

Submission guide: Selwyn District Plan
Submissions due 5pm Friday 11th December

Thank you for deciding to write a submission! The Selwyn District Plan will shape our region and affect how it changes over the next 10-15 years, so it's important we take part in shaping it. You do not have to live in the region to make a submission. Here are some tips to help you write your submission.

For those submitting primarily about the climate crisis / coal mine in the Malvern Hills the key points are:

-The Selwyn District Plan needs to fit in with the government's declaration of a climate emergency, and cease to provide consent for activities that exacerbate that state of emergency, primarily coal mining.

-If the coal mine continues to exist (or worse, to expand) it takes away from national efforts to live up to the Paris Agreement. Climate and ecological ramifications from the coal mine in Malvern are not limited to the Selwyn district.

-In addition to cooking the climate, coal is driving industrial dairying. We want it written into the plans that coal will not be granted any further resource consents, as part of our recognition of the state of emergency.

-Over the next 10-15 years we will be facing increasing pressure to decarbonize the economy, but the proposed district plan does not make a distinction between development of low-carbon businesses (such as regenerative agricultural businesses, social enterprises, etc) and high-carbon businesses (intensive farms, extractive industries, resource-heavy industries). This means there are no incentives in the district plan for developing businesses to prioritise ecologically restorative practices.

-The plan should recognize the ecological crisis and disallow consents for any new farms/agricultural industries that do not operate within a regenerative model. This should include any application to intensify or extend existing farms.

Writing a submission:

You don't need to submit on the entire plan, but it's important to submit on what's most important to you. If you like something in the plan, say so. If you don't like something in the plan, say so. Don't use your submission as an opportunity to rant at the council, use it as an opportunity to bring your concerns to light, tell them how you feel, and how you think things can be changed for the better.

Tone:

Be constructive, clear, respectful, and speak from the heart. Remember, the people reading your submission are people. Your submission does not need to be as formal as possible, it needs to be authentic and real. The concerns are yours, so don't write as if you're someone

else. Think of a teacher or sports coach you really liked, and talk as you would talk to them—respectfully but familiarly. This will help the person reading the submission connect with what you are saying. A planner is likely to connect more with submissions that feel genuine and heartfelt than submissions that sound like an academic essay.

Writing tips:

- If you have a choice between two words, use the shorter, simpler one.
- Make your sentences short and clear, if you let them go on and on then sometimes it's easy to lose clarity and impact and you end up just repeating yourself too many times in a rambling way you see what I mean, yeah, don't do this ;)
- Make it easy to read. Better to be clear and easy to understand than to use jargon or fancy words.
- If a word doesn't add meaning or clarity to a sentence, take it out.
- Shorter is better, no need to labour the point. Be kind to your reader by not taking more of their time than you need to.
- Be conversational, if you wouldn't talk that way, you might not want to write that way.
- Be sincere, your submission is on your behalf, so speak from your own perspective and experience, don't try to make assumptions about others' views.
- PROOFREAD. Spelling mistakes are not the end of the world, so if you're not a good speller don't stress about it, or use spell check if you want to. But I think it is important that your sentences make sense, and it's easy to leave things unfinished, or accidentally miss out key words. This can make your submission sound awkward or hard to understand. Give it to a friend or a family member if you're unsure.
- Have fun with it. Don't be afraid to be yourself. If you want to be colourful or funny, go for it! Being yourself doesn't take away from the legitimacy of your concerns.

Structure:

This is the structure I intend on using.

Introduction—brief introduction of myself, why I am submitting, and the experience I bring to the table (if you have lived in the area for 50 years, that's relevant local knowledge; or you may be a doctor, teacher, mechanic, student, bus driver, each of you have valuable perspectives of the region that you can bring into your submission—all points of view are important. State where you're coming from, but be brief!!!)

Highlight your main concerns—these are things that are the most important to you. You may be concerned about healthcare in Selwyn, or the polluted waterways, or suburban sprawl, or the risks of drought, or the connectedness of the community. Whatever your primary concerns in the region, (and bear in mind this is for the next 15 years) state them clearly and concisely before getting into the details of the plan.

Issues with the plan—next, state the aspects of the plan that you like (positive feedback is just as important as negative feedback). Then state the aspects of the plan you don't like, why you don't like them, and how you think they could be improved. If you have a better idea share it. You don't need to have all the answers, but suggest an alternative approach if you can. If you have any relevant research or information reference it here, summarizing the relevant info and providing further references so as not to make this part too long. I recommend choosing a handful of aspects that are the most important to you as opposed to trying to cover everything.

Conclusion—end on an appeal to values. No need to elaborate at length, just a statement of why you care and what you hope to see from this process. If you are doing this for your grandchildren, or a friend who is sick, or for a river that you care about, or your elderly parents, state that. Say whatever comes from your heart and trust that you've done a good thing.

Submitting:

Remember, your submission does not need to be long! A short sweet submission is better than no submission. Feel free to get in touch with me if you need help, 022 548 6143 or siana.fitzjohn91@gmail.com

The link below will take you to the SDC website, on the right-hand side there is a link to the summary document. Have a read of the contents page first if you don't want to read the whole document.

<https://yoursay.selwyn.govt.nz/selwyndistrictplanreview>

Link containing instructions for online submissions:

<https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/property-And-building/planning/application-and-submission-forms/form-5-submission-on-publicly-notified-proposed-plan>

OR email your submission to dprsubmissions@selwyn.govt.nz (Subject line: Proposed Selwyn District Plan Submission)

EXAMPLE SUBMISSION (this is not my actual submission)

Kia ora koutou,

My name is Siana Fitzjohn, I live near Charing Cross in Selwyn. My family have lived in the area for 20 years. My background is in geography and I have a Masters of Science Communication degree from the University of Otago.

My biggest concerns for the Selwyn region are the climate and biodiversity crisis. The droughts are becoming more frequent, and I'm worried about how this will affect biodiversity, soil health, and the agriculture in the area.

The plan states that the council wishes to plan how any new development is managed so that it is sustainable. Yes. Great. However, the plan does not say how we will ensure that development is "sustainable". The plan states that it aims to promote primary production in the Selwyn rural areas by allowing "intensive primary production, like poultry or pig farming, to become a permitted activity" (p. 14 of summary document). This is not an example of sustainable development. It's the opposite. The district plan should be set up to encourage regenerative farming, and to discourage (or, even better, to disallow) intensive farming that will degrade Selwyn's ecosystems even further. Regenerative agriculture (as opposed to intensive agriculture), promotes ecological diversity and better land practices. It will help to restore our damaged ecosystems and waterways, ease pressure on the climate, while feeding us and keeping us healthy.

I trust that you will revise your promotion of intensive farming practices in the Selwyn District Plan, and instead support regenerative methods that protect biodiversity, waterways, soil, and people. Let's make better decisions now so we don't bugger things up any more than we already have.

Sincerely,

Siana Fitzjohn