

Memorandum

To

Liz White – Author s42A Report PC29

From

Murray Dickson - MDC

Subject: PC29 – Rezoning of Land - Located at the south-east corner of Mackenzie Drive and Simons Street through to Glenbrook Crescent, Twizel

I am the General Manager of Corporate, Commercial and Planning for Mackenzie District Council. This role includes responsibility for a number of areas. My role includes oversight of Council property assets and the facilitation of initiatives that support economic development and community wellbeing and infrastructure.

I am providing this memorandum as I have been involved in discussions, with members of the community, and with staff and elected members, regarding a potential change of use for this land. The proposal is one such initiative that aligns with both Council and community objectives. The proposed rezoning of this site from Recreation P/Open Space to Medium Density Residential directly supports this initiative and was suggested by Council itself after being approached regarding this proposal.

Mackenzie District Council has been in discussions with Twizel St John parties regarding the proposed establishment of a new, purpose-built ambulance station at this site. These discussions included both Council staff and the Elected Members themselves. In the community engagement processes prior to Plan Change 29 being notified there was feedback suggesting the use for St Johns, however, subsequently those parties did not make a submission. In discussions with them they had not understood that their submissions in the formal hearings process would assist in decision making on this matter.

These discussions were the reason Councillors supported proposing the rezoning.

Background and Rationale for the Proposal:

- Twizel St John covers an area between Tekapo/Takapo, Aoraki Mt Cook, Kurow, Omarama to Lindis Pass. This area includes several townships, large sections of State Highway, large population fluctuations (sometimes over 20k people) and high levels of tourism (including large events such as festivals and rowing competitions) as well as significant remote rural homesteads.
- St John currently occupies a very limited space at the rear of the Twizel Fire Station, comprising a single room with two small storage areas. This facility lacks basic infrastructure such as toilets, kitchen, sleeping quarters, private changing areas, decontamination and sluicing capabilities. Access to shared facilities is inconsistent and is dependent on access permission. Moreover, the current ambulance parking bay is 50 metres from the training area, further complicating logistics.
- Some statistics for 2024 calendar year
 - 314 call outs – av 6 per week
 - Almost 30% calls were high priority (life threatening)
 - 200 transported to hospital
 - 63 transported by helicopter
 - 50 residents attended AED training courses provided by volunteers
- Should patients require hospital care, it is about 2 hours drive from Twizel to the nearest hospital (Timaru) and significantly more if the incident occurs south of the base township.
- Twizel has fewer than 10 volunteer ambulance crew members available to cover 14 shifts in pairs. As a result, ambulance cover is not consistently available, and a paid crew from Temuka is often required to travel to Twizel, incurring significant time and travel costs. Health & Safety requirements mean that volunteer crew cannot work during the day, then cover a night shift
- The lack of visibility in the community, along with unsuitable facilities, is believed to be contributing to a decline in volunteer interest and retention. The target is at least 14 volunteers to cover all shifts.
- St John is planning to station a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) vehicle in Twizel to support major emergencies (e.g. multiple-vehicle crashes, forest fires, large events). This will require secure on-site garaging, which the current site cannot provide.

Proposal:

- A group of community-minded local philanthropists has expressed a willingness to purchase the land to build and lease back a purpose-built ambulance station to St John.
- The proposed St John facility would include:
 - Permanent overnight accommodation for up to four staff
 - Specialist decontamination and health & safety facilities
 - Office and storage space
 - A training room (available for community use)

- Three parking bays with safe drive-in/drive-out access
- The proposal also includes provision for 9–12 small retirement units on the remainder of the site, addressing community need, including for affordable downsizing options for older residents. The site can be enhanced with landscaping to support visual appeal.

Site Suitability:

St John consider this site is the only available site that meets key operational and locational requirements:

- Proximity to the Medical Centre and helipad, and fire station (across the road)
- Good community visibility
- Located near the population centre but buffered from residences
- Adequate land size (~2000m² minimum required)
- Services to boundary
- Proximity to State Highway

Current Usage and Open Space/Recreation land:

Mackenzie District Council provides a total of 198 hectares of park land which is equivalent to 36 hectares per 1,000 residents which is well above the industry median of 19 ha per 1,000 (2023 figures).

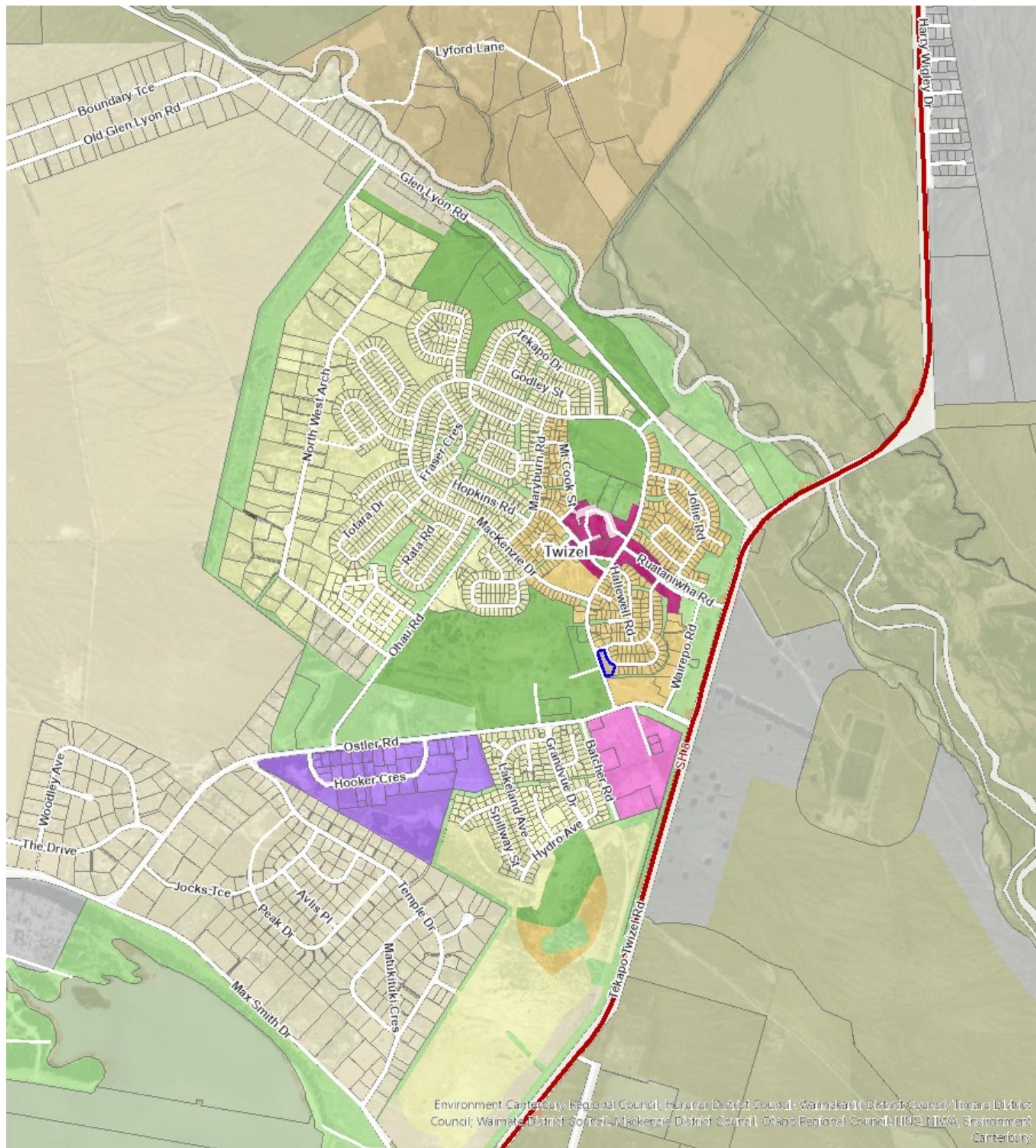
A more useful comparison metric for parks is actively maintained park area. Mackenzie District Council provides a total of 180 hectares of actively maintained park land which is equivalent to 33 hectares per 1,000 residents which is also well above the industry median of 9.6 ha per 1,000 residents.

As well as its situation in the Mackenzie Basin, Twizel itself has significant open space and recreation areas, as with the District statistics above (see attached map - the three shades of green, with this site outlined in purple/blue). The Golf Course is across the road from the subject site.

Currently the subject site is maintained by Council. The land receives basic maintenance (such as mowing, in season). It has no irrigation, no play equipment nor any facilities for the community, and is dissected by a sealed “roadway,” which is not a legal road. The council has no other plans for any upgrade of this site for open space or recreation purposes.

Conclusion:

Council is supportive of the rezoning for the above reasons, in particular to facilitate the use of the site for St John Twizel.



Map Legend

Primary Parcels



Road Parcels



ZonesFilter

- Accommodation Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- Airport Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- General Industrial Zone
- General Rural Zone
- Glentanner Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- Large Format Retail Zone
- Large Lot Residential Zone
- Low Density Residential Zone
- Medium Density Residential Zone
- Mixed Use Zone
- Natural Open Space Zone (Proposed)
- Neighbourhood Centre Zone
- Open Space Zone (Proposed)
- Pūkaki Downs Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- Pūkaki Village Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- Rural Lifestyle Zone
- Special Purpose Zone (Proposed)
- Sport and Active Recreation Zone (Proposed)
- Town Centre Zone

State highways outside Canterbury



State highways (<1:250,000)



Territorial Authority Boundaries



Regional Boundaries

