

In the Matter of      Rangitikei District Council Proposed Plan  
Change Rezoning of 1165/1151 and  
1091, SH 1, Marton

Under                      The Resource Management Act

Submitter                Howard and Samantha Walsh

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**Brief of Evidence of Howard Murray Neil Walsh**

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My full name is Howard Murray Neil Walsh.

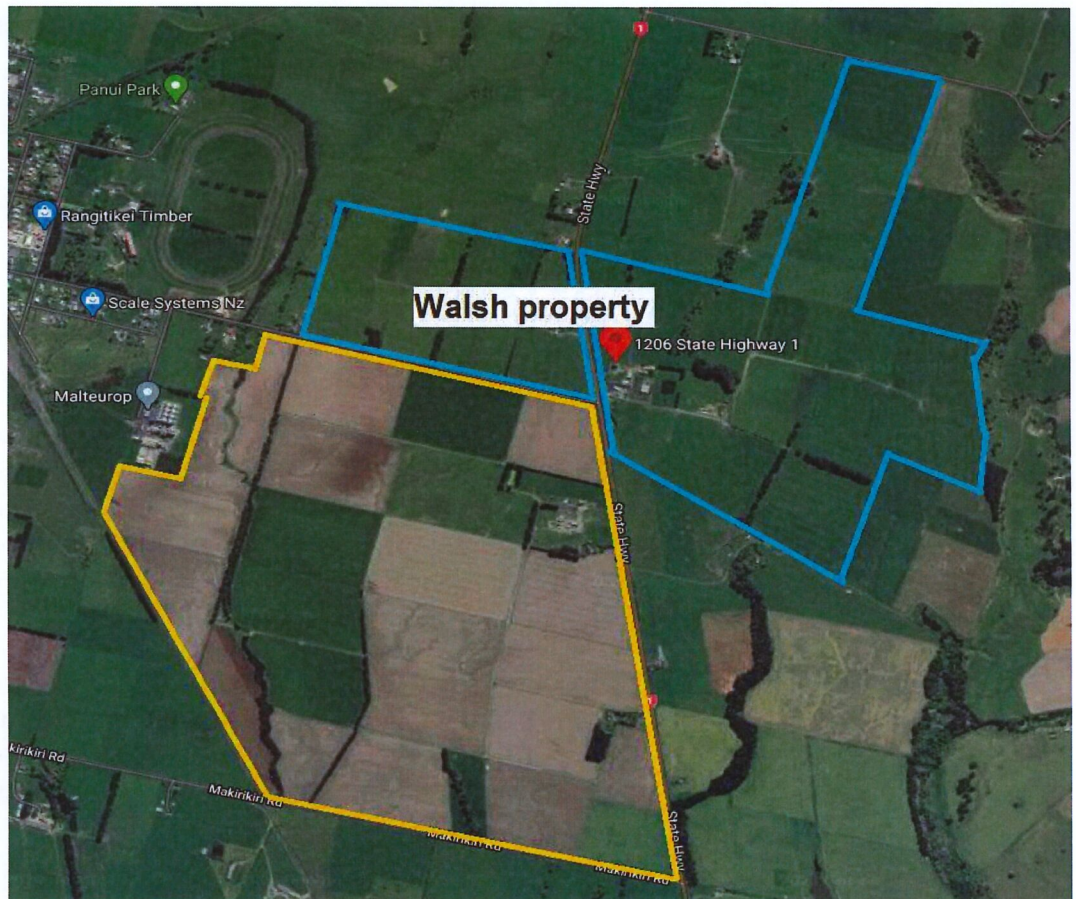
I am giving evidence as a submitter who will be severely affected by this proposal if it proceeds. I am also supported by my wife Samantha Walsh.

### **Our Position**

1. We both oppose the proposed plan change. The information provided from the Council and developers didn't give us enough information to fully assess the impact of the proposed plan change to our home and business. We still don't even know what is going in there, where, how big or what they will do. We are therefore in a very vulnerable position. As proposed a full 217 ha change could have a catastrophic affect on our existing livelihoods, especially wide spread development along Wings Line. The options proposed would not address our concerns unless they have major changes.
2. There is no evidence to say we need light industrial development along Wings Line. We have been blindsided by this: they always spoke of a buffer zone (trees and bunds and rural) and suddenly it is 'industrial' right opposite us.
3. We have very little assurance that any protections will be put in place and honoured to protect surrounding properties and the residents of Marton. The approach is – lets just do it and we will see if you are really affected later. We are worried we will have to spend money and distress repeating our concerns for 20 different developments along Wings Line over the next ten years. We believe that if this opportunity is lost then no-one will ever look at the cumulative effect on Wings line especially. We feel the Council have failed us.

### **My Background**

4. We live at 1206 State Highway 1. We own and operate a Dairy Farm that runs on the North side of Wings Line (1233) and also is on the Eastern side of SH1 (1206). Despite this we were not notified.
5. I have marked it on the aerial map below. Almost all of the Wings Line frontage is our family farm. I have lived at this address all my life, and have farmed this property since I was 15yrs old; that is for 26 years. I am very familiar with the land and am an experienced dairy farmer.



### Flooding: Tiles

6. One of our major concerns is flooding of our property by blocking the drainage tile system. Our property is on the high side and the tiles from the State Highway one side and the Wings Line side drain into the proposed rezone land.

### Tiles

7. Tiles are the blood lines of our farm. I have asked our drainage contractor to give evidence on the tile system. I am also very familiar with it and know where the tiles are on my land: many of them I have helped lay. The natural flow of water goes from our property to the proposed site, so if drainage is not sufficient - this will cause major issues for our property.
8. Without the tile drainage system that we have invested in and maintained for years – our farm will turn into a bog-hole. We farm heavy clay soil, and so in winter we are very wet. Our major issue is pugging. In badly pugged land the cows sink into the mud and go lame. It is very

bad for their welfare and destroys not only the grass but the integrity of the land itself by compacting it.

9. Normally, adjoining farms etc. will join their tile system into their neighbours' main tile - so that the system runs freely. If they are not joined in properly together – this will cause a property to have major drainage issues. This is an existing integrated system.
10. We are very worried that the development of the site will cause our fields to bog up. If the tiles on the site are crushed or blocked in any way it won't spill water onto their site: it will back up onto ours.
11. Down State Highway One the tiles go under the road and drain away into the proposed land. On Wings Line tiles don't go under road, culverts do. The culverts drain into ditches which are closed both ends. The tiles to the south are open to the ditches and slowly drain the ditches after rain. It is not ideal, the system under the Highway is better, but it works.
12. There is no evidence about how the Council will make sure the ditches will drain if the land is rezoned and developed. I have read the Supplementary evidence from Greg Carlyon: and looked at is proposed solution. All three of his suggestions are about stormwater I think it completely misses the point. I have looked at the ACC standard 2015/004 (GD04). It doesn't apply. It concentrates on stormwater and maintaining and enhancing ecosystems. We are talking about protecting a rural field drain system. The Auckland standard he suggests:
  - a. is not designed to handle existing infrastructure. Its for stormwater on site; and
  - b. it won't apply to the light industrial zone so the damage will be done closer to Wings Line anyway; and
  - c. there is no timing in place to make sure it is in place before Wings Line is developed. Once the tiles silt up it is too late.
13. The photo below shows the field tile which drains away the water from the 1st culvert under Wings Line. The ditch is on the South side of Wings Line and the field tile goes to the proposed light industrial zone. I have sprayed the tile red.





14. We believe that the plan does not adequately recognise, and makes no attempt to fix, problems if drains block.
15. This photo shows a field tile in the ground on our property in the 1st paddock up Wings Line. The field tile at the correct height flowing from the paddock on our property (North of Wings Line) into the 1st culvert under the Wings Line road.



#### **Traffic - Wings Line Road**

16. I support Wings Line not having any more traffic on it. We have seen so many incidents and near misses. Wings line is a very bad road already for the trucks it gets on it. It is too narrow for two to pass. I drive down it and work next to it every day. There is no proper place to pull over it is bumpy and has blind spots.
17. If driving a regular sized vehicle, passing large trucks coming the opposite direction on Wings Line is already dangerous enough – either

having to slow down or sometimes pull partially off the road to pass. Each lane is only just wider than a truck, so often they drive almost directly on the centre white line to keep away from the ditch.

18. At least once a day we see an oversize truck transporting houses, large boats/massive diggers or harvesters etc. on the back of trucks, using Wings Line – because they can't fit under the rail bridge on SH1.
19. On third June alone I saw two trucks at different times of the day transporting houses up Wings Line, as well as multiple diggers, dump trucks and oversize trucks.
20. These oversize vehicles often take up almost the entire road – with cars having to wait at the intersection or pull right off the road to allow them to pass. During the cropping/harvesting seasons there are also a lot of tractors and transport trucks that use Wings Line.
21. We are really worried about any idea of a Light Industrial zone for many reasons but one is that Wings Line shouldn't have driveways going onto it or more traffic. My children walk down it to school and there are no footpaths or cycle lanes. Everyone who wanted a light industrial activity on Wings Line would want a driveway onto it of course. The road can't handle the traffic, the whole mess hasn't been looked at properly by an engineers and it is not NZTA's problem and the Council hasn't got the money.
22. Our observation from living and working on Wings Line is that the road in its current state is barely adequate for the type of traffic and the traffic volume already using it. The Plan only protects traffic from the *Industrial area* coming off Wings Line: not developments in the *Light Industrial zone*. Work needed to get Wings Line, SH1 AND Makirikiri Rd to a standard able to comfortably cope with the predicted level of traffic would be a massive undertaking and expense but we have no costings. Who is going to pay for this? There is no provision for the developer to do so and it is not fair if it falls on the Community.

#### **Makirikiri Road**

23. We are very worried the traffic plan is still inadequate. The use of Makirikiri Rd by logging trucks coming to and from Santoft is also a significant concern for us. Our children attend South Makirikiri school and there are already hazards on that road with agricultural contractors operating from a property situated on that road. The entrance to the school is not currently a particularly safe one – without adding logging trucks to the mix. There is a crossroads right at the entrance of the school, with cars accessing 4 different directions, with some confusion amongst newer parents as to how the practised flow works. Frequent logging trucks is just an accident waiting to happen.

## Lighting

24. Another major concern for us is if there is going to be 24hr lighting, particularly at night. We know, from years of past experience that our cows are more agitated and active on a full moon. They are excited if it is light at night: it doesn't happen if it is cloudy for example.
25. I always take more precautions because of this, by making sure all electric fences are running well. If they are in a paddock on our boundary, I set up another electric fence using standards and tape as an added precaution.
26. Because of their response to light we need a real buffer zone with plantings and a bund, done early, including tall trees, so they can get established. A light industrial zone would be a disaster for noise and light and result in distressed and injured stock and possible escapes onto SH 1. Even restrictions on things like night security lights: anything that would throw excess light towards the paddocks, wouldn't be enough because the section is only 400 deep so would push all development right up to Wings Line.

## Noise

27. Cows are also sensitive to noise and stampede if they don't know what it is. During calving time, and dry off time, the cows are more prone to spooking, and flighty. Calves are the worst - they spook and scatter with loud noises. If they are still getting used to electric fences, then when they spook, they can bust through multiple fences, tape gates etc. Light industrial/Heavy Industrial noises would affect the herd, and the calves significantly.
28. During storms for example it worst: the combination of light and noise is terrible: if we have the proposed development we would have both, every night. When cattle spook, this sometimes results in injuries. I have seen, open gashes/wounds to legs, torn udders, and sometimes even teats amputated by wire fences they have broken through at night when frightened by something. Our cows are our livelihood. An in-calf cow is worth \$1700 plus - we cannot afford these kinds of unnecessary losses.
29. All it would take is security lighting, or motel lights, or a mini-skip being emptied at night or a neon sign. Even if they didn't break fences they would be anxious exhausted, more difficult to handle, and that means more injuries and less milk. Light industrial and cows don't mix.

## **Water and Discharges**

30. We are also concerned that a development of this magnitude would greatly impact our water supply. We are on bore water. And indeed - we are deeply concerned that any number of industrial businesses could contaminate our water supply with who knows what leaching into the ground. What protections will be put in place?
31. What about the health impacts of whatever toxic, chemical products and processes may be used by any of the businesses on this site? Just because you have "Bio" in your name doesn't mean you are clean, green and healthy for the environment and people!

## **Summary:**

32. We have concerns about the appropriateness of the scale of this site and the assessment of alternative sites. We are particularly opposed to light industrial going in here are plenty of sites around Marton that have sat empty and unused for a decade or more. (For example, the old Benchmark site on Station and Kensington Rds). If Light Industrial is needed it should be looking first at what we already have in Marton.
33. We want to know what needs to be done and how Council plans to cover these costs when it is already blowing budgets.
34. 'Light Industrial' has been thrown in at the last minute, is unnecessary and not well thought out. We feel we haven't have any notice and have been ambushed. We have no faith in this Council to inform us of future projects or even different proposals concerning this site as it develops.
35. We are not against job opportunities for locals - this is good. But the scale of this means that Marton residents alone will not be able to fill these requirements. Either a lot of people will need to travel from out of town, creating more traffic and the requirement for more housing will grow - in turn changing the really special dynamics of our small country town. We love Marton's character and small scale. It has never been mentioned as a positive thing in the reports.
36. This proposal will make money for the landowner and leave us and Marton with the bill. It is badly thought out, won't deliver what it promises and will create huge issues for us and Marton in general in the future. We are being told to 'trust us we will protect you': how they have acted so far doesn't give us a lot of trust. We are upset about how this has been pushed through on as little information as possible as fast as possible.

We therefore ask that the Proposed rezoning is rejected.

Howard Walsh