

**BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONER**

**APPOINTED BY MASTERTON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

RM210207

**IN THE MATTER OF**      The Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**                      An application by East Leigh Limited for consent to  
subdivide land at Riversdale Beach (Lot 102 DP517369)  
to create 21 residential allotments and a local purpose  
reserve to vest, to adjust the boundary between Lots 12  
& 13 DP383390, and for land use consents to enable  
development of the allotments for residential use.

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**STATEMENT OF ANDREW SCOTT**

**13 May 2022**

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**MAY IT PLEASE THE COUNCIL**

- 1 Thank you for allowing me to speak at the start of this hearing.
- 2 Firstly, I would like to thank Tangata Whenua for their involvement in the process of this application and the Cultural Impact Assessment prepared by Dr Takirangi Smith.
- 3 It was interesting to read in Dr Smiths report about some of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century History. I also note the reference to the Historic walking track to Waikaraka, but that its precise location is unknown. Within our application we have included a walking track from the Beach Settlement in order to allow the residents of the Terraces to walk to the beach and the reserve, and residents of the Settlement to enjoy the views from the Terraces.
- 4 In his report he also comments on reserve land. We have planted a lot of native species in the valleys and eastern facing slopes of the terraces and we would be open to making these additional reserves available for the community.
- 5 At the beginning of the exercise to further develop the Terraces we held two consultation exercises with the local community in the Golf Club at Riversdale. It gave us an opportunity to recognise concerns expressed by many members of the community and the current proposals have developed as a result. We acknowledge the concerns of the submitters and are very grateful for the comments of support we have received both publicly and privately.
- 6 When we bought East Leigh station in 1995 an article in The Wairarapa Times Age was headlined: "A mystery London buyer has bought Riversdale Station and 36 hectares of land bordering the beach resort that is earmarked for residential development". I mention this because it was acknowledged and anticipated that Riversdale Station represented not just a lovely farm, but also an opportunity for some residential development, providing an opportunity for more people to benefit from this wonderful bit of New Zealand coastline. In the Wairarapa Age article, Brian Bodle was quoted as saying "with only four other sections available for sale, a major development of the residential block was a strong possibility".
- 7 In practice more sections have appeared within the Settlement over the last 27 years. Early on we were advised to consider lifestyle sections, but it meant house sites with some 3 to 5 hectares of land at the beach, where people wanted to relax rather than deal with land. The concept of cluster

development on the three Terraces came out of a meeting with the Council. It meant change and unsurprisingly some people preferred and prefer the status quo.

- 8 What Riversdale Terraces have provided is an alternative to the Beach settlement and a place with wonderful views in all directions. By increasing the available building plots and by having a different outlook from the Settlement, it has encouraged people to think of Riversdale not just as a beach resort, but a place to live and a place to retire to. It has created a bigger community and as we get older most of us enjoy and need community in our lives.
- 9 When we started the development, my wife and I decided it should be something we wanted to be proud of. We are not property developers and we were keen to create a development that could be admired. To create something special we did a lot of planting of native species, river stone entrances and seats, gabion baskets and stainless-steel signage. We hope that people in Riversdale recognise the efforts we made.
- 10 We still have Resource Consent on sections on the Northern Terrace, however we have offered, at no cost, land to the Golf Club for them to extend the Riversdale Golf Course by up to six holes. This option is open until the end of this year and if it is taken up it will involve development over a number of years. As a result of this we are not able to develop the Northern Terrace until after the end of this year at the earliest. If the Golf Course take up their option, it will involve the loss of probably 15 consented sections.
- 11 All the sections originally consented on the Middle and Southern Terraces have been sold apart from a couple providing access to the East Leigh Farm. We recognised early on that there were potential sections on the Southern Terrace that were considerably less visible than many sections on the middle terrace and even on the Northern Terrace. That is the basis for now applying for Resource Consent on the 21 sections in the application.
- 12 We intend to apply the same standards to this part of the development as we have done to the current development. There will be a few minor changes to road and swale design taking account of issues that have been identified with the current designs. We have already planted the slopes and valleys around the Southern Terrace with native species and there is a programme for further infill this winter. The hope is that it will provide a similar impact to the native bush around the northern terrace in a few years' time. As well as providing a

haven for wildlife it will also lessen any impact and visibility of new housing on the terraces.

- 13 In addition, we have proposed reducing roof heights and even more subdued colours to ensure that new houses work well within the rural landscape.
- 14 I am sorry that my opening comments have gone on rather longer than you might have anticipated. I wanted to finish with a thank you to the Commissioner and to all the Council Staff, who have been working on this application.
- 15 I am sorry that I am not present in person. This is largely a result of Covid, the inability of any of us to plan ahead and it is of course only recently that open access to New Zealand has finally resumed. In the past, my wife, who was born in Hawkes Bay, have spent January and February in New Zealand. We have missed it, but have booked to return after Christmas this year for an extended stay.