

Submission of Graeme Ferrier to RMA Panel 19th July 2022.
Private Plan Change 28 – Maitahi Bayview Proposal.

1. My name is Graeme Ferrier and I live at 172 Cleveland Terrace, which is just over the one-way Clouston Bridge up Nile Street. I have lived here for just over 11 years. I spent most of my working life in Northland or the “winterless North” as it is often called. So that was a very pleasant place to live and raise a family.
2. The last ten years of my working life were spent in Melbourne. When it came time to retire, I had to make a decision to return to the familiarity and friends in Kerikeri or to find an “even more interesting place” for retirement. I chose Nelson and the reasons I chose Nelson, are some of the main reasons why I oppose this Plan Change. I would now like to outline some the reasons for my choice to retire here.
3. Firstly, I do not intend to comment at length on the many negative impacts of this proposal. Others can and will do that more effectively. I will just say that due to my locality, I will see and experience those negative aspects first hand . People pollute and many people confined in one location pollute a lot more, much of which will end up in the river.
4. I want to give you a personal story of how I see this proposal and hopefully express how others feel about it as well? I think that we need to stand back and take a big-picture view of Nelson and it's character, and ask the question:- What does this do to enhance Nelson? Sure we need more housing, but it is a much bigger issue than that in my view. How does this proposal improve Nelson as a liveable city?
5. I lived and worked in Melbourne for ten years before I retired to Nelson. Melbourne is frequently quoted as one of the world's most-liveable cities. It's main competitor for the title at that stage was Vancouver in Canada. I have also been fortunate to visit Vancouver. For 2022, Vienna is now No. 1; Vancouver is No. 5 and Melbourne is now at No.10. (I think that it's just a coincidence that Melbourne has declined since I left?)
6. I will not go into the full details of the criteria, but ask Dr Google and you will find much more. The most credible international rating body is “The Economist Intelligence Unit”. The first sentence puts it in a nutshell:

“The concept of liveability evaluates which cities around the world offer the best living conditions”. The authors then go on to expand liveability further and say:

“A liveable city is one that provides inclusive opportunities for all residents- has access to green spaces, abundance of public spaces, efficient public transport systems and healthcare availability are all hallmarks of a healthy, livable city.”

We know that effective public transport has a domino-effect impact on public health as well, contributing to less pollution and more fuel efficiency, while encouraging healthy habits simply by walking from one destination to another. It also makes accessing recreational activities easier. (My emphasis)

They give Vienna as an example “ –50 percent of Vienna is covered with green spaces. From forests and parks to vineyards and gardens

to the Danube river, giving residents plenty of ways to connect to nature within the city limits”.

7. Just think about Nelson for a while, we have our own city river – the Maitai; we also have a stunning coastline; plus we have hills and forest and in winter we have snow-capped mountains. We have our own unique environment that in my view rates with the best in the world. I said in my original submission that 10 years ago, I saw Nelson as a mini-Melbourne- a highly liveable city.(and it still is) That was the decider for me and why I live here now along with other members of my family including grand children. That is also why I would like to protect what is special about Nelson for future generations.
8. I acknowledge that it is more challenging for smaller cities like Nelson to support an “effective public transport system”, But smaller cities like us are clearly benefiting from the transport revolution that is happening with e-bikes, and don’t forget the reference to “*simply walking*” to your destination. As a walker myself, I see many people walking and riding to their destinations in Nelson. We have a great climate for being outdoors for all sorts of activities., including low-impact commuting. After all, Nelson often wins the title of the highest sunshine hours in the country.
9. Botanicals Park, the Centre of NZ, Branford Park and the Maitai River itself are already very popular biking, running and walking tracks. The Maitai River is the connecting thread and Kaka Valley is a key catchment feeding into the River. With this proposa it won’t always be clean run-off water that will end up in the river! This is also the river where my grand-children swim. (The impact on the river, the swimming holes and picnic areas will have been mentioned by many submitters already)
10. The addition of potentially hundreds if not thousands of extra car movements through the intersection of Nile and Maitai Valley Road and along the road to the valley entrance will detract dramatically from that outdoor experience.
11. In many or most cities around the world these days a lot of emphasis is given to more high-density housing closer to transport hubs or the city centre. I am not a town planner but the logic is obvious as we try to become more environmentally sustainable and reduce our climate impact. We are already seeing this type of development happening here in Nelson
12. But associated with that development, must be easy access to recreational areas. As already mentioned, e-bikes have caused and continue to cause a revolution in low-impact personal transport. But more bikes require either more bike-tracks or less cars on the road or preferably both. They support a clean environment, but also deserve a clean environment for the ride and not having to compete with more cars
13. Open space is vital to good health. It is often referred to as “people reconnecting with nature”. Our fast-paced modern lifestyles; and with more people living in higher density housing, having easy access to clean, green spaces to enjoy peace and quiet is now even more essential. It is mentioned above as a key “liveability” factor essential for peoples’ well-being. So how does all this relate to the proposed Kaka Valley development?

14. Firstly I would like to briefly comment on the foundation of Nelson. The city planners of the time clearly saw that having parks and gardens was a key part of building Nelson and making it an attractive place to live. But I am sure that they had no idea just how big Nelson would grow. Those tree-lined streets, the parks and the gardens are a real asset and are now an essential part of Nelson's character. But they are limited in size and unlikely to fulfil the needs for the Nelson of the future. Who can see that far ahead?
15. Kaka Valley is the last easy-contoured area close to the centre of Nelson. Even though it is not public land it adds to the environment by remaining as farmland. Visually it adds to the general openness of both Branford Park and the parks along the Maitai River. It adds to the peace and quiet. I ask the question - once this piece of land is gone under houses, roads and pavement, what is left for Nelsonians of the future? What will future generations think when they read about this proposal and the opportunity Nelson had to preserve this valuable part of its clean ; green character?
16. In just 25 years I can picture residents thinking- perhaps out loud: "If only the people of 2022 had thought far enough into the future." Nelson's city fathers tried to do that, and we are benefiting now, but the pressure is on – houses and streets, OR an open space that offers lots of options for future generations? As I said earlier, once it is gone; it will be gone for good! No second chances.
17. As people, we have struggled to address the impacts of climate change that will dramatically affect our grand children's futures. Can we even agree to prevent even worse consequences? But we do have a chance here to make a decision that will preserve some positive options for our grand children to enhance their well being as the climate continues to change. As I have already said- once it's gone; it's gone!
18. In terms of the liveability in the proposed subdivision – there are those who can afford to buy and build on the ridgelines and higher country will have good liveability. For those in the darker depths of the valley, they will at least have somewhere to live. I guess that will be affordable housing? But no thought at all of the impact on the liveability for the rest of the Nelson community that I can see.
19. Last week I heard a comment on the news that the Christchurch Stadium decision was a Goldilocks" moment for Christchurch – It was "just right" and just what they needed to meet the cities future needs for a multi-purpose sports and concert facility. Perhaps they were thinking in liveability terms as well?
20. I ask the question here today: Is this proposal "just right "for Nelson's longer term future – a future that we can only guess? Or should we leave something for the future with this land? We do have other options for housing developments, but do we have more easily accessible open spaces? Will all our open spaces largely be on the steeper hills? Is this Nelson's "Goldilocks moment; needing a Goldilocks decision?" I would suggest that it is! Once it's gone; it's gone! No options left!

Thank You,
Graeme Ferrier