

**UNDER** the the Resource Mangement Act 1991 ("RMA")  
**IN THE MATTER** of Proposed Waikato District Plan: Hearing 1 - Introduction

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**EVIDENCE OF MATTHEW ARMIN LINDENBERG ON BEHALF OF  
HOUSING NEW ZEALAND CORPORATION (749, FS1269)**

**PLANNING**

**16 September 2019**

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**1. Summary Statement**

1.1 My full name is Matthew Armin Lindenberg. I am a Senior Associate at Beca Limited. I am providing planning evidence on behalf of Housing New Zealand Corporation ("**Housing NZ**") submissions (749 and FS1269) made on Chapter 1 of the Proposed Waikato District Plan ("**the Proposed District Plan**" or "**PDP**") insofar as they relate to this hearing.

1.2 In summary, the key points addressed in my evidence are:

- (a) A summary of Housing NZ's submission point 749.91, the reasons for the submission and a discussion regarding the Council's response to the submission;
- (b) A discussion regarding the relevance of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity ("**NPS-UDC**"), as well as the Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development ("**Proposed NPS-UD**"), to the delivery of well-functioning urban environments, including how such delivery can be supported through a 'compact urban form' growth strategy; and
- (c) A minor proposed amendment, as an alternative to the original amendment sought by Housing NZ in relation to its submission point 749.91.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 My name is Matthew Armin Lindenberg. I am a Senior Associate - Planning at Beca Ltd. I hold the degree of Masters of Science (Geography) from the University of Auckland and am an Associate of the New Zealand Planning Institute.
- 2.2 I am providing planning evidence on behalf of Housing NZ's submissions (749 and FS1269) made on Chapter 1 of the Proposed District Plan insofar as they relate to this hearing.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.3 I confirm that I have read the submissions and further submissions by Housing NZ in relation to the Proposed District Plan. I am familiar with Housing NZ's corporate intent in respect of the provision of housing within Waikato.<sup>2</sup> I am also familiar with the national, regional and district planning documents relevant to the Proposed District Plan.
- 2.4 I have 15 years' planning and resource management experience, providing technical direction on a number of key projects, particularly focussing on land development projects and policy planning. I have been involved in a number of plan review and plan change processes, including the recent Independent Hearings Panel ("IHP") hearings on the proposed Auckland Unitary Plan ("PAUP"). In particular, I have been a member of planning teams for policy planning projects including:
- (a) The Kaipara District Plan review and development of objectives and policies (for the 'Land Use and Development Strategy' and 'Residential' chapters) for the notification of that Plan;
  - (b) The Plan Variation for the site known as 'The Landing' at Hobsonville Point (undertaking through the Housing Accords and

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<sup>1</sup> The Corporation made two primary submissions and two further submission points on the proposed Chapter 1 provisions. This evidence only addresses one of the primary submission points (749.91), which sought amendments to Chapter 1.5.4 – Urban development. It is understood the submission points relating to Chapter 1.12 will be addressed within Hearing 3 – Strategic Objectives and Directions.

<sup>2</sup> I understand that, in the interests of efficiency, Housing NZ will provide corporate evidence in a subsequent hearing(s).

Special Housing Areas legislative process) on behalf of Hobsonville Land Company;

(c) The Kerikeri-Waipapa Structure Plan (2007) on behalf of the Far North District Council; and

(d) The preparation of the Local Development Framework and Core Strategy (the 'Spatial Plan') during my time working at the London Borough of Bexley in the United Kingdom, including leading the 'Affordable Housing' and 'Sustainability/Climate Change' workstreams as part of the plan development process.

2.5 I also prepared and presented evidence on numerous PAUP hearing topics on behalf of Housing NZ in front of the IHP. I subsequently prepared and presented evidence in the Environment Court on behalf of Housing NZ in relation to appeals on the PAUP related to the carparking and transport provisions as well as the Residential zone provisions.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

3.1 I confirm that I have read the Expert Witness Code of Conduct set out in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014. I have complied with the Code of Conduct in preparing this evidence and agree to comply with it while giving evidence. Except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person, this written evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed in this evidence.

### **4. Scope of Evidence**

4.1 This evidence addresses Housing NZ's primary submission point (749.91) on Chapter 1.5.4. Having considered the further submissions received and the s42a Report for Hearing 1, I propose an amendment to Chapter 1.5.4 'Urban Development' to reflect matters raised in Housing NZ's primary submission, as well as the comments in the s42a Report.

### **5. Chapter 1.5.4 – Urban Growth**

5.1 Chapter 1.5 provides background information to, and a summary of the direction taken in the provisions of the Plan on various topics. Chapter 1.5 covers topics such as compact urban development, planning for urban growth and development, cross boundary issues, urban growth, services

and general infrastructure, transport and logistics, water and the natural environment.

*Submission Point 749.91*

- 5.2 Housing NZ's primary submission sought amendments to Chapter 1.5.4 – Urban Growth to ensure that the wording of the provisions emphasise the importance of giving priority to residential intensification in existing urban areas. Specifically, Housing NZ sought the addition of the following text (as a new point (d)) to section 1.5.4 – Urban Growth:

*d) Urban growth and residential development should focus on a compact urban form with growth concentrated in and around existing town centres and urban settlements.*

*Reasons for Housing NZ's Submission*

- 5.3 The strategic directions and objectives of the Proposed Plan seek to achieve a more compact and concentrated urban form over the next 30 years in the Waikato district.
- 5.4 Housing NZ strongly supports the approach of concentrating growth in and around existing towns and villages by way of focusing on urban growth on centres and transport nodes and corridors. This is because, amongst other things, a compact urban development model optimises the efficient use of the existing urban area (including infrastructure and amenities) which can facilitate the provision of a wider choice of housing types and more affordable housing.
- 5.5 Because of the importance of this approach, Housing NZ has sought a number of amendments to emphasise the need for, and support the provision of, a compact urban development model so that the strategic directions and objectives are appropriately reflected in the provisions of the Proposed District Plan.
- 5.6 Such an approach also facilitates the implementation of the directives in the current NPS-UDC, as well as the Proposed NPS-UD, which will

replace the NPS-UDC.<sup>3</sup> The relevance and importance of these instruments to the Proposed District Plan process is discussed in further detail below.

*Council's Response to Housing NZ's submission*

- 5.7 The Council's s42A Report recommends rejecting submission point 749.91 on the basis that there is already sufficient content within Chapter 1.5 which communicates to plan users that the Strategic Directions and Objectives of the District will be focused on achieving growth around existing urban centres and infrastructure (such as through Strategic Objectives 1.12.1 and 1.12.3, and within the policies and objectives in Chapter 4 – Urban Environment).

*Response to s42a Report*

- 5.8 Having considered the reasoning provided in the Council's s42A report, I acknowledge that Chapter 1.5 of the Proposed District Plan, in particular Chapter 1.5.1 'Compact urban development' (now proposed to be Chapter 1.3.1, as set out in Council's s42A report), does contain content and detail with regard to the need for and benefits of a 'compact urban form' development strategy. Specifically, the Chapter 1 notes the following:

- (a) *"The Future Proof Strategy seeks a shift in the existing pattern of land use towards accommodating growth through a more compact urban form based on concentrating growth in an around settlements of the district. This involves a reduction in the relative share of the population outside of the subregion's existing major settlements through tighter control over rural-residential development and encouraging greater urban densities in existing settlements"* (Chapter 1.5.1(a); now proposed to be Chapter 1.3.1(a)); and
- (b) *"Focussing urban forms of growth primarily into towns and villages, and encouraging a compact form or urban development,*

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<sup>3</sup> Planning for Successful Cities: A Discussion Document on the Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development, 2019.

*provides opportunity for residents to “live, work and play” in their local area, minimises the necessity to travel and supports public transport opportunities, public facilities and services”* (Chapter 1.5.1(b); now proposed to be Chapter 1.3.1(b)).

- 5.9 I support the inclusion of these statements within Chapter 1.5 of the PDP, and consider it is important that the Introduction chapter of the PDP sets out the guiding context and principles with regard to the urban growth strategy which the District Plan will seek to promote and implement.
- 5.10 A ‘compact urban form’ development strategy is consistent with and supports the intent of the current NPS-UDC, as well as the proposed NPS-UD which will replace it. That is to say, a ‘compact urban form’ will assist in the creation of well-functioning urban environments which provide for people and communities’ wellbeing:
- (a) The NPS-UDC / Proposed NPS-UD supports the provision of and recognises the national significance of well-functioning urban environments. A ‘compact urban form approach’ is critical to delivering well-functioning urban environments which support integrated planning of land uses, infrastructure and development and optimise the efficient use of the existing urban area (and infrastructure and amenities associated with it). Therefore all the objectives and policies related to the efficient use of land and integration of growth and change with infrastructure planning and delivery are relevant considerations (e.g. Objectives OA1, OA2, OA3 and OD1 and policies PA3(a) and (b) of the NPS-UDC).
  - (b) The Proposed NPS-UD intends to enable growth by requiring Councils to provide development capacity to meet the diverse needs of communities, address overly restrictive rules, and encourage quality, liveable urban environments. The aim of the NPS-UD is to encourage more effective urban growth, particularly close to frequent public transport, and walking and cycling facilities. The ‘compact urban form’ growth strategy is key to delivering upon this aim of the Proposed NPS-UD.
  - (c) While the Proposed NPS-UD is currently out for public consultation and feedback, the Ministry for the Environment’s intention is for the proposed NPS-UD to go to Ministers and

Cabinet for approval in early 2020 and, if approved, to likely come into force in the first half of 2020.<sup>4</sup> This will likely mean the NPS-UD will be approved and in place as a relevant statutory consideration prior to the conclusions of the hearings process for the PDP. I therefore consider it is both important, and appropriate, for the Council to give consideration to both the NPS-UDC, as well as the Proposed NPS-UD, through the District Plan review process to ensure that the PDP will appropriately enable and provide for well-functioning, quality urban environments and will be consistent with national policy direction which will likely be in place at the time decisions are made with regard to the PDP.

*Suggested Amendment to Chapter 1.5.4*

- 5.11 Having regard to the above, I consider that it is important to ensure 1.5.4 accurately summarises the direction of the plan with respect to urban growth. Because the provision of a compact urban form is a fundamental part of the plan's approach to urban growth, I consider it important to link the discussion in 'Chapter 1.5.1 Compact urban development' with the discussion further below in Chapter 1.5.4 Urban growth' of the PDP. In order to achieve that linkage I consider an alternative amendment (outlined below) – to that set out in Housing NZ's submission – could assist to emphasise and reaffirm the 'compact urban form' growth model which is set out in the Future Proof Strategy.

*"1.5.4 Urban development*

*...*

- (c) It is important that the district's settlement patten is consistent with the Future Proof Strategy's 'compact urban form' settlement pattern, as set out in the (RPS),..."*

- 5.12 I consider the this minor amendment to 'Chapter 1.5.4(c) Urban growth' is appropriate, and will assist to provide a direct link between the 'compact urban development' discussion in Chapter 1.5.1, with the 'urban development' discussion in Chapter 1.5.4, reiterating the importance of a 'compact urban form' settlement pattern to achieving the overall

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/consultations/nps-urbandevelopment>



development strategy which the Proposed District Plan is seeking to give effect to.

**6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 In conclusion, I am of the opinion that the amendment set out above is appropriate and will assist to emphasise the importance of a 'compact urban form' settlement pattern which focuses urban intensification around existing centres.

**Matthew Armin Lindenberg**

16 September 2019