

Proposed District Plan Change for rezoning land from
RURAL to INDUSTRIAL at 1165, 1151 & 1091 State Highway 1
Marton

Hearing Notes by Robert Snijders, 5 Grey Street, Marton

My name is Robert Snijders and I am a resident of Marton.

I am a construction professional with a career spanning over 35 years both in New Zealand and Overseas. I have worked alongside and lead groups of professionals in developing and delivering industrial, mixed use, commercial and residential developments.

I have written a number of Transport Impact Assessments, presented Appeal Evidence and stood at public consultations.

More recently, in New Zealand, I have been developing Traffic Impact Assessments for Structure Plan changes for future residential developments ranging from 1,000 to 2,500 houses. The process is similar to what I am familiar with in the United Kingdom and will include policies to be contained in an associated Development Structure Plan.

My experience provides professional weight to my objection.

My objection to the plan change focused on the Traffic and Environmental Impact and the need for site specific policies to mitigate the impact of the plan change. If council wish to promote development in Marton perhaps the council needs to develop a Community Plan in order to better direct development.

From the outset very little information was provided to inform the public fully on what was proposed. Critical documentation was not provided until after the submissions closed. In my opinion these documents lacked substance and structure.

In addition documents that dealt with Ecology, Landscape, Sustainability and a Masterplan, for example, have not been produced. These are just some of the core ingredients visible in plan changes of this size that I have become familiar with in New Zealand.

The development of these documents can flag up issues with the site selection and are there better options that better mitigate the effects.

Despite the new information being presented by the council, I maintain my objection.

1) Traffic and Transport

The Traffic Impact Assessment commissioned by council did not deal with all the strategic and local issues. WSP-Opus is a reputable company and, in my opinion, it appears that the council may have restricted the scope of the report. Some of the key observations from the report are as follows:-

- The development is forecast to generate 31,500 new vehicle movements per day of which 18% will be Heavy Vehicles (trucks). This is significant and should flag up that there will be strategic issues affecting the road network extending beyond the district's borders;
- It is predicted that 80% of the workforce will originate from outside the district, this again reinforces the fact that there are strategic issues to be addressed;
- No assessment was carried out for construction traffic as it was considered insignificant. In my experience, large developments such as this generate significant traffic volumes from day one equivalent to mid-development when you take in to account construction workers and material deliveries.
- No analysis was considered on other junctions such as SH1 and Kakariki Road (from Feilding), Wellington Road/Makiriri Road and Pukepapa Road/Makiriri Road for example. These are local level issues which should also incorporate the impact on the route along NgaTawa due to the height restriction on SH1 at Calico Line.

- Looking at the junction with SH1 and Kakariki, I travel along this route regularly at different times of the day and it is clear that there are a significant number of vehicles that, after joining SH1 from Kakariki, then turn left on to Makirikiri Road. The TIA flagged up significant turning movements from SH1 northbound into Makirikiri Road, and vice versa. This is then a primary route for vehicle travelling east to west and west to east.
- On a strategic level, junctions such as those in Bulls and routes through Halcome from Feilding for example have not been assessed. These will see significant increases in vehicle movements.
- I have read the Statement of Evidence by Natasha Reid of the NZTA. Ms Reid states in:-
 1. para 5.4 - that no early engagement between NZTA and RDC occurred,
 2. para 7.5.1 - that the intersection of Makirikiri Road should be upgraded prior to development occurring.
 3. para 7.6 – that the TIA provided lack of detail of the proposed development.

I broadly support the evidence of Ms Reid, however, in developing a new junction at Makirikiri Road/SH1 other key junctions should be assessed along with an assessment on the road network further afield. Waingawa Industrial Estate near Masterton has traffic issues because junctions on to the State Highway were not constructed prior to the development being brought in to use.

2) Environmental

For development of this scale it would be normal to see a suite of reports that address the impact on the site. In my opinion, it was naive of the council to think that detailed Ecology, Acoustic, Reticulated Services, Stormwater and Landscape reports, for example, were not required when the plan change was first notified.

These reports form the backbone of any structure plan change and drive site specific policies that need to be incorporated.

During the first pre-hearing meeting, NZ Bioforestry presented to the submitters verbal details of a proposal to build a BioPlastics Factory along with other timber processing facilities. No examples were presented.

Total Corban have a BioPlastics plant in Thailand which is of a industrial chemical scale. These plants aren't attractive and carry risk. Bonny Glen Landfill site is immediately to the west of Marton and there is good reason to assume that soon Marton will be at the centre of dirty industrial activities if they are not controlled properly.

3) Masterplan

The robust reports needed for this structure plan change would have driven the development of a masterplan for the site. Ouput from the report could have defined the size of the SH1/Makirikiri Road Junction, Access points in to the site, Internal road structure, surface water detention and quality management, acoustic buffers and landscape areas for example. It could have asked the question if this was the correct location.

4) Miscelanous

There are a number of plants that have been constructed with some sympathy for the environment. ANZCO near the junction of Wellington Road and SH1 appears to have been slotted in to the environment.

The Pulp Mill at Tangiwai is also screened from the surrounding environment, has a timber processing sawmill and is nestled amongst vast pine forests. It is owned by Earnslaw One that also owns forests in the Rangitikei.

The additional evidence provided by Greg Carlyon tries to go some way to dealing with creating a Development Structure Plan.

Summary/Conclusion

In my opinion, it is clear the council has not carried a thorough assessment of the site for this structure plan proposal. In fact its approach has been naive and cheap for a development of this size and significance.

I maintain my objection as the information to hand does not provide a robust assessment of the impact on the environment.

Any development structure plan or undertakings should be made available for public consultation as, up until now, they have been have been screened from the impact because of the lack of publicly available information.