

**IN THE MATTER OF THE RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT ACT 1991**

**AND IN THE MATTER OF PLAN CHANGE 9  
TO THE HAMILTON DISTRICT PLAN.**

**Further submissions of Dr Bryan Bang for the Harrowfield Residents and  
the Harrowfield Club inc.**

MAY IT PLEASE THE COMMISSION

- 1 You have heard my earlier submissions and the evidence of Mr and Mrs Miller. I now wish to round off the question whether or not the Harrowfield Drive area should be accorded the status of a Heritage Area or similar.
2. As I pointed out in my earlier submissions, the Harrowfield Area comprises the main street, and a number of *culs de sac*. It is a discreet area that cannot be enlarged because it is bounded by part of Wairere Drive to the north and the gully system to the south and west. It has one means of egress by motor vehicles. Accordingly, its status as a heritage area or precinct could not be extended to adjacent areas simply because in that they are not physically part of the Harrowfield “suburb”.
- 3 In their evidence Mr and Mrs Miller, who were among the earliest residents in Harrowfield, told us what attracted them to the area when they moved to Hamilton some 30 years ago. They told us that they liked the idea of large section sizes, and were happy to build a house to the specifications of the developer. They were also attracted to the fact that Harrowfield has its own park owned by its residents, and maintained by the Harrowfield Club. And a sense it is the centre of the community spirit that exists in the Harrowfield community.
- 4 Over the intervening years, later residents took the same attitude and as a consequence Harrowfield developed into what is widely recognised as a unique area of Hamilton. The original notion of the developer resulted in a “suburb” that is unlike any other in Hamilton and possibly in New Zealand).
- 5 The Experts have pointed out that Harrowfield does not meet the criteria that is used to identify heritage areas in the Plan. I have to agree with that assessment as far as it goes. But, of course, these criteria are theoretical in nature. In planning terms, in my view, these theories are of the nature of academic assessments that assist us in reaching conclusions about the nature of specified parts of the environment.. They are often not found fully demonstrated in the area under review. I believe that there is a further way of looking at these kinds of problems that gives us a safer way of protecting the past into the future.

- 6 If we leave the designation of areas of interest to some future time the chances are that the environment that commended itself today will, in the future, have been destroyed and thus, we would not be able to preserve what is it about Harrowfield today that may in the future seek to be designated for preservation by making it a heritage area?
- 7 In addition to the theoretical approaches mentioned above, I consider that there is another, and just as important, theoretical approach, that needs to be considered, namely an evaluation of the present situation of appropriate areas in terms of their possible or probable future.
- 8 This of course may be considered as just another theory and therefore as wide of the true mark as those that I mentioned above. I need to tell you again that I agree with the experts on this, but I believe that what I am suggesting is a method of securing for the future the best of today.
- 9 If we don't move on Harrowfield now, what may happen? The answer to that is the destruction of an environment that is unique in Hamilton and possibly in New Zealand. This is already happening. To date a number of houses have been sold and demolished and their sites used for the erection of townhouses. \$1million each.
- 10 This situation was brought about by the Government's legislation often referred to as the 3X3 Act. That is each section can have three houses on it and they can be up to three storeys high. No particular thought is given to the need for open space or other amenities on-site and this can be observed in several places in the city. I understand that the notion behind this legislation, which was supported by the opposition, was an effort to increase the housing stock to relieve the situation of the homeless and first home buyers. The prices asked for town-houses in Harrowfield simply means that the homeless or first home buyers are unlikely to find themselves owning a residence in this location.
- 11 I said earlier that this technique of "the future of the present" needs to be applied to Harrowfield. In order to do that we need to decide what it is that will prompt a consideration of the situation and support the possibility of designation as a heritage area. In my submission there are several criteria that need to be considered, namely –
  - What is unique or different about the area?
  - What is the aesthetic value of the area in those overall values of the city?
  - What is the view of the majority of those that live in the area?
  - Is there imminent danger of the destruction of the uniqueness of the area
- 12 It is my earnest belief that if we don't do something about this now the 3x3 legislation will simply assist in the destruction of Harrowfield without achieving, in this suburb, the purpose for which it was enacted in the first place.