

PROPOSED PLAN CHANGE 26

SUBMITTER: TA Projects Limited

SUBMITTER NO: 50

EVIDENCE SUMMARY OF CRAIG SHEARER ON BEHALF OF TA PROJECTS LIMITED

28 April 2023

1. Thanks for the opportunity to address the panel today. Since lodging the submission and evidence I have had the opportunity to read some of the relevant Council evidence and that of other submitters, especially that of Mr Jaggard for Kainga Ora. I have not changed my views, but I have had the opportunity to reflect on them. The thrust of my evidence is:
 - I support the medium density residential intensification proposed by the Amendment Act, and the general direction in PC 26.
 - But I disagree with the blanket approach to applying infrastructure and stormwater constraints as Qualifying Matters related to Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (“**Te Ture Whaimana**”).
 - I propose that greenfields areas be considered separately from existing developed areas in the Medium Density Residential Zone; so,
 - Stormwater and infrastructure constraints as Qualifying Matters should be removed from greenfields areas in PC 26.
2. The requirement for medium density residential standards creates the opportunity to provide for a variety of residential lot and dwelling sizes including price variations, and enables mixed communities instead of being large house dominated on 600m² lots – the prevalent streetscape adjacent to the TA Projects land.
3. I do not support the proposed application of qualifying matters as a blanket approach across the medium density residential zone, reducing the number of dwellings as permitted activities from three to two. I request both qualifying matters to be set aside for “unsubdivided and undeveloped Medium Density Residential Zone land”.
4. For example, “stormwater constraint” is a qualifying matter over much of Te Awamutu. I can understand why Council has taken this approach, as most of the

existing developed areas have no stormwater devices to prevent flood hazards and treat stormwater contamination. And these areas are hard to retrofit for treatment.

5. Retrofitting existing urban areas is no easy task, often relying on on-site, piecemeal, localised devices, almost impossible to monitor for compliance and often poorly maintained and consequently ineffective in maintaining good stormwater quality.
6. Managing greenfields sites is much easier, and most councils, including Waikato Regional and Waipa District Councils require integrated stormwater treatment to be installed when developing such areas.
7. The TA Projects land for example is required at the development stage, (by both the regional and district plans) to ensure that it attenuates all stormwater to pre-developed flood levels, and treat its stormwater as well.
8. And it is relatively easy to achieve, as for example stormwater drainage networks and overland flow paths can be designed into integrated greenfields developments, e.g., with engineered wetlands which will both attenuate flooding and provide a device for treating stormwater.
9. Dealing with stormwater issues on greenfields land is relatively straight forward and should in my opinion just be a development standard. I do not see the need to change the activity status by installing a qualifying matter for stormwater on greenfields land.
10. Council has also added an “infrastructure constraint” as a qualifying matter, to almost all of the Zone. In respect of water supply and wastewater services, I find it hard to make a significant link to the vision and strategy set out in Te Ture Whaimana being compromised.
11. Water and wastewater in Waipa will be needed by a growing population regardless of whether they live in medium density developments or low-density developments. I do not see how the vision will be compromised by tensions in the supply of water and wastewater into greenfields areas.
12. And as pointed out in the Council technical evidence (Ms Fairgray), the dwelling capacity proposed in PC26 is well ahead of the demand for housing. So, it seems if the infrastructure constraint overlay is removed, it is just a matter of where the dwellings are located, not a matter of if there is capacity in the system to serve them.

13. In my opinion it is notoriously difficult to retrofit local networks in existing housing areas but far easier to provide water and wastewater services for greenfields developments. In practice the developers are required to pay for the full reticulation in subdivided areas, with the Council, funded by development contributions/financial contributions, picking up the tab for network upgrades. It is not so easy in established brownfield areas, with irregular development providing minimal funding opportunities for Council outside rates.
14. What is potentially more onerous is that if the PC 26 status quo survives, subdividers and developers of greenfields areas may decide to adopt the easiest path forward and settle for lots designed for two dwellings. Future adaption to three lots, is likely never to happen.
15. Interestingly the reporting officer says (at 9.5.20) in his report:

However, Council proposes to periodically review and uplift those parts of the Infrastructure Constraint Overlay where greenfields development has taken place / been completed, and appropriate provision has been made for infrastructure. This would need to be undertaken as a separate plan change process.
16. With all due respect, by the time the uplift occurs the horse will have bolted as the greenfields development will have been completed - Council would lift the infrastructure constraint overlay after development has taken place! That's too late – most sites will not be able to be “retrofitted” for extra dwellings once development occurs.
17. In addition, the Qualifying Matters approach taken by PC 26 reduces the opportunity for developing medium intensive development with good urban form and a range of housing typologies. The opportunity for integrating a range of lot sizes and housing densities and designs in greenfields areas at the very beginning of the development phase is an opportunity in my opinion that should not be missed.
18. For the above reasons, I do not favour the application of stormwater and infrastructure constraints to greenfields development, and as a consequence Qualifying Matters, in the Medium Density Residential Zoned areas as proposed in PC 26.
19. I recommend the Commissioners recommend to Council the removal of the stormwater and infrastructure constraints to greenfields land in the proposed

Medium Density Residential Zone in Te Awamutu, and if appropriate, to other such zoned land in Waipa District.

20. Alternatively, the Commissioners may wish to revisit some of the larger greenfields Medium Density Residential sites and reconsider, because of their potential for integrated development and the ability to comprehensively deal with stormwater, wastewater and water supply issues, whether the infrastructure and stormwater constraints can be removed as Qualifying Matters for those sites only.