

Presentation to Council – Plan Change 19

In our earlier ^{submission} presentations, we strongly objected to the proposal in Plan 19 to create Medium Density Residential Housing around the Historic Precinct of Clyde. This opportunity to speak with the panel today outlines our objections of why we consider Clyde should not be included in the Zoning Change in Plan 19. We appreciate this is a supposed Long Term 30 Year Plan, but introducing it now, opens the door to potential, possibly unsympathetic development. We do appreciate we personally may not be in a position within the next 30 years to keep our eye on it, but then again, neither will most of you. What we want to ensure is if any development was to occur, particularly in and around an historic precinct, that the holistic values of that precinct are protected.

We previously asked the question - what is the rationale or reason for Clyde to be included in the Zoning Plan for Medium Density Residential Housing? So far without success. We ask you now- Is it on the direction of Central Government? We think not. So we have examined the literature available.

Our research has shown that Clyde does not seem to meet the criteria set out by the Ministry of the Environment for Medium Density Housing.

(Medium Density Residential Standards – A Guide to Local Authorities). Within their tables, (page 7) there are three Tier's of Territorial Authorities.

Tier 1 – is basically main centres – Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, Christchurch.

Tier 2 – Whangarei, Rotorua (I believe they have now been added to Tier 1 at their request), New Plymouth, Napier/Hastings, Palmerston North, Nelson/Tasman, Queenstown and Dunedin.

Under Tier 3 – All other territorial authorities with jurisdiction over an “urban environment”.

An “urban environment” is defined as any area of land (regardless of size, and irrespective of size and irrespective of local authority statistical boundaries) that (a) is, or is intended to be, predominantly urban in character, and (b) is, or is intended to be, part of a housing and labour market of at least 10,000 people).

Also in the guideline (on page 2) is a section on ***A relevant residential zone does not include:***

(Bullet point 4) – a mainly urban area that the 2018 census recorded as having resident population of less than 5,000 (unless a local authority intends it to become part of an urban development). ***Quote: 2018 Census Figures***

Our Question - Is there another agenda here that ratepayers are not aware of? Is the Council working towards a conurbation with Alexandra? If so, we would regard this as devious, and would be making further enquiries.

Another question we had at the time of our earlier submissions was, ***why was Clyde included with both Cromwell and Alexandra in the Rezoning Proposal?*** The latter two would surely come under both commercial and industrial towns, whereas Clyde is a heritage classified tourist destination, particularly due to its identification under the council’s very own plan. Heritage Buildings Places and Sites document. An explanation as to why Council has considered them to be of similar status is another point that requires clarification.

Under Heritage Precincts, (14.2.2) certain towns within the district have distinct historical character. Each precinct is defined by its own historical character and heritage values. These values are not only important to the people who live and work in these towns, but also important to the District as a whole, because of the potential to attract visitors from outside the District. The modification or demolition of buildings or the erection of new buildings within these precincts has the potential to compromise these values and the cohesiveness of the precinct, if not carefully controlled. ***(These are not our words – but Council’s)***

Clyde is one of five heritage precincts that has been identified on the planning maps. Others being St Bathans, Ophir, Old Cromwell and Naseby), but for some reason Clyde is the only one to have been included in the Medium Density Proposal! Surely this goes against everything within the Council's extensive District Plan on Heritage Precincts!

What are the impacts this planned change will have? It will be huge and devastating for the township. Heritage precincts have not only been identified for their heritage and amenity values they provide a tangible representation of the cultural, economic and social history of Central Otago. Any change or new development has the potential to adversely affect and compromise these values as previously said. They also contribute to the community's sense of place and help to provide the special character that makes Central Otago so attractive for visitors from all parts of New Zealand and overseas.

Remember your Motto – ***Central Otago – A World of Difference! Responsible control is therefore necessary.***

One of the notable differences between Clyde and Old Cromwell town, is the many buildings that remain in situ in Clyde, whereas local residents from Cromwell have relocated and reconstructed heritage buildings.

We consider the worst impact of allowing Medium Density development in the Clyde Historic Precinct (this is old Clyde) will mean it could literally be surrounded by a noose of residential sections which can be subdivided into 200 sq.metre lots. This opens the door for developers to purchase perfectly suitable housing for demolition and in its place build two storey boxy units. (This is already happening within the town). Once that door is Open – it's hard to shut. Imagine the views that will be presented to visitors in our historic town. For example, the late Shirley Howden's beautiful stone cottage could disappear behind two other properties which can be two storey and possibly surrounded by the ubiquitous six foot fence. You wouldn't see it!

What about the historic Station Masters House next to the Museum? It is an intricate part of the Railway Station/Museum complex, with its quaint white picket fence and lovely garden of roses and fruit trees etc. A fine example. This has been recently sold, and with wastewater already connected to the property, this could likely be bowled and redeveloped. Will the Council have any jurisdiction on what may be built there?

We believe this, and many other sections within the area, especially if the Wastewater is already connected - this will become a reality if Medium Density Housing is approved. Row upon row of boxy two storey properties jammed on their 200 sq. metre lots. No trees, little green, and tons of concrete. Parking congestion or more parking congestion, pressure on access for essential services and so on. What will the tourists and visitors to Clyde remember most? Not the remnants of an historic village, but boring and unsightly shoulder to shoulder constructions. We're seeing this already at the Wooing Tree Development in Cromwell which is under the jurisdiction of this Council, and at North Lake in Wanaka (under Lakes District Council) where barrack like buildings are being constructed. So close, that access by critical services could be difficult.

What of the residents of Clyde, particularly those that will be directly affected by this change. As already mentioned in our written submission, most of those people we talked to were not aware of this proposed zone change and were horrified when told what could happen? We like the others who will be impacted love Clyde for what it is. A beautiful historic town full of diversity and situated in one of the most beautiful landscapes in New Zealand. Imagine the property you bought to develop and enjoy with vistas of the Old Man Range and surrounding terrain. Your neighbour dies and the property purchased by the highest bidder – a developer – as he/she can afford knowing the huge return that can be made when a residence is demolished, and a number of boxes are built on the subdivided section. Suddenly your beautiful view is gone and you are faced with two storey buildings hard against your property

with maybe a six foot fence. This will be the reality should Council approve this Medium Density Zoning Change for Clyde. We feel safe for a few years, as our wastewater is not due to be undertaken until 2028!!

We are also amazed that the planners have selected this particular area for the Zoning Change – this being the old Township of Clyde, which expresses the diversity and history of its growth from the gold mining days. By allowing this Zone Change, the progressive human imprint on Clyde will be lost.

Villages of significance in Britain have recognised this and ensure that sanctity of the Old Town, not just the immediate historic buildings are kept.

We are saddened and horrified that Council has given oxygen to such a highly destructive plan change, particularly for Clyde, and ask that they give serious consideration to removing the Medium Density Plan for Plan 19. With climate change being on the lips and in the minds of many, we should be looking of planning sustainably for the future. Allowing room for people to grow their own food, and prepare for what may happen – don't think it won't happen to us.

Just to end, in response to the Mayor's Art analogy on development in the area; this is a nod to Aesops Fables. A short story ...

The Kingdom of Zealandia has a Crown. A very beautiful Crown of gold, studded with equally beautiful and rare gemstones and trimmed with dazzling blue that shimmers in the breeze. This Crown is called – ***The World of Difference***.

An unscrupulous and greedy jeweller came upon the Crown and after much negotiation was able to acquire its rare and gorgeous prize – the gemstone called Clyde by claiming he would increase its value. This he did, by cutting the gemstone into smaller stones and selling them off. The profit however was short-lived, but alas, the gorgeous and rare gemstone called Clyde was gone for ever.

Over time, the Crown called ***The World of Difference*** was not looking so good, the gold had started losing its gloss, elsewhere the gold had disappeared entirely and replaced with green Verdigris and the blue trim was becoming worn and threadbare and stained brown by overuse. The scar left by the removal and destruction of the rare Gemstone called Clyde was still evident, even though attempts had been made to hide it with a cluster of cheap dull diamantes.

A number of beautiful and rare jewels still managed to remain untouched on the Crown – these included the jewels of Naseby, Ophir and St Bathans, however, the shadow of the unscrupulous and greedy jeweller was growing forever closer.