

# **SECTION 42A REPORT**

Opening Statement

## **Hearing 25: Zone Extents Ngaruawahia, Taupiri & Horotiu**

Prepared by: Justine Ashley

Date: 17 May 2021



# I Introduction

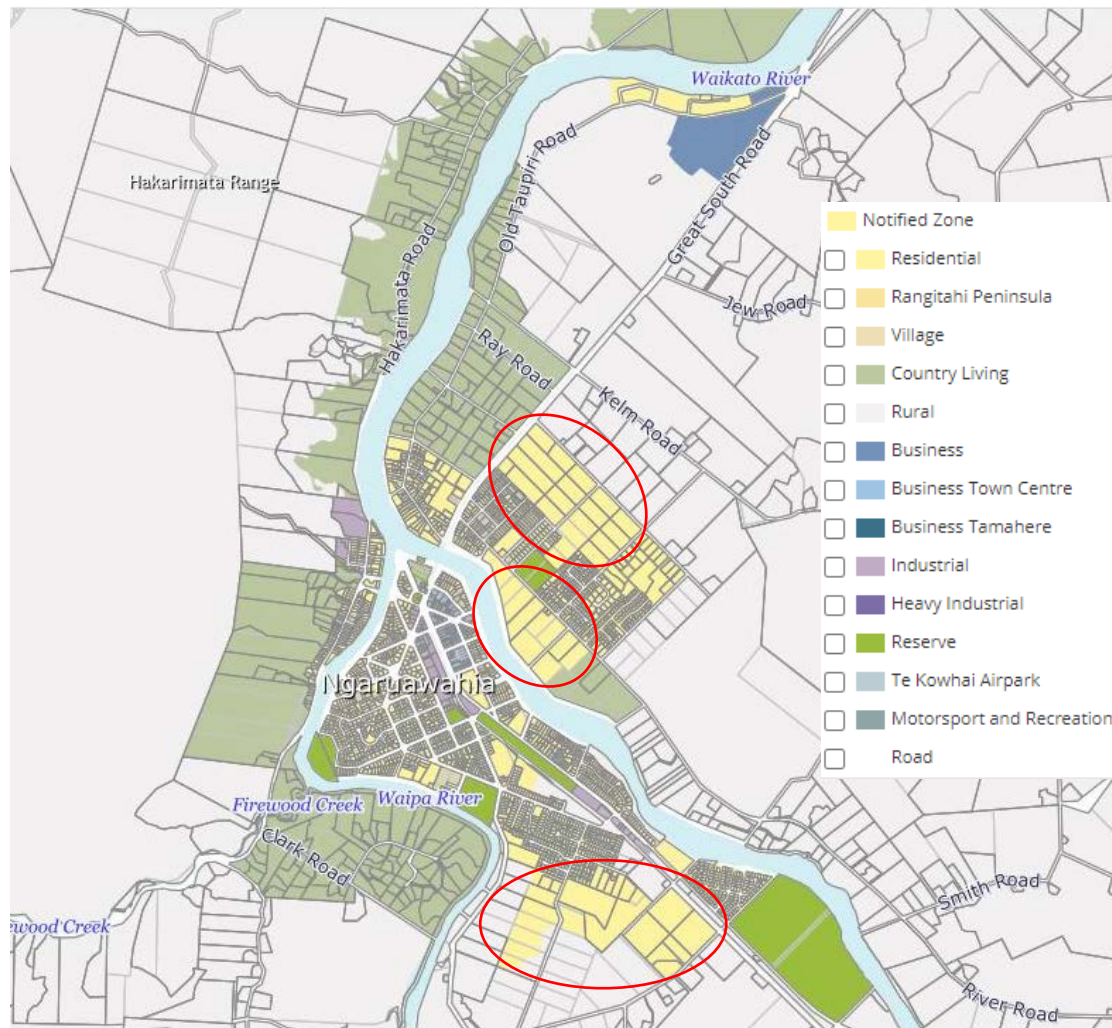
1. Good afternoon Chair, Commissioners and Submitters. My name is Justine Ashley and I am the author of the s42A report (and the s42A reply report) for Hearing 25: Zone Extents – Ngaruawahia, Taupiri & Horotiu.
2. The purpose of this opening statement is to provide you with a brief overview of the settlement pattern of each of these townships within the Proposed District Plan, to highlight any infrastructure and hazard constraints to urban growth and to outline the basis for my recommendations on submission points addressed in this s42A report.

## 2 Ngaruawahia

### 2.1 Overview

3. Ngaruawahia comprises mostly residential activities, including a large area of Country Living adjacent to both the Waipa and Waikato Rivers. Commercial activities are centred around the Business Town Centre, with opportunities for industrial development being primarily provided adjacent to Great South Road and the North Island Main Trunk Rail Line through the middle of the township.
4. The Proposed Plan zoning pattern largely reflects that of the Operative District Plan, with the exception of extensions to the Residential Zone in the vicinity of Galbraith Street and Starr Road to the north; River Road immediately to the north of the Waikato River; and Saalbrey Road to the south (as indicated by the red circles in Figure I below). These urban growth areas are consistent with those identified through the Structure Plan process undertaken in 2017, Future Proof Strategy (both 2009 and 2017 versions) and more recently, through Waikato 2070.
5. The findings of the 'Population, Household and Land Capacity Report (December 2020)' prepared by Waikato District Council show that the number of households in Ngaruawahia needs to increase from the current 2,500 to approximately 5,400 over the next 30+ years to meet the National Policy Statement – Urban Development requirements (based on a medium growth projection plus 20% additional capacity). While some infill is anticipated to meet this demand, the majority is reliant on the continued uptake of existing urban zoned land, and new greenfield subdivisions adjoining township boundaries.

Figure 1: Notified Proposed Waikato District Plan zones – Ngaruawahia



6. While no specific infrastructure and servicing constraints were identified through the Structure Plan process, additional capacity requirements will need to be addressed through the Council's Infrastructure Asset Management Plans and Long Term Plan, including an upgraded intersection where Great South Road meets Saubrey Road at the southern end of the town.
7. In terms of natural hazard risk, it is recognised that a High Flood Risk Area (as proposed via Stage 2 of the District Plan Review process) has been identified over some of the residential growth areas that have been zoned in the Proposed Plan. However, the extent of this hazard risk, and that of the Flood Plain Management Area, is fairly limited, with part of the River Road growth area on the northern side of the Waikato River affected and a Waipa River overland flow path extending into the new Saubrey Road urban area.

## 2.2 Analysis of submissions

8. Overall, my recommendations on submission points seeking to alter the notified zoning pattern in and around Ngaruawahia reflect:
  - (a) Support for those submissions seeking to retain Residential Zoning where this is consistent with the overarching Waikato Regional Policy Statement and Future Proof settlement pattern, identified as a potential growth cell within Waikato 2070, and supported by technical assessments undertaken as part of the Structure Plan process;

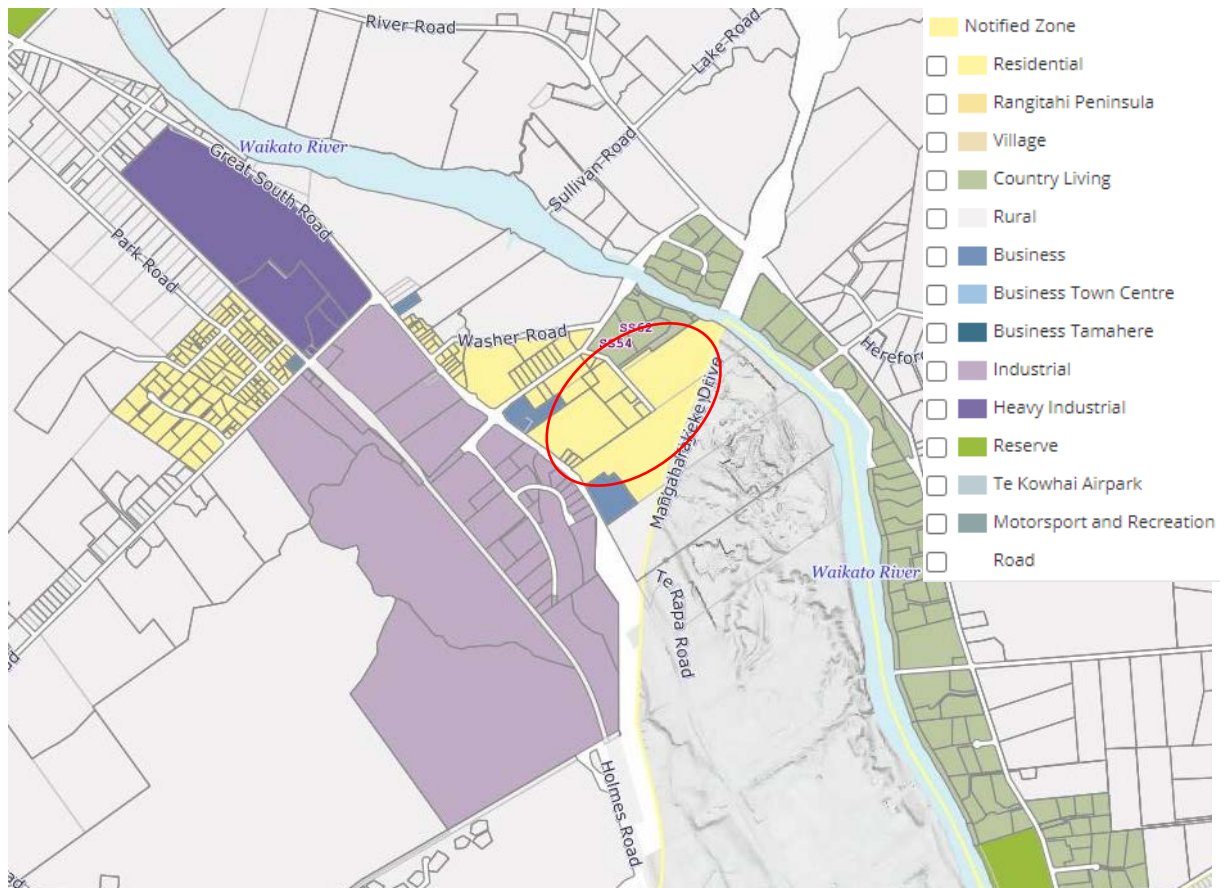
- (b) Support for the rezoning of the residential areas in central Ngaruawahia to a Medium Density Residential Zone to facilitate intensification opportunities, as identified in Waikato 2070;
  - (c) Opposition to those rezoning requests that have provided insufficient technical information to ensure a sustainable development outcome is achieved, including consideration of whether a Future Urban Zone is appropriate;
  - (d) Opposition to those rezoning requests that could potentially conflict with the foreseeable long-term needs for expansion of existing urban areas.
9. Also of note are the submissions relating to southern Ngaruawahia in the Saalbrey Road residential growth area. Mr Simon Upton's [756] submission to reduce the extent of the Residential Zone in this locality is supported by both expert landscape and planning evidence. Overall, I consider that as the site-specific constraints of this growth area were investigated through the Structure Plan process and can be addressed at the time of subdivision, the urban development of the area will give effect to the Regional Policy Statement and provide additional housing capacity to satisfy the NPS-UD requirements. I have however, recommended some minor adjustments to the zone boundary to better reflect both the Structure Plan and Plan Change 17.

## 3 Horotiu

### 3.1 Overview

10. Horotiu is a small settlement located on the northern edge of Hamilton, with the southern part of Horotiu being located within Hamilton City's territorial boundary. It has good accessibility to Hamilton City with an interchange access to the Te Rapa Bypass and it is also located on the Main Trunk Rail Line. Horotiu has therefore been identified as a substantial hub for industrial development for the southern Waikato Region, including the long-standing AFFCO meat processing works site, and provision for new industrial activities within the Northgate Business Park and Ports of Auckland inland port.
11. The Proposed Plan zoning pattern largely reflects that of the Operative District Plan, with the key change being the rezoning of the Kernott Road area from Country Living to Residential (as indicated by the red circle in Figure 2 below). It is noted that this rezoning does not appear to have been signalled through the Horotiu Structure Plan process, but is consistent with Future Proof Strategy (both 2009 and 2017 versions) and Waikato 2070, and includes Noise Control Boundary overlay to minimise the risk of reverse sensitivity effects on surrounding industrial activities.
12. According to the Council's 'Population, Household and Land Capacity Report (December 2020)', residential growth in Horotiu is expected to remain relatively modest, with the projected supply being likely to continue to exceed demand for the next 30+ years (being less than 1,000 households at a medium growth projection plus 20%). Conversely, Horotiu is anticipated to continue to grow as a strategic industrial node. The town's contribution towards the District's growth is therefore primarily as an industrial, rather than residential, centre.

Figure 2: Notified Proposed Waikato District Plan zones – Horotiu



13. The Horotiu Structure Plan identified that development of the new residential areas in Horotiu will require extensions to existing water and wastewater reticulation systems and consideration of the capacity constraints of the existing reticulation pipes. It is therefore anticipated that development of the Kernott Road area will need to be addressed through the Council's Infrastructure Asset Management Plans and Long Term Plan. However, it was found that the roading infrastructure for industrial development at Horotiu was already in place and that residential development within this settlement was of a scale that could be largely managed within the existing roading network.
14. The extent of natural hazard risk associated with flooding from the Waikato River (as shown in Stage 2 of the Proposed Plan) is limited to within the vicinity of Mangaharakeke Drive bridge.

### 3.2 Analysis of submissions

15. Overall, my recommendations on submission points seeking to alter the notified zoning pattern in and around Horotiu reflect:
- Support for those submissions seeking to retain Residential Zoning where this is consistent with the overarching Waikato Regional Policy Statement and Future Proof settlement pattern, identified as a potential growth cell within Waikato 2070, and supported by technical assessments undertaken as part of the Structure Plan process;
  - Opposition to those rezoning requests that have provided insufficient technical information to ensure a sustainable development outcome is achieved.
16. In addition, I note that Northgate Developments Ltd & Northgate Industrial Park Ltd [790.1] and Dixon Family Trust [740.1] have sought a substantial expansion of the Industrial Zone to



the southwest of the existing industrial park, with this area also identified as being needed for industrial growth in W2070. However, given that neither submitter has provided any evidence in support of their submission, and considering that a logical extension to the zone would also incorporate several adjacent blocks held by parties that have not lodged submissions, the provision of additional industrial land at Horotiu may need to be revisited following the District Plan Review process.

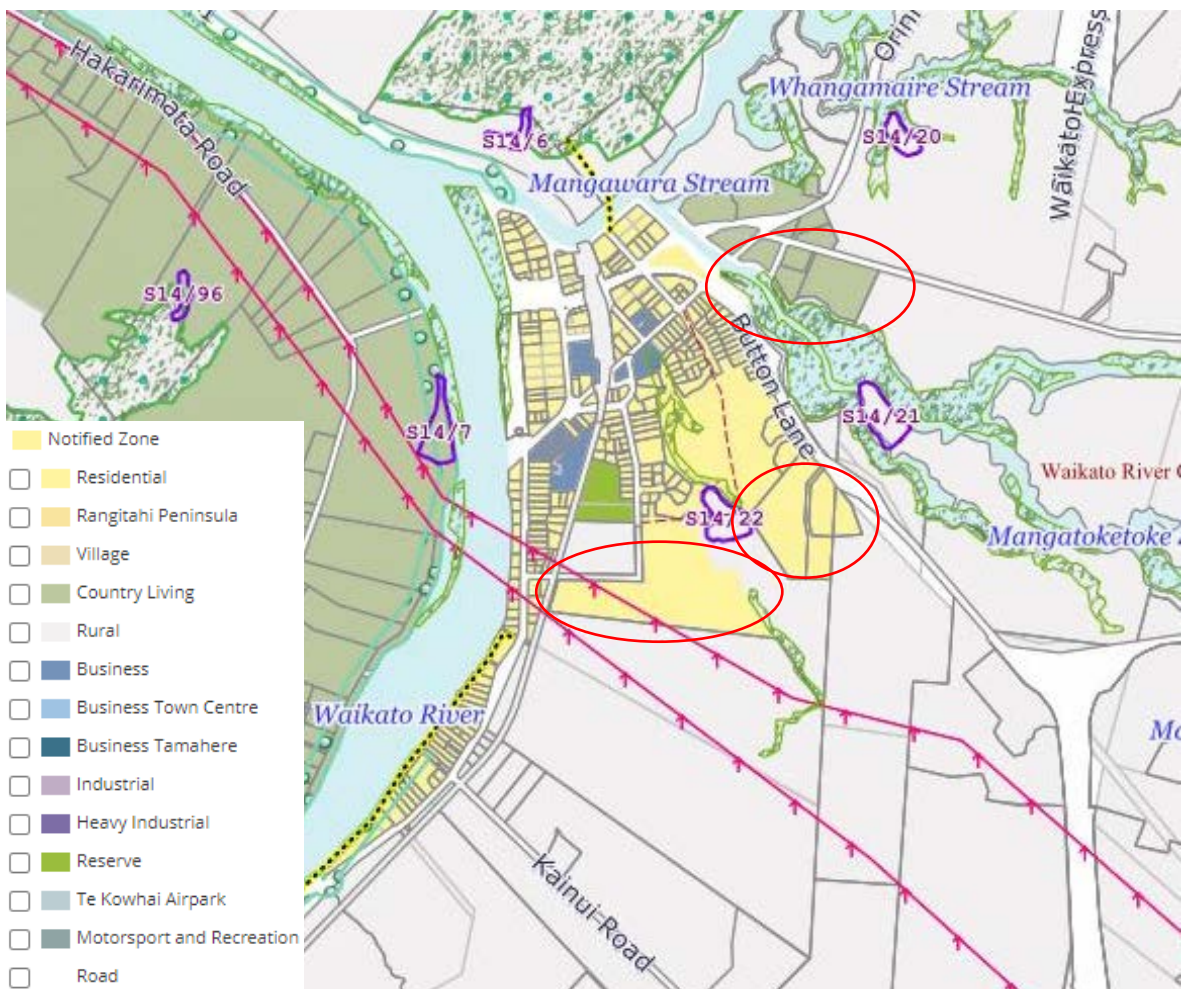
17. I also note that the southwest Horotiu industrial area is located in relatively close proximity to the Rotokauri area which my colleague Jonathan Clease has assessed and where submitters are seeking to rezone a large greenfield block for over 3,000 homes.

## 4 Taupiri

### 4.1 Overview

18. Taupiri is zoned predominately for residential activities in the Proposed Plan, with limited amounts of Business zoning located in and around the town centre. There is a small pocket of Country Living Zone on the north-eastern side of Mangawara Stream. The Proposed Plan zoning pattern largely reflects that of the Operative Plan, with the exception of extensions to the Residential Zone to the south of the township off Button Lane and at the end of Murphy Lane, as indicated by the red circles in Figure 3 below, which are consistent with the Taupiri Structure Plan, Future Proof Strategy (both 2009 and 2017 versions) and Waikato 2070.

Figure 3: Notified Proposed Waikato District Plan zones – Taupiri



19. The Council's supply and demand analysis for Taupiri shows a projected increase from the current 250 households to approximately 1,700 over the next 30+ years as a contribution to meeting the district's NPS-UD requirements. Much of the residential growth earmarked for Taupiri is anticipated to occur within the Kainui Road greenfield growth area. Taupiri has also been signalled as providing for an increase in the supply of industrial land, with a new industrial hub being identified on both sides of the Waikato Expressway in Waikato 2070, albeit that this land sits outside Future Proof 2017. Whilst the overall quantum of growth in Taupiri is relatively modest, in percentage-terms it represents a significant increase in the size of this area, with the scale and character of Taupiri changing from that of a village to become a larger township.
20. The Taupiri Structure Plan recognises that the development of new residential areas will require extensions to existing water and wastewater reticulation systems and consideration of the capacity constraints of the existing reticulation pipes. It is also identified that development of the new residential area between Murphy Lane and Button Lane will require at least one connecting link road across the gully and restoration work on the main gully system that enables it to serve as an important stormwater and amenity function. In addition to the discharge of stormwater, the gully is intended to be a significant natural open space area that provides for a walking trail linking to the adjacent road and footpath network. The Proposed Plan also identifies that the gully system between Murphy Lane and Button Lane contains tracts of indigenous biodiversity worthy of protection as a Significant Natural Area (SNA) and also includes a Māori Site of Significance. As such, these values will need to be recognised and protected as part of any future development proposal.
21. In terms of natural hazard risk, there are no High Flood Risk Areas or Flood Plain Management Areas (as proposed via Stage 2 of the PDP) identified over any of the new urban growth areas that have been zoned in the Proposed Plan.

#### **4.2 Analysis of submissions**

22. I have recommended that the two submission points seeking to rezone land in and around Taupiri be rejected, primarily because:
  - (a) insufficient technical information has been provided to ensure a sustainable development outcome is achieved, either through 'live-zoning' or by way of a Future Urban Zone; and/or
  - (b) the land is outside the settlement pattern identified in Future Proof Strategy (both 2009 and 2017 versions), and/or Waikato 2070, and is therefore not supported by the higher order planning framework.