

## **A note from Myself (Tim Jeffs)**

Hi guys I'm Tim and I'm one of the landowners in 50 Acacia crescent.

Truthfully I have not spent nearly as much time as I would have liked on this submission. I work around 100 hours a week and simply I don't have the time nor the mental capacity to fit this in, however one thing I can be sure on is this area does not fit the proposed criteria of a heritage site.

I would like to note, that like me, all our neighbours would have been notified via mail about this proposal. As a number of property's in the street are tenanted, therefore I think it is safe to say some landowners have missed the notification. As the process has gone on I have spoken with a number of the owner/occupiers in the street. This has been my findings:

1. A large number of the remainder have not understood the significance of this proposed change and have chosen not to involve themselves with it, especially since a few of them are of the opinion their voice will not be heard. I only know the significance because I used to own a property in a heritage area and it was a nightmare, therefore I especially don't want to see this happen again to my current property.
2. Every neighbour, about 15 or 16 I have spoken to has been against this change, and either doesn't remember being notified or didn't know what to do with the information, or was just too busy to take anything else on board.
3. I stopped talking to neighbours after I realised only those who made the original submission could make a further submission. This consists of 3 properties'. Myself (who is here), An elderly lady called Mel who is overseas currently and didn't want any more stress to deal with, and a guy called Mitch who currently lives in London. Mitch's sister was going to do a submission on his behalf as she owns half the property, but she is in the middle of exams and didn't need the added stress at this time. A disappointing result given the huge negative implications this will have on our property's

### **Tim Jeffs : Oral Submission 1 June 2023**

[**Note from Jean Dorrell:** Tim Jeffs (Acacia HHA) contacted David Whyte and myself for assistance with his oral submission. As a starting point I sent Tim draft info from what later became my 9 May submission which I thought may assist him after my initial review (refer to 9 May Whyte/Dorrell submission). I suggested that he check the actual number of the supposed described common features of Acacia (which has been documented as a good example of a clear description by Mr Knott) as our brief visit indicated these were neither dominant or in some cases accurate. Tim and one of his neighbours did this work. The variances are great and are documented below under the heading **architectural features**.

Personal circumstances (Tim's very busy life and the death of my husband's mother last weekend (we left Hamilton for her funeral immediately after our Wednesday oral submissions)) meant that we did not get a chance to meet with Tim and personalise Tim's oral

submission. As a result he ended up reading my notes from earlier draft (which I think are those below). This was obviously not ideal and I understand was unclear to the panel.

**The key point in the work that Tim and his neighbour documented, that is not already raised in the gazillion submissions from myself and David Whyte, is the fact that the list of supposed unique architectural features includes many items that are neither rare in the city or in many cases, actually dominant in Acacia.**

I hope that our combined personal circumstances will not detract from Tim Jeff's submission asking for the Acacia HHA to be removed. I believe the following is what Tim was reading from but am not 100% sure as I had a migraine on Thursday and left the room while he was speaking.

Tim contacted me last night (after his oral submission) concerned that he had not been heard and also concerned as he had just ended up reading my notes (which were written in my voice as legal-ish and were never intended to be read aloud by a young man talking about the impact on his assets).

The following is the last document that I sent Tim, but it has been a hell of a week so I cannot guarantee this.

Nga mihi

Jean Dorrell]

### **Acacia Crescent: notes for oral submission**

## **Meaningless or Unexplained Heritage Values**

There is no clear explanation or evidence as to why **this** street should be in an HHA vs other streets in the Houchen subdivision, or Houchen Road itself. Yes, it is a fact that it is part of Houchen subdivision, but so are many other streets.

The street is described as typical of the 1950s-1980s period including linked roads and cul de sacs. To state the obvious, all roads are **either** linked **or** cul-de-sacs. Roads either join another road or they don't. This is not a heritage value.

Schedule 8D notes that there has been little subdivision. The same can be said for most streets built in the same decade(s) with quality housing. This is because it is not yet old enough for houses to fall apart and be replaced with newer housing. This is not a heritage value. Two of the sections in Acacia have been subdivided, another has an auxiliary building placed on the back of the section, and multiple others have had extensions and major alterations.

Schedule 8D notes that there is more variation in styles, materials, and layouts than State housing. Given that early NZ State housing was all virtually identical, this is a meaningless description. **Any** two non-State houses in NZ will likely have more variation than State housing.

## **Growth**

"provides evidence of land owners capitalising on the growth of Hamilton city"

This may provide evidence that landowners sold land when they saw an opportunity.

Who wouldn't? It does not explain how this is a heritage value.

Hamilton has been a growing city since its inception. If a street or group of streets is considered to have heritage values because it is an example of growth, then **every** Hamilton street should be included in HHAs.

### **Visibility**

Many of the houses on the Houchen Road side have trees in front of them obscuring the house. Many of the houses on the non-Houchen side of the road are downhill and below the roadway and not clearly visible from the road. What is the point of protecting houses which no one can see?

### **Accuracy of Report**

Per the summary of values, the dwellings are largely 1960s and 1970s builds. Then a sentence later, they are only 1960s buildings. Has anyone even proof read this report?

"It remains at the southern boundary of the city" suggests that the heritage experts are not aware of the very significant Peacocke's development nearby, not to mention the new build duplexes currently being built on the other side of the Hamilton city boundary behind 48 and 50 Acacia. These can be seen from the road just the same as if a property was to be built on the back sections of 48 or 50 Acacia.

### **Plan Books**

Schedule 8D states:

"A new era of suburban housing vernacular was established in the 1960s **with the introduction of architecturally designed houses from plan books.**"

"The dwellings **appear** to have **strong similarities** with the 1960s plan books."

Two issues here:

Given this is the draft of the District Plan, it is not acceptable to have qualifiers. HCC need to provide evidence, not guesses. Appears and similarities are not evidence.

From the **early 1950s**, there were architecturally designed plan books in NZ. So the report writer seems to be a decade late in NZ architectural history. Of note, he does not say which plan books these houses are from. If the fact that they are plan book houses is important to the heritage value, some evidence showing whose plan book they are from is needed.

I have included some research on plan books in NZ, and the absence of this being a heritage value, as an appendix for you to read at your leisure.

### **List of architectural features**

Schedule 8D includes a list of architectural features. These are a mix of meaningless heritage values, instances of very few numbers, and incorrect statements.

There are 49 properties in the HHA. Schedule 8D acknowledges that there is limited visibility on the eastern side of the road so you cannot see half of the supposed historic heritage area.

Schedule 8D Statement	Comments
Many houses have linked or integral garages.	Most two-storey houses in NZ have a garage on the ground level. This is not a feature.
Low-pitched roofs with gable ends finished with prominent but plain bargeboard.	This describes a very large percentage of NZ houses from various decades.
Plain flat wall surfaces with rectangular picture windows	Is there some wall surface other than flat? Rectangular windows are also the default.
Tiles roofs	The roofs are a mixture of traditional tiles, decramastic and iron, with the iron roof type dominating the street
Red bricks or light brown/grey/dull coloured bricks	There are also timber houses, so, like the roofs, just a mixture of houses.
Timber windows with opening top lights	Only 11/49 houses have these. In fact, 71% of the windows are aluminium, so this is not a common feature.
Front doors with small glazed panels	Only 12/49 houses have these. Most of the doors are not visible. A number have screen doors hiding the main door. So again, this is not a common feature.
White painted panels between windows	I have been unable to locate one of these. I did locate a blue one.

NOTE: It has already been recommended in the 6th June 2022 peer review report, which has since been adopted in 2023 Supported by Gau and/or Miller that Acacia be removed from the proposed HHA

#### Conclusion

- 1) Request a site visit from the panel.
- 2) Note that all submitters opposed this HHA.
- 3) Note that HCC have provided no evidence of heritage values.
- 4) Request for the removal of the HHA from the District Plan  
Document to Send Panel in the week before submission to include this: Also probably table above.

## **Pattern or Plan Book Houses**

(Researched and written by Jean Dorrell, April 2023)

Acacia, Ashbury, Lamont and Seifert HHAs all have references to the houses being from “plan books” or “pattern books” in Revised Schedule 8D but there is no explanation as to **why** this would be a heritage value, no explanation as to **which** plan books they think the house designs come from, and **why** this makes them important.

These are referring to house plan books which, like a knitting pattern, give you a design, describe materials needed and give instructions as to how to make the house.

This concept is similar to a supermarket providing ingredients for a meal and a recipe and even these provide details as to the chef who designed the meal.

**They are not a unique feature of the 1960s and 1970s and, as such, it is unclear why it would be a heritage value specific to these two decades, or in fact at all.**

Internationally, plan books have been around since at least **1910** when Henry L. Wilson (self-proclaimed as “The Bungalow Man”)<sup>1</sup> published his book.

In NZ, Ellis & Burnand’s **1933** catalogue included a plan book section after the “ready-to-erect” houses, but it appears to have been added to the catalogue as an afterthought with no supporting information as to how to buy a plan.



From **1945** onwards, Ellis and Burnand produced several editions of a very professional-looking plan book called **Practical Home Designs**. Ellis & Burnand said the plans were created by “a woman designer”. The second edition states that *“the responsibility of providing the plans in this publication was placed in the hands of a woman designer, who viewing the matter from the angle of a*

*home-maker, has used her talents in planning.”*

Practical Home Designs 2nd edition, circa 1947

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/938136.The\\_Bungalow\\_Book](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/938136.The_Bungalow_Book), Henry L. Wilson, The Bungalow Book: Floor Plans and Photos of 112 Houses, 1910

Max Rosenfeld is noted as an NZ architect who sold **over 100,000 copies** of his various plan books with multiple editions from the **early 1950s** onwards. He also wrote a column in the "Weekly News" called "Home Architect" from 1949 for two decades.

Rosenfeld's plan books are probably the first NZ architecturally designed plan books.

Rosenfeld sold the house plans very cheaply so there are probably many, many houses from his plan books in NZ. (The usual cost for other house plans by registered architects was five percent of the cost of the building.) When asked why they were so cheap, Rosenfeld stated "*I'm letting them go at a nominal*

*price because I had to draw them anyway (for use in the book) and because I want to do something for the community in order to promote building activity.*"<sup>2</sup>



The New Zealand House 5<sup>th</sup> edition, circa 1957

A 1954 publication called **Your Own Home, HOW?**<sup>3</sup> "issued by direction of the Minister of Housing" in **1954** advertises a **low-cost plan service**. Fourteen plans were made available for five pounds each from the State Advances Corporation. A **limited plan service for small houses** developed by the **Institute of Architects** is also offered. The limited plan service cost around half the normal fee for full services.

Based on these examples, the statement in Revised Schedule D and Miller's peer review that "*a new era of suburban housing vernacular was established in the 1960s with the introduction of architecturally designed houses from plan books*" is **factually incorrect**.

All of the NZ plan books, whether designed by a draftsman, "a woman designer" or an architect, from the Ellis & Burnand 1933 catalogue onwards, have a variety of designs. The point of them was to offer many ideas so people could find one that they wanted. As such it makes it impossible to define a house (or group of houses) as being similar to a plan book unless it is one specific plan in one specific plan book.

In fifty years, will all homes by companies such as Jennian Homes and GJ Gardener be considered to have historic heritage value for this reason?

<sup>2</sup> Sources: Obituary on <https://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/>,

Max Rosenfeld: "The Home Architect", Daniele Abreu e Lima, School of Architecture, Victoria University, Wellington, 2008

<sup>3</sup> Copy held in Hamilton City Libraries Heritage Collection