

Before the Hearings Commissioner at Marton

Under: the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of: Rangitikei District Plan

Proposed Industrial Rezoning Plan Change at
1165, 1151 and 1091 State Highway 1N,
Marton

and: **Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency**
Submitter 17

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF NATASHA JANE REID



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1 QUALAFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1 My full name is Natasha Jane Reid. I am a Principal Planner with the Palmerston North Office of Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency ('Transport Agency'). I have been employed by the Transport Agency since November 2019.
- 1.2 I hold the qualification of Bachelor of Resource and Environmental Planning (Hons) from Massey University. I am an intermediate member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and have worked in resource management planning for 16 years.

2 CODE OF CONDUCT

- 2.1 I have read the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses (2014) and I agree to comply with it. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my areas of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed. Where I have relied on data, information, facts or assumptions on an area beyond my expertise, I have identified the source of that information.

3 INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROCEEDINGS

- 3.1 Principal Planner Letitia Jarrett prepared the submission on behalf of the Transport Agency, dated 23 September 2019. As part of the plan change process, we both attended a submitters' meeting on 26th November 2019 in Marton. From that date I have led the Transport Agency's engagement.
- 3.2 I did not prepare a further submission as there were no points in our submission to defend.
- 3.3 Due to unexpectedly requiring surgery and needing to recover away from work, in addition to the national response to Covid-19, it was agreed my evidence could be submitted prior to the hearing (5 days).

- 3.4 The national 'lockdown' as a direct result of Covid-19, has since provided Council with the opportunity to produce supplementary information which I received on 2 June 2020. My evidence takes into consideration the supplementary evidence by Mr Greg Carlyon.

4 THE TRANSPORT AGENCY'S STATUTORY ROLE & FUNCTIONS

- 4.1 The Transport Agency is the statutory body charged with operating the state highway network under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 ("LTMA"). In line with that responsibility, the Transport Agency is approved as a requiring authority under section 167 of the Resource Management Act 1991 ("RMA") for the purposes of constructing and operating state highways (as well as cycleways and shared paths).¹
- 4.2 The Transport Agency's statutory objective under the LTMA is to *"undertake its functions in a way that contributes to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest."*²
- 4.3 The Transport Agency's statutory functions are defined in section 95(1) of the LTMA. Of relevance to the Plan Change, the functions of the Transport Agency include:
- (a) *to contribute to an effective, efficient, and safe land transport system in the public interest (...)*
 - (c) *to manage the State highway system, including planning, funding, design, supervision, construction, and maintenance and operations, in accordance with this Act and the Government Roadway Powers Act 1989 (...)*
 - (e) *to manage funding of the land transport system (...)"*
- 4.4 In meeting its objective and undertaking these functions, the Transport Agency is required by the LTMA to exhibit a sense of

¹ Requiring Authority status was granted via an Order in Council dated 7 December 1992, with subsequent *Gazette* notices on 10 December 1992, 3 March 1994 (GO1500) and 19 November 2015 (GO6742).

² Section 94, LTMA.

social and environmental responsibility, while using revenue in a way that seeks value for money.³

5 Government Policy Statement and National Land Transport Programme

- 5.1 The LTMA requires the Minister of Transport to issue a Government Policy Statement ("GPS") every three financial years.⁴ The GPS enables the Minister of Transport to guide the Transport Agency (and the broader land transport sector) on the outcomes, objectives, and short- to medium-term goals that the Government wishes to achieve through the National Land Transport Programme ("NLTP"), and from the allocation of the National Land Transport Fund ("NLTF").⁵
- 5.2 The LTMA provides that the Transport Agency must give effect to the GPS when carrying out its planning functions, including in preparing a NLTP.⁶
- 5.3 The NLTP sets out the Transport Agency's planned land transport investments, including for New Zealand's state highways, over the next three years. Of note to this Plan Change is that activities are not eligible for funding from the NLTF unless they are included in the NLTP.
- 5.4 The current NLTP does not have any funding identified for this stretch of state highway to enable the intersection upgrading proposed in this Plan Change. No early engagement between the Transport Agency and RDC occurred to ensure that this development was agreed at a regional level, included in the RLTP and then accepted into the NLTP.

³ Section 96, LTMA.

⁴ Sections 84 and 86, LTMA.

⁵ Section 84, LTMA.

⁶ In accordance with section 89(1) of the LTMA, the Transport Agency must give effect to the GPS when performing its functions under subpart 1 of Part 2 of the LTMA in respect of land transport planning and funding.

6 THE TRANSPORT AGENCY'S SUBMISSION 23 SEPTEMBER 2019.

- 6.1 The Transport Agency's submission seeks to ensure that effects from the rezoning do not compromise the functionality, efficiency, resilience and safety of the transport network.
- 6.2 In relation to the provisions of the Plan Change as notified, the Transport Agency's submission:
 - a. did not form a position or provide advice on the appropriateness of the development (position reserved);
 - b. identified there was insufficient information to consider effects on the state highway network;
 - c. identified that no mitigation measures were proposed to manage potential effects on the state highway network.
 - d. identified that no funding mechanism for roading was proposed.

7 THE TRANSPORT AGENCY'S ROLE IN THE PLAN CHANGE PROCESS

- 7.1 The overall objective of the Transport Agency in these proceedings is to ensure that the Plan Change provisions, as they relate to State Highways 1N and 3, do not adversely affect the state highway network.
- 7.2 The Transport Agency supports planned development in appropriate areas and considers this should occur in a manner which does not compromise the effectiveness, efficiency, resilience and safety of the transport network. The Plan Change as notified did not include a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA), nor did it identify a planning mechanism that would appropriately manage effects on the state highway network.
- 7.3 However, some months after the plan change was notified and after submissions had closed, a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was made available on Council's website. The TIA was subsequently reviewed by me and my Transport Agency colleague,

Mrs Heather Liew. Mrs Liew is a safety engineer and her report is attached at Appendix One. I advise that her report has informed my evidence with regards to traffic matters.

- 7.4 From a planning perspective, I identified that information about the pace of growth generated from the development of the industrial zone, was not available at the time of producing the TIA. Whilst there is always an element of forecasting in such assessments, in discussions with Mrs Liew, we both concluded that a more detailed TIA with revised assumptions is required.
- 7.5 In summary, with advice from Mrs Liew, I generally support the findings throughout the TIA and the recommendations on page 39. Mrs Liew makes the following further recommendations in her report, which I support:
 - 7.5.1 that the SH1/Makirikiri Road intersection must be upgraded prior to any development occurring.
 - 7.5.2 the other three intersections, being SH1N/Wings Line, SH3/Makirikiri Road and SH3/Pukepapa Road must be monitored for traffic use and volume.
 - 7.5.3 when the site is developed at 25%, no further development is permitted until the intersections identified in paragraph 7.5.2 have been assessed by a traffic engineer. This is to ensure that the operation and safety of the state highway network at these intersections are within acceptable levels of service and thresholds.
- 7.6 Despite the TIA being provided, there was still an absence of detail about the proposed industrial site, its road layout and mitigation measures to address the effects of industrial activities on the state highway network.
- 7.7 I was pleased therefore, to receive the supplementary evidence produced by Mr Greg Carlyon on 2 June 2020. This new information addresses many of the points raised in our submission, which were also discussed in an online meeting with

myself, Mr Carlyon, Mr Hopkins and Ms Rebecca Beals (KiwiRail) during the lockdown period.

8 RESPONSE TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE

- 8.1 The supplementary evidence in paragraph 19 suggests a buffer along the SH1 and Wings Line boundary at a depth of 400m setback. This is to part-mitigate adverse effects on amenity values of submitters who live adjacent to the site. I consider that this buffer will also part-mitigate adverse effects on users of SH1N and the setback is supported.
- 8.2 The evidence then continues from paragraphs 20 to 39 to address via a policy response, the actual and potential adverse effects.
- 8.3 I support the proposed policy response as far as it can avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects from industrial activities on the safe and efficient operation of the state highway network. Specifically, I support paragraphs 22 (Stormwater), 23 (Wastewater), 25 (Transport) and 28 (Natural Hazards).
- 8.4 I am also supportive of the draft site plan supplied in the supplementary evidence that identifies one vehicle access only to the site and an area set aside for a SH1 intersection upgrade.
- 8.5 I support the addition of *“any industrial activities located within the Industrial (Deferral) Overlay”* and the matters of discretion to the existing Restricted Discretionary Activity Rules. Following on from these matters, it is pleasing to see the Transport Agency being identified as an affected person for the purpose of notification for future resource consents.
- 8.6 Overall, I advise that the supplementary evidence provides a degree of certainty about effects on the state highways and how they will be appropriately managed through a planning mechanism. There are still information gaps however, and these are discussed below in paragraphs 10 and 11.
- 8.7 I note that a speed reduction along Makirikiri Road has been included in the policy response. Whilst Makirikiri Road is not a

state highway, it does intersect with both SH1N and SH3. I therefore sought advice from my colleague Mr Dan Tate (Team Lead Safety Engineers). He advised that *“changing speed limits requires engagement and consultation with stakeholders outside of this Plan Change process. The Transport Agency cannot confirm that a speed limit reduction is likely at any stage without this good faith engagement occurring”*.

9.0 THE SECTION 42A REPORT

- 9.1 The Section 42A Report recommends a preferred Option 4. I agree that a structure plan is an appropriate way forward and the supplementary evidence appears to support this option with the development of a policy response.
- 9.2 I note that I have not considered the alternative Options outlined in the Section 42A Report and this would need to occur if the Commissioner does not adopt Option 4, which has been recommended by Mr Carlyon.

10 OUTSTANDING MATTERS

- 10.1 I seek clarification as to the process Council will use to *“resolve/adopt”* mitigations in order to manage transport effects generated by industrial activities on the site (paragraph 25 Transport, of the supplementary evidence). I consider that where relevant, this should include consultation with the Transport Agency so that we have assurance of these mitigations and an agreed funding mechanism.
- 10.2 The funding mechanism must ensure the Council, and not the Crown, have the funds to mitigate adverse effects on the roading network. This includes funding for the upgrade of state highway intersections as required.
- 10.3 I note from the supplementary evidence in Appendix 2, there are two provisions for Council to address prior to the Deferral Overlay being removed from the District Plan. These are to develop a comprehensive structure plan for development use of the site; and

the requirement to demonstrate *“that investment in three water and roading improvements are explicitly provided for in the LTP to implement the comprehensive structure plan”*. I support these provisions however, further assurance is requested.

10.4 The further assurance I seek is that Council, in collaboration with the Transport Agency, adopts appropriate conditions or rules that are included in the Plan Change. These are to achieve assurance of factors such as (but not limited to) investment, design, construction, safety audits, approvals and responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the works. This assurance is in addition to provisions in the LTP.

10.5 The policy response also does not appear to address the potential impacts of incremental subdivision and development to avoid cumulative effects on the roading network. Areas of concern are the intersections at Makirikiri Road/SH3 and Pukepapa Road/SH 3. These concerns are raised in both the TIA and Mrs Liew’s report in terms of Level of Service ratings (LoS) being reduced as the site is developed.

10.6 I note the proposed buffer zone and staged development approach may manage and avoid such effects as they relate to SH1N and I am supportive of these.

10.7 The policy response does not appear to provide for a review of the TIA and direction for its implementation. As mentioned earlier in my evidence, I support the proposed investment provisions for roading improvements required to be demonstrated in the LTP. However, the TIA will inform the investment and needs to be incorporated into the planning framework.

11 RELIEF SOUGHT

11.1 I wish to remain engaged in this plan change process to ensure that the chosen planning framework, funding mechanism, staging of development and the buffer zone, will mitigate adverse effects on the state highway network.

- 11.2 I request that once a preferred option is chosen, preferably a structure plan, it includes review and design provisions to confirm the type of intersection upgrade(s) required and when. This includes a revised TIA with more detailed analysis that reviews the viability of each option at all intersections.
- 11.3 I reserve the right for the Transport Agency to review each intersection subject to a more detailed TIA being provided, including the viability of a roundabout at the Makirikiri Road / SH1N intersection.
- 11.4 As recommended by Mrs Liew, I request a review of the operation and safety of the highway and intersections with local roads when 25% percent of the site is developed. This is to ensure that the operation and safety of the state highway network (including intersections of Makirikiri Road/ SH 3 and Pukepapa Road/ SH 3) are within acceptable levels of service and thresholds.
- 11.5 As identified in Mrs Liew's report, Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP) are to be prepared and approved by the appropriate authority to ensure that on-site activity is managed appropriately.
- 11.6 A definition for 'light industry' should be included in the Plan Change so such activities and their potential adverse effects can be assessed.
- 11.7 I request that the chosen planning framework includes a mechanism(s) to avoid adverse effects of incremental subdivision and development on the roading network. In particular, the intersections identified above in paragraph 7.5.2.
- 11.8 Treatments to the SH1N/Makirikiri Road intersection and highway must be undertaken prior to the occupation of any site to mitigate any increase in collective risk for crashes. Treatment must include the upgrade of Makirikiri Road to align with the Safe System Approach.

- 11.9 I encourage paragraph 25(f) of the supplementary evidence be expanded via objectives and policies, to include identified areas that ensure the transport network is integrated to provide a variety of routes for walking, cycling, public transport and motor vehicles.
- 11.10 Any stormwater discharged to any state highway will need approval from the Transport Agency.
- 11.11 The outstanding matters identified in paragraph 10 – 10.7 if not specifically identified above.

12 CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 The supplementary evidence, proposed structure plan and the section 42A report, have provided a level of certainty to ensure some adverse effects from this plan change on the state highway network, can be mitigated. As such, the Transport Agency does not oppose this plan change. The Transport Agency reserves the right however, to review its position subject to the relief sought.
- 12.2 I look forward to my continued engagement in this process to ensure the Transport Agency's land transport policy role, as well as its perspective as the operator of New Zealand's national state highway network, is preserved throughout the Plan Change process.

Natasha Reid

9 June 2020

Appendix One – Safety Engineers Report