

**Before Independent Hearing Commissioners
In Ngāruawāhia**

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

In the matter of of a submission by Ambury Properties Limited in respect of the proposed Waikato District Plan pursuant to Clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Act seeking the rezoning of land at Ohinewai

and Ambury Properties Limited (Ambury)
(Submitter)

and Waikato Regional Council
(Further Submitter)

**Summary of evidence of Vincent Yu-Wen Kuo for the Waikato Regional
Council – Public Transport**

8 September 2020

1 Introduction

1.1 My full name is Vincent Yu-Wen Kuo. I am employed by the Waikato Regional Council as a Senior Policy Advisor in the Transport and Infrastructure team. I have the qualifications and experience as set out in my evidence in chief. I also confirm that in preparing this summary statement I have complied with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the current Environment Court Practice Note (2014).

2 Summary of evidence

- 2.1 In my view, there are strategic and operational reasons as to why Council is unable to provide a public transport service to the proposed development area at this time, including:
- a The site is not located within the existing growth areas identified under the Future Proof Strategy, and accordingly Council has not undertaken any forward planning or detailed assessment to ensure the strategic integration of land use, infrastructure, and service provision.
 - b The proposal does not align with Council's current strategic priorities and objectives set out in the RPS, RLTP and RPTP, particularly with respect to promoting multimodal transport connections and reducing reliance on private vehicles.
 - c It is not cost-efficient for Council to provide a new public transport service due to likely low demand, and higher operating costs which will lead to higher opportunity cost (e.g. resources could be utilised more efficiently elsewhere).
- 2.2 Whilst the existing bus services could be connected to the development site via the proposed interim bus stop, these services are very limited in their utility due to very low service frequency and will provide very limited benefits in terms of providing transport choices and reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- 2.3 In my opinion, any additional or enhanced public transport service to the development site would be contingent on a new and sustainable funding source being found (outside of existing council and NZTA funding streams). This would require a new funding framework/mechanism to be developed and agreed by the councils and the Applicant.
- 2.4 It is my opinion that even if a more frequent public transport service could be provided to enable people to access employment, education and essential

services, the critical issue is that this development, by its location and layout would incentivise car-based journeys over other transport modes.

3 Response to rebuttal evidence for APL

3.1 I have read the rebuttal evidence of Mr Inder and Mr Gaze. I do not consider that there to be anything in those statements that would materially change my opinions as expressed in my evidence in chief (EIC).

3.2 Notwithstanding this, I do wish to provide further clarification in response to the points raised by Mr Inder:

Location of bus stop at Ohinewai

3.3 Mr Inder considers the existing bus stop (currently located on the western side) should be relocated to the eastern side of the Waikato Expressway (Expressway) given most of the demand will be generated by the APL proposal.¹

3.4 I wish to advise that if the existing bus stop is to be relocated, this would require WRC to undertake targeted community consultation to understand the potential demand/uptake, and to ensure that existing users are not unfairly disadvantaged as a result of this decision.

3.5 Presently, WRC has not undertaken any detailed assessment or community consultation that could help to inform the decision around the future location of bus stop at Ohinewai, but this is likely to occur should the rezoning proceed.

3.6 However as noted in my EIC, I consider that the proposed walking and cycling overbridge would not be the preferred option of choice for existing bus users (from the western side) to access the new bus stop in the east, given the additional distance and journey time.

3.7 In my opinion the existing users are more likely to access the new bus stop via the Expressway interchange as this is the shortest and convenient access across the Expressway from the existing township. This has the potential to create significant safety risks at the interchange.

¹ Paragraph 11.1 of Mr Inder's rebuttal evidence, 24 August 2020.

Efficient and effective provision of public transport

- 3.8 Mr Inder notes that the decision to provide public transport services to Te Kauwhata appears to be contrary to WRC's objectives and policies in terms of delivering effective and efficient public transport in the region².
- 3.9 I stress that the context for public transport provision in Te Kauwhata is very different to Ohinewai. The provision of public transport services in Te Kauwhata has been undertaken in partnership with Waikato District Council and Waka Kotahi, and was subject to a rigorous planning process, including;
- a A household travel survey undertaken for the north Waikato communities (Pokeno, Tuakau and Te Kauwhata) to ascertain current transport needs and future public transport demand.
 - b A North Waikato Integrated Growth Management Programme Business Case³ developed to confirm the preferred land use patterns for the north Waikato township (Pokeno, Tuakau and Te Kauwhata) and future transport requirements (including public transport).
 - c The decision to provide a service in Te Kauwhata was also subject to detailed cost/benefit assessment and public consultation process as part of the 2018 RPTP review.
- 3.10 In my opinion, the process followed by WRC has demonstrated an integrated approach to public transport planning in Te Kauwhata, and that a service can be delivered in a coordinated and cost-effective way.

4 Revised s42A report recommendation

- 4.1 I agree with the recommendation of Ms Trenouth that the APL proposal should be rejected on the basis that "...a number of significant adverse effects have either not been adequately addressed or cannot be" ...including in particular, "poor integration of land use and transport resulting in car centric development and dormitory town"⁴.
- 4.2 I also support Ms Trenouth's assessment of the WRPS, RLTP and RPTP provisions, in which she has concluded that the APL proposal:

² Paragraph 11.9 of Mr Inder's rebuttal evidence, 24 August 2020.

³ North Waikato Integrated Growth Management Programme Business Case, February 2018.

⁴ Paragraph 140 of Ms Trenouth's rebuttal evidence, 7 September 2020.

- a Does not give effect to the WRPS, and in particular Objective 3.12 and Policies 6.1 and 6.14, because the Proposal would establish a car-based urban area that is not supported by public transport⁵.
- b Is not consistent with the objectives set out in the RLTP and RPTP, which promote a supportive land use pattern or urban form that can maximise the usage and uptake of public transport to encourage modal shift⁶.

Vincent Kuo

8 September 2020

⁵ Paragraph 178 of Ms Trenouth's rebuttal evidence, 7 September 2020.

⁶ Paragraph 189 of Ms Trenouth's rebuttal evidence, 7 September 2020.