

**BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL
THE PROPOSED WAIKATO DISTRICT PLAN (STAGE 1)**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991 (the Act)

IN THE MATTER OF Hearing 18: Rural (Proposed Waikato District Plan)
submissions and further submissions

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE FOR MICHAEL WOOD FOR WAKA
KOTAHI (THE NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY) - CORPORATE AND
PLANNING**

DATED 31ST AUGUST 2020

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Waka Kotahi (the Transport Agency) is a submitter and further submitter on the Proposed Waikato District Plan (PWDP).
- 1.2 The Transport Agency lodged several submission points (742.222-742.240) in relation to the Rural topic. I have reviewed the s42A reports and largely support the author's recommendations in relation to the Transport Agency's submission points. There are a few matters raised in the Rural Zone report relating to the management of noise sensitive activities in relation to the state highway network which I do not support and/or wish to provide further clarification.
- 1.3 I confirm that I am familiar with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as set out in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014. I have read and agree to comply with the Code. Except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence or advice of another person, my 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 I express.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 2.1 My full name is Michael Blain Wood. I am a Principal Planning Advisor with the Transport Agency where I have been employed since June 2014.
- 2.2 I hold a Masters' in Resource and Environmental Planning (MRP) from Massey University in 2001. I am a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have 17 years' planning experience both within the public and private sector.
- 2.3 My key responsibilities at the Transport Agency, include working with local councils on district plan reviews and plan changes, assessing land use development applications and contributing to business cases for capital works.
- 2.4 I am also involved in the delivery of the Transport Agency's capital works programme through the statutory consenting process. This involves stakeholder engagement and reviewing notices of requirement and resource consents prepared on behalf of the Transport Agency.
- 2.5 I have authority to give evidence on behalf of the Transport Agency.

3. SECTION 42A REPORTS: RURAL ZONE AND RURAL SUBDIVISION

Sensitive Land Uses and the State Highway Network

3.1 The Transport Agency lodged several submissions seeking amendments to the policy (742.40) and setback rules (742.229, 742.230) for the siting of sensitive land uses in relation to the state highway network.

3.2 The Transport Agency's submission point 742.40 sought to amend Policy 5.3.15(a)(vi) Noise and vibrations as follows:

Requiring acoustic insulation where sensitive land use activities are located within high noise environments including near existing and designated State Highways, the Airport Noise ...

The s42A under paragraph 529 notes that the setback rule (rule 22.3.7.2) for managing sensitive activities in relation to the state highway (and rail) does not require acoustic insulation. On that basis, I am inferring that the report writer does not recommend that this policy is amended; at least until such time that a s32 report is presented by the Transport Agency for assessment. Setting aside the s32 discussion, the problem that this policy currently presents is that:

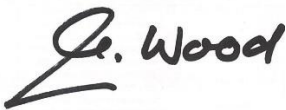
- the areas adjoining a state highway are high noise environments (see Transport Agency evidence on the Residential Hearing Topic) which this policy does not currently recognise; and
- it does not recognise that the Agency will seek resource consent conditions on sensitive land use proposals (where we are served as an affected party) establishing within state highway building setbacks – these conditions will relate to acoustic treatment or some other form of noise mitigation (e.g. noise walls, earth bunding).

3.3 As a way of addressing the Transport Agency's concerns, I suggest that a new clause is added to this policy (as opposed to amending the existing clause where the additional wording is unlikely to apply to the other activities) to reflect what typically occurs in practise –

*Requiring acoustic insulation **and/or other form of noise mitigation** where sensitive land use activities are located ~~within high noise environments including~~ near existing and designated State Highways.*

3.4 The Transport Agency submission 742.229 sought to increase the building setback from 15m to 35m for a national route or regional arterial route (the Agency's interest is on the

national routes which would incorporate all other district state highways – SH21, SH39, SH23 and SH2). The s42A report rejects this approach in the absence of a s32 report. In relation to requiring a larger buffer distance; the Transport Agency provided evidence on this matter in relation to the Residential Hearing Topic. In that topic, the Agency's noise expert Dr Stephen Chiles noted that the current setback approach in the PWDP only addresses the most significant noise effects from road noise – these effects typically extend 100 metres from the edge of the road carriageway. This matter (and submission point 742.230) will be addressed more comprehensively as part of the Transport Agency's evidence for the Infrastructure Topic.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mike Wood

Principal Planner

Waka Kotahi (The Transport Agency)

31st August 2020