

Proposed Waikato District Plan Outline Summary - Hearing 6: Village Zone

To: The Hearings Panel **Date:** 16 December 2019
From: Fire and Emergency New Zealand **Our Ref:** 4394933
Copy: Ashley Cornor
Subject: Overview of the Statement of Evidence of Craig Sharman on behalf of Fire and Emergency New Zealand on the Proposed Waikato District Plan – Hearing 6: Village Zone

Summary

My statement of evidence sets out a summary of planning evidence on behalf of Fire and Emergency New Zealand (Fire and Emergency) in relation to Fire and Emergency's submission points 378.45, 378.49, 378.51 and 378.52.

The intent of Fire and Emergency's submission is to ensure that the objectives, policies and rules of the Proposed Waikato District Plan (Proposed Plan) support Fire and Emergency in meeting its statutory obligations under the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 (FENZ Act), Fire and Emergency New Zealand's Statement of Intent 2017 – 2021 (SOI); and Fire and Emergency's Statement of Performance Expectations 2019-2020 (SPE).

Submission 378.45 - Emergency Services Training and Management Activity

Firefighter training is not provided for in the Proposed Plan as publicly notified, therefore is an activity defaulting to a non-complying activity in the Village Zone and across all other zones in the Proposed Plan.

Fire and Emergency oppose the non-complying activity status given to firefighter training and have therefore sought a new permitted activity for 'Emergency service training and management activities' across the key zones of the Waikato District, including the Village Zone.

The section 42A Reporting Officer agrees in part with Fire and Emergency's submission that if provision were not made for training to occur, then the ability for people and communities to provide for their well-being and for their health and safety is being compromised, as both the response time and manner in which an emergency is handled by Fire and Emergency would suffer from a lower performance of the staff involved.

On this basis, the section 42A Reporting Officer has recommended the following amendment (underlined in red):

P9 Emergency services training and management activities Nil **except Emergency services training shall be restricted to the hours of 7:00am-10:00pm**

This recommendation (Submission 378.45) is supported by Fire and Emergency.

Submission 378.49 - Height Standards – Provision for Hose Drying Towers

Fire and Emergency has sought the inclusion of a specific exemption from the height rule (Rule 24.3.3.1) for hose drying towers associated with emergency service facilities in order to appropriately provide for the operational requirements of Fire and Emergency. Whilst referred to as 'hose drying towers', they serve several purposes being for hose drying, communications and training purposes on station. The frequency of hose drying towers being required at stations is dependent on locational and operational requirements of each station.

The section 42A Reporting Officer recommends that the relief sought for the Village Zone height standards be rejected for the reason that Fire and Emergency have sought in submission 378.46 that emergency service facilities are sought by the submitter as a discretionary activity and that hose drying towers can be assessed as a part of the resource consent process and do not need to be specifically exempted from the height rules.

It should be noted that whilst Fire and Emergency have sought a discretionary activity status for emergency service facilities in the Village Zone, this is largely due to there being no provision for restricted discretionary activities within this zone. Fire and Emergency have largely sought restricted discretionary activity statuses where possible across the district's zones.

Fire and Emergency consider that the inclusion of an exemption for 'hose drying towers associated with emergency service facilities' is a specific exemption that will not have unintended consequences for any other activities. Such an exemption is also considered to be justified on the basis that fire stations are a key component of Fire and Emergency's ability to respond to emergencies, and that their location is dictated by response times as set within the Fire and Emergency SOI and SPE. The establishment and operation of emergency facilities is important in enabling for people and communities to provide for their well-being and ensuring that their health and safety is not compromised.

Rule 24.4.1 and 24.4.2 Subdivision – Provision of Water Supply

Fire and Emergency's main functions under the FENZ Act include to provide fire prevention, response, and suppression services. Fire and Emergency is seeking appropriate water supply throughout the Waikato District to facilitate efficient and effective responses to fire and other emergencies which includes adequate access (vehicle and water supply) to development to ensure that fire appliances, and firefighters, are able to access and suppress fires. Specifically, Fire and Emergency seeks that provision shall be made for sufficient water supply and access to water supplies for fighting purposes consistent with the New Zealand Fire Service Firefighting Water Supplies Code of Practice SNZ PAS 4509:2008 (Code of Practice).

Fire and Emergency have therefore sought through its submission that Rule 24.4.1 (General) and 24.4.2 (Te Kowhai and Tuakau) be amended to require all new lots to be connected to a water supply that is sufficient for firefighting purposes, with applications becoming a discretionary activity where such supply is not available.

The section 42A Reporting Officer has recommended that the relief sought in submission 378.51 and 378.52 be accepted in part with an additional matter of discretion added to 2.4.1 RD1 to enable consideration of firefighting water supply 'where practicable'. The section 42A Reporting Officer states in their report that many of the properties within the Village Zone are not serviced and are in

reasonably isolated locations, and a requirement to connect to a water supply with sufficient volume and pressure to meet firefighting standards is unlikely to be practicable.

I disagree with the recommendation made by the section 42A Reporting Officer that it is impracticable and unlikely for many of the properties within the Village Zone to connect to a water supply with sufficient volume and pressure to meet firefighting standards. While it is understood that the majority of the Village Zone locations are not serviced by reticulated water supply, this does not mean a development cannot provide water supply through alternative means such as water tank storage, bores or if required a sprinkler system to compensate for an inability to connect to some form of water supply that will meet the requirements set out in the Code of Practice. I note that the Code of Practice provides for both reticulated and non-reticulated water supply. The phrase 'where practicable' is problematic as it implies that in some circumstances, non-compliance with the Code of Practice is appropriate. Fire and Emergency do not consider this to be the case and given the breadth of possible solutions within the Code of Practice, compliance with the Code of Practice is always necessary and practicable.

I consider that the amendment sought to Rule 24.4.1 and 24.4.2 be accepted as per Fire and Emergency's original submission. However, should the panel prefer to retain the recommended wording from the section 42A report, I would suggest the following amendment to provide further clarity and to link effectively with Rule 14.3.1.8:

(a) Subdivision must comply with all of the following conditions:

(b) Council's discretion is restricted to the following matters:

viii. The provision of water supply for firefighting purposes ~~where practicable~~; and

Thank you for your consideration.



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16 December 2019