

**BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL**

**UNDER**

The Resource Management Act 1991

**IN THE MATTER OF**

Waikato District Council Proposed District  
Plan:  
Hearing 14-Historic Heritage and Notable  
Trees.

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ROBIN BYRON  
ON BEHALF OF HERITAGE NEW ZEALAND POUHERE TAONGA**

**07 JULY 2020**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 My name is Robin Elizabeth Byron. I am employed as a Senior Conservation Architect with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga in its Northern Regional Office which is based in Auckland. I have been in this capacity with Heritage New Zealand for the past over 14 years.
- 1.2 I am a registered architect with the Architectural Institute of British Columbia, Canada, and am an affiliate member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects. I have been engaged in professional architectural practice in Canada (Toronto and Vancouver), England (Cambridge) and New Zealand (Auckland), and since coming to New Zealand 27 years ago have also taught architecture for a number of years at the University of Auckland's School of Architecture. I continue to contribute to conservation courses and the Master of Heritage Conservation program at the University of Auckland School of Architecture and Planning, and to the built conservation course at Unitec.
- 1.3 I completed formal studies in architectural conservation from the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at the University of York, and at the International Laboratory for Architecture and Urban Design in Urbino, Italy (the focus of which was working in historic environments).
- 1.4 I am a Board member of International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) New Zealand and Chair of its Education and Professional Development Committee.

## **2. CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 2.1 I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014 and I agree to comply with it. I confirm that I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express, and that this evidence is within my area of expertise.

## **3. HNZPT RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNERS REPORT**

- 3.1 My evidence supports the submission and further submission of Heritage New Zealand in respect of Waikato District Council Proposed District Plan: Hearing 14-Historic Heritage and Notable Trees. As my colleague Carolyn McAlley has stated, HNZPT supports all of the identified places recommended for scheduling as outlined in the Section 42A Hearing Report. I will address in my evidence a few selected places as discussed in the report
- 3.2 House, 14 Galileo Street, Ngaruawahia (Submission 559.226, Further Submission 1323.134)

The house at 14 Galileo Street, Ngaruawahia is a B-ranked building on the Operative Plan. HNZPT supports its retention on the Plan as a Category B place. I regard the place as a remarkably intact and well preserved example of a fine and highly articulated bay villa, in a

street with some other similarly styled villas to which it relates but which do not have as high remaining architectural integrity or as intact in respect to their settings. The place retains its original form, materiality and detailing, including original bull-nosed verandah roofing. Later interventions have been located to the rear so as not to compromise the original villa and thus preserving the front garden setting and picket fencing as well. Moreover it has contextual value as a exemplary example in a leafy street largely comprised of villas.

Because of its moderate historic significance and its high architectural authenticity, I regard this place as being worthy of scheduling in favour of simply regarding it for its character, streetscape amenity contribution.

3.3 Former FH Edgecumbe residence (Riverdale), 11 Lower Waikato Esplanade, Ngaruawahia (Submission 559.219)

The former FH Edgecumbe residence (Riverdale) is a historic place on the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga List in recognition of its significant heritage values. Notwithstanding the substantial extension to the rear of the house, the architectural expression, features and fabric of the house remain largely original and physically and visually intact. Its scheduling as a Category B place (from its previous Category A status) is supported, commensurate as it would be with the HNZPT Category 2 listing.

3.4 Former Taupiri Post Office and Postmaster's Residence, 3 The Crescent, Taupiri (Submission 559.231)

The Taupiri Post Office and Postmaster's Residence is a largely original structure that connects to the history of Taupiri. I agree with assessor Dr McEwan and the supporting peer review by Archifact, that the place is of important significance and warrants scheduling as a Category B place. Moreover the building is highly suitable to adaptation that would ensure the possibility of ongoing functional use.

3.5 Kosoof House, 40 Main Street, Huntley (Submission 559.230)

The Kosoof House in Huntley is a very distinctive building that has significant historic values for its association with the Kosoof family and their retail interests in Huntley, technical values for its construction and use of Huntley bricks, and architectural values for its highly decorative use of polychrome brickwork and notable arches, and Arts and Crafts features such as its faceted bay window, recessed entry, use of stained glass and deep overhanging eaves.

I agree the argument in favour of the recommendation for scheduling in the Section 42A Hearing Report. Kosoof House has significant heritage values that warrant recognition and protection through scheduling in the District Plan, in line with exercising the obligations of local authorities to the RMA in respect to heritage.

3.6 Former Robinson's Boarding House, 79 Wilton Collieries Road, Glen Massey (Submission 559.232)

The Former Robinson's Boarding House has been identified as a significant place through the assessment by Dr McEwan, particularly in relation to its association with the mining history of the area. Further, this significance has been confirmed through peer review by conservation architectural firm Archifact. While modifications to the place have been made over time, the owner, supportive of its heritage values, has been committed to undertaking restorative conservation work on the place.

The issue of the vulnerability to flooding is not an unsurmountable one, as with careful and sensitive planning either a barrier could be constructed to potentially relieve water inundation, or the building be raised to protect it from flooding. The concern for flooding should not be an impediment to recognize its important heritage values through scheduling.

I agree that the significance of the former boarding house merits its inclusion for scheduling as a Category B place and support the recommendation.

3.7 Otatau War Memorial Bowling Green, 36 Maioro Road, Otatau (Submission 559.236)

I am fully supportive of the inclusion of the Otatau Memorial Bowling Club Gates and associated Boundary Wall being scheduled, however I do not support the exclusion of the bowling green itself as part of the scheduling.

The gates and wall address the street along one side of the green and signal the entry to the bowling green, but without the definition of the boundaries of the green and the spatial area it encompasses, the memorial ostensibly becomes 2 dimensional. The war memorial commemoration is to the bowling green as a place - it memorializes the function of a bowling green which is defined by a landscape, unlike that of a memorial hall for example. The green and its intended function as a place to play bowls is integral to the memorial's meaning and therefore it is important in my view to include all of the bowling green. The modest and prosaic pavilions and sheds along its edges relate too to the place in an intrinsic way, but it is really the definition of the boundary of the green that is in my view of prime importance for inclusion. Whilst the bowling green may not currently be functioning, by maintaining of the green it allows for any future re-activation of use.

Without the inclusion of the green, the retention of only the gates and wall risk their meaning being compromised, diminished and misrepresented if the landscape area of the green is not maintained, and vulnerable to be filled in by later development.

3.8 Former Marist Juniorate Training College Building, 131 - 139 Dominion Road, Tuakau (Submission 559.229)

I agree the high architectural, social and historical heritage values associated with the former Marist Juniorate Training College Building as identified by Dr McEwan and confirmed by peer-review by conservation architectural practice Archifact. Consequently, I support the recognition of its significance through scheduling.

The Section 42A Hearing Report rightly points out that the scheduling is not an impediment to the ongoing sustainable use of a great many heritage places, certainly one of this nature. In my experience I have seen many heritage buildings modified and/or re-purposed to meet evolving and changing demands so that they remain functional and relevant, while still maintaining the heritage values associated with them. As stated in the report, this is the ambition of the provisions as set out in the district plan in respect to places on the schedule.

3.9 11 and 19 Bow Street, Raglan (Submission 559.227/559.228, Further Submission 1323.135)

I support the buildings at 11 Bow Street and 19 Bow Street in Raglan being retained on the heritage schedule as recommended in the Section 42A Hearing Report as they reflect the early commercial development of Raglan, retain significant and distinctive architectural features of value, and importantly relate to each other and to the HNZPT listed (List No. 740) and scheduled Harbour View Hotel (ID #142) at 14 Bow Street all at the town's central main intersection, effectively creating a heritage grouping.

While it was evident during a site visit early in the year that the Raglan buildings at 11 and 19 Bow Street have undergone modifications over time, these interventions have been made in a manner which endeavours to retain heritage character and support the prevailing historic features and building fabric. Given the prominent positions in Raglan, and in line with taking a conservative approach as discussed in the report, I also favour the recommendation to acknowledge the significance of these places through scheduling.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 As stated in Chapter 7: Historic Heritage in the Proposed District Plan, 'The contribution of historic heritage to the Waikato District and its communities is maintained through the protection and conservation of its buildings, sites, structures, places and areas through restoring, conserving and reusing.'

4.2 It is my view that the identified heritage items recommended for scheduling in the Section 42A Hearing Report, including the selected places discussed in my evidence, all contribute to the rich heritage resource in the Waikato District and merit scheduling, and through their conservation, including adaptation, can be maintained into the future to enrich the knowledge and experience of our shared history.