

18 September 2012

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For: Brigitte de Ronde

Dear Brigitte

### Potential plan change – special purpose (airport) zone

- 1 As discussed on 24 August 2102 circumstances have recently arisen which indicate that it is timely for Christchurch City Council (CCC) to consider a review of the current provisions of the Special Purpose (Airport) zone (*the SPAZ*).
- 2 As you are the aware the City Plan currently provides for the SPAZ to enable the continued operation of Christchurch International Airport Limited (CIAL). We consider the concept of a special zone relating to activities which can occur on the airport and the outcomes that are anticipated from that special zoning is appropriate.
- 3 The practical difficulty is that the SPAZ as currently drafted is uncertain. There are no stated objectives, policies or environmental outcomes set out and there is simply a list of activities provided which do not reflect the activities which are carried out at a modern airport. Because of this CIAL can make an application for any non-complying activity, which has exactly the same effects as any of the matters set out in the list of activities and can expect to have that application granted non-notified.
- 4 At one level it is in CIAL's interest to allow the situation to continue as our legal and planning advice is that most applications for resource consent for any activity should continue to be granted until a point is reached sometime in the future where the amount of land used for development begins to raise the possibility that there may be insufficient land available for core aeronautical activities. In the context of CIAL's total landholdings of **996** hectares that point is obviously well into the future (833Ha freehold, 163Ha leasehold).
- 5 The flipside, however, is that CIAL is currently faced with the uncertainty of not knowing the point at which that threshold will be reached, it is difficult to engage in discussions with prospective tenants when the planning framework is uncertain and there are inefficiencies and delays in successive applications for resource consent applications.
- 6 In the most recent resource consent decision relating to a data storage facility Commissioner Mountfort noted in an addendum:

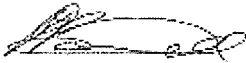
"It is becoming apparent to me that CIAL is treating the part of the Special Purpose Airport Zone as just another Business Zone and is prepared to allow a range of business activities to locate there which have no particular relationship with the airport greater than similar activities located elsewhere. In doing this it is ignoring the clearly expressed description of what the zone is for, as set out in provisions such as the rules, the zone description and reasons for rules. I note that almost all businesses probably make some use of the airport from time to time and this is not enough to bring them within the purpose and meaning of this zone. I have approved this application only because the area known as Dakota Park is such a small part of the airport itself, and an even smaller part of the business areas of Christchurch that it cannot possibly have a significant effect upon the integrity of the City Plan's Business Objectives and Policies. It is also relevant that there are no objectives and policies that directly relate to expectations for the zone. However at some point cumulative effects are going to become apparent. In my judgement that point has not been reached yet. It may well start to occur if CIAL starts to develop more of its site for business activities. I recommend that Council gives some consideration to this issue, and that these comments be forwarded to the Strategy and Planning Department of Council."

- 7 We therefore consider that the time has come for the issue to be squarely addressed and the SPAZ provisions to be redrafted to reflect a proper objective and policy framework and rules reflecting the range of activities which are enabled by a modern airport, so that there is certainty around activities that can and cannot take place on CIAL land and acknowledgment of the airport's critical role in the regional economy (particularly post earthquake) and its role in providing a part of the region's strategic transport infrastructure.
- 8 In parallel with the above CIAL is aware that CCC is progressing with its northwest area review. We understand that approximately 50 hectares of the 100 hectares which is subject to the Commissioner's PC1 decision is likely to be land zoned for business uses in the future and is shortly to be the subject of CCC initiated plan changes.
- 9 CIAL is naturally concerned that whilst it is in a situation where its own zoning is unsatisfactory in terms of its drafting CCC is promulgating a plan change to allow business activities to locate on or close to the airport boundary in Christchurch's northwest.
- 10 CIAL does not have any difficulty with business zoning in northwest Christchurch but it would be concerned if at the same time it is left with a quasi business zone, with uncertain provisions where any particular development needs to go through a non-complying resource consent process. This would create an unlevel playing field.
- 11 CIAL does not consider that CCC could, or should, proceed with zoning new business land in the northwest without at the same time properly considering a tidy up of the provisions of the existing SPAZ which is also a business zone in the northwest of Christchurch.
- 12 Accordingly we consider that prior to, or at the same time, as progressing the zoning of business land in the northwest area review process that it is appropriate for CCC to consider a review of the current provisions of the SPAZ to ensure that they are properly reflective of enabling the airport (in the modern sense of activities carried

out by other modern airports around the world), to function, grow and assist in the economic recovery of Canterbury.

- 13 As discussed if the CCC is prepared to consider this process ahead of, or in parallel with, the northwest area review CIAL is happy to assist the initial phases of this process by providing a first draft of updated SPAZ provisions for consideration by CCC officers.
- 14 We would welcome the opportunity to discuss further.

Yours sincerely



Rhys Boswell  
**GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING & ENVIROMENT**