

19 May 2006

**Re: Lincolnshire Farm Development**

**1) Opposition to the Proposal**

The Architectural Centre opposes the Lincolnshire Farm Development. While we realise that this proposal is in part a result of the Council taking a pro-active and positive role in relation to an independent development, and we support the aims to ensure a high quality development and the utilisation of best practice urban design, we do not consider that this development is productive for Wellington.

**2) Urban Sprawl**

The Architectural Centre does not support continued urban sprawl, and we consider that the Lincolnshire Farm Development is at odds with attempts to confine the city limits. We support development on brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites such as the proposed site for the Lincolnshire Farm Development. In addition this is a very low density development which under-utilises the area. While we acknowledge that a new housing development of 800 households would reduce the current pressure on Wellington's housing market, we consider that more intensive development closer to the city to provide additional housing is more appropriate.

**3) Transportation**

The Architectural Centre considers that given increasing fuel costs and the ongoing need to encourage alternatives to private cars to reduce the effects of climate change, any new developments must be strategically placed alongside existing transport infrastructure. This development will be over 3km from railway connections. We suggest that sites along the railway line (for example to Porirua) should be considered prior to establishing development on sites currently isolated from transport infrastructure. Building new roads is counter-productive in the current transport climate. The Council must instead invest more progressively in public transport in all its activities.

In addition, while the development will increase the likelihood of the building of a more expedient connection between Petone and the Granada section of SH1, such a new road raises additional issues which need to be carefully considered. This new road will be critical to the viability of the development but it must be funded by the tax-payer (and so is dependent on Transit and public support). The likely cost of what is described as a complex construction needs to be made public, as this is an important issue to consider in relation to the impact of the scheme on the wider community, and in relation to other roading such as Transmission Gully.

There is also a negative side to the provision of an expedient connection between Granda and Petone in that it will change travel patterns in the city, encouraging currently tight communities to become more dispersed, through increased opportunities to use private transport. For example, those who work and live in Petone, or in Granada, are likely to consider possible work opportunities further from their homes, increasing the use of private transport in the Wellington region, and driving a new need for more roads. While the proposed road would relieve congestion, it must be realised that congestion is a good motivator for increased use of public transport and other sustainable transportation options. To build roads to relieve congestion will exacerbate, rather than alleviate, the current over-reliance on cars as a mode of transportation.

**4) Integrated Business District**

While we applaud the Council for attempting to address needs to supply further employment opportunities for Wellington's northern suburbs, we are not convinced that



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the proposed business park model will appropriately provide the envisaged employment opportunities. The business park is an outdated 1980s model, and such strict zoning models have been surpassed by more integrated approaches which we consider to be more appropriate. Currently the site plan shows two large industrial areas disconnected from the residential areas, and also isolated from the "town centres." The orientation of this industrial zone is clearly towards the state highway access routes. This follows a model more closely related to an "industrial estate" than the stated "integrated business district" and we would like to see more work done to achieve a more integrated model in planning the development, including the important inclusion of local facilities and amenities, to ensure there are activities and services provided within the community as well as in the greater city. We also consider that more work is needed to develop meaningful pedestrian community spaces which take into account the large scale of this development.

Research (if it has not be undertaken) is needed to establish the occupational groups in surrounding areas, and consideration needs to be given to actively providing employment opportunities for the existing population rather than simply supplementing such a business development with new residential housing.

#### **5) Name (Lincolnshire Farm)**

While we realise the name Lincolnshire Farm Development refers to the existing Lincolnshire Rd (and possibly a Lincolnshire Farm in the area), this name appears to be ill-considered in a post-colonial New Zealand context. It conveys a nostalgic hankering for a pseudo-England (perhaps a *Lord of the Rings* Hobbiton shire?) which is no longer relevant in New Zealand. We strongly suggest that if this development is to proceed that serious consideration be given to renaming the development.

#### **6) Documentation**

We strongly support the council making documentation available via the web in addition to public meetings and having hard copies available for the public. We would however note that in the documentation for the proposed Lincolnshire Farm Development a majority of the images were of a low resolution which significantly reduced their value.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposed Lincolnshire Farm Development will be counter-productive to the worthy aims of the Council to have a compact city and to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport in Wellington. The development plan needs to more rigorously take on board the model of an integrated business district, that is to not simply provide a range of activities (residential, business, recreational reserves, town centre) but rather to develop meaningful interaction between these activities and to encourage a comprehensive approach which provides greater flexibility of uses, and greater interaction between uses. Currently it appears to us that the low density of the residential areas and the distinct zones of different activities undermines more ambitious and more productive modes of urban design and development.

Yours sincerely

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