the evidentiary threshold for full rezoning has been met and exceeded. If full GRZ zoning is not supported at this stage, application of the Future Urban Zone (FUZ) provides a standards-compliant and responsive alternative.
- We then assert that if these recommendations are not deemed appropriate then a reduction of the FDA to 2 years is recommended as a pathway.

Yours faithfully

DAVIS OGILVIE (AORAKI) LTD



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APPENDIX A

Glen McLachlan – Speaking Notes (Scott Submission #128 – Hearing G)

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Role: Director, Davis Ogilvie Aoraki – Representing Warren and Elizabeth Scott

Site: 22 Templer Street, Geraldine – Submission #128

Zoning Context: Within FDA3 – currently GRUZ + FDA overlay (DAP priority 5 years)

Relief Sought: Primarily relief is to retain the FDA 3 overlay, but request to amend its timing. Alternative relief sought is to rezone the site now. Now including potential alternative relief of FUZ.

Intro/Opening Remarks

Thank you Madam Chair and Panel for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Glen McLachlan, I'm a Director of Davis Ogilvie Aoraki, a multidisciplinary land development consultancy based in Timaru. I've worked across land development and infrastructure planning for over two decades both in New Zealand and internationally. I grew up in Timaru and have lived back here for approximately 18 years now, so I am very familiar with the district, including the context of this site.

Today I appear on behalf of Warren and Elizabeth Scott, the owners of 22 Templer Street. The Scott's are long-standing Geraldine residents with family links to the area going back over 115 years. They continue to be actively involved in various community beautification and planting initiatives throughout the Geraldine district.

As further background, the Scott's previously owned the land adjacent the site (between the site and Connelly Street). This land was developed as the McKenzie Lifestyle Village, however even back then (more than 10 years ago) consideration of Geraldine's logical growth was front of mind and considered the subject site, evidenced by the infrastructure corridor through the Village land to the site.

Nature of My Involvement

I am not presenting expert evidence in planning or engineering, I am here more as a **strategic advisor and in support** for the landowners. My role is to:

- Provide support and strategic input into the overall direction of the submission based on my experience within the land development and infrastructure industry, along with the decades of local knowledge I have,
- Where possible, I'll assist in responding to questions about the submitter's intentions and capability, and
- Reinforce the **practical, development-led perspective** on how this land can contribute to the District's future growth.

You will hear from our lead planner (Sonia Dolan) and infrastructure engineer (Selwyn Chang) who have provided evidence and will address technical matters where necessary, and/or be available to answer questions the Panel may have.

For context, Sonia Dolan has only just recently joined us as our Principal Planner, starting in early June, working remotely from Wellington until she moves down later this year. So she has had to come up to speed quickly with the information and matters associated with the Growth Chapter, our submitter's sites and Hearing G preparation.

I also consider it relevant to point out that Selwyn Chang's evidence and presence offers an experienced and balanced view, given his experience in both Local Authority and private practice. In particular his detailed understanding of the likes of asset/infrastructure management, LTP funding and Financial Contributions within the Local Government environment.

Our goal is to work openly and constructively with the Panel, the experts and Council to progress what we believe is a well-considered and appropriate residential development opportunity.

Before handing over to my team, some key points I would like to get across:

The Land Is Already 'earmarked' for Growth – Let's Not Stall It

- Council has **already identified this site** as FDA3 – a **priority Future Development Area** with a 5-year DAP horizon.
- It was identified in the **GMS 2022 Review as 'live zoning'** for urban development.
- Mr Bonis confirms the site is **exempt from the NPS-HPL** due to that GMS designation.
- We've taken this seriously — our team has prepared a **concept plan**, undertaken servicing assessments, and addressed hazards and cultural feedback.

We Disagree That There Is No Urgency

- From experience, I'd simply say that zoned land is not always developable land. While the PE land capacity assessment suggests sufficient zoned capacity, we've long argued that **zoning ≠ delivery**.
- We're not saying the Property Economics (PE) model should be ignored — but its outputs must be pressure-tested, peer-reviewed, and contextualised in the lived realities of each growth area and township. Given the importance and heavy reliance on this assessment, we consider this is a District wide matter, beyond the burden of an individual submitter to carry out.
- Infrastructure is typically designed for 100yrs, and current National guidance on planning for growth indicates that Councils should be planning for at least 50yrs, therefore given the situation we are in today and the evidence presented for this site, why wait?
- District Plan Changes and reviews are costly and time consuming. I believe we are already sitting at around 8 years since the initial/draft GMS for the district was debated at hearing in late 2017. To ensure our District can react to changing market demands we need a District Plan which can enable and respond to growth with suitable guardrails.

We're Ready to Work with Council – Let's Use the Right Tool

- We support the FDA overlay in principle, or more so the principle that the site has been appropriately identified as being suitable for future development. But **waiting for a DAP and rezoning leaves development stranded**.
- That's why we seek immediate rezoning, or as a potential alternative mechanism now suggest **Future Urban Zoning (FUZ)**, which is:
 - Recognised by the National Planning Standards.
 - Already used by **other Tier 3 councils** (such as: New Plymouth, Waitomo, Wairarapa).
 - Offers Council the oversight it needs, while enabling progress via structure planning.

As Mr Bonis points out, both FDA and FUZ follow a two-step structure plan + plan change approach — the key difference as I understand it is that **FUZ provides transparency and readiness**, whereas FDA sequencing acts like a gate that can't be unlocked until Council decides the time is right with 'zoning' still a hurdle.

On Infrastructure – We're Not Asking Council to Pay Now

- We're well aware of the infrastructure challenges and sequencing responsibilities.
- But deferring zoning **until infrastructure is fully programmed** is at odds with:
 - Good planning and the flexibility offered by FUZ (e.g. developer agreements or staging),
 - And most importantly, with recent **Government policy direction** issued last month (June 2025) *Going for Housing Growth* paper – which cautions against delaying zoning based on rigid funding horizons.
- This site is **low risk, readily serviceable**, and could be brought forward if paired with smart infrastructure planning.

Closing Remarks & Constructive Offer

To summarise:

- This land has been signalled for residential growth since at least 2022.
- We've listened to the s42A officer and responded with the homework — we're not asking for leapfrogging, just progress.
- If full rezoning to GRZ isn't supported now, we strongly believe **FUZ is the more responsive, transparent, and future-ready option**.
- Failing that, we ask for a **reduction in the FDA3 timeframe**, to reflect the site's readiness.

Finally, we're open to **post-hearing expert caucusing** — we believe in collaboration and are ready to resolve any residual concerns through structured, evidence-led dialogue.

I'll now pass over to Sonia and Selwyn to speak to their evidence. During this process and/or at the end, where I can add value and potentially answer questions I will endeavour to do so.