

Attachment - 4

Comments provided by Mesh on the key themes that have been raised in the lodged submissions.

- Adverse impact on rural lifestyle and character of the area

A number of submissions indicated concern that the growth scenarios will impact on the rural lifestyle and character of Relbia. More specifically, some of the submissions expressed concern regarding the character impacts associated with upgrading of roads to have kerb and channel and having new dwellings 'too close' to existing dwellings.

A key message from the consultation workshops was the community's attachment and sentiment toward the character of Relbia. Many participants at the workshops cited maintenance of the rural character as a non-negotiable condition but equally many participants sought some limited subdivision and development potential. The detailed technical analysis that was completed by Mesh supports the general view that Relbia has some significant infrastructure capacity limitations and that significant change throughout Relbia would have a negative impact on existing character.

Beyond arriving at the general conclusion that significant change throughout Relbia would be inappropriate, the Mesh analysis includes detailed examination of the extent to which new dwellings could be accommodated in a site responsive way so as to not impact the rural lifestyle and character of the area.

The average lot size provisions and emphasis on site responsive driveway alignments and careful placement of house sites were deliberately recommended along with limited changes to the current subdivision minimums in order to enable some limited change in a way that would not impact on existing character. The preferred limited change scenario also takes into account infrastructure capacity issues.

Taking all of these issues into consideration, the Mesh report recommends a reduction of the current 4ha subdivision minimum to 2ha in some limited locations and a very small area of 1ha minimum. A 2ha minimum lot size will provide more than adequate opportunity to locate any new dwellings such that any impact on the presence of neighbouring dwellings will be minor, when factoring in the presence of existing vegetation and the undulating landform that will contribute to screening.

It should also be noted in this context, that the vision for Relbia specifically focuses on retention of the role of Relbia as a low density, lifestyle-based community as set out below:

Relbia will be retained into the future as a rural living, lifestyle community. Relbia will be differentiated from other parts of the Launceston housing framework due to the presence of natural vegetation and wildlife, scenic character and views, larger lots, and a sense of privacy. Existing and new non-residential land uses such as wineries will be encouraged to remain, and new tourism and related uses will be supported where they contribute to the character and sense of place in Relbia. Where subdivision is supported it will be site responsive and new housing will be encouraged to incorporate excellence in design and environmental sustainability. (*Mesh Consultation Draft Report 2020, pg 54*)

The vision for Relbia was prepared following the community workshops and following completion of the technical analysis. The vision confirms that Relbia has an important point of difference when viewed within the context of the broader growth areas where it is appropriate to plan for and progressively deliver a range of urban services and facilities. In Relbia by contrast, the emphasis is directed toward maintenance and enhancement of the low density/semi-rural character for the majority of the land with some limited change in some discreet locations.

- Traffic Congestion and Safety Concerns / Preferred Limited Change Scenario exceeding infrastructure capacity

Traffic congestion and safety concerns were raised by members of the community in the workshops. The general limitations of the existing transport network were also acknowledged during the course of undertaking the project.

A specialist traffic consultant was employed to document the existing transport network in terms of road capacity, connectivity and intersection design, capacity and safety. Lack of road network and intersection capacity and potential impact on character, if roads were upgraded to an urban standard were primary reasons why significant change in discreet locations or generally throughout Relbia was not supported.

In this context, it is noted that the preferred limited change scenario could only produce approximately 97 new dwellings (subject to assessment of site impacts etc) and that some of the land (precincts W4 and W5 and E6 and E7) would need to be rezoned before land could be subdivided.

The Mesh report notes that any such rezoning/approvals process would provide more than adequate opportunity to assess impact on the existing road network and assessment of whether the development should be liable for contributions toward or direct upgrade of roads and/or intersections such as the intersection of Hobart Road and Relbia Road. An important point to also recognise is that the additional dwellings are unlikely to be delivered in the short term. In other words, it is more likely that the additional dwellings will be delivered incrementally following the relevant approvals processes where siting, character, infrastructure impact and other issues can be actively assessed.

- Misleading wording and presentation of 'No Change' and 'Limited Change' options

The uncertainty around use of the terms 'No Change' and 'Limited Change' is acknowledged notwithstanding that the draft report defines each of the terms that have been used.

In the Mesh report, the 'No Change Scenario' is explained as having no change to the current planning provisions, that is, retention of the current 4ha subdivision minimum within the Rural Living zoned land. As some parcels have the ability to be subdivided under the current planning provisions however (i.e. lots 8ha down to two 4ha lots), it is important to note that some subdivision/development could occur within the 'No change' scenario. This potential was acknowledged in the calculation of potential yield (46 additional dwellings) for the no change scenario in the draft document however it is acknowledged that the term 'no change' could have caused some confusion.

The 'Limited Change Scenario' includes recommended changes to the current minimum lot sizes (i.e reduction from 4ha down to 2ha for example) within the existing zones, but

only in discreet precincts where the land could support such changes. In some other limited locations rezoning is identified as being possible subject to some pre-conditions.

- Not supportive of lot sizes below 4ha

Some of the submissions have expressed concern about the 'density' of recommended lot sizes and in particular whether lot sizes of less than 4ha in area will cause loss of amenity. In reviewing the submissions, it is apparent that there may be some misunderstanding about the ability of 1ha or 2ha lots to accommodate a dwelling and existing vegetation etc with sufficient remaining land to enable retention of the semi-rural character of Relbia. At 10,000m² (1 hectare) and 20,000m² (2 hectares) respectively and allowing for vegetation and other site features there is a high degree of confidence that new dwellings will be able to be accommodated in a non-intrusive, site responsive way.

Other submitters have requested that significant change be supported in some locations such as in precinct W1 and W2. Such outcomes have not been supported in the draft document due to the likely impact on character and limited infrastructure capacity.

- Summary Comments

In reflecting on the themes that have been raised in the lodged submissions, it is very important to highlight the extent to which the community's general views about the role of Relbia and the importance of maintenance of the low density/rural living character are supported by the findings and recommendations that are contained within the draft report. As summarised in section 3.1 of this report and in the associated preferred limited change scenario and the vision for the future of Relbia, the recommended future for Relbia is maintenance and enhancement of the role of Relbia into the future as a low density/rural living area.

What most submitters are really commenting on is the means by which a specific part of the vision for Relbia will be able to be achieved. The specific part of the vision is that *where subdivision is supported it will be site responsive and new housing will be encouraged to incorporate excellence in design and environmental sustainability*. In other words, how will the character of Relbia be protected and enhanced through the preferred limited change scenario.

Before setting out recommended changes to the exhibited document to address this concern, it must be recognised that the recommended changes to the zone minimums in some locations and identification of rezoning potential in other locations do not imply that there is an 'entitlement' to such outcomes or that a landowner is in some way compelled to deliver such outcomes.

In both cases, where an application is lodged, an applicant will be required to prepare documentation to demonstrate that the proposal is site responsive and that it addresses the other objectives and requirements of the planning scheme including whether there is a need for infrastructure improvements to support the application.

The general process of an application for rezoning and/or development approval is shown following. The process demonstrates in general terms the extent to which an applicant is required to provide information about the proposal to enable a proper assessment to be conducted.

The potential means by which the exhibited document could be improved to give guidance to an applicant is set out as follows.

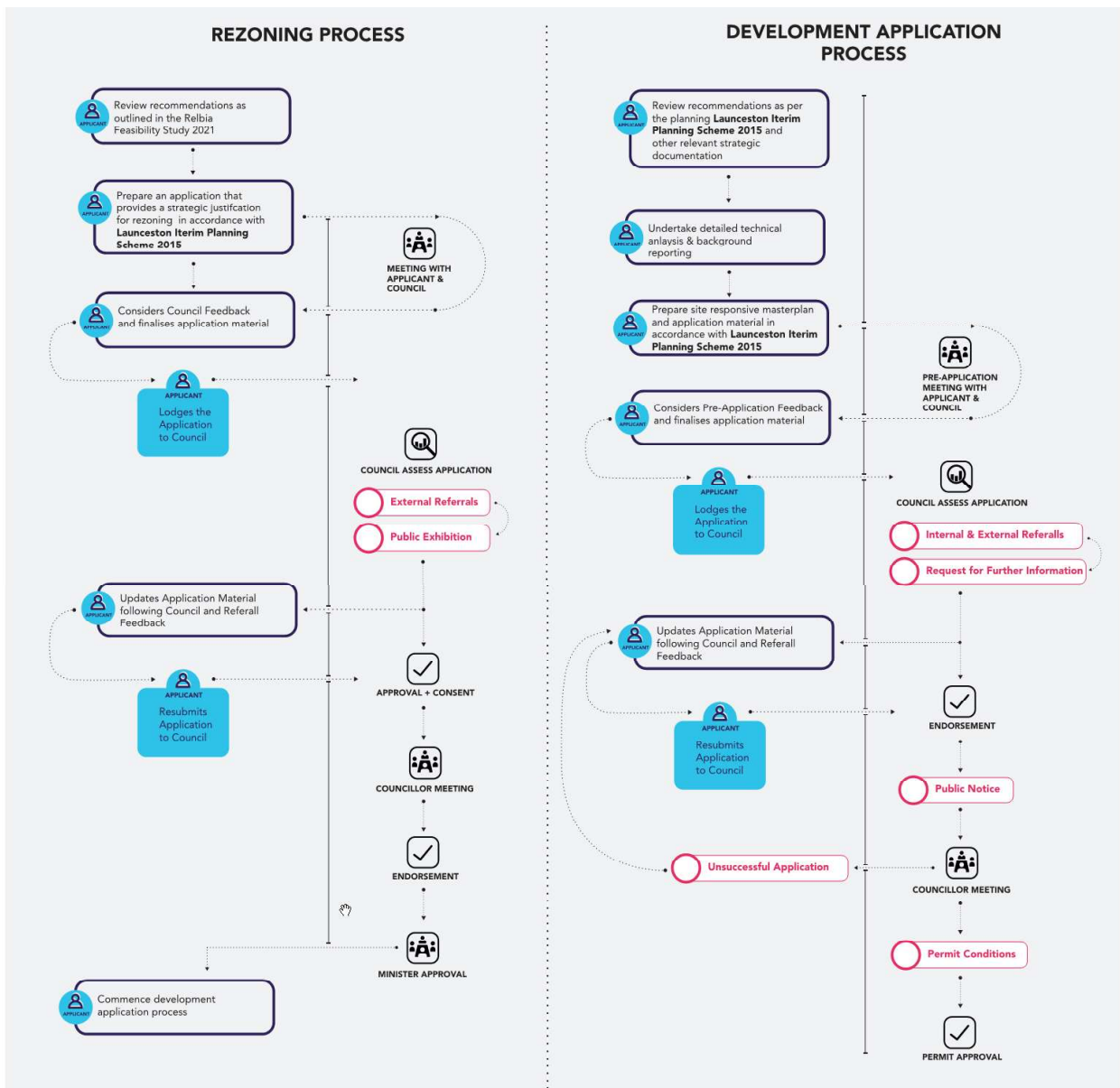


Figure 1: Rezoning and Development Application process
 (Source: Community Consultation Findings and Recommendations Report, Mesh Planning 2021)