

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a mother of a 4 year old and a one month old, I live in the boulevard park on Taylor subdivision and I work at Wairau Hospital. When we first built in boulevard park on Taylor a key reason for choosing the location was its ease of access to my work-place - I was able to cycle (or walk) to work each day and save the planet by reducing short car trips. When we had our eldest daughter and the time came to return to work I looked for childcare that would enable me to continue this - however none of the childcare options within cycling distance accept children under 2 years old - therefore I had to look to the options in town and chose Little Footsteps. This meant that I had to drive each day to drop Lilly off before returning to the hospital for work. Since Little footsteps has moved to its new location I have only driven on a handful of days - I am able to walk/ cycle/ scooter to daycare with Lilly (and our new baby). Given the council's and the countries commitment to reducing carbon emissions and encouraging healthy lifestyles for children I think it is essential that a childcare option that accepts children under 2 is on offer in local neighbourhoods; and especially so close to a large employer like Wairau Hospital. The boulevard park subdivision is advertised using the values of it as family environment with ease of access to recreational and fitness activities. It seems a shame the families would have to use a car to access key utilities such as childcare and therefore continuing to have a daycare presence in the neighbourhood would enhance the area of town.

If the location on Taylor pass road were to remain a childcare centre I would continue to use it. It would have the benefits as outlined above as well as providing children with a chance to attend daycare with children who will also attend the local primary school and therefore maintain social connections as she develops. As it currently stands, having to drive into town for daycare services, means that children usually attend daycare with other children from all over Blenheim and so far none of the children in my daughter's cohort will be attending her local primary school and it would be nice to see this change.

Little footsteps as a daycare centre values outside time and use of natural resources in its teaching - the Taylor pass road location is ideal for this as the large outdoor space is utilised every day (rain, frost or sun) allowing nature based play and exploration as well as a calming and beneficial environment for children.

Cheers

Jen