

BEFORE THE WAIKATO INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL

In the Matter of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**Act**)

And

In the Matter of the Proposed Waikato District Plan

Submitter Thorntree Orchards (submitter reference 54, Further submission reference 1054

Cindy and Tony Young (Submitter Reference 735, Further Submission Reference 1221)

Parkmere Farms (Submitter Reference 696, Further Submission Reference 1283)

**Rebuttal Statement of Evidence of Gary Black on behalf of Thorntree Orchards,
Cindy and Tony Young and Parkmere Farms**

(Traffic)

Dated 3 May 2021

Jeremy Brabant
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Introduction

1. My full name is Gary Black. My qualifications and experience are set out in my primary statement of evidence dated 17 February 2021.
2. As with my primary scene evidence, I confirm that I have read and agree to abide by the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as specified in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I rely upon the evidence of other expert witness as presented to this hearing. I have not omitted to consider any material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

Rebuttal – evidence of Wes Edwards

3. I have read a statement of evidence prepared by Wes Edwards on behalf of Pokeno Village Holdings Ltd. Mr Edwards comments, amongst other matters, on the future zoning of Pokeno East (which encompasses the rezoning supported by Thorntree Orchards, C & T Young and Parkmere Farms).
4. Mr Edwards provides commentary on four aspects of the road network and its suitability to be rezoned Future Urban Zone. These relate to:
 - a. Dean Road SH1/Southbound Off Ramp intersection
 - b. Deans Road
 - c. Intersection of State Highway 2 and Avon Road.
 - d. Pedestrians and Cyclists
5. I have reviewed the comments raised by Mr Edwards and, by way of rebuttal, address his concerns below.

Dean Road/SH1 South Bound Off Ramp Intersection

6. Paragraph 2.3. Mr Edwards states: 'As growth in Pokeno continues, there are several locations in the road network that I expect will have capacity constraints and

require upgrading including Pokeno Road between Helenslee Road and Gt South Rd, and the Dean Road/ SH1 Southbound off ramp intersection’.

7. Mr Edwards also states in his conclusion Paragraph 7.14(c) ‘There is some potential for possible adverse effects on SH1 due to higher off-ramp traffic volumes. That may be addressed by increasing the capacity at the ramp terminal intersection (by adding traffic signals for example) and/ or by widening or lengthening the off-ramp to accommodate longer queues. The latter appears to be impractical at both Pokeno off-ramps as they are already close to upstream on-ramps.’
8. The statements by Mr Edwards are speculative, and without any traffic analysis to back up the assertions made. I agree with Mr Edwards that there may be capacity concerns on the network, should the site be developed. I consider Mr Edwards’ statement can be assessed during any future Plan Change, and subsequent subdivision applications. At that time, a comprehensive Integrated Transport Assessment would be required and any capacity analysis and subsequent upgrades to the intersections can be determined.

Deans Road

9. Mr Edwards states:
 - a. Paragraph 8.55 ‘Dean Road between Fraser Road and the SH1 off ramp is steep. Mr Black states a gradient of 1 in 6 (17%), which matches the gradient I have calculated from LIDAR contour data.’
 - b. Paragraph 8.56 ‘Legislation sets a default maximum grade for any new road of 1 in 8 (12.5%), unless a District Plan, Bylaw or Council Resolution sets a different maximum gradient.’
 - c. That grades steeper than 15%, as present in Dean Road, are not negotiable by heavy vehicles, and are only to be used in extreme cases where there are no commercial vehicles. He goes on to say that this effectively rules out a bus service to eastern Pokeno.
10. I have checked the gradients using the Lidar Contour data and Mr Edwards and I agree that the steepest gradient is 1 in 6 (17%). I have also checked the

average gradient from the roundabout at the off ramp to the cross-intersection of Dean Road and Fraser Road. The length of the road is 170m and the level difference is 19.5m. I calculate the average gradient to be 11.5%, less than the maximum 12.5%.

11. I consider that a constant gradient of 12.5% on Dean Road can be provided as part of a future road upgrade. To achieve this, I expect that the cross intersection of Dean Road and Fraser Road, plus Deans Road would have to be lowered to achieve a suitable geometric design. This would also have to address the existing visibility issues at the cross intersection to the west. Any lowering of the cross-intersection at Dean Road and Fraser Road would have to extend a distance into Fraser Road and Dean Road to tie back into the existing road levels.

Intersection of State Highway 2 and Avon Road.

12. Mr Edwards States:
 - a. Paragraph 7.14(f) 'Both Dean Road and Avon Road are unsuitable for accommodating any significant new development areas, as Dean Road is too steep, and the SH2/ Avon Road intersection would experience safety issues.'
 - b. Paragraph 8.47 states 'In other locations on the state highway network the Transport agency has installed, or is planning to install, wire-rope barriers or other median barriers to improve safety. I consider it possible that movements at the SH2/ Avon Road intersection may in future be restricted to left-in and left-out movements in a similar manner to the SH1 / Pioneer Rd northern intersection.'
13. I agree with Mr Edwards that the intersection of SH2 and Avon Road in its current form is not suitable and would be a safety concern. I have raised in my own evidence that an intersection upgrade would require channelisation, deceleration and acceleration lanes. I agree with Mr Edwards that the intersection could be restricted to left-in and left-out with a wire rope median barrier, as this meets current Waka Kotahi policy and safety projects.

14. I note that Waka Kotahi (NZTA) in the evidence of Mr Wood, para 7.10, support the Future Urban Zoning. This is on the basis that a grade separated overbridge crossing SH2 would be required connecting Avon Road to the south and Rimu Road to the North. This would provide an interchange servicing this Future Urban Zone and the potential light industrial area to the north of SH2. This should address safety concerns as the site would be accessed using the left-in and left-out movements on SH2. There may be other solutions (other than an overbridge). Either way, these can be addressed in the context of any future Plan Change.

Pedestrian and Cyclists

15. Mr Edwards States in Paragraph 5.11 'Connectivity to eastern Pokeno is poor, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. The only road connection is via Deans Road, and the capacity of that connection is constrained by the volume of traffic exiting SH1 at that point, and there are safety issues I will describe in Section 9.'
16. I state in my evidence that a new footpath could be provided via Market Street East and Market Street West and Mr Edwards concurs that this is feasible. I also recommend that a pedestrian and cyclist bridge be provided further to the north to ensure community connectivity is provided either side of SH1. I also expect that pedestrian and cyclist improvements would also be proposed along Dean Road and Great South Road as part of a future Plan Change application.

Conclusion

17. I conclude that the concerns raised by Mr Edwards relating to the Dean Road and SH1 off ramp intersection, Deans Road Gradient, SH2 and Avon Road intersection and pedestrian and cyclist connectivity can be addressed in any subsequent Plan Change for the site and associated infrastructure upgrades.
18. I support the Future Urban Zone recommended in the Section 42a Report. I remain of the view, as I concluded in my primary evidence, that the Future Urban zoning sought by the applicants can be accommodated by the existing road network. A residential zoning can also be accommodated by the existing

road network when combined with appropriate road improvements implemented as part of a future plan change and any subsequent resource consent application.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Black". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Gary Black

Dated 3 May 2021