

28 April 2023

Good morning

I am Jennie Gainsford and I am a resident in Princes Street Cambridge East. I am part of the heritage cluster between Stafford Street and the intersection with Thornton Road. My house was built in 1921 and is an American inspired bungalow design constructed in reinforced concrete. I have lived in Cambridge for 33 years and the reason we purchased a property here was the aesthetic and beautiful nature of the town - as you could say 'love at first sight'.

I am passionate about the preservation of the character of our town and the retention of the visual impact of the streetscape. Cambridge is a town of special significance aesthetically and historically. The community do not want to see this destroyed by unsympathetic development by including three storeys in our residential area. Removal of setbacks and no limit and no consent for this type of development is not appealing to this community. The removal of houses for this type of development is not for this town. To add to this, the pressure that it will create on the already established infrastructure.

I have a Masters Degree in architectural history and I have worked with architects who were commissioned by Councils to establish the historical content of buildings, their merits for inclusion in their district plans for protection. Assessing buildings for inclusion in district plans is not simply by its age and design - it is a combined process. Researching delves into the history: takes into account the land on which the house is situated, the owner of the land, the owner who commissions the build, the builder and very important is the architect. His style and design leaves visible markers on the streetscape.

In Cambridge in the early part of the twentieth century a number of prominent architects designed houses, commercial and civic buildings in the town. We have Arthur Bibra Herrold who designed the Cambridge Town Hall plus various other buildings, also James Thomas Douce who designed the former Central Hotel and Veale's Building prominent commercial buildings, which are still extant on the corner of Duke and Victoria Streets. He also designed other commercial premises but was instrumental in the design of at least 80 domestic dwellings, mainly bungalows, in Cambridge. I live in one of his houses he designed and diagonally across the road from my house is a transitional bungalow designed by another important Waikato architect Frederick Charles Daniell. I have completed a comprehensive study on him as well as Douce.

Key features - often these heritage dwellings are on larger plots, have well established gardens and a set back and in some cases a low fence line defining the property. These are common features of the bungalow era. The villa's in Cambridge were often defined by fences and hedges simply because of wandering stock as in more settled urban areas standardised wire or wood fencing was common.

This is why I am here today - I am extremely concerned over these blanket rules, without thought to its inhabitants.

To make a national blanket policy 'a one size fits all' to create more houses including high density housing without differentiating between large cities, smaller cities and small towns, quite frankly

shows a lack of respect for communities. No input of the people who live in these communities is in my personal view disrespectful. This policy has been discussed amongst the community, and it does not have our approval. We have a council who look after us as ratepayers and this interference from Central Government does not - to be blunt, does not win any favours with our community.

Waipa Council have in their district plan about restricting sunlight with neighbouring houses - a three storey block would certainly have this effect on neighbours.

I was part of the Waipa Heritage Council under the guidance of former Waipa Mayor Alan Livingstone. He was pro heritage and under his guidance the group put together a list of domestic and commercial buildings they considered to be worthy of protection ; included in this was cluster heritage groupings, which gave further prominence to their importance.

Cambridge is a town full of character. The original settlement towns are still defined by the town belts, Victoria town square, heritage buildings domestic and commercial. All these elements give the town its uniqueness. Ratepayers do not want to see destroyed by over development imposed on the town. Heritage buildings, parks, mature trees are all the components that enhance a town - these give a sense of place, markers of time, visual and aesthetic values that enhance the streetscape and the town's character.

Cambridge residents are protective of their town.

Over the past two days I have listened to people make assumptions about our town. I heard loud and clear that HSG NZ are right and perfect. They are making plans to disrupt the town in which we live. Cambridge has its own special uniqueness; Cambridge East is a character area in conjunction with cluster of houses considered of historic value.

To finish

The last couple of days I have heard a lot 'you shall and you must' as well as the word 'I' used a lot - should it have been we or the name the organisation.

The most disturbing factor is Cambridge being lumped into Hamilton metropolitan area under tier 1.

We are not part of HCC we are Waipa District and should be tier 3 as recommended by WDC.

There appears to be a lot of idealism used - that residents will walk, not drive cars will have electric cars and so forth.

Now retired: I continue to research heritage buildings in the Waikato. I have researched the central business district of Cambridge and quite a number of heritage commercial and domestic dwellings in the town - it is essential and important to know their history.