

24 APRIL 2024

**BEFORE THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL APPOINTED
PLAN CHANGE 14 INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL (IHP)**

Cindy Robinson – Chair
David McMahon – Deputy Chair
Karen Coutts
Alan Matheson
Ian Munro

**WITNESS STATEMENT BY CATHERINE SHIPTON IN SUPPORT OF THE SUBMISSION FROM
RICCARTON BUSH KILMARNOCK RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION (Submitter #188)**

INTRODUCTION 1
OVERARCHING VIEWS ON HIGH DENSITY DENSIFICATION 1
POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF PC-14 ON RICCARTON AND NEED FOR MITIGATION 2
SUMMARY 4

INTRODUCTION

1. Kia ora koutou.
2. Ko Catherine Shipton taku ingoa, no Ōtautahi Tūrangawaewae. I am a Riccarton resident – I live with my husband, my two-year-old son and my six-month-old twin boys.
3. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. The heart of the PC-14 is about providing for future communities. However, I am here to speak to you, first, as part of the existing Riccarton Bush & Kilmarnock (**RBK**) community and, secondly, as a mother on behalf of my beautiful wee boys.
4. I am going to outline some of the concerns my family and I have about the proposed PC-14 and the potential impact of these on us and our community.
5. In doing so, I am hoping to put it to the IHP to recommend that the Christchurch City Council (**CCC**) first provide for better infrastructure and other mitigation measures in our area to deal with increased population *before* allowing any such proposed plan changes to go ahead.
6. Otherwise, our existing residential community may potentially bear the burden of the proposed changes without necessarily receiving the benefits, particularly if the changes are rushed through.
7. Again, I appreciate you taking the time to listen – ngā mihi nui ki a koe.

OVERARCHING VIEWS ON HIGH DENSITY DENSIFICATION

8. First, I would like to start off by saying that my family and I are generally in favour of increased densification and understand the need for this in an increasing population. My husband and I spent nearly six years living in London, where we experienced the benefits of a densified city.
9. However, living in high density areas is difficult for several reasons and appropriate mitigation measures are needed for this to be a feasible way for communities to live successfully together. To put it plainly, people do not want to live in highly densified areas with poor support structures. In fact, the very opposite – people choose to live in lower density residential areas that are safe and supportive environments for our children to grow and develop. Hence, for example, why we chose to live in the Riccarton Bush area upon our return.
10. London, for example, is at least established with an incredible public transport system that can support a high population in small areas. Riccarton, however, does not yet have equivalent structures and, as far as I am aware, there are no concrete commitments to put any in place enough to support an increase in population in the Riccarton area within the next few years.
11. And while we are not experts, it seems infill housing and increased density is already possible in the CBD under the current district plan, particularly following the large investments made as part of the central city rebuild. Accordingly, there may already be opportunity to densify the CBD in the first instance.
12. However, if densification in Riccarton is recommended to go ahead, then appropriate mitigation measures should be put in place to *before* allowing this to take place.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF PC-14 ON RICcartON AND NEED FOR MITIGATION

13. The cumulative effect of any negative consequences of PC-14 is to potentially reduce the quality of life for the existing Riccarton residents, including my young sons. Currently, adequate mitigation plans are not clearly proposed. For example:

(1) Sunlight Access Qualifying Matter

14. First, for example, the Sunlight Access Qualifying Matter currently only protects properties that share a boundary. Other properties, like my family's, that are separated by a road or a driveway are not at all protected. See Slides 1 and 2¹ for example – if there was a 10-storey building opposite the road from us and a three-storey building next to us, as would be allowed by PC-14, this may block significant periods of our morning, midday, and afternoon sun, including in our main living areas. This could very much impact the quality of our lives in our home. The Sunlight Access Qualifying Matter should be expanded to better consider these scenarios.

(2) Traffic, parking and congestion

15. While the idea is for residents to walk or use public transport, there are currently no concrete commitments for any changes to public transport solutions in the area to encourage this and so residents may well still use cars as a primary transport option. This could mean a greater demand for on-street and off-street car parks and increased congestion given the greater number of cars using the roads.
16. There doesn't appear to be many planned mitigants for this. For example, the CCC confirmed that it can restrict off-street parking to residents only, however, there is no ability to restrict carparks being built on private property developments.² The CCC also confirmed that there are limited circumstances where developers/CCC must consider impacts on traffic when developing private properties.³
17. There are various consequences of increased congestion. For example:

A. Increased Journey Times

18. In an area where congestion is already an issue, this will further increase the time spent travelling each day for residents. For example:
- (a) Certain roads in the area (e.g. Straven Road, a major arterial route) already have big delays in peak periods, which impact traffic flows into other areas (e.g. right up to Wairakei Road). This will only get worse.
 - (b) It will also make it harder for residents to turn right out of their driveways against the traffic and to turn right into their driveways. This is already difficult as it is.
 - (c) Matai St is also problematic. See slide 3⁴ which shows how cars parked on both sides mean double lane traffic flow is not possible – this will only be exacerbated. Turning in and out of Matai Street from Straven Road could also become more difficult – see slide 4⁵. It is already

¹ Powerpoint presentation accompanying this witness statement.

² Christchurch City Council, Plan Change 14 Housing and Business Choice', Council Briefing Monday 11 September 2023.

³ Christchurch City Council, Plan Change 14 Housing and Business Choice', Council Briefing Monday 11 September 2023.

⁴ Powerpoint presentation accompanying this witness statement.

⁵ Powerpoint presentation accompanying this witness statement.

only possible to turn right in busy traffic by virtue of the lights stopping the traffic to let pedestrians and cyclists across which allows turning traffic an opportunity to turn in.

B. Road Safety

19. More traffic may also affect pedestrian, cyclist and scooter safety. For example:
- (a) first, there are major schools in these areas with school children as pedestrians, cyclists and on scooters trying to cross busy roads to get to school; and
 - (b) secondly, the turn-off from Matai Street into Straven Road is already unsafe with cars allowed to cross at the same time as cyclists, pedestrians, and scooters, which could become more problematic with more traffic (refer again to slide 4⁶). Again, this is a concern as a parent of children who could one day be using that crossing.

C. Emissions

20. Christchurch is already well recognised for high emissions issues^{7,8,9}, particularly in the roads around the city (noting cars that are stopped cause greater emissions than free flowing traffic). Increased congestion could well have a big impact on the health of residents in the area – including my own children, which is cause for serious concern. Electrification will help to a degree of course but a full phase out will take many years. And while the CCC is proposing a financial contribution to be made by developers cutting down trees in the area as a form of mitigation, there is no requirement for CCC to replace the trees in the areas affected or that they be like for like trees (for example, big mature trees that could consume more CO₂).

(3) Area security and noise

21. Many of the streets in the area proposed to change are quiet and safe. However, more people will mean more noise and also potentially more crime – again, of particular concern to me as a mother of young kids. PC-14 does not appear to offer much mitigation for how these potential impacts should or would be dealt with.

(4) Amenity and feel of the neighbourhood

22. Finally, our community is a very established and settled neighbourhood. For example, many families live in this area, and some have done for a very long time. Many chose the area because of the overall amenity (e.g. the tree lined roads; the old, classic houses etc.) and the overall neighbourhood feel (e.g. as regards safety and community spirit). In some cases, residents have already paid premium prices to live in this area for these reasons. It is not clear how CCC plans to cater for these concerns. For example, will new buildings be required to look a certain way to fit in with the existing neighbourhood aesthetic; and will the trees lining some of the streets be preserved or will they need to be cut down to allow for increased traffic?

⁶ Powerpoint presentation accompanying this witness statement.

⁷ H. Caldwell, 'Air pollution: Invercargill revealed as deadliest centre – study', *Radio New Zealand* [website], <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/470488/air-pollution-invercargill-revealed-as-deadliest-centre-study>, (accessed 16 April 2024).

⁸ N. Chittock, 'Emissions Reduction Plan needs to be accelerated to curb air pollution - science advisor', *Radio New Zealand* [website], <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/470537/emissions-reduction-plan-needs-to-be-accelerated-to-curb-air-pollution-science-advisor>, (accessed 16 April 2024).

⁹ K. Frame, 'Air pollution from cars killing thousands of NZers yearly', *Radio New Zealand* [website], <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/470457/air-pollution-from-cars-killing-thousands-of-nzers-yearly>, (accessed 16 April 2024).

SUMMARY

23. In summary, while PC-14 is intended to benefit future communities, it is existing communities like those living in Riccarton, including young children like my own, that stand to potentially bear the burden of the changes in the meantime. And while I've only touched on these effects, they would be very real to these people.
24. The plan is light on the detail on mitigation and management of any such consequences.
25. Therefore, we submit that the IHP recommend the CCC make the necessary amendments to appropriately mitigate the effects outlined *before* allowing the proposed changes to go ahead.
26. Christchurch is a unique city – it is not Auckland, Wellington or London. We urge the CCC to protect it and not rush to make decisions that could affect it long term without proper mitigants. Let us not make decisions about the city we love that we, and our children, may regret in the future.
27. Thank you again for your time – ngā mihi nui ki a koe.