BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARING COMMISSIONER

IN THE MATTER of the Resource management Act 1991 (the Act)

AND

IN THE MATTER of proposed Plan Change 33 to the Waipā District Plan

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY JAMES HEATH ON BEHALF OF THE HAUTAPU LANDOWNERS' GROUP (ECONOMICS)

DATED: 30 OCTOBER 2025

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Timothy James Heath. I am a property consultant, market analyst and urban demographer for Property Economics Limited, based in Auckland. My experience and qualifications are outlined in paragraphs 1-4 of my primary statement for this hearing dated 13 October 2025.

2. I confirm I have compiled with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witness contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 in preparing this statement.

ECONOMIC SUMMARY

3. My economic analysis shows that industrial growth in the Cambridge-Karāpiro market has significantly exceeded projections outlined in the Future Proof Business Development Capacity Assessment 2023 (BDCA), and after Area 7 was rezoned Deferred Industrial at the end of 2023 (operative date 19 January 2024). Specifically, industrial employment annual growth rate in Cambridge increased by more than double the BDCA's short-term forecast.

4. In addition, industrial GDP in the local market has risen by +15% over the past three years, contributing roughly half of the district's total industrial GDP growth. These metrics confirm Cambridge and Hautapu are increasingly important industrial hubs supported by their strategic location near the Waikato Expressway.

5. In my view, advancing the live zoning of Area 7 would generate economic benefits for the market and community without incurring any material economic costs. The live zoning of Area 7 would improve market efficiency, support competition, and provide greater certainty of industrial land supply.

6. Given the limited availability of serviced industrial land in the short term, enabling earlier development of Area 7 would help mitigate land price escalation, support business clustering, and accelerate local employment growth. All economic benefits without any identified economic costs.

7. From an economic perspective, retaining the 2030 activation trigger to make Area 7 “live” is inappropriate. While a 2030 trigger may have been appropriate under previous slower growth assumptions, current market conditions indicate stronger demand. Purposely delaying development would restrict land choice, constrain supply, and risk local price inflation, resulting in economic inefficiency. However, on the basis that Area 7 is live zoned and the 2030 date is a “backup” trigger which effectively changes the activity status for subdivision and development of Area 7 from non-complying to restricted discretionary, this should not interfere with market certainty.

8. Importantly, from a practical perspective, even if Area 7 were rezoned now, this would not translate into immediate development. In practice, the land is unlikely to be development-ready until around late 2027 due to the time required for detailed subdivision design, consenting, infrastructure servicing, and securing development or tenant commitments. It also needs Road 4 to be vested in Council. However, live zoning provides a better opportunity for integrated development of Area 6 and Area 7, and within Area 7 itself.

9. Overall, based on my economic analysis, PC33 represents an appropriate and economically efficient response to the accelerating industrial market demand in the Cambridge area. Enabling PC33 would align industrial land supply with practical demand, promote flexibility, and reduce economic inefficiencies caused by delayed development.

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Tim Heath
30 October 2025